



## Polis date announcement dispels election delay notion, says Solangi

Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said the announcement of polls date had cleared all doubts and uncertainties surrounding the upcoming general elections. "The good and big news is that the elections will be held on February 8," the minister said. (Details on Page 8)



## Jane Marriott visits PARC to learn more about agriculture, botanical conservatory

On the occasion of King Charles III birthday, H. E. Jane Marriott, British High Commissioner to Pakistan visited National Herbarium and Botanical Conservatory at National Agricultural Research Centre, NARC Islamabad on 3rd November 2023. She was briefed about the history and significance of National Herbarium of Pakistan and conservation activities at the Botanical Conservatory. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting regarding progress of filling up of vacant seats for marginalized areas in civil bureaucracy through special examinations as well as rotation policy on Friday.



Photo: PID

## PM directs holding of regular CSS special exams to fill up posts reserved for minorities

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday directed the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the appointment of competent civil servants in remote areas of the country including Balochistan. He also ordered the restoration of rotation policy of civil servants in line with its original spirit and to ensure its strict implementation.

The prime minister was chairing a meeting to review progress on filling up vacant seats reserved for marginalized areas in civil bureaucracy through special examinations as well as rotation policy. PM Kakar directed to regularly hold the competitive examinations to fill the vacant seats

in civil bureaucracy reserved for minorities and people from marginalized areas. He stressed persistent awareness campaigns to encourage minorities to participate in the competitive examination for government jobs.

The meeting was briefed about the recently held special examination of the Central Superior Services (CSS). It was informed that 15,000 candidates appeared in the examination, out of which 3,500 belonged to Balochistan. The examination has over 60 seats reserved in quota for Balochistan. The meeting was attended by PM's Adviser Ahad Khan Cheema, the PM's secretary, the Secretary Establishment, and the Secretary Federal Public Service Commission.

## 14 soldiers martyred as terrorists ambush army vehicles in Balochistan

Three incidents in KPK: soldiers embraced Shahadat

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: 14 Pakistan Army soldiers embraced martyrdom after two vehicles were ambushed by the terrorists in Balochistan's Gwadar district, ISPR.

Terrorists ambushed two vehicles of the security forces moving from Pasni to Ormara in Balochistan's Gwadar district on Friday. 14 Pakistan Army soldiers embraced martyrdom in the terrorist attack.

Sanitization operation is being carried out in the area and perpetrators of this heinous act will be hunted down and brought to justice, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a press release.

Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the



country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve, it added.

On October 27, terrorists had carried out two separate attacks on security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement that an Intelligence-Based Operation (IBO) was conducted in the

Tirah area of Khyber District and after an intense exchange of fire, one terrorist was killed, two terrorists were injured and both were apprehended by security forces.

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from these terrorists, who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces and target

killings of innocent civilians in the area.

In another incident, an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded in area of Sarwekai, South Waziristan District and resultantly two brave soldiers; Sepoy Banaras Khan (age: 23 years, resident of District Orakzai) and Sepoy Abdul Karim (age: 23 years, resident of District Khyber), embraced Shahadat.

Meanwhile: An intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Rori, Dera Ismail Khan District and one terrorist was sent to hell, while two terrorists were injured. The killed terrorist has been identified as Usama, TTP's suicide bomber, who was planning to carryout a high profile incident in the area.

In a second operation, conducted in Lakki Marwat District, one terrorist was sent to hell and vari-

ous terrorists hides were busted. However, during intense exchange of fire two Soldiers; Naik Zafar Iqbal (age: 37 years, resident of: District Gujranwala) & Sepoy Haji Jan (age: 30 years, resident of District Ghizir, Gilgit Baltistan), having fought gallantly embraced Shahadat.

In another incident, an Improvised Explosive Device exploded in general area Kulachi, Dera Ismail Khan District and resultantly, Havildar Shahid Iqbal (age: 39 years, resident of: District Mirpur Khas) embraced Shahadat.

Sanitization operations are being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

## PM strongly condemns terrorist attack in D I Khan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar strongly condemned terrorist attack near a police mobile in Dera Ismail Khan in which four passers-by were killed and 15 police officials and civilians sustained injuries. According to police, the vehicle carrying elite force personnel was targeted by unknown militants.

In a condolence message, the prime minister expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of citizens in the

blast. He also prayed for elevation of ranks of the departed souls in Jannah and grant of courage to the bereaved families to bear this loss with equanimity. The prime minister instructed the relevant authorities to provide the best medical facilities to the injured. He said war against terrorists would continue until complete eradication of the scourge of terrorism from the country. "Thanks to the sacrifices of the law enforcement agencies, we have been thwarting the evil intentions of the terrorists," he said.

## Solangi for media's role to reverse negative impacts of climate change

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Friday urged official media to join hands with private media houses to create awareness about negative impacts of climate change.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of establishment of climate change desk at PTV, he said today the first step had been taken by PTV management for which it deserved appreciation.

Lauding the PTV management for acting swiftly, he said that the climate change desk has been established and connected with regional stations and dedicated reporters have been appointed.

The minister urged the private media to adopt this



model on coverage of climate change issues. The minister issued directives to Ministries of Climate Change and Information and Broadcasting to work together on this front.

He said that Information Service Academy should start providing training to reporters, researchers on this subject.

Murtaza Solangi also called for mobilization of social media and other digital platforms in fight against climate change. He said that the journalists working in climate change desk should visit the regions affected by climate change and meet the local people.

## PTI's Asad Qaiser arrested from Islamabad

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab on Friday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser from Islamabad.

According to details, the Anti-Corruption Establishment arrested the former National Assembly (NA) Speaker for his nomination in Swabi's Gaju Khan Medical College corruption case.

The arrest comes as another setback for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), which is already embroiled in legal battles as its top leadership remains behind bars.

PTI chief Imran Khan and vice-chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi are also incarcerated at the Adiala jail and undergoing trial in the cipher case.

Recently, a PTI delegation, headed by Asad Qaiser, called on JUI-F President Maulana Fazlur Rehman and discussed the country's overall 'political situation'.

The delegation of PTI leaders - which included bigwigs Asad Qaiser, Ali Mohammad Khan, Junaid Akbar and Barrister Saif - offered their condolence over the demise of Maulana Fazlur Rehman's mother-in-law.

## IMF assured of no 'new tax amnesty' as talks underway

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has assured the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission visiting Pakistan of not introducing 'any new tax amnesty scheme' as talks underway for the next installment of \$710 million this week.

An IMF review mission landed in Pakistan on November 2 and reviewed the country's progress on targets set in a \$3 billion programme approved in July this year to bail out the struggling economy.

The IMF executive board had approved the nine-month stand-by arrangement (SBA) with Pakistan "to support its economic stabilisation programme". Following the approval by IMF board, the lender disbursed an installment of \$1.1 billion to Pakistan.

Sources told that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), in its first meeting with IMF review mission, presented a report regarding the tax performance of July-September. The report encompassed revenue target, payments of refunds and tax rebates as dictated by the IMF during its previous meeting with Pakistan delegation.

## Bilawal says 'no decision on PPP-PTI electoral alliance yet'

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that there was no decision regarding an electoral alliance between PPP and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) yet.

While addressing an event, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari welcomed the announcement of the general election date by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

He, however, said that it would be better to announce the election date without the intervention of the Supreme Court.

Bilawal urged for the provision of a level playing field for all political parties. He claimed that PPP had formed its governments in 1988 and 2007 despite the non-provision of a level playing field.

The former foreign minister claimed that the PPP has never been given a level playing field in any elections. He expressed hopes that his political party would form its government in the Centre.

He urged the ECP to implement relevant laws for providing a level playing field to all political parties in letter and spirit.

## Sanam Javed case: LHC seeks reply from IG Punjab

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought reply from the Inspector General (IG) Punjab on a contempt plea filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist Sanam Javed.

PTI activist Sanam Javed had filed a contempt of court petition against Inspector General of Police (IG) Punjab, CCPO Lahore and others in Lahore High Court (LHC) on Saturday for not releasing her from jail despite securing bail in the cases.

The LHC's Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard the contempt plea filed by Sanam Javed. The petition stated that an IG Punjab report mentioned two cases against the PTI activist but she was not released despite bail.

It also stated that the Punjab police chief and other high-ups violated the court orders and sought contempt of court proceedings against them.

## Sarfraz Bugti lays SBP annual report in Senate

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti on Friday laid before the Senate the annual report of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on the country's economy for the year 2022-23. The Interior Minister also tabled in the House the Annual Report for the year 2022 of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the Federal Public Service



Commission's Annual Report for the year 2021.

The House also witnessed the presentation of 12 reports of various Senate Standing Committees.



IS 'Mujaddid-e-Tibb'

# Shaheed Hakim Said made significant contributions to our nation and country: Speakers

Bureau Report

Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said made significant contributions to our nation and country by following the virtuous path of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his life. His life carries a valuable message for all of us: to transform our society into a hub of knowledge, skills, peace, and harmony by emulating the character and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These views were expressed by former bureaucrat Shafiq-ur-Rehman Paracha as chief guest during the concluding session of the two-day 14th National Tibbi Symposium, held at Bait-ul-Hikmah Auditorium in Madinat al-Hikmah yesterday. Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard

Pakistan, presided over the closing session. The symposium's theme was "The Role of Hakim Mohammed Said in the Revival of Tibb-i-Unani."

He further said that Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said set remarkable examples of serving humanity in various aspects of society. He founded Madinah Al-Hikmah, a hub of knowledge and wisdom, dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and skills. However, the cornerstone of his life was the revitalization of Unani Medicine, which significantly contributed to the welfare of our nation. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said is undoubtedly worthy of the title Mujaddid-e-Tibb.

"Hakim Said instigated a quiet revolution through



Hamdard Pakistan, transforming the landscape of medicine and emphasizing the significance of knowledge and awareness. This played a pivotal role in rekindling people's connection and faith in Tibbi-Unani. As a compassionate physician, he attended to the medical needs

of patients daily and engaged in social service throughout the day. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said possessed the unique abilities of face reading and pulse reading. In addition, he led an extraordinary life in an unassuming manner, truly earning the title of Shaheed-e-Pakistan,"

he added.

Earlier, for the interest of the participating Tabibs from all over the country, researchers from the Faculty of Eastern Medicine Hamdard University Tabiba Saima Ghayas, Dr. Hakim Sultan Ayaz, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nauman Khan,

Dr. Hakim Syed Faisal Haider Zaidi, Dr. Syed Rizwan Ali, Tabiba Nadia Naseem, Tabiba Misbah Ahmed, Dr. Hakim Muhammad Amjad Chishti, Dr. Hakim Amjad Ismail and Tabiba Huma Saeed presented their latest research papers on various diseases in the first and second

scientific sessions of the National Tibbi Symposium.

Professor Dr. Ahsana Dar Farooq, the Dean of the Faculty of Eastern Medicine, delivered closing remarks at the two-day national symposium. She extended her congratulations to the organizers for the successful organization of the symposium. Ms. Sadia Rashid, Professor Dr. Hakim Abdul Hannan, and the Vice Chancellor of Hamdard University Professor Dr. Syed Shabib-ul-Hassan, presented the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) seal of honour to the chief guest. The 14th National Tibbi Symposium concluded with Dua-i-Said. The symposium was organized by the Pakistan Association for Eastern Medicine in collaboration with Hamdard Pakistan.

## Khaddi work

MUZAFFERABAD: A girl is busy in making traditional dresses clothes with traditional "Khaddi", which is very famous around the tourists of the World.



Photo: Online

## Maintenance and facilities available in police stations

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Regional Police Officer Multan Captain Retired Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry made a surprise visit to Multan City Police Station Coop.

SP City Division Hasan Raza Khakhi was also accompanied on this occasion, Regional Police Officer Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry said that

The maintenance of police stations and the facilities available in police stations on a priority basis create a good impression of the police among the public. The RPO said that

All the police stations of Multan region have been upgraded for the convenience of the public.

Regional Police Officer Captain (Rtd) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry visited Thana Kup in Internal city late at night. SP City Division Hasan Raza Khakhi was also present. During this time, he inspected the cleanliness of the police station and also inspected



the Hawalat Inquired about their cases from the prisoners held there. He said that illegal detention will not be tolerated. Multan Region Police is always engaged in delivering justice on merit

He directed the city police officer to keep the police stations of the city division manned in every way so that people have a good impression about the police. He further said that Multan

Range Vihari, Khanewal and Lodhran police stations have been upgraded. Where a calm environment has been created for the convenience of people and counters have been created to solve problems. Where people's problems are tried to be solved keeping in mind the requirements of merit and justice. So that the morale of Multan Region Police remains high.

## Drug peddler sentenced to 9 years in prison

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A special court for the Control of Narcotic Substances (CNS) in Fatehjang on Friday sentenced a drug peddler who was arrested by Bhattar Police station under section 9-C CNSA, 1997 to nine years of rigorous imprisonment besides imposing fine over them.

Additional Session Judge Arshad Iqbal, the judge of the special CNS court pronounced the judgment after recording statements of witnesses and final arguments from both sides. The convict Sabaz Ali was arrested red handed by Police this year while hashish peddling. In the light of the statements of the witnesses, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to nine years of rigorous imprisonment besides imposing a fine Rs 0.80 million fine over him.

## Custom-enforcement Multan Region intensifies anti-smuggling crackdown

Asim Tanveer



MULTAN: Pakistan Customs (Collectorate of Custom-Enforcement, Multan) Intensifies Anti-Smuggling Crackdown. Rs.108.5-Million of Smuggled Goods/vehicles Seized during first two days of November.

Smuggled Goods/Vehicles including 626-Bags of Whey Powder & an NCP Vehicles smuggled into Pakistan through unfrequented routes spanning the bordering areas of Afghanistan and Iran. The smuggled goods/vehicles are subsequently transported to Multan.

Being cognizant of this phenomenon, Pakistan Customs has intensified the counter smuggling operations and started crackdown against the smuggled goods especially POL, Currency and other goods.

In operations in Multan division on 1st & 2nd November, seized 626-Bags of Whey Powder worth approximately Rs.12.5-Million from a godown and 02-NCP Vehicles i.e. Toyota Prius Car of 2010 Model valuing Rs.6-Million and Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep of 2017-Model valuing Rs.90-Million are also seized from Multan City.

Moreover, strict instructions to the anti-smuggling formations including mobile squads of the Collectorate and airports have been issued to keep vigilance on the illicit movement of essential goods / commodities, Iranian POL and currency. Chairman FBR Malik Amjed Zubair Tiwana and Member Customs (Operations) Ms. Zeba Hai Azhar have appreciated the Pakistan Customs for taking timely action to thwart the smuggling of essential goods. Pakistan Customs is committed to eliminate the menace of smuggling and would continue intensifying its anti-smuggling operations across the country.

## DPO conducts orderly room regarding grievances of police force

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: According to the exact vision of the Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, District Police Officer Farman Ullah conducted the orderly room in the DPO office here on Friday, to learn about the grievances and problems faced by the police personnel and to listen to their legitimate demands.



District Police Officer South Waziristan Lower Farman Ullah listened to the problems of the policemen very carefully on this occasion, while issuing orders to solve them on the spot.

During the orderly room, the DPO clarified that these force are the real asset of the force, and as a district police officer, I am proud of them.

He said, the South Waziristan Lower Police are brave and exemplary policemen, who have set an example of courage and bravery by fighting terrorism manfully.

DPO said that the policemen who perform their duties well will be valued.

Finally, DPO addressed all the policemen and said, that they should meet the public in good manners during their duty and try hard to solve public problems on merit.

## Bannu commissioner seals five fertilizer dealers over overpricing of crops



News Desk

Assistant Commissioner Bannu Syed Abrar Ali Shah has sealed five shops of agricultural fertilizer dealers on over pricing and who did not keep proper records under the Fertilizer Control Act.

Assistant Commissioner Bannu Syed Abrar Ali Shah sealed the shops of five dealers who charged overpricing and did not maintain proper records under the Fertilizer Control Act.

During the raid, they confiscated 71 bags of fertilizer. Which will be presented for auction in the fix factory rate at Model Farm of Agriculture Department on coming Monday. Director Agriculture Bannu Khudayar Khan and Deputy Director Dr. Rehmatullah were also present on this occasion. Assistant Commissioner Bannu Syed Abrar Ali Shah warned the shopkeepers involved in illegal activities that continuous action will be taken against the illegal elements so that the rit of the government should be implemented at any cost.

## UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF call for protection of children and families seeking safety in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, IOM, the UN Migration Agency and UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, are deeply concerned for the safety and well-being of children and families affected by the 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan' and alarmed at the potential consequences of this plan's implementation.

The majority are Afghans now returning out of fear of arrest or deportation in Pakistan. Afghanistan is deep in the grips of a humanitarian crisis, with ongoing human rights challenges and an impending harsh winter. Almost 30 million people require humanitarian assistance and 3.3 million are internally displaced. Since 15 September 2023, an estimated 160,000 Afghans have left Pakistan. Among those, 86 percent of families reported fear of arrest as the most common reason for leaving the overwhelming major-

ity departing in a rush, and without assistance.

Pakistan has a proud tradition of hosting refugees, saving millions of lives. This generosity is still needed.

Although the Government of Pakistan's plan specifies repatriation of undocumented foreigners during phase one, there are reports of registered refugees and Afghans possessing legal documents, including Afghan Citizenship Card holders and Afghans scheduled for resettlement being pressurised despite assurances they will be protected. Those include children and women. IOM has received reports of persons being targeted in their homes.

Children face serious protection risks while on the move in Pakistan, in detention centres, crossing borders and upon return to Afghanistan. In these situations, children face risks of physical threats to their safety, family separation, distress, fear, abuse and exploitation. Children's access to service-

es including education and healthcare and basic necessities such as food and shelter can be severely disrupted.

More registered Afghan refugees are also approaching UNHCR's voluntary repatriation centres in Peshawar and Quetta asking to be assisted to return. UNHCR and IOM are stepping up their capacity to help. Voluntary returns are generally slower during the winter.

"Any return needs to be voluntary and done in a safe and orderly manner, with full respect for rights and protection of those in need" stressed UNHCR's Representative, Philippa Candler.

UNHCR and IOM have undertaken intensive engagement with the authorities in Pakistan, including advocating that those whose safety may be at risk are exempted from the government's deadline for undocumented foreigners to leave by November 1.

"We are appealing to the author-

ities not to force vulnerable people, including children and families, back to a situation where their lives may be at risk" said IOM's Chief of Mission, Mio Sato.

UNHCR and IOM reiterate their offer to support Pakistan in developing a mechanism to register, manage, and screen people who need continued protection in the country.

"At this time of increased vulnerability, UNICEF calls on the Government of Pakistan to fulfill its obligations to uphold and protect the rights of all children within its borders. A child is a child. Children everywhere must be protected at all times to live with dignity, so they can grow, learn and reach their full potential," said UNICEF Pakistan Representative, Abdullah Fadil.

UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF continue to appeal to the international community to increase support for hosting vulnerable children and families and refugees in Pakistan.





Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 5:04 am  
Zohr ..... 11:51 am  
Asr ..... 3:36 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:14 pm  
Isha ..... 6:39 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116  
MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
RGH ..... 9290301-7  
Holy Family ..... 9290322-7  
PIMS ..... 9261170-79  
Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09  
Shifa International ..... 4603666

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886

# Jamal Shah inaugurates ten-day annual Lok Mela

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Cater Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah inaugurated ten-day annual folk festival popularly known as 'Lok Mela' here at Garden Avenue Shakarparian.

Information Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Secretary National Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed, Ambassador of Palestine Ahmed Ameen, Diplomats

Executive Director Lok Virsa Muhammad Uzair Khan and senior officials National Heritage and Culture Division were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, the minister said that the main focus of the festival will be a greater source of establishing national cohesion and promoting cultural diversity besides providing quality entertainment to the people.

Talking to media, he said the rich culture and traditions of all four provinces in addition to the Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir will be presented in ten-day mela.

In order to entertain the visitors, the minister said the folk music of all provinces will be presented. He said food stalls will offer variety of rational foods of all parts of the country to the people.

The Minister further said a specific stall will be reserved for the collection of funds for Palestine and the Ministry is in the contact with the embassy of Palestine in this regard.

Expressing sorrow over the massacre of innocent Palestinians by Israel, Jamal Shah said that festival will be held in the



expression of solidarity with the people of Palestine.

He said that hundreds of master artisans, folk artists, rural musicians and folk dancers from all over the country are participating in the festival bring with them their creativity in arts, crafts and innovation.

He said that an exotic craft bazaar featuring a rich variety of unique handicrafts, souvenirs, antiques and decorative art is also being set up.

The minister also visited Palestine stall set up at Lok Mela.

Later, the minister also attended a charity concert, held after the opening of ten-day folk mela. The main performer at this exclusive musical concert was renowned Sufi Opera Singer Saira Peter, Fazal Jutt, Wahab Shah dance company and Shukat Dhola.

Saira Peter enthralled audience with fusion of eastern and western tunes at the charity concert.

She sang various popular songs and got a big applause from the audience at the open air theatre of Lok Virsa. Saira Peter is a British Pakistani Soprano. She is Director of Noor Jahan Arts London, multicultural performing arts centre.

Passionate about bringing together people of all backgrounds, during her second MA (History) Saira Peter identified music as a historical means of bridging otherwise isolated communities and promoting a positive message.

Simultaneously in the midst of studying Western Classical voice, she envisioned using her music to take Sufi peace poetry to the world stage.

## Scope of Culture is unlimited: Syed Bilal Haider



PNP

ISLAMABAD: Director General Punjab Arts Council Syed Bilal Haider inaugurated the Punjab Pavilion at Lok Mela Islamabad. Director Waqar Ahmed and Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman also accompanied him on this occasion. Director General Punjab Arts Council Syed Bilal Haider said on this occasion that Punjab is the land of five rivers and its culture is very attractive and beautiful as well as centuries old. The scope of culture is unlimited; the nations that stay connected with their culture are the ones that develop in the world.

Around 50 stalls of artisans have been decorated in the Punjab Pavilion, in which around 100 skilled craftsmen are engaged in the work. Among the artisans are Hajran Bibi Chungi Sazi from Bahawalpur, Shahada Bibi Kishda Kari, Ibrahim Alam Pottery Work, Asma Zahoor Kishda Kari from Multan, Muhammad Ahmed Block Printing, Zeeshan Rashid Camal Bone Work, Shah Jahan Begum Moti Work, Surya Abdullah Chenri Making and Abdul Rehman Camel Skinwork, Muhammad Aslam Khasa Making from Faisalabad, Muhammad Riaz Lacquer Art, Kaneez Fatima Chhabbi Making, Sarfraz Hussain Khadi from Gujranwala, Ghulam Abbas Desi Dari khas, Zulfiqar Ali Blue Pottery from Lahore, Ziaul Haq Woodwork, Muhammad Afsar Khan Brass.

## Int'l moot on Islamic Finance concludes in AIOU



PNP

ISLAMABAD: A three-day international conference on "Advancing Islamic Finance" at Allama Iqbal Open University concluded with 10 recommendations, including the publication of a research journal of Islamic Finance, organizing conference on Islamic Finance regularly, collaborating with national and international institutions for the promotion of Islamic finance, designing courses and degree programs in Islamic finance. These recommendations were presented by the Conference Secretary, Dr. Ahmed Abdul Rahman. The closing ceremony was presided over by the Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi, while Prof. Dr. Mufti Zubair Usmani from Jamia Darul Uloom Karachi, and Sahibzada Muhammad Qamarul Haq from Jamia Muhammadi Sharif Chiniot, were the special guests.

Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi said that Faculty of Arabic carries a unique identity for organizing conferences, seminars, academic and intellectual events, but this was our first experience on Islamic finance, which was a successful joint effort. On this occasion, he announced that an international conference on Arabic would be held in December on the World Arabic Day. Dr. Hashmi added that I now announce the approval of two recommendations, one is that the conference on Islamic Finance will be organized annually in AIOU and other is that the Islamabad Journal of Islamic Finance will be published before the next year's conference. Dr. Hashmi said that we are very grateful for the guidance and support of Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood during the conference.

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Spokesman Report

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## Protest

ISLAMABAD: Activists of Quaid-e-Azam Employees Welfare Association are shouting slogans during protest outside University top show solidarity with the oppressed Muslims of Palestine.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## RPO Multan Awarded Certificates of Appreciation to Sanitary Workers Staff

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Police officer awarded certificates of appreciation to ministerial staff, sanitary workers and police jawans for best performance.

Hardworking and dedicated employees are admirable.

The role of the ministerial staff in the completion of the records and the beauty of the offices is important. Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhary.

Regional Police Officer Captain (Ret'd) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhary awarded certificates of appreciation to the ministerial staff of the offices, police employees and sanitary workers. On this occasion, the RPO said that the role of the ministerial staff in completing the records of Multan region. It is important. By motivating the employees, the spirit of working in them gets stronger, similarly, the role of the sanitary worker is important in the beauty of the offices.

Due to this, by encouraging the employees, the passion to work is created in them. Among those who received certificates were Tanveer Ahmed, Muhammad Zaheer, Muhammad Riaz, Muhammad Khalid, Aamir Shehzad, Muhammad Waqar, Muhammad Shahid, Muhammad Imtiaz, Muhammad Shawkat, Muhammad Altaf, Muhammad Junaid, Hamid Shah, Yunus Masih and Samuel Masih.

## NDRMF and OGDCL all set for socially responsible and environment friendly initiatives

PPA

ISLAMABAD: In order to promote socially responsible and environmental friendly practices in the field of oil & gas exploration and production in line with the sustainable development goals, National Disaster Risk Management Fund and Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) entered into an agreement to work on joint projects. A MoU signing ceremony in this



regard was held in Islamabad, in which Bilal Anwer CEO NDRMF and Ahmed Hayat Lak Managing Director/CEO OGDCL signed the agreement. Bilal Anwer, CEO NDRMF

financing investments in disaster risk reduction that have high economic benefits, taking into account climate change, as well as disaster risks and their impacts.

Ahmed Hayat Lak, Managing Director/ CEO OGDCL expressed great confidence in this partnership and said it will help us explore carbon dioxide gas capture & storage solutions and mechanisms for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

## Celebrating Words, Wisdom, and Ideas

# 9th edition of ILF returns with a Literary Extravaganza

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Oxford University Press (OUP) inaugurated the 9th Islamabad Literature Festival (ILF), a vibrant celebration of fresh ideas, creative perspectives, and the art of storytelling, at the Gandhara Citizen Club in Fatima Jinnah Park, Islamabad.

Arshad Saeed Husain, Managing Director, OUP Pakistan, commenced the session by extending his thanks to the distinguished attendees. He underscored the significant impact of literary festivals, stressing that fostering a cultural shift depends on the celebration of diverse perspectives and their constructive effects.

Jane Marriott, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, expressed gratitude for the recog-

nition that Pakistani authors, especially those writing in the English language, had attained at a global level. She stated, "To allow yourself to be lost and unleashing your imagination makes you realize how powerful all forms of literature are."

She also referred to the relationship between the UK and Pakistan, particularly the profound connections in education and culture.

Khalid Mahmood, Managing Director of Getz Pharma Pvt. Ltd., reiterated the significance of sustainability and inclusivity, stating that a sustainable world invites everyone to share in its abundance, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Iftikhar Arif, prominent Urdu poet, scholar, and literary figure

from Pakistan, spoke at length about the various languages, both spoken and written and felt that those need recognition at state's level as well.

Victoria Schofield, a British author, biographer, and historian, expressed her delight at being back in Pakistan and her eagerness to explore the 9th edition of ILF.

Nauman Khalid representing Capital Development Authority (CDA), said he was impressed by the festival and stressed on holding many such events in future. The ceremony was concluded by Zahshanne Malik, a renowned actor, performer, artist, and dancer, captivating the audience with her moving interpretation of Faiz Ahmed Faiz's 'Lao to Qatal Nama Mera.'

The session was followed by an

insightful session on Iqbal: Aik Ehed Saaz. Shair delved into how Iqbal's poetry shaped the times, moderated by Nasira Zuberi, with Ahmed Atta reciting the selected poetry for audience.

In a parallel session, Tariq Alexander Qaiser and Umber Khairi engaged in a thought-provoking conversation on Pakistan's Mangroves: A Forest in Peril.

The day ended with a meaningful discussion on the right to religious freedom, where Syed Irfan Ashraf conversed with Yaqoob Bangash, Farzana Bari, Pritam Das Rathi, and Maham Ali to explore "Jinnah's Vision: Safeguarding Religious Freedom."

Two remarkable art exhibitions have been curated especially for the weekend long occasion by connoisseurs Qudus



Mirza, Ammar Faiz, and Fauzia Minhalla. The beautiful frames and sculptures will be showcased

on all festival days and present an excellent opportunity to appreciate the value of expression,

whether through print or brush strokes, and reflect on the power of communication.



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# India - The International Terrorist-I

**A** civilized nation, often referred to as a developed or advanced country, possesses a distinct set of characteristics that differentiate it from less developed counterparts. These traits encompass not only economic prosperity but also encompass the social, cultural, and political aspects that contribute to an enhanced quality of life for its citizens.

One of the foundational characteristics of a civilized nation is a robust commitment to the rule of law. Within these countries, the legal and political systems are transparent, just, and free from corruption. An independent judiciary ensures impartial dispensation of justice, while checks and balances within the government prevent the consolidation of power.

Civilized nations often feature stable political systems that facilitate the peaceful transfer of power.

These countries frequently adhere to democratic principles, allowing citizens to participate in the decision-making process through free and fair elections. Inclusivity in politics, with a specific focus on minority rights, is another hallmark of these advanced societies.

These countries are known for offering a high standard of living to their citizens. This encompasses accessible quality education, healthcare, and social services. They maintain low poverty rates, possess a robust social safety net, and strive for a fair distribution of wealth.

Technological advancement and innovation are defining characteristics of civilized nations. They invest significantly in research and development, nurturing a culture of innovation that leads to

breakthroughs in various sectors, including science, technology, healthcare, and the arts.

Civilized countries boast well-developed infrastructure, including efficient transportation networks, modern utilities, and urban planning that prioritizes sustainability. Clean, safe, and well-maintained cities and public spaces are the norm.

Respect for human rights is a cornerstone of these societies. Citizens enjoy freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly, and discrimination on the basis of race, gender, or sexual orientation is strictly prohibited.

Environmental consciousness is paramount in civilized nations. They implement comprehensive policies and practices aimed at protecting the environment, reducing carbon emissions, and conserving natural resources. Sustainable development and eco-friendly initiatives are commonplace in these countries.

Celebration of cultural diversity and the embrace of tolerance are distinguishing traits of civilized nations. They honor a myriad of cultural traditions, languages, and ethnic backgrounds, demonstrating respect for differing perspectives and a commitment to cultural exchange.

Civilized nations prioritize education, ensuring accessible and high-quality educational systems from primary to tertiary levels. This includes investment in both public and private education to provide every citizen with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Recognition of the importance of healthcare and well-being is evident in these countries. They often maintain universal or near-universal healthcare systems, guaranteeing access to quality medical care. Moreover, they place significant emphasis on public health measures to enhance the well-being of their citizens.

Civilized countries typically experience low crime rates due to efficient law enforcement and the presence of robust social safety nets. Their criminal justice systems tend to emphasize rehabilitation over punishment, resulting in lower rates of recidivism.

The civilized nations embody a unique set of characteristics that encompass governance, economic well-being, social values, and environmental responsibility. These traits collectively contribute to a high quality of life for their citizens and serve as a model for countries worldwide aiming to achieve similar levels of progress and prosperity.

India, often characterized as a so-called secular state and the world's largest democracy, notably lacks of the aforementioned traits.

Now, shifting our focus to international relations, the principles of respecting other nations and abstaining from involvement in their internal affairs become pivotal. International relations form a complex network of interactions between countries, each guided by its distinct values, interests, and governing systems. Within this intricate realm, the doctrine of non-interference plays a

central role. This policy entails refraining from meddling in the domestic matters of other nations.

The most fundamental rationale for embracing a non-interference policy lies in the reverence for a nation's sovereignty. Sovereignty stands as a core tenet of international law, affirming a nation's entitlement to self-governance without external interference. Upholding this principle not only conforms to international standards but also contributes to a more stable and harmonious global order.

Interfering in the internal affairs of another nation can rapidly escalate tensions and lead to conflicts. Such interference can be perceived as a breach of a country's autonomy and may incite strong reactions. Therefore, a non-interference policy serves as a preemptive measure, diminishing the likelihood of diplomatic crises and hostilities.

The adoption of a non-interference policy cultivates the art of diplomacy. By refraining from meddling in internal matters, nations can sustain open lines of communication and seek diplomatic resolutions to global issues. This approach fosters negotiation and compromise, thereby promoting peace and cooperation.

Furthermore, a non-interference policy augments bilateral relations. It communicates a clear message that a nation respects the autonomy and self-determination of other countries. In response, this respect often fosters more amicable and productive relationships, emphasizing shared interests and cooperation rather than criticism and imposition.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi



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

## Analyzing the Dynamics of Inflation in Pakistan: Causes, Consequences and Policy Implications - I

**I**nflation is a critical economic phenomenon that affects the lives of individuals, businesses, and governments worldwide. In Pakistan, inflation has been a persistent challenge, with multifaceted causes and significant consequences for the economy and society.

This research paper aims to comprehensively analyze the dynamics of inflation in Pakistan, examining its causes, consequences, and policy implications. Using a combination of quantitative data analysis, literature review, and policy evaluation, this paper provides valuable insights into the factors contributing to inflation in Pakistan and offers policy recommendations to address this complex issue.

Inflation, defined as the sustained increase in the general price level of goods and services over time, is a macroeconomic phenomenon that affects economies worldwide. It has far-reaching implications for various economic agents, including households, businesses, and governments. The dynamics of inflation are complex, and driven by a multitude of factors, and its consequences can be both positive and negative, depending on the rate and stability of inflation. In Pakistan, it has been a persistent challenge with significant economic and social consequences. The country's diverse population, reliance on agriculture, and fiscal and monetary issues make understanding inflation crucial. Pakistan has experienced fluctuating

inflation rates, influenced by factors such as monetary policies, fiscal deficits, global oil prices, and geopolitical tensions. Inflation's impact extends beyond economics, affecting income distribution, poverty, access to services, and political stability.

Inflation, as a fundamental concept in economics, represents the sustained increase in the general price level of goods and services over time. Inflation is characterized by rising prices, which means that consumers need more money to purchase the same basket of goods and services over time. As prices rise, the purchasing power of money declines. This means that the same amount of money can buy fewer goods and services. Inflation can be caused by changes in both demand and supply. Demand-pull inflation occurs when demand for goods and services exceeds their supply, leading to price increases. Cost-push inflation, on the other hand, results from rising production costs that are passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. Economists use various indices to measure inflation, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Producer Price Index (PPI) being common tools. These indices track the prices of a representative basket of goods and services over time. Inflation can be categorized into different types based on its magnitude and persistence. Mild inflation, often considered beneficial for economic growth, is called "creeping inflation." When inflation

rates become excessively high and volatile, it can lead to "hyperinflation," which has devastating effects on an economy. Understanding the concept of inflation is essential for policymakers and economists when formulating monetary and fiscal policies.

Theories of inflation are pivotal in explaining the underlying mechanisms and driving forces that lead to changes in price levels within an economy. The demand-pull theory says inflation results from excessive demand outstripping supply. Factors like increased spending or government expenditures can lead to demand-pull inflation. Central banks use tools like interest rates to manage it. Cost-Push Theory explains how inflation arises from higher production costs, like wages or energy. These cost increases get passed on to consumers. It's driven by supply-side factors and is challenging to control with monetary policy alone. The monetary theory also known as the quantity theory of money states that increasing the money supply, without a corresponding rise in economic output, leads to inflation. Central banks monitor and manage the money supply to control inflation. Expectations theory is what people expect about future prices that can influence current inflation. If people foresee higher prices, they may demand higher wages and prices today, fueling inflation. The Phillips Curve suggests an inverse relationship between inflation and unemployment in the short term. Policymakers face trade-offs between the two. However, this trade-off is considered temporary.

*To be continued*

## 'Voices for Humanity: The Gaza War'

Fatima Mazhar

**I**srael-Palestinian conflict is not just a conflict. It is a horrifying tale of human rights atrocities, suffering of millions of Palestinians and the heart-wrenching screams of poor children. It is a pity that the major and big powers of the world are not speaking up about the suffering of Palestinians. They have turned a blind eye towards them. Millions of Palestinians have been displaced. They have lost their homes, families and everything that they built from scratch. It is very unfair and saddening. Buildings have been turned to rubble. Electricity and power supplies have been cut off. Goods for humanitarian aid are being blocked to enter Gaza. This is a clear war crime.

The question that arises here is that do civilians have any protection under international law? Most of the victims in the Gaza war are civilians. Thousands have been killed, tens of thousands have been displaced and forced to leave their homes. Many are injured as well. People are deprived of food, water and other basic supplies and necessities. In international law, protection of civilians is a high-priority and fundamental principle during any conflict or war. According to Israel, its actions are justified and the acts of terror do not violate international law. Moreover, Israel has support from major powers such as the US. President Biden draws a distinction between the actions of Hamas which he terms as "terrorism" and Israel's bombing of Gaza as "self-defense." The US has been a constant supplier of military aid and weapons to Israel.

According to the UN charter and customary international law, a nation has the right to defend itself from an armed attack. An attack must be met with a proportionate response. Instead of retaliating against a larger group of people for the casualties caused, it should concentrate on militarily defeating its armed opponents. It is forbidden for a battling party to launch attacks that target both military and civilian targets without making a distinction. Attacks would typically be prohibited at places like stores, hospitals, schools, and places of worship, which are regarded as civilian installations. If a civilian site is struck by an operation like an Israeli air strike, it could still be considered a war crime even if it wasn't specifically targeted. The 1977 Additional

Protocols to the Geneva Convention forbids the use of starvation as a weapon of war. According to article 57 of International Humanitarian Law, the discrimination principle calls for the differentiation between civilians and combatants and the principle of precaution prohibits placing military objectives close to the area of non-combatants. Israel disobeyed and violated these principles by bombing places all over Gaza. The US has been a constant supplier of military aid and weapons to Israel.

However, it is abundantly clear that the International Community's inaction has allowed the Israeli government to carry out these actions. In addition to failing to control the situation so that it would be advantageous for both Israel and Palestine, the United States has also failed to prevent it from destabilizing, igniting conflict, and resulting in a sizable number of fatalities. This has been especially true because the US has been unable to put into place an appropriate strategy for this conflict. Not only the US, the European Union also is very ignorant towards the human rights violations committed by Israel and has failed to put into effect an effective international policy. This evidently and openly shows that international law is being ignored in the Gaza war. No major power or any international organization is making Israel accountable for its alarming and terrifying actions. The innocent civilians continue to suffer. Poor children continue to see the bloodshed. All hope is gone. The international community needs to wake up in support of Palestine. The psychological trauma being caused by the war upon the minds of innocent civilians can not be put into words. Post traumatic stress disorder, anxiety issues and depression can be seen in the victims.

It is very saddening to see how the civilians and non-combatants have to pay the price every time and suffer the most as it has been seen in Russia-Ukraine war, Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and now Israel-Palestine conflict. The human toll is incalculable, and it requires our focus, compassion, and dedication. The experiences of those impacted, the refugees yearning to return, and the kids who have only ever known war urge us to be resilient in our pursuit of justice.

*Author pursuing bachelors in International Relations from National Defense University, Islamabad.*



# British High Commissioner visits PARC to learn more about agriculture, botanical conservatory

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of King Charles III birthday, H. E. Jane Marriott, British High Commissioner to Pakistan visited National Herbarium and Botanical Conservatory at National Agricultural Research Centre, NARC Islamabad on 3rd November 2023. She was briefed about the history and significance of National Herbarium of Pakistan and conservation activities at the Botanical Conservatory. She applauded the contribution of National Herbarium and Botanical Conservatory in the documentation and conservation of botanical resources in the context of climate change.

Subsequently, Ms. Marriott also visited the National Institute for

Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB). Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC, presented a comprehensive exposition of the research endeavors underway at NIGAB. Dr. Ali underscored the pioneering nature of the research conducted at NIGAB, highlighted its substantial contributions to the domains of genomics and advanced biotechnology. While discussing PARC's recent initiatives, Chairman PARC, shared the institution's most recent findings pertaining four rice varieties, recently approved, which are insect/pest resistance, drought tolerant and high yielding. Chairman PARC also apprised Her Excellency about the ongoing research endeavors aimed at combating the challenges posed by climate to the flora

and fauna of Pakistan. Her Excellency also mentioned British Government's support for Water Governance in Pakistan, emphasizing the importance of utilizing water-saving technologies to efficiently manage irrigation water.

Addressing the press, the British High Commissioner reaffirmed the United Kingdom's unwavering commitment to collaborate with agricultural researchers in Pakistan. She emphasized the UK's dedication to promoting scientific advancement in Pakistan by offering Chevening scholarships to enhance the research capabilities of Pakistani scientists. As a symbol of environmental stewardship, Her Excellency also formally planted a *Callicarpa Macrophylla* sapling at the conservatory.



## Bilateral Relations

H. E Mustansar Tamar Ambassador of Pakistan to Netherlands visited the HQ of Lipton Teas & Infusions in Rotterdam. Held discussions with the CEO Nathalie Roos and her team on the company's business in Pakistan, and prospects for future collaboration.



## A seminar on HR situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir held

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: A seminar on HR situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) was held at Parliament co-hosted by Parliament's Foreign Affairs & Defence Standing Committee Member Mr. Dag-Inge Ulestein & Pres Foundation Dialogue for Peace Mr. Aamir Javed Sheikh. Chief guest SAPM to PM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mrs. Mushaal Hussein Mullick; key note speakers former Norwegian PM Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Ms. Raziyah Sultana, daughter of incarcerated Kashmiri leader Mr. Yasin Malik & SAPM Mishaal Mullick, Ambassador of Pakistan to Norway Mrs Saadia Qazi and Mr Aamir Sheikh President Foundation Dialogue for Peace, Ms Sabien



Hussein Mullick focal Person SAPM also attended #ReleaseYasinMalik #KashmiriLivesMatter

# Uzbekistan – France: A Comprehensive High-level Partnership

**Mukhiddin Khashimov**

France pays special attention to Central Asia as a region with an important geopolitical position, significant energy and other resources, and great economic, investment, transportation, communication and humanitarian potential.

Uzbekistan is considered by France as a large and influential state in Central Asia, which plays a key strategic role in the region and pursues a balanced and forward-looking foreign policy. Paris highly appreciates the regional policy of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, who has significantly activated the Central Asian vector of foreign policy, based on the principles of mutual benefit, equality, pragmatism and consensus. This new approach contributes to solving vital problems of Central Asia and maintaining stability, security and sustainable development of the region.

Uzbek-French relations have a deep history, as evidenced by the correspondence between the great statesman Amir Temur and French King Charles VI.

A new page was opened in the relations between the two countries with Uzbekistan's independence. Today, it is observed Uzbekistan's active open, pragmatic approach and France's interest in deepening and expanding bilateral ties. The foreign policy activities of Uzbekistan's leader have created a new political atmosphere and achieved positive results in a number of spheres of cooperation. A solid legal framework has been created between the two countries, consisting of 62 agreements, including 26 interstate and intergovernmental, 23 interdepartmental and 13 other agreements.

An open and trustful dialogue has been established between the leaders of the two countries. It is noteworthy that the presidents of the two countries are reformers: in Uzbekistan, the deep transformations in all spheres are underway under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev; similar processes are taking place in France under the framework of Emmanuel Macron's program doctrine.

Since March 1, 1992, in more than 30 years after the establishment of diplomatic relations, 5 high-level visits have been organized: to France—4, to Uzbekistan—1. Over the last 5 years, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has visited this country twice. The first official visit took place on October 8-9, 2018 at the invitation of President Emmanuel Macron. The French Republic became the first European country visited by the President of Uzbekistan since he took office in 2016. The agreements and trade contracts worth a total of \$3.4 billion were signed at that time.

On November 21-22, 2022, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev paid his second official visit to France. During the visit, the two heads of state held negotiations, meetings with the

President of the French National Assembly Yael Braun-Pivet and representatives of leading companies and financial institutions of France, as well as joint visits to Uzbekistan's national exhibitions at the Louvre Museum and the Arab World Institute. As a result of the visit, 14 bilateral documents were signed, as well as 59 agreements and contracts worth 6.086 billion euros.

Political dialogue and practical interaction between the countries is strengthened by active inter-parliamentary exchange. Both chambers of the Oliy Majlis have established groups for cooperation with the French Parliament. The French Senate has a France-Central Asia interparliamentary group and the National Assembly, the lower house of the French parliament, has a France-Central Asia friendship group.

In recent years, the number of joint ventures and projects with the participation of French companies has tripled. The current portfolio of active joint projects in Uzbekistan has exceeded 5 billion euros. There are 46 enterprises with French capital in Uzbekistan, including 17 enterprises with 100% French capital.

At present, a number of large investment projects are being realized in Uzbekistan with the participation of French investments. In particular, the construction of a solar photovoltaic station with a capacity of 100 MW in Nurabad district of Samarkand region is underway with "Total Eren" company, geological exploration works on promising areas for uranium mining are carried out jointly with "Orano Mining" company, together with an international consortium, including the company "EDF", a combined-cycle power plant with a capacity of 1600 MW is being built in Syrdarya province; together with "SUEZ", the projects "Tashkent Water Sector Transformation Plan" and "Improvement of Drinking Water Supply in Surkhandarya province" and others are being implemented. The French company "Veolia" has received management of the heating network of Tashkent city on the basis of public-private partnership (PPP) for the next 30 years.

Systematic work on increasing investment and financial-technical cooperation continues, in particular, through the French Development Agency (FDA). The intergovernmental Agreement on the establishment and activities of the FDA and PROPARCO in Uzbekistan, signed in 2016, allowed to intensify bilateral cooperation. The total amount of funds allocated by FDA for the implementation of 10 projects amounted to 990 million euros of loans, 4.3 million euros of grants from FDA and 19.6 million euros of grants from the Investment Fund for Central Asia.

On November 20, 2022, the Program of Cooperation with FDA for 2023-2025 was signed, which envisages implementation of projects worth 1.070 billion euros.

Trade is the most important compo-



ment of international relations to ensure the welfare of the two countries by creating sustainable income throughout the supply chain. For 2022, trade turnover amounted to \$339.5 million (+20.9%): exports—\$67.9 million (3.2 times), imports—\$271.3 million (+4.5%).

In January-July 2023, trade turnover increased almost threefold—from \$183.4 million to \$517.6 million. Uzbekistan increased exports to 239.5 million dollars (3.5 times), imports from France—to 278.1 million dollars (2.4 times).

The issue of ensuring quality and safety of goods and services is an essential component of bilateral trade relations. The French side provides active assistance in the field of certification and standardization, including through the French representatives of "AFNOR", "Bureau Veritas".

One of the priority areas of cooperation are cultural-humanitarian, scientific-educational and tourist ties, which in recent years have entered the trajectory of dynamic development.

Already today, cooperation in these spheres has a multidimensional and multilevel character. Cultural personalities, scientists, parliamentarians, civil society institutions, mass media of the two countries are involved in strengthening cultural and humanitarian ties.

Today, the Association for the Study of Temurid Art and History and the Association "Avicenna-France" operate in France. Representatives of France regularly participate in the international festival "Sharq Taronalari" in Samarkand.

From November 2022 to March 2023, one of the largest and most popular museums in the world "Louvre" organized an exhibition entitled "Treasures of the oases of Uzbekistan at the crossroads of caravan routes", as well as from November 2022 to June 2023 the exhibition "Road to Samarkand. Wonders of silk and gold" at the Institute of the Arab World in France.

There is a growing common interest in interaction in the educational sphere as well. In Uzbekistan, over 200 thousand students in more than 700 schools, colleges and lyceums, and in 12 universities study French with great interest.

The established direct contacts between higher educational institutions also contribute to the deepening of relations in the educational sector. Today more than 40 higher education institutions of the two countries have established fruitful cooperation.

The expansion of tourism ties also contributes to mutual cultural enrichment. More than 20 thousand tourists from France visit Uzbekistan annually. The Decree of the President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 4, 2018 established a visa-free regime for 30 days for French citizens to enter the territory of Uzbekistan.

In general, in recent years, the interest of Europe, and France in particular, has increased sharply to Central Asia and Uzbekistan, which can be traced in the following factors.

First, the strategic position of Central Asia is of great interest to the EU member states. In the geopolitical context of recent years, France's interest to the region, including Uzbekistan, has increased noticeably.

Secondly, the transit opportunities of the region as a connecting link between East and West, South and North. The EU has become a constructive partner of Central Asia in communications, trade and investment. Our region has become a reliable source of critically important raw materials as well as the center of the supply chain with the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), also called the Middle Corridor.

The EU has allocated US \$150 million from 2021 to 2024 for regional cooperation and integration and prioritized co-financing of digital connectivity projects in the region, hydropower and hydrocarbon energy projects through international financial institutions, Member States (the European Group) and existing Global Gateway Funds.

Third, Uzbekistan's current domestic and foreign policies and wide-ranging reforms contribute not only to improving the welfare of the population, but also to peace and stable development in CA. "The Central Asian region is now experiencing economic growth, developing dynamically and grabbing the attention of the whole world. It is important for us to show our partners from Central Asia that we are interested in cooperation between our agencies. We have economic interests in the region," declared in November 2019, Emmanuel Macron.

Fourth, France is also taking some steps towards Central Asia in terms of security and reforms. All the more so because the region neighbors Afghanistan, and issues such as organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism are among those to which Paris is highly sensitive. France is also providing various types of assistance to support reforms, strengthening the rule of law and free market in the region.

In conclusion, Paris is interested in developing interaction with Uzbekistan through political, economic, energy and cultural cooperation. Uzbekistan and France view each other as reliable partners interested in strengthening comprehensive strategic partnership and bringing mutually beneficial cooperation to a new level for the benefit of the peoples of our countries.

Writer is Head of Department of the Information and Analytical Center for International Relations under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

## 10th summit of Organization of Turkic States starts in Kazakhstan



**Spokesman Report**

10th summit of Organization of Turkic States starts in Kazakhstan-Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov and observer countries President of the People's Assembly of the National Council of Turkmenistan, former President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban attend the 10th Summit of the Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), at the Ak Orda Presidential Palace in Astana, Kazakhstan on November 03, 2023. (TUR Presidency/ Murat Cetimuhurdar-Anadolu Agency)

The 10th summit of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) started in Kazakhstan's capital Astana on Friday.

According to the press service of Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, also attending the event are the leaders of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The summit started with a meeting of the group's Council of Foreign Ministers where Kazakhstan's top diplomat Murat Nurten expressed concern over the situation in the Gaza Strip and urged the opening of humanitarian corridors. "Our country is very concerned about the escalation of violence in the Middle East. We join the cooperation with the international community and call for an immediate cease-fire. The opening of humanitarian corridors for the people of Gaza is a priority task of Kazakhstan's diplomacy," he stressed.

## British Council Business Team visited British Council's Awards Holder and Gold Partner Institute SLS College



JHELUM: British Council Business Development Manager Syed Ikram Akbar and Business Development Officer Sabeeh Ejaz paid a special visit to British Council's Awards Holder and Gold Partner Institute SLS College. On this occasion, he met Sarfaraz Malik, Managing Director, in his office. BDM Syed Ikram said that such an office does not belong to any of our partners. He was also satisfied with the training of IELTS students at SLS. He said that Sarfraz Malik not only highlights the difficulties faced by his students during the IELTS test, but the problems highlighted by him benefit the IELTS students of other parts of Pakistan. BDM & BDO British Council, during a special lecture to IELTS students, said that we are in direct contact with our partner institutes, so any issue faced in the registration process is resolved immediately. He appreciated the excellent results of IELTS and the UK Marriage English A1 test of SLS and assured support for better training of students. Some suppliers of air purifier filters in the region said there was a shortage as demand had suddenly spiked.



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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
53,123.03	52,656.76
Day's High	Day's Low
53,263.07	52,782.21
Index Value	Change
10,601,661,199	+466.27
Percentage	Time
+0.89%	3 Nov, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,406.49	-40.04
Percentage	Time
-0.54%	2 Nov, 4:27 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
34,119.51	+280.43
Percentage	Time
+0.83%	3 Nov, 12:43 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
31,949.89	+348.24
Percentage	Time
+1.10%	2 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181	183
Bahrain Dinar	751.44	759.44
Canadian Dollar	205.5	207.75
China Yuan	38.65	39.05
Danish Krone	40.2	40.6
Euro	301	304
Hong Kong Dollar	36.11	36.46
Indian Rupee	3.39	3.5
Japanese Yen	1.68	1.75
Kuwaiti Dinar	914.12	923.12
Malaysian Ringgit	59.46	60.06
New Zealand \$	166.3	168.3
Norwegians Krone	25.28	25.58
Omani Riyal	734.36	742.36
Qatari Riyal	77.62	78.32
Saudi Riyal	75.25	76
Singapore Dollar	204	206
Swedish Korona	25.38	25.68
Swiss Franc	311.8	314.3
Thai Bhat	7.85	8
U.A.E Dirham	79.25	80
UK Pound Sterling	347	351
US Dollar	282.35	285.1

# PTCL accords grand reception to newly elected office bearers of CBA

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunications and ICT services provider, PTCL held a grand reception in honor of the office bearers of PTCL Workers Ittehad Federation, the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA), who recently won it through a nationwide referendum. The ceremony was graced by the presence of the guest of honor, Syed Sagheer Bukhari, Senior Programme Officer at the International Labour Organization (ILO), Country Office Pakistan, along with senior PTCL officials and newly elected office bearers and labor leaders from across the country.

The recent referendum is a continuation of PTCL's democratic tradition of protecting employee rights, and integrating their voices in crucial policy-making to ensure their well-being. At the ceremony, PTCL management warmly welcomed the newly elected CBA, who expressed their happiness and hoped for the continuation of cooperation between the union and PTCL for their



shared growth and prosperity. Senior Programme Officer, International Labour Organization (ILO), Country Office Pakistan, Syed Sagheer Bukhari cited ILO conventions on workers' rights and quoted

examples of how unions and administrations worldwide ensure mutual growth and prosperity through effective cooperation. He lauded PTCL's management for setting the right precedent of giving the union an

excellent reception. Group Chief People Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Shoaib Baig congratulated PTCL Workers Ittehad Federation for winning the CBA referendum and praised the ER team for its exemplary role in the process. He assured full cooperation of the management in resolving the problems faced by employees and reiterated that the management is firmly committed to the principles of fairness, transparency, and equality. He urged the employees to adhere to the corporate values of PTCL at all times to make PTCL the #1 company in the telecom industry. Ends

Earlier, Advisor Employee Relations, PTCL, Jamil Afzal Bajwa welcomed the newly elected CBA and emphasized the importance of the union and employees in PTCL's growth, saying that effective cooperation and harmony can guarantee sustainable business development. General Secretary of the newly elected CBA, Hafiz Lutfullah thanked PTCL for the remarkable reception and assured full cooperation of employees in PTCL's journey for growth and expansion.

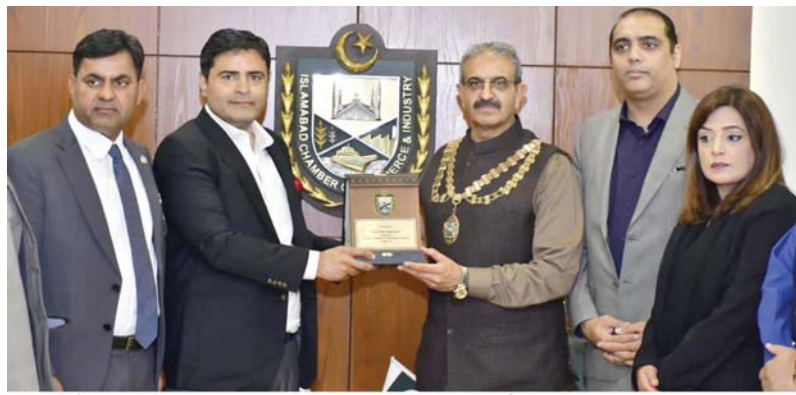
# Mayor assures to cooperate with ICCI in exploring UK market for exports

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: The Mayor of the London Borough of Hounslow Afzaal Kiani along with Councillor Samia Chaudhry and others visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and exchanged views with the business community on matters for further improving Pakistan's business relations with the UK. He assured that he would cooperate with ICCI members in exploring the UK market for exports. He said that the Pakistani diaspora has great love for Pakistan and they are keen to contribute to the economic development of their home country.

Councillor Samia Chaudhry and other members of the delegation said that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK prefers to buy Made in Pakistan products and stressed that Pakistani exporters should focus on enhancing their exports to the UK. She stressed for bridging the communication gap between the private sectors of both countries to increase bilateral trade and investment relations.

Speaking at the occasion Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Cham-



ber of Commerce & Industry said that the UK is an important trading partner of Pakistan and we want to further strengthen these trade ties. He said that bilateral trade between Pakistan and the UK is just over £ 4 billion in 2023 and stressed for developing strong business linkages between the private sectors of both countries to further improve bilateral trade relations.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that many Pakistani products

reach the UK market through smuggling

due to which economies of both countries suffer and he stressed for promoting direct trade to achieve better results. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI said that the Pakistani diaspora in the UK should play the role of Ambassadors of Pakistan and promote its business and investment interests in the UK market.

Maqsood Tabish, Ch. Muhammad Ali and others also spoke on the occasion and shared useful ideas to further improve bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and UK.

# Telenor Pakistan welcomes Magnus Muller as Chief Business Officer

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Telenor Pakistan has announced the appointment of Magnus Muller as the Chief Business Officer to lead its B2B Division. Magnus brings an extensive wealth of experience and a dynamic perspective, from his role of Vice President B2B at Telenor Asia and having previously served in similar roles Myanmar and Thailand. His appointment marks an important moment for the organisation as it aims to bolster its Beyond Connectivity ambitions, innovative strategies and a customer-centric approach.

Magnus is recognised for his entrepreneurial drive, combined with a strong digital mindset that has steered several successful business ventures. His international experience spans various markets, encompassing Norway, the Nordic regions, and Southeast Asian coun-



tries. His expertise lies in driving digital and organizational transformation, demonstrating a remarkable commitment to creating positive impacts for customers, the organisation, and stakeholders.

Expressing his enthusiasm about the new appointment, Khurram Ashfaq, Chief Executive Officer, Telenor Pakistan remarked, "We are thrilled to welcome Magnus to Telenor Pakistan. His proven track record and innovative vision align seamlessly with our strategic goals. Magnus brings invaluable expertise and a fresh perspective that will add value to our B2B operations."

# 13th Fire Safety Convention and Awards-2023

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: The current Caretaker Sindh government is fully committed to supporting the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in strengthening firefighting systems in Karachi to save its numerous high-rise commercial and residential buildings from the fire emergency.

Interim Sindh Local Government Minister, Muhammad Mubeen Jumani, expressed this commitment in his remarks as the chief guest at the 13th Annual Fire Safety and Security Convention and Awards-2023 organised by the National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH).

Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, President Ifikhar Ahmed Sheikh, said that owing to the efforts of the KCCI each of the seven industrial zones in the city had a dedicated fire station with two fire tenders provided by the federal government to deal with



any fire emergency at any factory without loss of precious time.

Consul General of Oman in Karachi, Sami Abdullah Salim Al Khanjari, hoped that events like the Fire Safety Convention would go a long in promoting the culture of fire safety in residential and office buildings in the city.

President of the Fire Protection Industry of Pakistan, Dr

Imran Taj, emphasised that every industrial unit should undergo annual inspections to check the validity of its fire safety measures.

CEO of Sindh Integrated Emergency & Health Services (SIEHS), Brig (retired) Tariq Qadir Lakhari, said the Sindh government had succeeded in curtailing the response time for dispatching firefighters, ambu-

lances.

NFEH Secretary-General, Ruqiyah Naeem, stressed that superstores on the ground floor of high-rise residential buildings shouldn't be allowed to stuff cooking oil or any hazardous material in the basements to prevent fire emergencies.

NFEH President Naeem Qureshi, in his welcome speech, said the recommendations of the convention would be sent to the relevant government authorities and agencies for strict adoption of the fire safety measures in the multi-story residential and commercial buildings in cities.

NFEH Vice-President, Engineer Nadeem Ashraf, delivered the vote of thanks.

Also on the occasion, some 50 companies and industries were given awards by the Caretaker Local Government Minister for showing excellence in adopting fire safety measures in their offices and industrial set-ups.

# Garaj Partners with Mobilink Microfinance Bank to Revolutionize Branch Networking Infrastructure

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Garaj, Pakistan's fastest-growing local cloud service provider, has partnered with Mobilink Microfinance Bank Ltd. (MMBL), VEON's financial services arm, to transform the Bank's branch networking infrastructure through the integration of cutting-edge Software Defined Wide Area Networks (SDWAN). This initiative is set to tap into one of the fastest-growing segments in the global network infrastructure market, projected to reach USD 6 Billion by 2025.

Commenting on the partnership, Asif Aziz, Chief Business Officer Jazz, said, "We're excited



about this strategic partnership which will enable MMBL to revolutionize its network infrastructure by integrating Garaj's cutting-edge SD-WAN solution. Through its robust cloud platform, Garaj is helping businesses like MMBL to achieve enhanced efficiency, security, and customer experience.

While commenting on the partnership with Garaj, Fais-

al Mahmood, Chief Information Officer, MMBL, said, "This collaboration marks a significant milestone for us at MMBL as we contemporize our network infrastructure. By leveraging Garaj's SDWAN solution, we aim to enhance operational efficiency, fortify security measures, and deliver a seamless, digitally enabled experience for our valued customers.

Khurram Riaz, Head of Marketing & Products, Jazz, while speaking about this partnership, said, "MMBL, through its partnership with Garaj, is set to elevate its application-level performance to new heights, connectivity parameters, and hardware health, enabling the Bank to implement WAN link load balancing and failover mechanisms, ensuring zero service downtime."

This strategic endeavor will allow the MMBL to seamlessly adopt the Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) framework, providing secure access to cloud-native applications hosted on the Garaj Cloud Platform, enhancing security, and reducing costs.

# Shell Pakistan hosts 10th Tameer Awards to honour young Pakistani innovators



**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Pakistan Limited hosted the finale of the 10th Tameer Awards 2023 at Shell House to recognize the brightest, young entrepreneurs in Pakistan.

This year, more than 400 applications were received for the awards program, and 30 finalists were shortlisted in six award categories. The event was attended by business leaders, industry-professionals and academia. The finalists presented their pitches to a jury of experts for the selection of winners and runners-up in each category.

As part of the event, a

panel of high-profile leaders engaged in insightful discussions on innovation and entrepreneurship, inspiring growth in the start-up ecosystem.

The Chief Executive & Managing Director of Shell Pakistan Limited, Waqar Siddiqui, stated: "It is wonderful to see young talent take significant strides in a wide and diverse range of areas, coming up with innovative solutions to the problems faced by our country. We are proud to invest in our youth and accelerate enterprise development, through our flagship program—Shell Tameer; towards a bright future for Pakistan."

# E-Cube Solutions & Winterland- Pioneering Pakistan Ist Solar Powered Indoor Snow Park

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: E-Cube Solutions Pvt Ltd, a leading name in the renewable energy sector, is set to redefine the landscape of energy generation in Pakistan through a ground breaking agreement with Winterland Pakistan and, the nation's premier indoor snow park. This collaboration marks the installation of a 1 MW grid-tied solar-power plant at Winterland, a venture that

will make Winterland the first every Solar Powered Indoor Snow Park in Pakistan. Winterland, nestled in the heart of Bahria Town, Lahore, has always been a symbol of innovation and adventure. With the aim of enhancing sustainability, the Winterland team embarked on a journey to harness the abundant solar energy resource. E-Cube Solutions emerged as the ideal partner to turn this vision into reality.

# ACCA's Worldwide Topper: Ibad Haseeb lands the top spot in Audit and Assurance

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: ACCA has announced the results for students who took their exams in September 2023. Thousands of students from across the globe participated in the October session of ACCA exams.



Ibad Haseeb from Karachi, Pakistan has landed the top spot with the highest scores in Audit and Assurance (AA) making him the prize-winner. This distinction is a notable achievement and highlights Ibad's commitment towards creating a strong career for himself in the field of accountancy.

Assad Hameed Khan, Head of ACCA Pakistan, commented: "We are always proud to see our Pakistani students receive worldwide distinctions. This highlights the untapped potential within this nation's youth that ACCA is dedicated to polishing and enabling them to pursue successful careers within and outside of Pakistan. Our youth faces a plethora of adversities and its through achievements such as Ibad's that we see that it only enables them to shine brighter."

Ibad attributes his success to relentless hard work and unwavering perseverance. He expresses gratitude for the unwavering support he received from his parents and educators at Tabani's School of Accountancy (TSA), notably he thanks Haris Hanif, who tutored him for AA.

Ibad shares, "When I first started prepping, I made numerous errors and mistakes but it was only through constant dedication and practice that I was able to build my confidence up and attempt the challenge."

The ACCA qualification commands substantial recognition and enjoys widespread recognition on a global scale, thereby presenting captivating career prospects with prominent employers. The ACCA Qualification meticulously evaluates the skills, capabilities, and competencies requisite for a contemporary accountant, all while fostering a strong foundation in ethics and professionalism.



# UNICEF and ICC partner with 10 cricket teams during the World Cup

## Spokesman Report

NEW DELHI: The English cricket team played cricket with 50 children today in Ahmedabad to promote equal rights and opportunities for girls and boys.

The clinic with England marked the conclusion of a series of 10 cricket clinics organised with teams participating in the 2023 World Cup in India, as part of a global partnership between UNICEF and ICC.

Cricket teams from Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands played cricket with 50 young boys and girls each at stadiums in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Dharamsala, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Pune from 10 October to 3 November 2023. During these clinics, each team guided the children, especially girls, through a game of cricket.

"Cricket can move millions of people and play a vital role in inspiring girls and boys. So, we thought it only fitting to use the influence it wields, especially during the Cricket World Cup, to advocate for equal rights for both girls and

boys," said Sanjay Wijesekera, UNICEF South Asia Regional Director. "Life isn't always easy for girls in South Asia. The region is home to one-third of the world's adolescent girls, yet they lag behind in too many aspects of life. For a girl, the clinic creates a lasting memory that can inspire them to persevere against all odds."

In South Asia, 1 in every 5 girls is undernourished. More than half of adolescent girls are anaemic. Only 36 per cent of girls have completed secondary school. In addition, South Asia accounts for nearly half of the world's child brides.

The clinics were designed to help young girls and boys learn valuable skills that can help them become more confident, work together and be leaders in the future. Priyanka and Shabnam were two girls who attended the cricket clinic with the Afghanistan cricket team at the Arun Jaitley Cricket Stadium on 13 October in New Delhi.

"We got a chance to play with the entire team. Everyone was easy to get along with. We assumed they would be strict. It felt great overall," said Priyanka.

"It was a great experience being here

today and meeting the team. They gave us tips on having the right position and techniques for playing. I really enjoyed it," said Shabnam.

"It was wonderful to come here and meet Rashid Khan. I had previously seen him only on television, but I now got a chance to meet him and the team in person for the first time," said Vikas.

"Be a champion, play cricket. Doesn't matter if you are a boy or a girl," said Naveen-ul-Haq, the Afghan bowler who had some inspiring words for the children.

On 18 October, the Pakistan cricket team led by star wicket keeper and batsman Mohammad Rizwan, accompanied by team members Iftikhar Ahmad, Hassan Ali, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf and Agha Salman played cricket with 50 children of India's Karnataka state at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

On 19 October, the children had a thrilling day when they met star cricketers from the Australian national cricket team who were in Bengaluru for a World Cup match. The team was led by the Australian cricket captain Pat Cummins and his teammates David Warner, Marnus Labuschagne,



Steven Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Travis Head, Cameron Green, Marcus Stoinis, Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and the team's support staff. The children met, played, joked, laughed, and learned cricket as well as life lessons such as team building and leadership. They asked questions, got answers, and received autographs on their t-shirts and caps from the cricketers, and even had a pep talk from UNICEF Australia Ambassador, Pat Cummins, on what

it takes to survive the challenges in life and succeed.

Pat Cummins also visited a primary school in Lucknow, India, to see how UNICEF's learning-by-doing programme is making a real difference to students in the community. The programme encourages children to stay in school by teaching them practical skills, like building solar cookers or turning plastic rubbish into toys.

On 27 October, players from Bang-

ladesh, led by their captain Shakib-Ali Hasan, shared tips with the children on how to bowl, bat and field.

"It felt good to have played with boys. I felt at par with the boys to play with the international cricketers," said Sneha Mondal after the brief practice session.

Shuvam Rajwar, a speech and hearing-impaired boy, said with the help of an interpreter, that this practice was useful to learn how to play in a team during a match. "I learnt to negotiate and take decisions with my team members," he said.

On 28 October, 50 children from various schools in Pune played cricket with the Sri Lankan cricket team at MCA stadium in Gahunje, Pune. Excited after the event, Swarnjali Dhavade said it was a memorable event. "I enjoyed today's event very much. It was the first time I got to meet and play with the Sri Lankan players. I have only seen them on television so far. They encouraged us to play and exercise on a daily basis," she said.

On 31 October 2023, the Indian cricket team met around 50 children from Bharat Scouts and Guide from Mumbai at Wankhede Stadium.

## Ihtisham-ul-Haq wins Asian Taekwondo Championship

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan's Ihtisham-ul-Haq defeated world ranking number 13 Michael Rodriguez of America to win the gold in the Kyuogi event of the 5th Combaxx Asian Taekwondo Championship here at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex on Friday. Also, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Malaysia claimed medals in different disciplines.

Results (Day-11):

In the men's 74 category final, Uzbekistan's Najmiddin Kosimkhovjev defeated Afghanistan's Omid Sahak 2-0 to win the gold medal, Jordan's Muhammad Othman won the bronze and Mahmood Khan of Pakistan won the fourth bronze.

In 87- Pakistan's Ihtisham-ul-Haq defeated world ranking number 13 Michael Rodriguez of America 2-0 to



win the gold medal, Kazakhstan's Nurbul Yersaiynov won bronze and Pakistan's Muhammad Adnan got the

fourth bronze.

In the women's 49 category final, Indonesia's Ni Kadek Heni won the gold medal by defeating Nepal's Anjali Tamang 2-1 after an exciting contest, while Afghanistan's Zarghana Noori won the bronze. Pakistan's Sheeza Jawad won the fourth bronze.

In the final of the women's 57 category, Mariya Sevostyanova of Kazakhstan defeated Noor Rehman of Pakistan 2-0, Sabira Bibi of Pakistan won the bronze and Aralym of Kazakhstan won the fourth bronze medal.

In women's 73-kg, Lauren Williams of Great Britain defeated her compatriot Emily Sutherland 2-0 and won the gold medal.

Pakistan's Bushra Zuberi won the bronze medal while against Kazakhstan's Diana Absenova, she won the gold medal by winning 2-0.

## 'Lahore Lahore Aye' Festival kabaddi event tomorrow

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: The members of national kabaddi team will participate in the 'Lahore Lahore Aye' Festival grand kabaddi event scheduled to be staged at Punjab Stadium on Sunday (tomorrow). Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Shahid Zaman, DG Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail, several top sports stars and a large number of kabaddi enthusiasts will attend this great occasion.

It is worth mentioning that Sports Board Punjab is organizing sports events of 'Lahore Lahore Aye' Festival on the directions of Punjab CM Syed Mohsin Naqvi. All leading kabaddi players including captain of national kabaddi team Irfan Mana and veteran star Musharraf Janjua will feature in 'Lahore Lahore Aye' Festival kabaddi competition.

After the kabaddi event, the exciting taekwondo competitions will be conducted at NPSC Gymnasium Hall on Nov 7 and the 'Lahore Lahore Aye Festival' sports events will culminate with another mega event of Rustame-Punjab Dargal on Nov 12. It may be noted here that Sports Board Punjab has already organized thrilling sports events of 'Lahore Lahore Aye' Festival such as male, female Mini Marathon, Road Cycling, male, female hockey and wushu during the last one week.

## Pakistan gets 3rd position at 2nd Korea Karate Championship

### Sports Desk



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Sensei Qasim Salman International Qualified Instructor of Japan and Chief Head Coach Shotokan Karate School participated in 2nd Korea Do INTERNATIONAL Championship held in Busan Korea from 26th October to 29th October 2023, in Busan Korea. In this event 20 countries participated including Pakistan.

Sensei Qasim Suleman head of SKIF Pakistan and Shotokan Karate Schools Pakistan Participated in this Championship as a player and also as a Judge Referees. And got 3rd position for Pakistan. He said that this is big honour for me and my country that i got 3rd position in this huge event.

## Pak cueists to feature in back-to-back World Snooker C'ships

### Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan snooker team has been finalized for participation in the IBSF World Men's (15 Reds) Snooker and Teams & 6 Reds Championships 2023 to be held from November 5 to 15 in Doha, Qatar. The players to feature in IBSF World Men's (15 Red, November 5 to 10) include Babar Masih, Muhammad Naseem Akhtar and Ahsan Ramzan.

The participating players in IBSF World Teams Championship (November 5 to 12) Muhammad Naseem Akhtar & Ahsan Ramzan (Team A), Muhammad Sajjad & Babar Masih (Team B). The cueists to participate in IBSF World 6 Reds C'ship (November 5 to 15) include Muhammad Naseem Akhtar and Ahsan Ramzan. The World Men's (15 Reds), Teams and 6 Reds Championships 2023, training camp would be held in four cities Lahore, Sargodha, Sahiwal and Rawalpindi from October 9 to 31. The players would participate in the camp, from 10am to 5pm, to hone their skills and prepare themselves for the said World events. The federation was hopeful that the players, would win laurels for the country, in the above events.

## Afghanistan pip Pakistan in World Cup standings with Netherlands thrashing

LUCKNOW: Half-centuries from Rahmat Shah and Hashmatullah Shahidi after a combined bowling effort led Afghanistan to a resounding seven-wicket victory over the Netherlands in the 34th match of the ICC World Cup 2023.

A well-calculated victory lifted Afghanistan to fifth in the World Cup standings, replacing Pakistan, who have six points in seven matches.

Set to chase a modest 180, Afghanistan comfortably amassed the total for the loss of just three wickets and 111 balls to spare.

Afghanistan opens Rahmanullah Gurbaz (10) and Ibrahim Zadran (20) failed to inspire in the modest pursuit and both returned to the pavilion in the

11th over with just 55 runs on the board.

Skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi and Rahmat Shah then put Afghanistan in control by stitching a 74-run partnership with both scoring half-centuries.

Shah, however, fell unlucky to go unbeaten as he handed a simple catch to Saqib Zulfiqar on his follow-through. He scored a 54-ball 52 with the help of eight boundaries.

Meanwhile, Shahidi stood his ground firm and knitted a match-winning partnership with Azmatullah Omarzai, who scored a brisk 31 not out.

Shahidi top-scored for Afghanistan with an unbeaten 56. His 64-ball knock featured six boundaries.

For the Netherlands, Logan



van Beek, Roelof van der Merwe and Saqib Zulfiqar could pick up a wicket apiece.

Opting to bat first, the Netherlands' batting lineup unfolded in the 47th over, putting a modest total of 179 on the board despite

Sybrand Engelbrecht's half-century.

The Dutch side had a dismal start to their innings as Mujeeb Ur Rahman removed Wesley Barresi (1) in the first over. Following the early blow, Colin

Ackermann and Max O'Dowd put together an anchoring 70-run partnership for the second wicket and pulled their side out of trouble.

The pair began to dominate the Afghan bowlers before O'Dowd's sensible knock came to an end in the 12th over, courtesy of a direct hit by Azmatullah Omarzai.

O'Dowd smashed nine boundaries on his way to a 40-ball 42.

Engelbrecht then joined Ackermann in the middle and they could put together a brief 19-run stand before the former fell victim to a suicidal running. He scored 29 in 35 deliveries, hitting four boundaries.

The dismal running between the wickets harmed the Dutch side again when their skipper Scott Edwards' fell for a duck on the next delivery.

## Karachi Whites, Multan taste first victories in Pakistan Cup 2023

### A Sports

KARACHI: Karachi Region Whites and Multan Region handed a six-wicket defeat to FATA Region and Lahore Region Whites to taste their first victories in the ongoing Pakistan Cup 2023.

The second round of Pakistan Cup 2023-24 was played at four venues across three cities - Rawalpindi, AJK and Abbottabad - in the country.

Karachi Whites banked on their decision to field first and dismissed FATA for 155 in 36.2 overs at Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium.

Mohammad Sarwar Afidi was the lone fighter for his side, producing a gritty half-century (53, 68b, 2x4s, 3x6s). Mohammad Farooq, who scored 23 from 43 including two fours and a six, was the second-highest run-getter

in the innings.

Veterans Anwar Ali and Sohail Khan grabbed three wickets each. Danish Aziz also got two wickets to his name and bowled three maidens in his eight-over spell.

In return, Karachi Blues completed the target in 31.1 overs, while losing four wickets. Omair Bin Yousuf top-scored (41, 57b, 6x4s) for his team. His efforts were complemented by Asad Shafiq (37 not out, 67b, 4x4s).

Irfanullah Shah took two wickets while Sameen Gul and captain Khushdil Shah had a wicket each to their name.

In another second-round Pakistan Cup fixture, half-centuries by Zain Abbas, Sharoon Siraj and Haseebullah helped Multan to a six-wicket win against Lahore Whites.

Multan won the toss and opted to field first against Lahore Whites

at Abbottabad Cricket Stadium.

Lahore Whites were bowled out for 266 in 44.1 overs. Tayyab Tahir (74, 86b, 6x4s, 4x6s) and Aamer Jamal (74, 53b, 7x4s, 4x6s) scored the bulk of the runs for their side.

Captain Saad Naseem chipped in with 22 off 19 deliveries, including two boundaries and a maximum.

Pacer Mohammad Imran registered a four-wicket haul while left-arm wrist-spinner Faisal Akram grabbed two wickets.

It took Multan 39.2 overs to chase the target, getting to 270 at the expense of four wickets. Haseebullah (70, 96, 5x4s, 1x6), Zain Abbas (69, 67b, 6x4s, 1x6) and Sharoon Siraj (55 not out, 44b, 7x4s, 1x6) were crucial to Multan's smooth sailing to the target.

Kamran Afzal got two wickets while Mohammad Faiq and

Ahmed Bashir grabbed a wicket each.

Hunain Shah's heroics with the ball allowed Lahore Blues to obtain a 94-run victory over Faisalabad in the second round of the Pakistan Cup.

After being put in to bat first, Lahore Blues got to 241-6 in the stipulated 45 overs. Junaid Ali (47 not out, 48b, 4x4s, 1x6) and Umar Siddiq (46, 41b, 8x4s, 1x6) were the high scorers for the side. Umaid Asif (41 not out, 28b, 4x4s, 1x6) and Hussain Talat (39, 63b, 2x4s) also chipped in.

Faisalabad captain Faheem Ashraf returned with three wickets while Mohammad Ali and Arham Nawab picked up a wicket apiece.

In turn, Faisalabad were dismissed for 149 in 36.2 overs courtesy of a six-wicket haul by Hunain Shah. Faisalabad batters had no answers for the questions



asked by the right-arm pacer falling 94 short of Lahore Blues' total.

Faheem was the only batter offering resistance, producing 40 from 57 including five boundaries. Mohammad Faizan (30, 38b, 4x4s) was the other contributor with the bat.

ing five boundaries and a maximum, and was the top-scorer for the side. He was supported by Sajid Khan (38, 34b, 5x4s, 1x6) and Kamran Ghulam (36, 69b, 2x4s, 1x6).

Spinner Mubasir Khan and pacer Jahandad Khan returned with three scalps each.

Zeeshan Malik (83, 110b, 7x4s, 1x6) and Haider Ali (63, 65b, 11x4s) allowed Rawalpindi to get into a comfortable position while chasing 213.

However, a counterattack by the Peshawar bowlers swung the game back in their favour. Kamran Ghulam took a four-fer, while pacer Abbas Afidi had three wickets to his name.

Mohammad Imran took the last wicket to fall as Rawalpindi fell two runs short of the target as the side was dismissed for 211 in 41.3 overs.



## Innocent martyrdom

A child martyrdom in an artillery attack against al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Strip.



## Child martyrdom in Israeli artillery attack in Gaza

Wafa

GAZA: Five civilians were martyred and others injured in an Israeli airstrike on a house in the town of Bani Suheila, east of Khan Yunis city. A child was also martyred in an artillery attack against al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Strip. Israeli warplanes shelled a house belonging to the Abu Omar family

in the town of Bani Suheila, which resulted in the martyrdom of at least five people and the injury of others.

A child was also killed in an artillery attack against al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Strip.

In the last few hours, Israeli artillery intensified its shelling of areas east of Khan Yunis, in the southern Strip, as well as in al-Bureij refugee camp.

## PASSCO reports 6.934 million tons of wheat reserves

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministry of Food Security and Research has made it clear that the country is currently well-stocked with wheat reserves as both the federal and provincial food departments have reported a total stock of 6.934 million tons of wheat.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the federal ministry informed that

PASSCO's has stock 1.78 million tons, Punjab has 4.021 million tons, Sindh has 0.817 million tons, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 0.227 million tons, and Balochistan has 0.089 million tons.

These reserves are sufficient for the country's essential needs until May 2024 when the new crop harvest begins.

The private sector has initiated wheat procurement due to their

confidence in the federal government's support. Currently, more than 700,000 tons of wheat have been procured within the country, with expectations of an additional 1.2 million tons to be procured.

The federal government has assured full cooperation to the private sector to ensure a steady supply of wheat until the arrival of the new crop.

The supply and price situation for wheat has improved, with no shortage in any part of the country.

Wheat prices, which were previously at 4,800 Pakistani Rupees per maund a month ago, have now decreased to 4,300-4,400 Pakistani Rupees per maund.

The possibility of further price reductions is also present, which is expected to alleviate the common man's financial burdens and improve their purchasing power.

## Polls date announcement dispels election delay notion, says Solangi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said the announcement of polls date had cleared all doubts and uncertainties surrounding the upcoming general elections. "The good and big news is that the elections will be held on February 8," the minister said while speaking in the current affair programmes of the private news channel.

He said the caretaker set-up firmly believed that the elections would be held in time and the people would elect a political government under the constitutional process. The President, the apex court and the Election Commission of Pakistan had full consensus on holding the elections



in the country, he said, adding the court had monitored the entire process. He said today's decision of the Supreme Court should be a source of happiness for everybody since the Constitution clearly dictated that the country would be governed by the elected representatives. Solangi said it was the responsibility of the caretaker government to facilitate the Election Commission in

holding free, fair and transparent elections and it would extend all possible assistance in that regard. The minister said the caretaker government was established in accordance with the Constitution, and it was determined to ensure transparent elections in the country. "If anyone has any complaints, they can approach the Election Commission," he added. He said the ECP would

provide a level-playing field to all the political parties. Under the Constitution and the law, all the political parties would be given 54 days for the election campaign. To a query, he said all the political parties were being given due coverage on the state media which did not have any favorite. He acknowledged the presence of certain elements who wanted uncertainty in the country by spreading fake news and misinformation. "No one can hold a public meeting in a place that causes inconvenience to the public," he stressed. "All those who are eligible will participate in the elections," he said, adding the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was a registered political party, and it had every right to participate in the elections. The caretaker government, he said, had

nothing to do with the legal issues of anyone. He ruled out political affiliation of any member of the caretaker cabinet. As regards the privatization process, he said it was responsibility of the caretaker government to implement the decisions taken by the previous government. The caretaker government had taken measures to curb smuggling of dollars, flour, fertilizer and sugar, he said, adding the stock exchange index had crossed 53,000 points. He said the caretaker government wanted to hand over the national economy to the next government in a better shape. "It was a good step for the Prime Minister to visit LUMS (Lahore University of Management Sciences)," he said, adding the PM would continue his engagement with the youth.

## PML-N never given level playing field in elections: Ishaq Dar

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Ishaq Dar on Friday regretted that his party was never given level playing field in electoral process, calling for free and transparent polls in the country.

Speaking on the Senate floor, Leader of the House Ishaq Dar said that PML-N was not given a level playing field in 2002, 2008 and 2018 [elections].

"Even in 2018, we didn't get any fair playing field. Nevertheless, the PML-N bravely

contested the election despite facing numerous challenges," the former finance czar added.

He stressed the importance of ensuring a level-playing field for all political parties participating in the electoral process. "Elections in the country should be free, fair, and transparent, leaving no room for doubt about their credibility," they asserted.

In response to a point, Dar explained that the constitution mandates that elections be held within 90 days in the event of the assembly's dissolution. However, he pointed out



that following the unanimous approval of the new census by the Council of Common Interest, it became incumbent upon the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to carry out delimitation. He further clarified that delimitation is also a constitutional requirement for the ECP. Furthermore, Ishaq Dar

revealed that the government had not allocated any funds for holding elections in the fiscal year 2022-23. However, he said that the required funding had been allocated for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the PDM government.

Regarding not releasing funds for holding elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he explained that he was bound to follow the resolution passed by the National Assembly, stating, "I have no choice but to follow the resolution of the National Assembly." Ishaq Dar said that the

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government derailed the IMF program during their tenure.

He said that the PTI government had strategically laid landmines for the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government on the economic front, and some elements sought to push Pakistan into a situation similar to Sri Lanka's economic challenges.

He also highlighted the accomplishments of the PDM government in the economic domain, particularly in the reinstatement of the IMF program.

## 'No Afghan refugee being deported forcibly from Pakistan'

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai on Friday rejected criticism of the government's treatment of Afghans and undocumented immigrants, stating that no Afghan refugee is being forcibly deported from Pakistan.

Addressing a press conference in Quetta, the provincial minister clarified that action is only being taken against those immigrants who are living in the country without valid documents.

Jan Achakzai emphasised that Pakistan has been hosting over 1.7 million refugees for many years and will continue to do so

in the future.

"The Caretaker PM and Balochistan Chief Minister have instructed concerned officials to ensure that no guest's self-esteem is hurt during the crackdown," he added.

The minister further noted that a crackdown is underway against those who make fake identity cards (IDs), saying that over 40,000 fake IDs have been blocked in Quetta so far.

He announced that NADRA has blocked over one lakh ID cards so far during the crackdown. He said that more than twenty thousand people have volunteered to leave Pakistan from Chaman Border. Achakzai termed the issuance

of a health card in Balochistan as an important milestone. He said that the health card is a gift to the people of Balochistan from the government. Under the health card, every citizen can receive treatment from any hospital up to one million rupees.

The Balochistan government's crackdown on fake IDs and undocumented immigrants is a necessary step to ensure the security and well-being of all residents of the province.

More than 100,000 Afghan migrants have already left Pakistan since the start of October. More than 80 per cent have left via the Torkham border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the majority of Afghan migrants live.

## SCO Deputy SG meets with member of Eurasian Economic Commission Board

Spokesman Report

BEIJING:

Deputy Secretary-General of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Sohail Khan met with Arzybek Kozhoshev, Member of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission - Minister in charge of Energy and Infrastructure.

During a meeting held in Tashkent on the sidelines of the SCO Transport Forum, the sides discussed topical issues of interaction between the SCO Secretariat and the Eurasian Economic Commission in the field of transportation, according to the SCO Secretariat here.

The discussion took place in the context of the results of the SCO Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) Meeting in Bishkek last week.



## Wasi Shah called upon youngsters to contribute towards country's development goals

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs



and Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah on Friday urged the young minds of the nation to contribute their fresh ideas and innovations to achieve the country's development goals. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the interim government is launching various projects to provide a better life to the youth and will use our youth power for the social economy of the country.

"Creating more jobs and promoting entrepreneurship culture for youth empowerment is the top priority of caretaker government," he added. He said that the youth population is the lifeline of this country, adding that they are the future of the nation, so their education and understanding of national politics, democracy and economy must be comprehensive. Replying to a question, he said the youth must struggle to achieve success as hard work is the path that leads to glory, adding that if Pakistan wants to move forward and make progress then its key is in the hands of youngsters. He said that the youth of Pakistan are our most valuable asset and the young minds of Pakistan are eager and eager to contribute to the development of the country, adding that Pakistan has a rich and diverse cultural heritage which is fostered by the youth.

## BOI Secretary hails JICA's role for Pakistan economic development



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Secretary of the Board of Investment, Muhammad Sohail Rajput on Friday appreciated the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for its cooperation in different sectors for economic development of Pakistan. He was talking to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) delegation, led by Chief Representative, Yasumitsu Kinoshita which called on him, said a press release issued here.

The BOI secretary said that JICA's mission was to play a pivotal role in bolstering Pakistan's economic infrastructure, enhancing the investment landscape, and fostering regional connectivity for a brighter future. The meeting marks the beginning of a promising journey to fortify partnership and explore new avenues of collaboration between BOI and JICA.