



**President for enhanced trade, cultural ties with Nigeria**

President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for further improving trade, economic and cultural cooperation with Nigeria, besides increasing the bilateral trade volume for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The president expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (retd) Sohail Ahmad Khan, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, said a press release. (Details on Page 8)



**No wheat shortage; ample stocks in country: Minister**

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information, Murtaza Solangi on Monday said Pakistan currently had ample wheat stocks and concrete measures would be initiated to address any flour shortage due to supply chain problems. Responding to a motion under Rule 218 by Senator Sania Nishtar, focused on addressing gaps in the wheat supply chain that may lead to flour shortage, the minister stated... (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Cooperation in fields of defence**

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir meeting Commander Saudi Land Forces Lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair.



Photo: ISPR

**Saudi General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair called on General Syed Asim Munir at GHQ**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ, today.

During the meeting, both sides discussed various areas of mutual interest including cooperation in the fields of defence, security, military training as well as regional situation and the ongoing conflict in Middle East.

Visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army's role in fighting the menace of terrorism and paid rich tribute to the sacrifices made in bringing peace to the region.

COAS thanked the dignitary and said that, "Pakistan deeply values its strategic and brotherly ties with the Kingdom of Saudia Arabia."

Earlier on arrival at GHQ, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary.

**Pakistan hosts multinational counterterrorism exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V**

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Two weeks long multinational joint counter terrorism exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V was conducted at National Counter Terrorism Centre, Pabbi with the participation of Special Forces contingents from the brotherly countries.

Exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V is a multinational joint exercise in the Counter Terrorism domain among the Special Forces of Pakistan, Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The exercise is aimed at nurturing joint employment and interoperability besides,

harnessing the historic military-to-military relations among the brotherly countries.

The member countries have displayed zeal and enthusiasm for benefiting from each other's expertise.

In October, the Pakistani and Malaysian armed forces held joint military exercises in two stages from October

9 to 22 in Malaysia.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Bilateral Army Exercise Series was held between Pakistan and Malaysian Armed Forces. The exercise commenced on October 9 and culminated on October 22 in Malaysia.

The exercise was based on two stages, namely Cross

Training Exercise and Field Training Exercise.

The exercise has greatly benefited both the Malaysian and Pakistan Army to strengthen bilateral relations and establish friendly relations amongst officers and members of both countries by exchanging ideas, knowledge and skills, it concluded.

**Meeting of the Prime Minister with the President of the UAE**

Spokesman Report

ABU DHABI: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar today held a bilateral meeting with His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates IN ABU DHABI. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) was also present at the occasion.

The leaders underlined that Pakistan and the UAE have historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties which have stood the test of time. They reaffirmed the resolve to further strengthen bilateral strategic cooperation and dialogue between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates. Prime Minister Kakar expressed profound gratitude for the UAE's firm support for Pakistan in economic and financial domain. The UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis, contributing to the progress, prosperity and economic development of the two brotherly countries.

During the meeting, regional and global developments in the region were discussed with particular reference to the escalating hostilities in the occupied



Palestine. The Prime Minister expressed concern on the human cost of the dire situation in Gaza and reaffirmed Pakistan's support to a lasting solution of the Palestinian question anchored in international law and in line with relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions.

The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's full support to the UAE's Presidency for COP 28 and underlined the importance of COP 28 as an opportunity for meaningful progress towards effective and result oriented global actions on key areas to mitigate climate impact including establishment of the Loss and Damage fund.

The two leaders witnessed the signing of MoUs between Pakistan and the UAE pertaining to investment cooperation in the sectors

of Energy, Port Operations Projects, Waste Water Treatment, Food Security, Logistics Sector, Mining, Aviation and Banking & Financial Services. These MoUs will unlock multi-billion dollars of investment from United Arab Emirates into Pakistan and will help realise various initiatives envisioned under SIFC.

Prime Minister of Pakistan termed it as a historic event that will take economic cooperation between both brotherly countries to new heights and open doors of economic prosperity and socio-economic development of Pakistan. He highlighted the success of SIFC in creating a business and investment friendly environment through one window operation and fast tracking the initiatives.

**Gaza truce extended for two more days, confirms Qatar**

Agencies

QATAR: "An agreement has been reached to extend the humanitarian truce for an additional two days in the Gaza Strip" confirmed Qatar foreign ministry.

The Palestinian group Hamas said that the temporary truce was extended in agreement with Qatar and Egypt and in accordance with the same conditions. Earlier, Hamas was reported to be seeking a four-day extension while Israel wanted day-by-day extensions.

An Israeli official reiterated Israel's position that it would agree to an extra day of truce for the release of each group of 10 hostages. In exchange, three times the number of Palestinian prisoners would be released each time. The limit would be five days.

**Biden hopes for extension as Israel-Hamas truce enters final day**

Reuters

JERUSALEM: US President Joe Biden said he hoped the temporary Israel-Hamas truce can go on as long as hostages are being released, after the Palestinian group freed 17 more people, including a 4-year-old Israeli-American girl.

Hamas said it wanted to extend the pause in fighting, which will enter its fourth day and final agreed day on Monday, if serious efforts were made to increase the number of Palestinian detainees released by Israel. Thirty-nine teenage Palestinian prisoners were released by Israel on Sunday, taking the total since the truce began to 117.

Hamas said it had handed over 13 Israelis, three Thais and one with Russian citizenship, and the International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed it had successfully transferred them from Gaza

on Sunday. Biden said the 4-year-old hostage, Abigail Edan, had witnessed her parents being killed by Hamas fighters during their Oct. 7 rampage into Israel and had been held since then.

"What she endured is unthinkable," Biden said at a news conference in the US. Abigail was on her way to the hospital for checks, Israel's Channel 13 said. Her grandfather, Carmel Edan, told Reuters he "simply could not believe" she had been returned, thanking Biden "for all the help he's offered us."

The four-day Israel-Hamas truce agreed last week is the first halt in fighting in the seven weeks since Hamas killed 1,200 people and took about 240 hostages back into Gaza.

In response to that attack, Israel has bombarded the enclave and mounted a ground offensive in the north. Some 14,800 Palestinians

have been killed, Gaza health authorities say, and hundreds of thousands displaced.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday he spoke to Biden about the hostage release, adding he would welcome extending the temporary truce if it meant that on every additional day 10 captives would be freed.

However, Netanyahu said he also told Joe Biden that, at the end of the truce, "we will return with full force to achieve our goals: The elimination of Hamas, ensuring that Gaza does not return to what it was; and of course the release of all our hostages."

Palestinians gave the freed prisoners a jubilant reception in Ramallah, according to Palestinian news agency WAFA. Omar Abdullah Al Hajj, 17, one of the detainees released Sunday, said he'd been kept in the dark about what was happening in the outside world.

**PM's notification for Ishaq Dar's nomination raises questions**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaarul Haq Kakar's notification for Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Ishaq Dar's nomination as the Leader of the House in Senate raised questions.

The caretaker prime minister's notification regarding the nomination of Ishaq Dar as the Leader of the House in the Senate raised questions. The notification was issued a month after Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani appointed Dar to the post.

Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani had appointed the PML-N Senator to the post on October 30. He also addressed the Upper House and said the appointment was made on PM Kakar's directives.

**IMF tax experts' team reaches Pakistan**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A team of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Monday reached Pakistan to consult over tax net and to enhance tax revenue.

Sources said that the technical experts' delegation will hold consultations with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) over the taxation policy for about one week.

The delegation will suggest meas-

ures to the FBR for amendments in the tax policy, sources said. "Introducing amendments in the tax policy aimed at expanding the tax net and collecting maximum tax," sources said.

According to sources, the FBR and the IMF experts will jointly prepare the basic structure for introducing the scheme to retailers.

"One million more taxpayers will be added to the tax net to enhance the number of taxpayers to six million," sources said.

**IHC adjourns Nawaz Sharif's appeals in Avenfield and Al-Azizia cases**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday adjourned the hearing of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's pleas against convictions in Avenfield and Al-Azizia cases.

As per details, IHC Chief Justice Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Gul Hassan Aurangzeb heard Nawaz

Sharif's pleas against his conviction in Al-Azizia and Avenfield cases.

PML-N leader and Sharif's lawyer Azam Nazeer Tarar urged the court to exempt Nawaz Sharif from appearing before the court due to security concerns at the hearing.

At this Chief Justice Aamer Farooq responded "You file an application for exemption then the court will see."

**استعمال سمجھداری سے ذمہ داری سے!**

**گیزر کی بروقت مرمت نہ کروانا بل میں کئی گنا اضافے کا سبب بنتا ہے**

**گیس کے اضافی بل سے بچنے کیلئے یقینی بنائیں**

گیزر کی چھاریں رنگ آلود ہوں

گیزر کے تقریباً ٹیسٹ میں کوئی خرابی نہ ہو

گیزر کے ساتھ ناقص آلات کی تنصیب نہ ہو

PIDU1700-D



# South Punjab Chambers Alliance signs MoU for economic development: spokesman

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: 7 Chambers of Commerce of South Punjab have come together on a platform for economic development and solving the problems of the region. MoU of South Punjab Chambers Alliance was signed in Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Khawaja Muhammad Yusuf Patron while Mian Rashid Iqbal, president of Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been elected as the president of the Alliance for one year. In this regard, a ceremony was organized in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, in which the officials of the Chamber of Commerce of Multan DG Khan, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Vehari, Khanewal and Jhang, including Mian Farid Mughes Sheikh, Malik Israr Awan, Khwaja Salahuddin, Khwaja Muhammad Hussain, Khwaja Muhammad Usman, Fazl Elahi, Sheikh Faisal Saeed and others participated.

Addressing the ceremony, the newly elected president of the Alliance Mian Rashid Iqbal welcomed the representatives of recognized Chambers of Commerce and Industry of South Punjab on their arrival at Multan

Chamber and said that the MOU of Alliance of Recognized Chambers of South Punjab was signed. Under which each chamber will be chaired in turn for a period of one year. And unanimously, the order of turn has been kept on the basis of the Date of Incorporation of the chamber as per SECP records. Will try hard to make the alliance successful. The sole objective of South Punjab Chamber Alliance is to create the best and most conducive business environment and opportunities in the region.

He said "I am hopeful that Inshallah South Punjab Chambers Alliance will prove to be a dignified and reliable platform for all the Chambers and their members and will be able to represent the business community fully addressing, he said that the dream of bringing together the business community of South Punjab on one platform has been fulfilled". The 7 Chambers of Commerce and Industry of South Punjab will raise a common voice to solve the problems and work together. Should also be included to increase the effectiveness and strength of the alliance

And a strong voice of the business community of South Punjab reached the Houses. Ex-President of FPCCI,

Mian Tanveer A. Shaikh, speaking said that the alliance was formed 15 years ago, which also held periodic meetings, now a formal MOU has been signed. After that, the alliance has also been formally announced. The business community is facing other problems including fluctuations in the value of the dollar, high markup rates, increase in electricity and gas prices. The business community will get relief. Now we will move forward together and with one language. President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry DG Khan Khawaja Muhammad Ilyas said that the establishment of the alliance is indeed welcome

Khawaja Muhammad Yusuf and Mian Tanveer will work together under the patronage of Sheikh. The caretaker government should play its role to solve the problems of the business community and the value of the dollar should be set at a level so that exports can increase. Bahawalpur Chamber of Commerce President Chaudhry Zulfikar said that all the chambers of the region have gathered on a platform which is commendable. The business community will move towards solving the problems and develop a common



plan of action. The leadership of the alliance should talk to the federal and provincial governments to resolve the issues. President of Jhang Chamber of Commerce Chaudhry Muhammad Ansar said that it is welcome to gather the business community on one platform. A strong voice from South Punjab will unite and work for the business community.

The Khanewal Chamber of Commerce President Masoodur Rehman said that by establishing the alliance, the problems will be solved on a priority basis. The leadership should talk to the government to solve the problems of the business community of the region. President of Rahim Yar Khan Chamber of Commerce Mohammad Iqbal said that all the

chambers have gathered for a common cause which is a welcome thing, it will increase the strength of the business community of the region. Talk to the Federal Board of Revenue to resolve the issues. The business community should be freed from black laws. Vehari Chamber of Commerce President Khalid Hussain said that the situation in the country is different.

## Kashmir Youth Summit 2023

MUZAFFERABAD: Visitors are taking interest in different things on various stalls during the "Kashmir Youth Summit 2023" in the Capital of AJK.



Photo: Online

## Faisalabad SHO's vehicle attacked in Khadian Waraichan

**Abdul Majeed**

FAISALABAD: Firing on the vehicle of the SHO of Police Station. The gunman in the vehicle was injured by the bullet. The SHO survived the firing. Given. After the incident of firing on the police, a heavy police presence was requested at the spot.

The case of firing on the vehicle of SHO Police Station President Faisalabad in Khadian Waraichan Head Constable Shakeel Gujjar, who was injured by a bullet on the head, was transferred from Civil to Allied Hospital. The armed men opened fire on their vehicle, which hit Head Constable Shakeel Gujjar, who was seriously injured due to a bullet on the head. 3 constables were injured and a passerby was killed. Later, a man of the accused party was killed in an alleged police encounter, after which the accused had forbidden the police from entering the village. Arrived at the spot.

## Police to provide fool-proof security for Gurdwara at birth of Guru Nanak

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Attock 27th Nov On the special instructions of District Police Officer Dr. Sardar Ghyas Gul Khan, Attock Police has issued a security plan for Gurdwara Sri Panja Hasan Abdal regarding the birth day of Baba Guru Nanak 2023. Around 700 of Attock Police Officers and youths will perform security duty in three layers, apart from this, 19 elite sections will also perform duty. In which a large number of local and foreign Sikh pilgrims will participate, to provide fool-proof security to the Sikh pilgrims, the Attock Police has deployed fresh troops for security at various places under the supervision of DPO Dr. Sardar. Ghyas Gul Khan and SP Investigation Attock Jawaria Mohammad Jameel, besides 5 DSPs will also perform their duties to check the security process, total around 700 to provide security to Sikh pilgrims. Police officers and jawans have been deployed for security duty, including 5 DSPs, 13 SHOs, 55 Upper Superintendents, 53 Head Constables, 406 Constables, 26 Ladies Constables, and 19 elite commandos to protect the Sikh pilgrims. The section will be on alert all the time, on this occasion DPO Dr. Sardar Ghyas Gul Khan said that the safety of religious places and their followers is our top priority and Attock Police will not allow any miscreant elements to spread mischief. All Sikh pilgrims should worship freely without fear or danger.

## NSU Islamabad's Exclusive EV Repair Course: Shaping the Future of Automotive Expertise

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The National Skills University Islamabad, a leading technology university, is pleased to announce an upcoming Electric Vehicle (EV) Repair and Maintenance Course scheduled from December 18 to 20, 2023. The course is being conducted in collaboration with Pak-China Huazi Green Energy (Pvt) Ltd, by renowned Chinese engineering technologists who bring a wealth of expertise and experience in the rapidly evolving field of electric vehicles.

Electric vehicles have gained significant attention towards sustainable and eco-friendly solutions. Keeping pace with this shift, this course is a unique example of academia-industry collaboration recognizing the importance of fostering a skilled workforce capable of maintaining and repairing electric vehicles to the highest standards.

## Book on Sindh's water issue launched

**Kamran Khamiso Khawaja**

THATTA: Speakers lashed out at IRSA over its cruel policies that have left an adverse effect on the deltaic region of Sindh. During a book launch ceremony at a local press club Thatta they proposed adequate supply of water in the Kotri downstream in order to restore the glory of the Indus delta and coastal region of Sindh.

Members of civil society, journalists, water experts and social activists shared their ideas during the ceremony that was organized to launch the book of noted agronomist Ohaiyo Khan Khush. The author in his book titled "Hydro politics in Pakistan" has discussed in detail the chronic issue of water crisis, its consequences and the core reasons behind this quandary.

The event was convened through a joint collaboration of Progressive writers forum, Sufi Shah Inayat Literari Forum and Thatta press club the



other day. Environmental experts drew the attention of concerned authorities towards the surging threat of sea intrusion that would prove hazardous to coastal districts of Sindh if adequate

quantity of water is not released to the Kotri downstream.

"IRSA and the federal governments for years have been violating the water accord of 1991" said Professor Mukhtiar

Maher adding that the book, "Hydro politics in Pakistan" carried a deep discussion about the Sindh-Punjab water dispute.

Social analyst and scholar Dr Maru Khan Khaushik paid tribute to the author of the book saying that Ohhayo Khan had shared deep-insight on a highly crucial issue with the upcoming generation through his book.

Through a unanimous resolution participants demanded human rights for the indus river and complete dispensation of the 1991 water accord. Muneer Jaffrani, a noted columnist, proposed a sprinkle and drip irrigation system and further added that it was high time to get rid of the obsolete irrigation system.

He urged concerned authorities to take measures for restoration of the Indus delta and rehabilitation of the coastal region of Sindh. The event was attended by Muhammad Iqbal Khawaja, Iqbal Jakhro, Mahboob brohi and Khuda Bux Baherani Among others.

## Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital Rawalpindi wants to organize eye medical camp at Gomal varsity: VC

**Adam Khan Wazir**

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Yesterday Vice Chancellor Gomal University Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah, Director of Logistics of Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital Rawalpindi Raja Anwarul Haque Javed and senior journalist and member of Dera Press Club Raja Jahanzeb Kayani met at his office in Quaid-e-Azam Campus.

On this occasion Director Director Logistics Raja Anwar ul Haque said that the role of educational institutions in fostering the love of the state and positive thinking for the

service of the country among the students is noticeable and this is what leads to country's development and prosperity and establishment of peace.

He further said that the current situation and time required that today's young generation will have to pay special attention to training along with knowledge and research in universities as well as success in practical life.

Raja Anwar ul Haque Javed added that Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Shakib Ullah took charge of Gomal University under the most difficult conditions and is trying day and night to take it on

the path of development.

He said, that is truly admirable.

Director Director Logistics Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital had further to say, Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital President Retired Major General Rehmat Khan led by the hospital administration, doctors are restoring and treating the affected people and this is the reason why we want to organize an eye medical camp at Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital Rawalpindi Gomal University under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah, so that a large number of people here can benefit from

this facility.

Gomal University Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah welcomed the distinguished guests on their arrival at Gomal University that we would be happy if Al Shafia Eye Trust Hospital conducts a camp at Gomal University.

We are grateful to all the administrations including President Al Shifa Eye Trust Hospital Retired Major General Rehmat Khan, Director Logistics Raja Anwar Ul Haque Javed for this kind initiative.

The Vice Chancellor further said that Gomal University is one of the oldest universities



in Pakistan, and by reading hundreds of students are shining the name of this ancient mother of knowledge by showing the essence of their ability not only in Pakistan but also abroad.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:23 am
Zohr	11:55 am
Asr	3:22 pm
Maghrib	5:00 pm
Isha	6:28 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**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	555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224

**UBG and BMP-Progressives Confident of Winning FPCCI Election**

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Khurram Ijaz, the Coordinator of the Businessmen Panel Progressive, has stated that the election activities for the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) for the 2024-25 term are currently at their peak.

He emphasized the principle of relinquishing power to engage in disagreements, highlighting that the willingness to sacrifice power is unprecedented in the history of FPCCI. "The alliance between the United Business Group (UBG) and BMP Progressive has garnered widespread praise, particularly as a positive development amid the current challenging economic conditions."

Furthermore, he mentioned that the nominated candidates for the FPCCI elections from UBG and BMP Progressive Atif Ikram for President, Saqib Fayyaz Magoon for Senior Vice President, and Asif Inam, Zaki Ijaz, Asif Sakhi, Aman Paracha, Abdul Momin, and Zain Ifkhar Chaudhry for Vice Presidents have received strong support and assurances of votes from trade bodies across the country.

Khurram Ejaz was of the view that Karachi, as the backbone of the country's economy, contributes 65 percent of the revenue to the treasury. However, trade bodies have expressed dissatisfaction, claiming that FPCCI has not played a significant role in addressing the problems faced by trade bodies, businessmen, and industrialists during difficult economic conditions.

# Magtymguly Fraghi promoted diversity, peace, and harmony among nations: Syed Jamal Shah

**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: Magtymguly Fragi, the greatest poet of Turkmenistan, has promoted diversity, peace and harmony among people. The poet's vision is based on constructing a community with prosperity and stability in Eurasia, South Asia, and beyond. There is a strong sense of cultural affinity, and we can collaborate to strengthen our cooperation in diverse fields. We have to adopt tangible dialogue regarding culture and heritage for this region to build unity in diversity.

These were the remarks by Syed Jamal Shah, Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture, during the Scientific and Practical International Conference "Magtymguly Fragi and Friendship of Nations in the Modern World" Organized by the Embassy of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies in collaboration with Tabani Group of Companies.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Farhat Asif, President Institute

of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, highlighted the 300th birth anniversary of the great poet and said that the Greatest Turkmen poet, thinker, and the man behind the vision and wisdom of today's glorious modern Turkmenistan, the great Magtymguly Fragi – the bestower of Happiness for Turkmenis—is a true messenger of love, unity, and peace in the world.

In his welcome remarks, Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, said that Pakistan and Turkmenistan have enjoyed a strong relationship over the years in diverse sectors. He said this event is in continuation of the 300th birth anniversary of the great Turkmen poet Magtymguly Fragi. He said that the great Turkmen poet is the true messenger of building bridges among nations. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Dr. Razia Sultana, Former Vice Chancellor of Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar, and member of the Public Service Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said that Magtymguly is a poet, philosopher, and, more importantly, a



Turkmen having vision beyond time and space where he has written poems and shared the vision to unite the Turkmen.

She added that knowledge, honesty, and bravery are the

messages of Fragi. Nazarov Atabay, Chief researcher of the Department of Turkmen Literature and Literary Relations of the Institute of Language, Literature and National Manuscripts,

named after Magtymguly of the Turkmenistan Academy of Sciences, said that the greatness of Magtymguly Fragi rests on its uniqueness and the wisdom and honesty as the virtue are the asset

for our nation. He further highlighted various works of Fragi that have been translated into multiple languages globally. Akmyrat Rejebov, Deputy Head of the Department of Creative Personnel of the Ministry of Culture of Turkmenistan, shared that as a man of ideas, philosophy, and national leader of the Turkmen people, Fragi is living in the hearts and minds of the Turkmen nation.

Seyidov Dovletgeldi, Researcher of the Department of Lexicology, Terminology and Linguistic Culture of the Institute of Language, Literature and National Manuscripts, named after Magtymguly of the Turkmenistan Academy of Sciences, was also present on the occasion. In the end, Chief Guest Syed Jamal Shah, Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture, gave shields to the people. Many Ambassadors, diplomats, journalists, members of the civil society, and students were present on the occasion.

Photo by Raja Farid

## Protect

ISLAMABAD: Workers of local administration are busy in cover the plants on greenbelt alongteh Express Way, to protect from frost in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## AKU's Climate Change

# Opportunities for Change Conference Concludes on a High Note

**City Desk**

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University, in partnership with the Institute for Global Health and Development at Aga Khan University (IGHD-AKU), Sustainable Solutions Development Network Pakistan (SDSN-PK), and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), hosted an annual conference titled "Climate Change, Health, and Environment: Opportunities for Change". The event brought together visionaries and thought leaders from all over the world to serve as a shining example in the fields of environmental studies, health and climate change.

Highlighting the significance of the conference, Dr Zulfikar Bhutta, Director at



IGHD-AKU said, "For young people in the world, particularly students, trainees, those who have decades to go still, this is probably the most important issue in global health as it relates to their future."

Distinguished speakers and luminaries, including Dr

Sanjay Wijesekera, Regional Director for UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), Dr Maureen Lichtveld, Dean, School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh, USA, and Dr Jill Baumgartner from McGill University, Montreal, graced the event with their insights

and expertise.

Echoing his sentiments, Dr Jai Das, Assistant Director IGHD-AKU, said, "The impact of climate change on environmental degradation and human health is profound, and it has been recognized as an existential threat to humanity."

Dr Sulaiman Shahubudin, President of the Aga Khan University said, "Climate change is a problem like no other. It's the proverbial problem that seems impossible to solve. This conference signifies our commitment to be at the forefront of addressing the pandemic of climate change. The conference at the Aga Khan University stands as a testament to the power of collective action and collaboration in confronting the most pressing issues of our time."

## Riphah International University Hosts NCUK Study Abroad Expo at Gulberg Greens Campus



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Riphah International University Hosts the NCUK Study Abroad Expo at Gulberg Greens Islamabad, Achieving Educational Excellence through International Collaboration

Riphah International University, one of the best private universities in Pakistan organized NCUK Study Abroad Expo 2023 at its Gulberg Greens Campus Islamabad. The event gathered substantial participation from students, educators, and researchers across Pakistan, providing a comprehensive platform to explore opportunities, scholarships, and information sessions for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Riphah International University provided this forum for all the candidates who wanted to learn about study opportunities in the UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Malaysia to interact with university representatives directly. It is important to mention here that the pathway offered by Riphah is the only HEC accredited pathway to study abroad. Maria McKenna Representative British High Commission graced the event as the honorable chief guest. Deputy Vice Chancellor Riphah International University Dr. Yawar Hayat was the guest of honor on this occasion. The event was a massive success and it established a platform for fostering international educational collaboration

## IWMB imposes heavy fees on awareness activities at Trails

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed has condemned the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) on Monday for imposing heavy fees on the awareness and environmental engagements in groups at the Trail-5 and 6 of the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP).

In a press statement, he said the Assistant Director IWMB Information and Outreach Omar Bilal wrote him an email on Monday stating "We would like to inform you about an update in the fee structure for activities on [the\_] Trail-5 of MHNP as well as at [the\_] Trail 6, in accordance with Rule 6 of the Islamabad Wildlife (Protection, Preservation, Conservation, and Management) Rules 1983. The Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) has implemented a fee for every activity on [the\_] Trail 5. In order to obtain the necessary No Objection Certificate (NOC) for your upcoming activity, we kindly request you to submit a fee of Rs. 1000 per participant. This fee is required to be submitted along with the completed Event Form, which is attached to this email."

The email states that the fees include, "awareness & education session about biodiversity and ecosystem of MHNP, a showcase of documentaries and a guided hike".

The IWMB AD further wrote: "If you exclusively utilize our Visitor Information Center (VIC) space for a closing ceremony at [the\_] Trail 5, the fee is Rs. 25,000". This is in addition to the awareness and education session about the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP) biodiversity talk, showing the documentaries and a guided hike.

## Pakistan Cricket Board should not be promotion of sugary drinks: Sanaullah Ghumman

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Heart Association (PANA) has written a letter to Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board Mr. Zaka Ashraf, in which he has been told that sugary drinks are one of the major causes of many types of non-communicable diseases including heart, diabetes, kidney diseases and many types of cancer. Therefore, Pakistan Cricket Board should not be part of the advertisement of sugary drinks.

PANA Secretary General Sanaullah Ghumman while talking to the media said that more than 33 million people are living with diabetes in Pakistan. Another 10 million people are pre-diabetic. Pakistan ranks first in the world with fastest growth of diabetes. 400,000 people die in Pakistan every year due to diabetes and its complications alone. If no immediate measures are taken, by 2045, the number of diabetes patients in Pakistan will increase to 62 million. He said that sugary drinks are one of the major causes of many non-communicable diseases including diabetes. Sugary drinks alone increase the risk of diabetes by 30%.



# ICCI calls for supportive industrial policy for SMEs

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed the constitution of an Industry Advisory Council led by Dr. Gohar Ejaz, Federal Minister for Commerce to formulate the country's industrial policy and stressed that the new industrial policy should be supportive of the SMEs.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that SMEs are the backbone of our economy as besides promoting the economic activities and exports, they play a vital role in job creation, poverty reduction, and innovation.



Therefore, it is very important that the new industrial poli-

cy should focus on supporting the SMEs so that these

businesses could play a more effective role in reviving the

economy.

ICCI President said that the new industrial policy should focus on simplification of regulatory requirements for SMEs and provide them a single-window solution for various approvals and permits. He said that the reliable and affordable energy supply to SMEs is the key for their smooth growth and stressed that the new industrial policy should address this major issue. He said that an enabling environment for SMEs would pave the way for Pakistan to achieve sustainable economic growth and stride forward towards better progress and prosperity.



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# Reasons for the Repatriation of Illegal Afghan Refugees - I

The worldwide refugee crisis has compelled millions of individuals to abandon their residences in pursuit of safety and stability. While host nations make efforts to offer aid and assistance to foreign refugees, there are difficulties linked to accommodating large populations of displaced people.

A primary challenge faced by nations hosting foreign refugees is the pressure on resources. Providing refugees with shelter, food, healthcare, and education, all crucial services, strains the host nation's infrastructure. Often, host countries struggle to meet the basic needs of both their citizens and the influx of refugees, leading to competition for scarce resources. The arrival of foreign refugees can have notable economic implications for host countries. The strain on resources frequently results in increased government spending, potentially causing budgetary deficits. The labor market may also be impacted as refugees vie with locals for job opportunities. Moreover, there can be stress on social services, contributing to heightened public expenditure and potentially leading to economic challenges.

Cultural disparities and language barriers can pose significant challenges in the process of assimilating refugees into the host society. Successful integration is pivotal for fostering social cohesion and preventing tensions between the local population and displaced individuals. Host countries may need to invest

in language programs, cultural sensitivity training, and community-building initiatives to facilitate a smoother integration process.

While the majority of refugees are escaping violence and conflict, there are valid security concerns associated with hosting large numbers of displaced individuals. Host countries must meticulously screen and vet incoming refugees to ensure the safety of their citizens. Failure to implement effective security measures can result in potential threats and challenges to maintaining public safety. The surge of foreign refugees can strain diplomatic relations between host countries and the nations from which refugees originate. Disputes over responsibility for the refugee crisis, differing views on immigration policies, and disagreements over the treatment of refugees can strain international relations and complicate efforts to find comprehensive solutions to the crisis.

The global challenge of hosting foreign refugees has diverse impacts on countries. Case studies of nations grappling with significant problems and complexities due to accommodating large numbers of displaced individuals offer valuable insights into the challenges they face.

Lebanon, for instance, has historically hosted a substantial number of refugees, particularly from neighbor-

ing Syria. With a population of approximately six million people, Lebanon has taken in over one million Syrian refugees, placing an immense strain on the country's resources. The resulting economic burden, combined with social challenges in assimilating a large refugee population, has heightened tension and stressed Lebanon's infrastructure.

Jordan, another neighboring country to Syria, has encountered economic and social challenges arising from hosting a significant number of refugees. The strain on resources has affected the nation's healthcare, education, and job markets. Despite commendation for its humanitarian efforts, Jordan has grappled with difficulties in providing sustainable support due to the sheer volume of refugees, leading to economic stress and the potential for social unrest.

In 2015, Germany's response to the refugee crisis involved accepting a large number of asylum-seekers, hailed as a humanitarian gesture but not without its challenges. Cultural integration of refugees and strain on social services emerged as focal points of concern. Political debates surrounding immigration policies further highlighted the complexities of managing large-scale refugee influxes in developed nations.

As a transit country for numerous

refugees, Turkey has faced challenges in balancing compassion for those in need with security concerns. Hosting millions of Syrian refugees, Turkey has had to navigate the economic impact, potential social tensions, and security risks. The geopolitical context has added complexity, with Turkey seeking international support for its efforts.

Kenya is home to one of the largest refugee populations in Africa, primarily originating from neighboring conflict-ridden countries like Somalia and South Sudan. The prolonged nature of certain refugee situations has strained the relationship between host communities and displaced individuals. For instance, the Dadaab refugee complex has been a source of contention, with Kenya expressing concerns about security and economic implications.

These instances underscore the intricate challenges that countries encounter when hosting foreign refugees. From economic strain and social tensions to security concerns and the imperative for cultural integration, the experiences of Lebanon, Jordan, Germany, Turkey, and Kenya offer valuable insights. As the global community grapples with the ongoing refugee crisis, comprehending the complexities of these case studies becomes crucial in formulating more effective and sustainable strategies to address the needs of displaced populations while alleviating the challenges faced by host nations.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

## Gaza is forcing the West to abandon its old illusions

Shortly after the start of a four-day ceasefire in the war on Gaza on Friday, the prime ministers of Spain and Belgium, Pedro Sanchez and Alexander De Croo, appeared in a joint press conference at the Rafah crossing. Sanchez described what was happening as "a disaster," while De Croo called for a "permanent cessation of hostilities" and for an end to the killing of children. Just as significantly, the two European leaders declared that they may decide to recognize the state of Palestine, even if the EU does not.

Coupled with the strong position of Ireland, some in Europe seem to be waking up to the fact that the Israeli occupation is the primary cause of the recent Gaza "hostilities."

Israel was not pleased by this evolving European position. It immediately summoned the ambassadors of both countries and sharply rebuked them, according to reports. This exaggerated response shows that Israel is not willing to give Europe even the narrowest of margins — such as condemning the killing of children or expecting some kind of a peaceful settlement centered on Palestinian sovereignty.

Spain and Belgium's indication that they may decide to recognize Palestine even without EU consensus is indicative of a foreign policy schism within Europe. It turns out that not all European governments have the same tolerance of the genocide in Gaza as, for example, Germany and Britain.

Interestingly, other EU officials are also calling for a Palestinian state, though their intention is neither to ensure Palestinian freedom nor to safeguard Palestinian rights. The bloc's chief diplomat Josep Borrell, for example, argued last week that "the best guarantee for Israel's security is the creation of a Palestinian state." Even David Cameron, the former UK prime minister and now foreign minister, used similar logic. Israel will not have security unless it guarantees "long-term safety, security and stability" for the Palestinian people, Cameron said.

Regardless of the reasoning behind the growing emphasis on a "solution" and rights for the Palestinians, this language was almost entirely absent from the Western political discourse prior to Oct. 7.

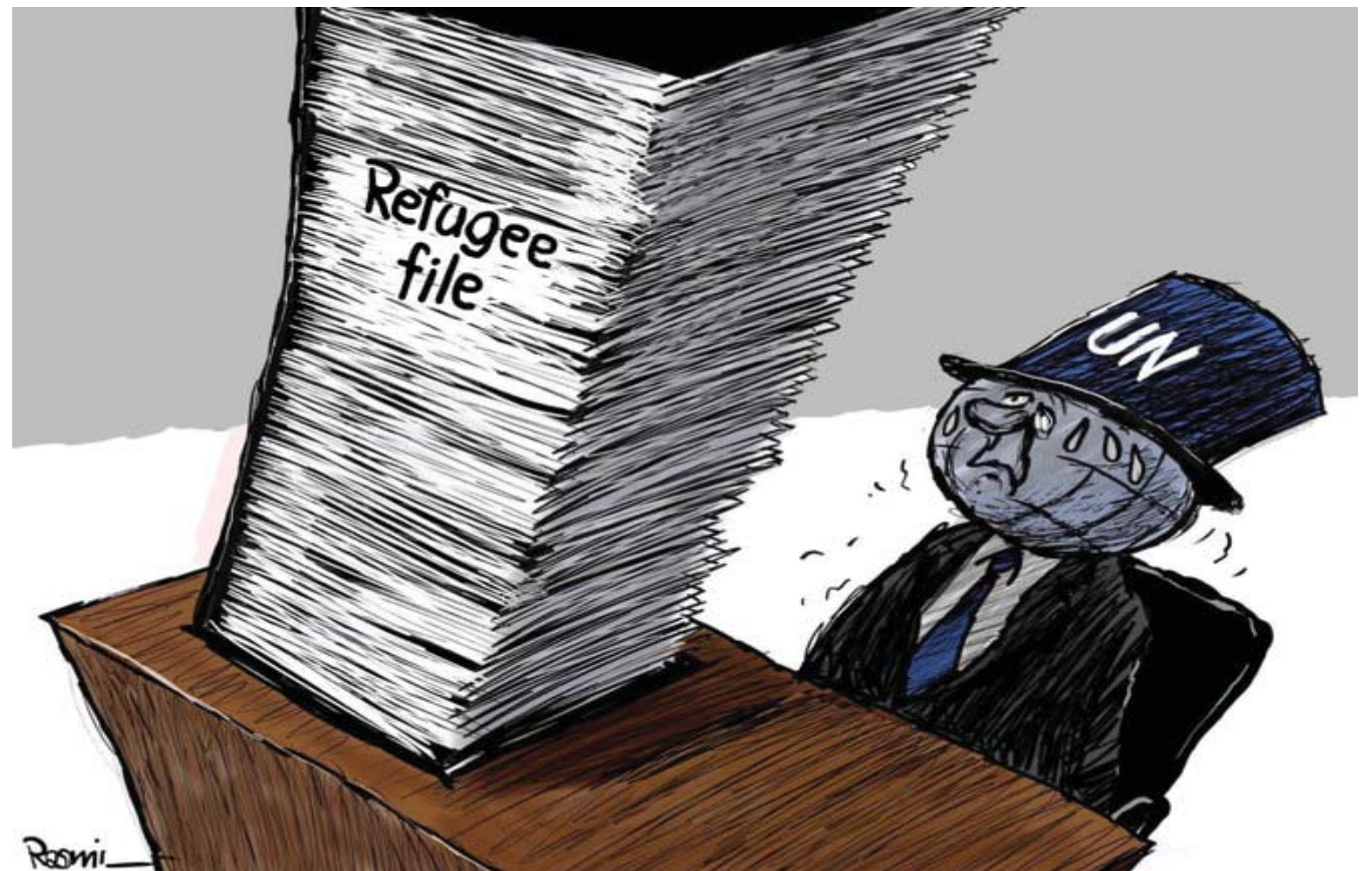
The truth is that Palestinians have succeeded, through their resistance and steadfastness, in reasserting Palestine on the global agenda. But how did Palestinians succeed in doing so despite the utter marginalization of their cause before the war?

Firstly, unlike during previous wars, especially those that preceded the so-called Unity Intifada of May 2021, this time around the Palestinians spoke in unison. Without rehearsing or even coordinating, it felt as if the Palestinian message flew seamlessly, when all Palestinians, regardless of their ideological background, placed the focus on the Israeli atrocities without falling into the trap of the typical factional blame game.

Even children who had lost members of their families in Gaza would stand bravely in front of cameras and state that they would never weaken and that nothing would remove them from their homeland. Young and old repeated the same logic and used similar language, even from their hospital beds.

This led Israel to do everything in its power to cut off the 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza from the rest of the world, shutting down the internet, electricity and any form of communication, even among Palestinians themselves.

Yet, somehow, a clear and united Palestinian message con-



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

## Turkiye's quest to future-proof its air force

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last week paid a visit to Germany, and met both President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Gaza was one of the important issues on which they exchanged views.

Both German leaders said in unequivocal words that they blamed Hamas for what is happening now in Gaza. Erdogan's efforts were not sufficient to soften their attitude. He referred to the Holocaust and claimed that Türkiye has no historical "luggage on its shoulders," and, therefore, can act more even-handedly.

Both sides spelt out what they had in mind and felt relieved. However, at the end of the day, Germany is likely to be the winner, because it holds more trump cards. The decision to let Türkiye acquire a state-of-the-art air defense system is one of them.

Questioned by a journalist, Erdogan said that if a country threatens to refuse to supply Türkiye with the type of aircraft it needs, it may turn to others. This hypothesis is both correct and wrong at the same time. If you aim at the best quality air defense system, your choices will be limited.

The difficulty in acquiring the most suitable air defense system for Türkiye began with the US. Tired of the caprices of its NATO allies, Ankara decided in 2019 to buy a Russian-manufactured air defense system, the F-400. As later developments showed, this was a questionable choice, because although the Russian system was efficient, it did not match with the NATO system that the Turkish air force was equipped with.

As a reaction to Türkiye's purchase of the Russian system, the US imposed curbs under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. CAATSA was originally designed

to ban the purchase of defense equipment from Russia, Iran and North Korea. However, it was extended to also cover the NATO ally Türkiye. It now includes a ban on selected US export licenses, asset freezes and visa restrictions for a number of Turkish officials involved in the development and manufacturing defense materials.

Ankara is unlikely to face an imminent external threat in air defense. However, thinking strategically, developing a concept of air defense, and implementing and concluding it may require decades. If Türkiye fails to take appropriate measures, its options will run out one after the other.

Türkiye is looking for a reliable air defense. Being a member of NATO is a strong guarantee, but Türkiye is regarded by several NATO member countries as a liability rather than an asset. The F-35 fighter aircraft was developed under the overall supervision of the US company Lockheed Martin and designed to meet NATO air defense requirements until the 2070s.

The US expelled Türkiye from the F-35 program, which is regarded as the most advanced air defense system. Ankara was not only a beneficiary of the project, but also an important contributor. Several components of the aircraft were being manufactured in Türkiye under the program. Furthermore, Türkiye had already committed to buying more than 100 fighters and had paid \$1.4 billion. It is now in the process of dissolving one engagement after another.

When Türkiye's dream was shattered after its expulsion from the F-35 program, it began seeking alternatives. The next-best option was to upgrade the F-16 fighter aircraft that were in the hand of the Turkish air force. Various figures were mentioned about the number of the aircraft to be upgraded, but the latest was 40.

Bob Menendez, chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, did everything to block the plan to upgrade Türkiye's fighter jets, but is now in deep trouble because of allegations that he took bribes from three New Jersey businessmen. We will see whether he continues to spoil Türkiye's interests.

When difficulties arose regarding Türkiye's purchase of US-manufactured aircraft, it turned to European markets. It is now negotiating with a consortium of countries to buy 40 Eurofighter Typhoon jets being manufactured by the UK, Germany, Spain and Italy. During parliamentary debates last week, Turkish Defense Minister Yasar Guler mentioned that contacts were underway for the purchase of these aircraft. Co-producers are the UK and Spain. Germany has not yet spelt out its final word. These talks coincided with the fluctuating relations between Türkiye and Germany, the Gaza crisis, cross-border operations with Syria, and criticisms voiced by Türkiye against the EU.

Bloomberg claimed that Erdogan would raise with the German chancellor the question of lifting Germany's embargo of selling Eurofighter Typhoons to Türkiye. So far, nothing has been leaked to the media on this subject.

The aircraft was to be manufactured by a consortium of the British company BAE Systems in cooperation with German and Spanish firms, but this time the purchase was made conditional to Türkiye's support for Sweden's accession to NATO. On his way back from Berlin to Türkiye, Erdogan said that the German chancellor avoided any reference to the issue. That is to say he did not make any comment on whether Germany would agree to sell Eurofighter Typhoons to Türkiye. "If they agree to sell them, so much the better. If not, we have so many other options," Erdogan said. Hopefully, Türkiye will not commit another mistake by making a poor choice.

*Yasar Yakis is a former foreign minister of Türkiye and founding member of the ruling AK Party.*



Analysis

Yasar Yakis

## STOP underage driving

Underage driving is a serious problem in Pakistan. Many children become victim everyday owing to this menace. In most of the accidents involving children, it has been found children don't have road safety sense. Nor do they follow safety rules and regulations. In a majority of cases and incidents children don't wear helmets. They fall prey to over-speeding.

There are several reasons, one in our cities and villages, there is no public transport available during school and college hours. This is unjust and deceptive, stemming from the failure of our governments and the burden of taxes on urban dwellers. Furthermore, in our society, children are compelled to go to the market at a young age to take loans. These children use motorcycles. Socioeconomic factors such as poverty often contribute to underage Motorcycle Riksha driving.

Please look around your homes, in your streets, within your family and social circle. Please take a step for the safety of our kids and others. I have seen that sometimes parents feel happy for their underage kid driving, but this action can result in killing someone else kid or a breadwinner. Being a parent myself, I also feel proud of my kids' achievements, but certain things need a proper time and age. Parents/ Guardians should discourage this activity altogether, no matter if they are sitting next to them in the car. This is BIG NO!

Parents/ Guardians should make sure if their kids go outside with their chauffeurs, they don't pressurize the poor driver and MUST NOT get hold of keys. If we see anyone in our surroundings, we should stop them and complain to their parents. STOP Underage Driving!! If you see any vehicle with such drivers, record the plate number and report to the police IMMEDIATELY.

There is no doubt that students use motorcycles more due to the high cost, but due to being underage, these drivers do not have driving licens-

es. In this offense, filing FIRs against students is not a legal action. The penalty for driving without a license is determined by the law. However, in Punjab, the police have spread fear and harassment, involving thousands of students in cases, damaging the future of these students. This policy and its consequences will prove negative for the ruling party. Arrangements should be made to provide junior driving licenses to students in their schools, colleges, and universities. Underage motorcycle riders should be regulated. No one operating a car or a larger vehicle is eligible for underage driving privileges. We do not support underage drivers in any way, but

for years, the government and authorities have not stopped this practice. Now it has become common. To end this practice, an awareness campaign and education should be carried out. A reasonable and effective approach would be to change the law to allow teenagers as young as 15 to ride motorcycles — but only after a period of rigorous training and testing to ensure safety.

Underage MRDs (Motorcycle Riksha Drivers) are openly operating illegally as commercial drivers, presenting a safety risk for themselves, MR occupants and other road users should be ban immediately. However, socioeconomic factors such as poverty often contribute to underage MR driving. Such motorcycle rickshaw drivers should be bound by the Motor Vehicles Rules not to carry more than the number of passengers allowed on the Motorcycle rickshaw. According to Motor Vehicle Rules 1969, "Motor cycle rickshaw" means a motor vehicles with three wheels the unladen weight of which does not exceed 900 pounds avoirdupois, constructed, adapted or used for private purposes, other than for hire or reward, to carry not more than two persons excluding the driver". Therefore, unregulated operation of Motor Rikshas and underage MRDs across Pakistan needs should to be addressed sensitively through road safety and transport policies.



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid



# PIC and TI Pakistan Collaborate to Enhance Proactive Disclosure under the Right to Information Act

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC), in collaboration with Transparency International Pakistan (TI Pakistan), organized a comprehensive training program for Public Information Officers (PIOs) on proactive disclosure under Section 5 of the Right to Access to Information Act 2017 (RTI Act 2017). The training, held at a local hotel in Islamabad, aimed to enhance awareness and strengthen the capacity of PIOs to effectively implement proactive disclosure provisions, ensuring greater transparency and accountability within the federal government.

The training brought together designated PIOs from various federal government departments, providing them with a thorough understanding of the key elements of proactive disclosure as outlined in the RTI Act 2017. Through interactive sessions and presentations, participants gained valuable insights into the legal framework, procedures, and best practices for proactive disclosure, empowering them to fulfill their obligations under the RTI Act 2017.



A panel of distinguished speakers, including Advocate Daniyal Muzaffar, Legal Advisor, Board of Trustee, TI Pakistan; Mr. Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui, Chief Information Commissioner, Pakistan Information Commission; Mr. Kashif Ali, Executive Director, TI Pakistan; Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ali, Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives and former Commissioner, Punjab Information Commission; Mr. Muhammad Azam, former Chief Information Commissioner, Pakistan Information Commission; and Director General (IP), Ministry of

Information and Broadcasting, shared their expertise on various aspects of the RTI Act 2017, specifically focusing on proactive disclosure requirements and implementation strategies. The training emphasized the importance of proactive disclosure in promoting transparency and accountability within government institutions. By proactively publishing information of public interest, government bodies can enhance citizens' access to information, foster trust and confidence, and strengthen public participation in decision-making processes.

## Joint-lecturer Raja Sagheer Ahmed resigns from Labor Party over Gaza Palestine

Arif Chaudhry

ROCHDALE: Raja Sagheer Ahmed, a socio-political personality of Rochdale, United Kingdom, resigned from the membership of the Labor Party and joined the Liberal Democratic Party along with his colleagues in a local restaurant against the Labor Party leadership's position on Palestine. Announced to take part in the local body election, Liberal Democrat Rochdale Council leader Councillor Andy Kelly and the special participation of party president Babu Ali Asghar—on this occasion, Raja Sagheer Ahmad said that the Labor Party leadership's decision on Gaza Palestine. On the stand, I and my friends have resigned from the basic membership of the party and joined the Liberal Democratic Party and I will contest the next local council election for the election of a



councilor from the Kingsway ward in the Liberal Democratic Party. All Members of Parliament voted in favor of ceasefire in Gaza. Inshallah I will continue to serve the people of Azad Kashmir and Rochdale—Rochdale Senior Politician—Businessman and Liberal Democratic Party President Babu Ali Asghar Raja Sagheer Ahmed and He thanked his colleagues

for leaving the Labor Party and coming to the Liberal Democrats and said that in the next election the Liberal Democratic Party will again have a majority in Rochdale Council. All major projects in Rochdale were completed by the local government of the Liberal Democrats. Mayors of Rochdale Zulfiqar Ali and Mushtaq Ahmed and others said their team under the

leadership of Raja Sagheer today deserve congratulations for leaving the party to join the Lib Dems against the policies of the Labor Party—Liberal Democratic Party Leader Councillor Andy Kelly. He welcomed Raja Saghir for leaving the Labor Party to join the Liberal Democratic Party and said that he would honor him in the party.

## UACP meets with Holy See envoy in Islamabad to discuss interfaith harmony



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Central Secretariat of Ulama Aman Committee Pakistan, the Ambassador of Holy See to Pakistan Honorable Excellency Msgr. Germano Penemote, Apostolic Nuncio in Pakistan, along with his delegation met the His Eminence Dr. Mufti Akeel-Ur-Rehman Pirzada, Grand Mufti of Islamabad & Chairman Ulama Aman Committee Pakistan in which interfaith harmony, important issues including religious harmony, promotion of tolerance were discussed. On this occasion, Mr. Alessandro Maggi, Representative Embassy of Holy See Islamabad, Chief Coordinator UACP Maulana Aziz-Ur-Rehman Samdani, Coordinator UACP Gwadar Sardar Muhammad Yusuf Khan were present on this occasion.

## NUST ICON Centre Inaugurated on the Premises of SITE Association of Industry



PNP

KARACHI: National University of Science & Technology (NUST) has set up its Industrial Innovation office, titled NUST ICON Centre in the premises of SITE Association of Industry, Karachi. Patron-in-Chief Zubair Motiwala and NUST Pro-Rector Research, Innovation and Commercialization, Air Vice Marshal, Dr. Rizwan Riaz, SI (M), along with other high officials of NUST and Members of the Association, inaugurated the ICON Centre. Earlier, a formal MOA was signed between the two organizations for the setting up of NUST Icon Centre – the first of its kind in the city. SAI President Muhammad Kamran Arbi and NUST Pro-Rector Research, Innovation and Commercialization Air Vice Marshal, Dr. Rizwan Riaz, SI (M), signed the Memorandum of Agreement. Air Vice Marshal, Dr. Rizwan Riaz, SI (M), on this occasion said that NUST is the top Engineering University of Pakistan. We are taking steps for industry-academia interaction. The purpose of setting up NUST ICON is to connect the technology, capability and Human Resource of NUST with the industry and solve industry problems and do value-addition in their production. Patron-in-Chief Zubair Motiwala said that SITE Association of Industry, Karachi is at the right place for the setting up of NUST Icon. Pakistan is a resourceful country together with capable people and we can take the exports of the country to USD 100 billion from the existing level. Unfortunately, we still depend on home remittances. There is a need to look into the cost of business and the cost of manufacturing. Industry-Academia Participation means creating economies of scale. Chief Coordinator Saleem Parekh, Former President Jawed Bilwani, SVP Muhammad Hanif Tawakkal, VP Muhammad Farhan Ashrafi, Maj General, Dr. Saeed ur Rehman Sarwar (Director General Projects, NUST), Anis Younus, Sana Maqbool and others attended the MOA signing ceremony.

## VEON Wins Award for Crisis Response at World Communication Awards 2023



PNP

LAHORE: VEON, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and online services, today announces that it has been awarded the Crisis Response Award for its group-wide Emergency Response initiatives in Pakistan, Ukraine and Bangladesh, and beyond at the World Communication Awards 2023. The World Communications Awards, presented in Amsterdam recently and hosted after the conclusion of the Total Telecoms Congress, is adjudicated by over 90 independent industry experts, academics, and CTOs; and is widely recognised as one of the most prestigious awards in the telecommunications industry. VEON was recognised for its "comprehensive approach to some of the most difficult operating environments on Earth, both due to natural disasters and man-made conflicts" including a focus on network resilience, early disaster-warning apps, and humanitarian aid. During the past two years, VEON's digital operators have prioritised putting technology to the use of the most vulnerable people and communities who fell victims to the war in Ukraine, devastating floods in Pakistan, and cyclone Mocha in Bangladesh. While no humanitarian situation is comparable in terms of devastation, these disasters have all affected and continue to affect millions of people, exposing them to disease, hunger and displacement, with women and children being most vulnerable. In response to the devastating 2022 floods in Pakistan, VEON's operating companies—Jazz, JazzCash, and Mobilink Microfinance Bank—extended support towards flood relief efforts. This support included the provision of free or subsidized telecommunications and financial services, as well as much-needed emergency supplies. "The World Communications Awards is one of the most distinguished ceremonies in telecoms, and we are thrilled to be recognised with the Crisis Response award," stated VEON CEO Kaan Terzioğlu. "Our emergency response initiatives have proved critical in safeguarding against national disasters and ensuring crucial communication lines remain open throughout geopolitical challenges. Across the Group, we've secured connectivity for all, fostered future development, and facilitated the distribution of humanitarian assistance to those in need."

## Emaar Celebrates the Launch of Dubai Metro's Blue Line

Commerce Desk

DUBAI, UAE: Emaar Properties, in collaboration with the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), commemorated the opening of the Dubai Metro Blue Line with a stunning projection on Burj Khalifa, a symbol of Dubai's ambition and progress. The historic announcement not only celebrated the expansion of the Dubai Metro, but also emphasised Dubai's ongoing evolution as a global city of the future.



The 30-kilometre new addition to Dubai's transportation network links the red and green lines, marking a significant milestone in the city's 2040 urban plan and enhancing public transport efficiency

by connecting key economic and social hubs across Dubai. Providing a link between the existing Red and Green

Metro lines, the Blue Line will feature 14 stations, including two transfer stations connected to the Centerpoint station

(the eastern terminus of the Red Line) and Creek station (the southern terminus of the Green Line).

Enhancing the reach and efficiency of public transport, the Blue Line will play an important role in connecting various economic and social hubs across Dubai, benefiting millions of residents and visitors alike. This new line will benefit Dubai Creek Harbour, a major development along the emirate's waterfront. When completed, Emaar Properties' visionary project will house 200,000 people and include 78.5 million square feet of residential space. Emaar Properties is currently developing the area, adding new retail, cultural, and residential areas, with plans to more than quadruple its size and set a new standard for futuristic architecture in Dubai.

## Irfan Mirza elected as new WWEA President

Spokesman Report

BONN: After heading the World Wind Energy Association for eight years, Peter Rae announced on the occasion of the WWEC2023 in Hobart his resignation as WWEA President. The WWEA Board elected unanimously Dr. Irfan Mirza as new WWEA President. Dr. Irfan Mirza is one of the first promoters for renewable energy in Pakistan, e.g. as one of the leading person of the Alternative Energy Development Board of Pakistan. Subsequently he became involved in the wind industry. He states: "I am truly honored and grateful to be the elected President of WWEA. I accepted this role, knowing that together, we can make a significant contribution to protect this planet for future generations. Climate change is speeding towards a climate catastrophe, and we all need to play our role to stop it. I want to express my gratitude to Honorable Peter Rae, for his tireless efforts and contributions. His hard work, dedi-



cation and professionalism has laid a strong foundation upon which we will build and continue to grow. I also look forward to closely work with my old friend and Secretary General of WWEA; Stefan Gsanger. WWEA Board and members are from different parts of the world and our collective strength lies in the diversity of our backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. It is this

diversity that will fuel our creativity, drive innovation, and ultimately lead us to meaningful solutions. Thank you." Hon. Peter Rae AO is a former Australian Senator and Chairman of Hydro Tasmania and was elected as WWEA President for the first time in 2015, re-elected three times. He says: "During the eight years during my role as President of WWEA, we have seen a strong growth in each of the renewable energy technology applications and, in percentage terms, huge growth in the worldwide wind industry. I was involved in many important activities, including REN21, IRENA, Energy Globe and the REN Alliance. WWEA held important conferences and, as President, I continued to enjoy enthusiastic support from members and associations around the World, after all at "my" the home conference in Hobart. Serving on the board not only of WWEA, but of the International Solar Energy Society and the International Hydropower Association

and having been given Observer status with the International Geothermal Association gave me the opportunity to positively develop the understanding and support from each of the major renewable energy technologies in the concept the "Symphony of the Renewables." I have enjoyed my part in achieving all this and commend it to others to follow. I have every confidence that Dr Irfan Mirza will be a very competent and successful president." Stefan Gsänger, WWEA Secretary General "I am extremely grateful that I had the privilege to work with Peter very closely over many years. We owe him a lot for his personal dedication for a renewable energy world. I am very much looking forward to collaborating with Irfan, whom I met for the first time in Pakistan as one of the drivers of wind power. Based on the new strategy which the WWEA board has just adopted, WWEA will do another step towards furthering a renewable future which will be based on participation of the many."



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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
59,811.34	59,086.35
Day's High	Day's Low
59,896.08	58,999.30
Index Value	Change
15,232,329,217	+724.99
Percentage	Time
+1.23%	27 Nov, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,460.70	-27.50
Percentage	Time
-0.37%	27 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
35,311.33	-78.82
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	27 Nov, 12:01 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
33,447.67	-177.86
Percentage	Time
-0.53%	27 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186	187.5
Bahrain Dinar	759	767
Canadian Dollar	208.00	210
China Yuan	39.93	40.33
Danish Krone	41.88	42.28
Euro	312	315
Hong Kong Dollar	36.24	36.59
Indian Rupee	3.39	3.5
Japanese Yen	1.55	1.63
Kuwaiti Dinar	916.38	925.38
Malaysian Ringgit	60.38	60.98
New Zealand \$	173.44	175.44
Norwegians Krone	26.25	26.55
Omani Riyal	741.26	749.26
Qatari Riyal	77.63	78.33
Saudi Riyal	76.25	77
Singapore Dollar	210	212
Swedish Korona	26.93	27.23
Swiss Franc	323.37	325.87
Thai Bhat	8.00	8.04
U.A.E Dirham	78	78.75
UK Pound Sterling	358.5	362
US Dollar	285.2	288

**IT sector**

# Payment system, low-cost financing required for IT expansion, says Mian Zahid Hussain

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that the government will increase the productivity of the IT sector and boost exports to ten billion dollars in few years which is laudable.

He added that the IT sector can play a central role in reducing unemployment and stabilizing the economy, which needs to be given all possible support.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said the government announced its strategy to promote the IT sector which is highly laudable and encouraging.

The Special Investment Council (SIFC) has played a central role in enabling this sector and

removing departmental obstacles. It will also pave the way for investment from other countries, he added.

It is necessary to activate the Pakistan Software Export Board further and consult with the organizations working in this sector, he demanded.

According to the official data, IT exports are currently 2 billion 600 million dollars, and the government intends to increase the number of people working in this sector by 200,000, which will increase the exports to 5 billion dollars.

Many freelancing centres will be established nationwide, and IT companies will be allowed to keep dollars, increasing revenue by several billion dollars.

The business leader said that establishing the Pakistan Startup Fund will help achieve the target of 10 billion dollars by increasing the total volume of IT exports by another billion dollars.



Mian Zahid Hussain said this sector suffers from various problems; if they are solved, things

can improve rapidly. Those working in the IT sector cannot easily transact with overseas customers.

Moreover, the organization of freelancers should be given the importance it should be given, and many experts complain that they should be listened to.

The tax system is also very complex; IT companies also have to go through a long process for overseas payments, while in other countries, it is done in seconds. For this reason, many IT experts and companies do not transfer the earned dollars to Pakistan but keep them in foreign banks because it is easy to pay from there.

He said that sixty per cent of the country's population consists of youth who, if provided with proper training, cheap loans and a freelancing platform, can change the fate of Pakistan by earning billions of dollars and end the country's dollar crisis forever.

**IIA meeting**

## IIA rejects unjustified property tax increase: 'It will damage industrial sector'

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) on Monday said that it rejects the cruel increase in property tax as it will damage the industrial sector.

The move will increase the problems of the industrial sector, which is already stuck in many difficulties.

While addressing a hurried association meeting, acting President IIA Karim Aziz Malik said that the industrial sector is already suffering from multiple problems.

Numerous problems have not only reduced the productivity of the industrial sector, but many units have been closed, and many are on the brink, he added.

Karim Aziz Malik said that in this grim scenario, the unjustified and illegal revision in property tax is unacceptable as it will increase the issues confronting industrialists.

He further said that in the absence of an elected district government and despite the explicit orders of the Supreme Court, the proposal to increase the tax is unfair and should be withdrawn immediately.

At the occasion, Omais Khattak warned that such unilateral moves will damage the industrial sector, which is already reeling under many issues and will trigger a flight of capital.

Atif Ikram Sheikh said that industrial productivity is imperative for the growth of the economy.



In Pakistan, the industrial sector is facing various challenges, such as power shortages, administrative flaws, low productivity of industries, lack of innovation and high energy prices.

The government needs to improve the infrastructure of the industries, improve private and public partnerships, provide a skilled workforce and provide uninterrupted electricity.

Tariq Sadiq maintained that industries have a significant role in enhancing a country's economic development. Other than the agriculture sector, there are two key sectors in the national economy; manufacturing and services.

The problem with Pakistan is that the country has moved to the services sector directly from the agriculture sector, leav-

ing the industrial sector by the roadside.

In 1960s, the country was known as an agricultural economy and our production was directly and indirectly dependent on agriculture. However, in recent times the country is known to have a flourishing services sector but to become a prosperous country, the government has to support the industrial sector which will help it reduce unemployment and earn foreign exchange.

Former presidents of Islamabad Chamber, Khalid Javed and Tariq Sadiq, and others, including Chaudhry Wahiduddin, Nasir Qureshi, Mahmood Waraich, Shaukat Hayat Khan, Malik Sohail, Mahmood Elahi, Rafat Farid, Imran Sadiq and others were also present in the meeting.

## Punjab govt should take the traders into confidence: Naseer Vohra

**Abdul Majid**



FAISALABAD: Chief Minister Punjab's order to stop the roundup of traders under the guise of lockdown and to take traders into confidence for any trade policy, this was said by Central President Cloth Board Alliance Group Pakistan Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra.

Talking to the media, he has warned the administration of district Faisalabad to stop the bad behavior of the traders, if the city administration does not change its attitude, the traders will not delay in going on a complete strike. Alhaji Naseer Yousuf

Vohra has sent a message to the district administration that all the shopkeepers caught in the lockdown should be released immediately and the FIR against them should also be dropped. Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner should play their respective roles in this regard.

**Electric Bike**

## Yadea electrifies Pakistan with the grand opening of its first showroom in Lahore



**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Yadea, the world's No. 1 best-selling electric bike brand, proudly announces the official launch of its first flagship showroom in Pakistan. The momentous ceremony took place in Johar Town, Lahore, marking a significant step forward for the renowned Global e-bike maker in expanding its global presence.

On this occasion, Mr. Muhammad Salman - Managing Director said, "We are thrilled to bring Yadea's cutting-edge electric bikes to Pakistan. The launch of our flagship showroom in Johar Town repre-

sents a significant milestone for us. Yadea is not just providing electric bikes; we are offering a sustainable and efficient mode of transportation that aligns with the evolving needs of the Pakistani market. We look forward to contributing to a greener and more eco-friendly future."

The Johar Town showroom is just the beginning of Yadea's expansive plans for Pakistan, with more showrooms slated for other cities in the near future. This strategic move reflects Yadea's dedication to making sustainable transportation accessible to a broader audience across the country.

## Custom agents trapped as victims of draconian laws despite their law-abiding role

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Sheikh Muhammad Tariq, Vice Chairman of Custom Agents, has said that in the intricate dynamics of customs procedures, a significant concern surfaces regarding the application of draconian laws against Custom Agents.

The issue revolves around the exercise of power by higher authorities who, in conducting direct inspections and facilitating the release of goods, may inadvertently be engaging in the practice of shifting the onus of responsibility for violations or negligence onto the Custom Agents. This issue underscores the indispensable need for a cautious and assertive approach in addressing and rectifying any potential abuses of power.

Moreover, there is a pressing matter related to the imposition of taxes on goods, where an apparent overreach of authority and a potential disregard for established laws is observed. This prompts a thorough examination of the legitimacy and fairness of the tax imposition practices.

It becomes imperative to scrutinize whether these actions align with established legal frameworks, as any deviation raises significant questions about the transparency and adherence to the rule of law within the customs regulatory domain.

Addressing these multifaceted concerns is not only crucial for the equitable treatment of Custom Agents but also for the broader principles of accountability and legal compliance within the customs land-

scape.

It is imperative to acknowledge that Custom Agents should not be automatically implicated or assumed to have any involvement or awareness of malpractices. Ensuring a fair and just approach requires recognizing the distinct roles and responsibilities within the customs framework, preventing unwarranted assumptions about the complicity of Custom Agents in any illicit activities.

This nuanced perspective is crucial for upholding the principles of justice and fairness in the evaluation of customs-related matters as it is a glaring issue that Custom Agents are systematically barred from accompanying inspectors who generate reports determining the nature of goods, whether legal or illicit.

## Markets' Predicament

**Shahzada Ahsan Ashraf**

When the famous psychologist Erik Erikson informally said "everything before the 'but' is horseshit," a century ago, no one really paid heed. Today, the word 'but,' suggests that what follows may be more aligned with the speaker's true thoughts or intentions, potentially casting doubt on the preceding statements. Some spoken statements last week:

- The economy is growing, but structural reforms ...
- Inflation will come down, but ...
- Rupee is strengthening, but ...
- The election dates have been announced, but ...

... and so the uncertainty goes on, with the fact that the Pakistan economy is still very fragile.

**Interest rate outlook**

One of the biggest uncertain segments is interest rate. When CPI clocked in around

26% for Oct, the market went on a bond buying spree predicting rates to come down. Subsequently, the increase in gas prices and the 2 consecutive SPI number of over 40% has cast solid doubts. Yields have consequently ticked up last week, and everyone is now looking for another round of data to project future inflation rates.

While most analysts don't think of increase in interest rates, they insist a no change will be akin to a hike, because the market has strongly factored in a cut. But a cut looks tricky if CPI comes above 30% (as is market consensus) especially amidst a hawkish Fed and a unique interest rate trajectory in Turkey—in which they increased rates by another 5% yesterday to take it to 40%.

**Rupee Outlook**

Rupee lost a few paise in the last 2 trading sessions. The key triggers were declining reserves which deteriorated by \$232mn & higher REER, which weakened from 91.7 to 98.6. However, most analysts think the lions share of rupee weakness came as SBP

did Sell Buy swaps to prop forward premiums and subsequently started buying dollars from the market to boost reserves. In spite of lucrative premiums, exporters were not active in selling forwards.

In the coming week, we see Rupee to be range bound & vulnerable to news flows. Importers & exporters should just wait & see, which comes earlier—positive or negative news flows.

Fed Determined to "Proceed Carefully" The FOMC minutes were arguably slightly on the dovish side, with the committee now seemingly of the view that no further hikes will be needed, with the language instead focusing on the need to proceed carefully. PMIs came in stronger than expected in the eurozone and the UK yesterday but weaker in the US. Despite the notion that eurozone growth pessimism may have peaked, rate differentials still point to a weaker EUR/USD & EUR/GBP.

Analyst is Former Chairman and Managing Director PIA, Former Federal Minister of industries and production

### Fawad stresses for revamping taxation system, privatizing SOEs

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatization, Fawad Hasan Fawad on Monday highlighted the flaws in the country's taxation system by informing that around 93 percent of the collected tax revenue is either voluntary or withholding; whereas, only 7 percent is actually collected by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

Mr. Fawad Hasan Fawad informed the audience that the current state of the public sector is unsustainable and contributes to the deterioration in the business environment in the country, according to a press release issued here.

Federal Minister for Privatization, Fawad Hasan Fawad, said this while speaking at the 3rd "Pakistan Prosperity Forum" organized by the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME).

In 3 years from 2018-2021, the government spent Rs. 2.54 trillion in terms of subsidies, grants, and loans to keep commercial SOEs operational, he said.

He informed that the size of the government has increased by more than three times in the last couple of decades.

Fawad said that moreover, FBR sends recovery notices to individuals worth billions of rupees while the actual collection is a mere few hundred million.

Since 2016, the tax burden on corporate taxpayers has increased by more than 40 percent on average, he said.

Such a burden has contributed to encouraging people to stay out of the tax system and corporatization.

The public sector reforms should include bureaucratic reforms and taxation system reforms. These two areas are crucial for improving the performance of the state.

He stressed that the reform should not increase in the size of the federal and provincial governments, and the power of state functionaries.

The Minister said the reforms also need to focus on building the state's capacity to regulate markets from where the government exists and the private sector takes over.

He said the taxation system of Pakistan not only incentivizes people to stay out of the tax system but also contributes to decorporatization.



# 'Bangladesh is a tough place to play Tests,' says Tim Southee

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: New Zealand's captain Tim Southee said on Monday he was looking forward to his side's Test series against Bangladesh, saying he hoped the Kiwis spinners would outwit their "strong" opponents.

"The guys have a great desire for Test cricket," Tim Southee said ahead of the opening match of the two-Test series in Bangladesh's northeastern city Sylhet on Tuesday.

"They say it is the pinnacle of the game. Whenever we play Test cricket, it is always special. We love and prioritise Test cricket," he added.

New Zealand won the title of the opening World Test Championship in 2021 but finished sixth in the next cycle, which ended in 2023 with Australia beating India in the final.

The Kiwis have not won a Test in Bangladesh since their three-wicket win in Chittagong in 2008.

Their next three Tests, including both matches in a 2013 series, ended in a draw. "The start of the new cycle is exciting,"



Tim Southee added. "It is a tough place to play Tests. Bangladesh are strong in these conditions."

Tim Southee said he hoped his spinners would tip the balance in their favour.

"It is foreign conditions compared to New Zealand — pace plays a big role in New Zealand, spin historically plays a

big role in this part of the world," Tim Southee said.

"Our spinners have done some great things in Tests. We are looking forward to them showcasing their skills."

The visitors named a spin-heavy squad for the upcoming series, with Mitchell Santner and Ajaz Patel joining Ish Sodhi

along with two spin all-rounders, Glenn Phillips and Rachin Ravindra.

Earlier this year, New Zealand ended their 15-year wait to win a series in Bangladesh, beating the home side 2-0 in the three-match one-day international series in September before they travelled to India for the ODI World Cup.

The Kiwis put up a credible show at that tournament, losing to hosts India in the semi-final. Bangladesh, who won just two matches in the World Cup and finished eighth, also aim to enter a new phase with the series.

Newly-appointed captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, a batsman, will take the field as his side's leader for the first time, with regular captain Shakib Al Hasan and his deputy Liton Das taking a break.

"I will not say we are completely new but less experienced. It was going to happen inevitably at some stage," Najmul said.

"I would call it an opportunity for those who are young and new to the team; they should take it as a challenge," he said.

The second Test of the series will be held in Dhaka from December 6-10.

# Wahab Riaz inspect training camp of national junior hockey team



**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: Adviser to Punjab Chief Minister on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz and Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail visited National Hockey Stadium to inspect training camp of national junior hockey team on Monday.

It is pertinent to mention here that the training camp of national junior

hockey team is being conducted under the supervision of veteran Dutch Coach Roelant Oltmans in preparation of Junior Hockey World Cup scheduled to be staged at Kuala Lumpur from January 5 to 17, 2024.

Talking on this occasion, Adviser to Punjab Chief Minister on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz appreciated the top class training of young hockey players and modern coaching tech-

niques of PHF coaches. He encouraged the young camp probables to participate in the training camp with national zeal and passion and prepare themselves fully ahead of Junior Hockey World Cup.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail expressed his hope that national junior hockey team will demonstrate excellent performance in the mega event of Junior Hockey World

Cup. "Our players are quite talented and we are upbeat that our young outfit will produce encouraging results against the tough opponents from different countries".

Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) General Secretary Olympian Rana Mujahid Ali, Olympians Asif Bajwa, Kh Junaid, Dutch Coach Roelant Oltmans and other officials were also present on this occasion.

# Moeen Ali confident of claiming AD T10 title

**Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: England's star all-rounder and captain of Morrisville Samp Army Moeen Ali is confident of winning the Abu Dhabi (AD) T10 title, getting underway from Tuesday at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi. A total of eight outfits will feature in the prestigious event.

"We had missed out on the last occasion. We came agonizingly close to winning the title but missed it by a whisker. We are confident of putting up a better performance this time around to emerge victorious," Moeen said in a statement. "We have a very strong squad. There are hard-hitting batsmen, ferocious pacers and wily spinners. It is the well-balanced squad. I think we stand a great chance of winning the title," added the England all-rounder, who came out of retirement earlier this year to play in the Ashes against Australia. Abu Dhabi T10 is one of its kind tournament in the world. It is shortest-format league of cricket, which is sanctioned by ICC, affiliated with Emirates Cricket Board and organised under the patronage of Abu Dhabi Cricket Council. Defending champi-



ons Deccan Gladiators and New York Strikers, will get the ball rolling in the opening game of the tournament. Apart from the two teams, Northern Warriors, Morrisville Samp Army, Delhi Bulls, Team Abu Dhabi, Bengal Tigers and Chennai Braves are also part of the T10 cricket tournament. The 12-day tournament will conclude on December 9.

After the completion of the primary

round, the final top-four teams will qualify for the play-offs. Qualifier 1 will see top two teams locking horns on December 8, whereas the third and fourth team will play the eliminator match. The winner of the eliminator will play the loser of Qualifier 1 for a place in the final while the winner of the Qualifier 1 will directly move to the final showdown. Samp Army who had

finished on the second spot in the 2022 edition of the tournament will start their campaign against Northern Warriors in the second match of the opening day. Samp Army owner Ritesh Patel said they are into expansion mode.

"We are expanding our franchise. We are already having teams in US and Zimbabwe version of T10 tournaments. We are exploring more opportunities to spread our wings," he explained. Moeen believes some changes will take place in the England squad after their dismal performance of at the 2023 ODI World Cup.

England crashed out of the World Cup before the knock-out stages. They came into the showpiece event as the firm favourites but failed to live up to the expectations. "It was very disappointing performance by us. We failed to deliver in every aspect of the game. We did not play to our potential. I hope there will be some big changes in the England team," said Moeen. England got their campaign off to a disastrous start against 2019 runners-up New Zealand. They failed to get over the bad start and kept on slumping to new lows as they were beaten by even Afghanistan.

# Pakistan Women cricket team hold 1st training session in Christchurch

**Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan women's team held their first training session at the Bert Sutcliffe Oval in Lincoln University in Christchurch on Monday. The 17-member squad captained by Nida Dar, underwent a three-hour training session supervised by the coaching staff led by interim head coach Mahtashim Rashid, a Pakistan Cricket Board spokesman said in a statement.

Pakistan women's team had reached in Christchurch, New Zealand on Saturday.

Pakistan women's team will feature in a three-match T20I series as well as three ODIs from 3 to 18 December. The ODIs are part of the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25,

where the touring side has played 15 matches and earned 14 points. The series matches will be played in Dunedin, Queenstown and Christchurch. Before the commencement of the white-ball series, the Pakistan women's team will feature in two practice games against New Zealand XI. The 50-over match against New Zealand XI will take place tomorrow at the Bert Sutcliffe Oval, while the T20 match against the same side will be staged on Thursday at the same venue. Both matches will be live-streamed on New Zealand YouTube channel and the first ball will be bowled at 11am local time. The 17-member contingent includes 27-year-old Umm-e-Hani, who made her ODI debut against Ireland in Lahore in November 2022. She also

represented the team in T20I this year against South Africa. In her short career, the off-spinner has bagged 11 wickets from 13 international matches. Umm-e-Hani is traveling to New Zealand for the first time and is eager to perform well for the team. After the training session, Umm-e-Hani talked to PCB Digital, saying, "It was a good first session today and the players are trying to adapt to the conditions that are different to those back home. "The practice matches before the series are very important for us as they will help us better adapt to the conditions here and we can go into the series better prepared. "I have worked hard with the coaches on improving my skills as an all-round cricketer. I will try to play the role required in the team and adjust according to the situation of



the match." Pakistan squad: Nida Dar (captain), Aliya Riaz, Bismah Maroof, Diana Baig, Fatima

Sana, Ghulam Fatima, Muneeba Ali (wk), Najiba Alvi (wk), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Omaidha Sohail,

Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Sidra Amin, Umm-e-Hani and Waheeda Akhtar

**Series schedule:**

28 Nov - 50-over warm-up match v NZXI, Bert Sutcliffe Oval, Lincoln University (11am local time)

30 Nov - T20 warm-up match v NZXI, Bert Sutcliffe Oval, Lincoln University (11am local time)

3 Dec - 1st T20I, Dunedin (1pm local time) 5 Dec - 2nd T20I, Dunedin (1pm local time) 9 Dec - 3rd T20I, Queenstown (1pm local time)

12 Dec - 1st ODI, Queenstown (11am local time) (ICC Women's Championship) 15 Dec - 2nd ODI, Christchurch (2pm local time) (ICC Women's Championship) 18 Dec - 3rd ODI, Christchurch (2pm local time) (ICC Women's Championship)



Quetta: Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Balochistan Javed Ahmed Shahwani giving the winner trophy to the Balochistan team of 7th National Futsal Championship held at Quetta. President of Futsal, Ali Khan Kakar is also seen in the picture.

# KHA Green Clinched 2nd Musarrat Hanif Memorial 7A Side Girls Hockey Title



**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Karachi Hockey Association congratulates KHA Green team to win the 2nd Musarrat Hanif Memorial 7A Side Girls Hockey Tournament 2023 by beating Islahuddin Academy whites by 2-0 in the final at KHA Sports Complex. The tournament is being organized by the Karachi Hockey Association.

Mrs. Asma Ali Shah was the Chief guest for the final and prize distribution Ceremony. International Goal Keeper Samsam Qadir and Olympian Waseem Feroz both Asst. Collector Customs were the Guests of honour.

In the Final match KHA Green beat Islahuddin Academy White by (2-0). Goal Scorers for winners were Iqra Iqbal (1) and Duaa Khan (1).

Awards/Prizes Winners of the tournament are as under:

Winner: KHA Green.

Runners: Islahuddin Academy White.

Best defender: Sundas Siddiqui (Islahuddin Academy).

Best Midfielder: Iqra Iqbal (KHA Green).

Best Goal Keeper: Shazma Naseem (KHA Green).

Best Emerging Player: Nimra (KHA White)

Player of the Final: Duaa Khan (KHA Green)

Best player of the Tournament: Umna Fatima (Islahuddin White).

# Islamabad thump Dera Murad Jamali in a thrilling National T20 Cup clash

**A Sports**

KARACHI: An undefeated half-century by Hammad Siddique helped Islamabad defeat Dera Murad Jamali by two wickets in a thrilling National T20 Cup 2023-24 match at National Bank Stadium.



While batting first, DM Jamali were dismissed for 127 in 19.1 overs courtesy of a four-fer by Umair Afridi.

Islamabad faltered while chasing a low total, losing eight wickets in the process, but were able to get over the line on the last ball of the game.

Prior to that, in another Group B fixture of National T20 Cup 2023-24, right-arm fast bowler Hunain Shah defended 10 runs in the final over to help Lahore Blues to a five-run win against Karachi Whites at the same venue.

Lahore Blues posted 159-8 in 20 overs while batting first, on the back of a half-century by Imran Butt.

Karachi Whites batters Ahammad Alam, Azam Khan and Omair Bin Yousuf's batting efforts went in vain as their team could only get to 154-7 in the allotted overs.

Peshawar posted 158-2 in the stipulated 13 overs owing to unbeaten half-centuries by Ifkhar Ahmed and Aamer Azmat in the rain-impacted game against Quetta at NBP Sports Complex.

In response, Quetta could only manage 89, losing seven wickets in the process which came courtesy of a collective effort by the Peshawar bowling attack.

At the same venue, Karachi Blues inflicted a nine-wicket defeat on Larkana, who were bowled out for just 61 in 16.5 overs.

Karachi Blues' Syed Waleed Azeem got four wickets while Mohammad Taha and Afnan Khan returned with two each.

Karachi Blues comfortably chased the target in 8.2 overs while losing just a wicket.

Zeeshan Malik hit his maiden T20 century to help Rawalpindi post 174-6 in 20 overs at HPC Oval Ground.



## Learning Festival

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi attended the closing ceremony of the National Reading Conference, Book Fair & Pakistan Learning Festival, as the chief guest on Monday.



Photo: Online

## President for enhanced trade, cultural ties with Nigeria

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for further improving trade, economic and cultural cooperation with Nigeria, besides increasing the bilateral trade volume for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The president expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (ret) Sohail Ahmad Khan,



who called on him, at Aiwane-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Talking to the high-commissioner designate, the president said that Nigeria was the largest economy in Africa, and Pakistan should explore opportunities for advancing trade and economic relations with it. He opined that economic diplomacy was the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Nigeria, especially in the field of economy. Pres-

ident Alvi asked the newly appointed high commissioner to work for promoting cultural linkages and people-to-people contacts to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries. He also congratulated Major General (ret) Sohail Ahmad Khan on his appointment and expressed the hope that he would work to further enhance bilateral ties with Nigeria in all domains of mutual interest.

## No wheat shortage; ample stocks in country: Minister

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information, Murtaza Solangi on Monday said Pakistan currently had ample wheat stocks and concrete measures would be initiated to address any flour shortage due to supply chain problems. Responding to a motion under Rule 218 by Senator Sania Nishtar, focused on addressing gaps in the wheat supply chain that may lead to flour shortage, the minister stated that currently there was no wheat shortage in the country.

Senator Nishtar had pointed out the specific lacuna in wheat policy, citing the conversion of green bags to white bags at the retail level. She also hinted at the smuggling as a factor, contributing to wheat shortages in addition to creation of systematic artificial shortages and hoarding. The minister emphasized that there was an adequate stock of wheat in the country as public wheat stock included 39,24,367 metric tons in Punjab, 8,17,394 metric tons in Sindh, 2,15,082 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 89,354 metric tons in Balochistan. Pakistan Agricultural Storage & Services Corporation Ltd (PASSCO) accounted for 17,18,177 metric tons, he added. Private wheat stock comprises 3,37,270 metric tons in Punjab,



93,165 metric tons in Sindh, 14,918 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 4,157 metric tons in Balochistan. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs said that Pakistan had over seven million (7,213,884) metric tons of wheat, with an additional imported stock of 10,33,845 metric tons, ensuring there was no shortage. He said the support price for provinces differed, being Rs 4600 in Punjab and Rs 4700 in Sindh.

During discussions on the motion, Senator Dilwar Khan said that Pakistan should export wheat rather than its import and called for concessions to the agriculture sector. Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haidri highlighted Balochistan's agricultural challenges, emphasizing the lack of canal systems. He expressed concern about the removal of subsidies for poor farmers on electricity. Senators Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur and Rukhsana Zuberi stressed the need for a concrete solution to address the issue.

## Education minister vows to continue improving quality of education

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi on Monday said that his top priority has been improving the quality of education and reducing the out-of-school children. He was attending the closing ceremony of the National Reading Conference, Book Fair & Pakistan Learning Festival, Islamabad.

Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training in collaboration with Idara e Taleem-o-Aghai (ITA) and the National Book Foundation, organised a three-day long 'Pakistan Learning Festival' on the theme 'Today's Readers, Tomorrow's Learners'. The launching event of the three-day festival was attended by the Federal Minister Madad Ali Sindhi as the chief guest. Madad Ali Sindhi while addressing the event said that the only way to progress for Pakistan is through education. He said that Pakistan as a country needs to bring back its focus to education. Madad said that on the Inter-

national Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, it is important to reiterate our commitment to stop all types of violence against women and provide them with equal opportunities so that they can achieve their full potential. He said that it is a shame that even today young girls are forced to work instead of going to school. He said that it is the duty of the government to ensure that all women of our country are provided free education. Secretary Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry said that the focus of this year's event is on children, schools, and families, where leading education providers will deliver short 'Lightning Talks' addressing innovative solutions to specific areas of foundational learning. Particularly on the first day, the renowned educationists will lead insightful discussions on key challenges and advancements in the field of literacy and foundational learning. These three days are packed with program for kids curated carefully to promote foundational learning and reading habits among kids.

## Pakistan, China hold meeting to promote agri-forestry economy

## Spokesman Report

BEIJING: The third Science and Technology Exchange Conference on China-Pakistan Trop, Nov 27 (APP): ical Arid Non-wood Forest is being held both online and offline from November 26 to 28 in Zhengzhou, China, and Gwadar, Pakistan simultaneously. The exchange conference aims to showcase achievements and research progress of both nations in the field of economic forestry. It also seeks to facilitate academic exchanges of woody medicinal herbs and active substances between China and Pakistan.

The event, co-hosted by the Chinese Society of Forestry (CSF) and Central South University

of Forestry and Technology (CSUFT), drew over 220 officials, scholars, students and business representatives from both countries, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. In 2021, to enhance the economic and ecological development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), CSUFT, China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC), and Yulin Holdings collaborated to establish an Engineering Research Center for Tropical Arid Non-wood Forest. The center aims to showcase a green and sustainable development approach, focusing on the non-wood forest industry and its compatibility with ecological, economic, and social benefits in Gwadar.

## PM hails educated youth as greatest asset of the country

## Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while terming educated youth as a greatest asset for the country, has said that planning for a better future of our coming generations was the government's responsibility. While addressing the Youth Summit organized by the Department of Sports, Youth and Culture here today the PM said that the government has chalked out comprehensive Youth Policy where by educated youth can get loans to establish their business. He said that loans worth 50 crore rupees would be provided through TEVTA and Akhuwat Foundation.

The PM said that a sum of 20 thousand rupees would be provided to the needy at the doorstep through easy-paisa accounts. On this occasion,

the Prime Minister also inspected the stalls set up by various departments. The summit was attended by Senior Minister Colonel (r) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Sports Minister Asim Sharif Butt, Javed Iqbal Badhanvi, Secretaries, Heads of Departments, university students and others. Meanwhile, chairman Benazir Income Support Program Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib called on Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Haq and briefed him on the current poverty rate in the country and the government's efforts to reduce poverty. Mr. Saqib informed the PM that more than 100,000 deserving families were being provided financial assistance under the Benazir Income Support Program. The AJK premier appreciated the efforts of Chairman Dr. Amjad Saqib. Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir Muhammad Bareach was also present on this occasion.



## Prime Minister's visit to the State of Kuwait

## News Desk

ABU DHABI: Following his visit to the United Arab Emirates, Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar will embark on a bilateral visit to the State of Kuwait on 28-29 November 2023.

During the visit, the Prime Minister will meet His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al Jaber Al Sabah, Crown Prince of State of Kuwait and His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al Ahmed AL Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait.

The visit will include signing of various MoUs in the field of Manpower, Information Technology, Mineral exploration and Food Security, Energy and Defence.

Pakistan and Kuwait enjoy deep



rooted and historical ties spanning over six decades. The year 2023 marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

## Suicide bomber kills 7, injures 3 in Bannu district

## City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On 26 November 2023, a motorcycle borne suicide bomber, affiliated with Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group and later identified as an Afghan national, exploded himself on a security forces' convoy in general area Bakka Khel, Bannu District.

Resultantly, 2x innocent civilians

embraced Shahadat, while 7x civilians and 3x soldiers got injured.

Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave civilians and soldiers further strength our resolve.

## PPP will fully participate in the general elections 2024: Gillani



## Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani has said that the People's Party will fully participate in the general elections and will field candidates in all national and provincial constituencies. In the meeting held with Muhammad Ashraf and Sheikh Ghulam Jilani of Ward No. 2, Rana Shahid was also present. They Assured Yousaf

Raza Gillani that after consulting the cantonment board members in NA 148, they will fully support him. Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani added that we have implemented the development projects of the People's Party in the Cantonment Board area.

We have always given priority to solve the problems of the people, whether we are in the opposition or in power, we stand by their side to solve the problems of the people.

## Welfare of overseas Pakistanis is top priorities of govt: Caretaker FM

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani on Monday said that welfare of the overseas Pakistanis and the resolution of their issues on priority basis, were among the top priorities of the interim government. Jilani further said that the European Union (EU) was an important partner of Pakistan and welcomed the continuation of GSP Plus status for Pakistan, adding these steps would further promote bilateral economic links with the EU.

Welfare of overseas Pakistanis, resolution of issues among govt's top priorities: Caretaker FM The minister expressed these views during his visit to Pakistan Embassy in Belgium where he was warm-



ly received by Pakistan Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Anna Baloch and other members of the diplomatic staff, a press release said. The caretaker foreign minister visited different sections of the embassy including consular section and expressed his satisfaction over the facilities being provided to the Pakistani community. On the occasion, he also penned down his expressions in the visitors' book placed in the embassy.

## Ex-PM Shahid Khaqan summoned in Faizabad sit-in case

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister (PM) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has been summoned in Faizabad sit-in case. According to sources, the Commission probing the Faizabad sit-in summoned Ex-PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on November 29.

Sources added that the commission will also record a statement of the then-prime minister.

The federal government formed the inquiry commission under the chairmanship of retired Inspector General (IG) Akhtar Ali Shah in the case after the Supreme Court rejected the fact-finding committee report.

Earlier, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa remarked that the government's newly formed probe commission in the case, was empowered to summon 'anyone' for investigation.