



Govt to provide free SIMs, female abayas to Hujjaj: Minister

Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed Tuesday said that the government would provide free of cost mobile SIMs with roaming internet packages, female abayas having a Pakistani flag on the backside and 13 Kg suitcases to pilgrims performing hajj this year. (Details on Page 8)



World Bank points out policy shifts for 'sustainable, productive' Pakistan

The World Bank on Tuesday launched a series of Policy Notes that outline critical policy shifts required for a "productive, sustainable, resilient, and healthy" Pakistan. According to a statement, World Bank's Regional Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser - who is in Pakistan to reaffirm the Bank's support - launched the policy notes. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Life savings

RAWALPINDI: A lady health Worker administer Polio Drops to a child during Polio eradicating campaign in City.



Photo: Online

Two terrorists killed in Balochistan after attack on checkpoint at Nagano Mountains

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On 28 November 2023, security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Nagano Mountains, Kalat District on reported presence of terrorists.



During the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists, resultantly two terrorists were sent to hell, while a cache of arms, ammunition and explosives has also been recovered.

The killed terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces and target killing of innocent civilians.

Sanitization is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. Security Forces of Pakistan, in step with Nation, remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan.

Govt to support ECP for ensuring free, fair elections: Solangi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi Tuesday said under Article 218(3) of the Constitution, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) would fulfill its responsibility to conduct fair, transparent and impartial elections and the government would support it. Talking to media persons here, he said that there were a total of 280 articles in the Constitution, not only the article of elections in 90 days, it also had Article 254.



"Everyone in Pakistan has freedom to express opinion, complain and criticize," Solangi added. The minister said the freedom that Pakistan People's Party and other

parties had been enjoying, Pakistan Muslim League (N) also had same freedom. He said that the caretaker PM had informed the public about his visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) last night through a video message. During the visit of the Prime Minister, the agreements and memorandums of understanding would be finalized, then the media would be informed in that regard, he added. The minister said he had a relationship of respect with Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Asif Ali Zardari and he could not comment on their statements.

PM-Bill Gates-Polio

Pakistan fully committed to eradicate polio virus: PM Kakar

Spokesman Report

ABU DHABI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday appreciated the Gates Foundation's support to the government's efforts to secure a polio-free Pakistan and reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to rid the country of the

debilitating virus. The caretaker prime minister received a telephone call from Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) this evening to discuss progress in the ongoing efforts to eradicate polio from Pakistan. The prime minister is currently on an official visit to the United Arab Emirates, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. During the telephone call, the prime minister and Gates followed up on their discussion in New York when they met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session in September.

In this regard, the caretaker prime minister briefed Gates on the polio vaccination drive currently in progress across Pakistan. Prime Minister Kakar assured Gates that the Government of Pakistan was fully committed to delivering on the promise of a healthier, safer and financially

inclusive Pakistan and counted on reliable partners such as the BMGF in this endeavour. The issues of malnutrition and maternal health also came under discussion. The prime minister expressed satisfaction at the excellent cooperation between the government and the BMGF.

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Pakistan summons Afghan diplomat over Bannu attack

Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has summoned an Afghan diplomat to the foreign ministry over yesterday's horrific Bannu attack. According to sources, Pakistan has condemned the involvement of Afghan citizen in the Bannu attack on November 26. Sources revealed that Pakistan has demanded strict and immediate action against the mastermind and facilitators of the Bannu attack and to stop the use of Afghan soil by terrorists against Pakistan. Furthermore, the diplomat was also told that Afghanistan should hand-over Hafiz Gul Bahadur to Pakistan.

Cipher case: PTI's chairman's trial to be conducted in jail, rules court

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A special court on Tuesday ruled hearing of a cipher case against the PTI chief Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi will be held in Adiala Jail due to security threats. The decision was announced by special court judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain in light of the letter submitted by the Adiala Jail superintendent citing security threats. According to the verdict, the public, media, and family members will be allowed to attend the hearing in the jail, which will commence from December 1. Earlier in the day, Adiala Jail authorities refused to present former prime minister and PTI chief Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi before the court in cipher case, citing security concerns. Special court judge Abul Hasnat

resumed the hearing at the Judicial Complex after the jail trial was nullified by the Islamabad High Court. During the last hearing of the case, the special court judge had ordered the PTI leaders before the court. However, as the hearing began, Adiala Jail's superintendent told the court in a written reply that PTI chief Imran Khan and Qureshi could not be produced in court. The superintendent said that additional security had been requested from the Islamabad police who had replied that there were serious threats to both the politicians. The superintendent's letter was read out in court by Federal Investigation Agency prosecutor Khawar Shah. PTI's lawyer Salman Safdar referred to the last hearing's order and said that Khan would have to be brought to court today in any way possible.

The lawyer added that when the former PM had himself said that there were security concerns he was told to appear in court. He added that if there were any hurdles to bringing Imran to court, the court should be informed about them. Court orders are being openly violated, Safdar said and asked the Adiala Jail superintendent to resign if he was unable to present the former PM before the court. Safdar while questioning the authenticity of the threats, said there was no information about the nature of the threats by any security agency, and arguments regarding the security were 'made in the air' without any proof. The judge after hearing arguments from both the sides, reserved his verdict. The case accuses former PM Khan of illegally retaining and communicating the contents of a classified diplomatic cable sent by Pakistan's ambassador in Washington.

FIA steps up action against Hawala/Hundi, illegal currency exchange traders

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has stepped up its crackdown on elements involved in hawala/hundi and illegal currency exchange. According to the FIA spokesperson, some 499 raids were conducted against the elements involved in the illegal foreign exchange and hundi during the ongoing year, in which 500 cases were registered and 711 accused were arrested. However, the FIA teams have completed some 61 inquiries during this period. During the current year, 333 suspects were arrested in the KP zone, 79 in Lahore zone, 24 in Gujranwala zone, 67 in Faisalabad zone, and 53 in the Multan zone.

Caretaker FM, EU Commissioner discuss ongoing development cooperation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and European Union Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen on Tuesday discussed the ongoing development cooperation engagement between Pakistan and the EU. The foreign minister met with EU Commissioner in Brussels, the



Foreign Office Spokesperson posted on X. They also agreed to intensify collaboration under EU flagship projects including Global Gateway and Horizon Europe.

Saifullah Abro removed from Senate body chairmanship

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PTI Senator Saifullah Abro has been removed from the Chairmanship of the Senate Standing Committee on Power following a motion of no confidence. The no-confidence motion against Senator Saifullah Abro was moved by Senators Bahramand Khan Tangi, Manzoor Kakar, Sana Jamali, Hafiz Abdul Karim, and Dilawar Khan. The meeting, convened at the Parliament House and chaired by Additional Secretary Hafeezullah Sheikh, witnessed the unanimous election of Senator Azam Nazir



Tarar as the new Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Power. Among the notable attendees at the meeting were Senators Azam Nazir Tarar, Saifullah Abro, Saifullah Khan Niazi, Haji Hidayatullah, Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, Sana Jamali, Dilawar Khan, Haji Hidayatullah, Muhammad Ali Shah Jamot, and Fida Muhammad.

PTI denies 'rumours' about chairman slot in intra-party elections

City Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has rejected Advocate Sher Afzal Marwat's claim that party chief Imran Khan will not contest the 'long-pending' intra-party elections, being held to fulfill the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) directive by completing the process before December 13. Earlier, Imran Khan's lawyer

Sher Afzal Marwat - while talking to journalists - claimed that the ousted prime minister would not contest the intra-party elections due to his conviction in Toshakhana case. Marwat said that the PTI will get a new chairman following the intra-party elections. "In this regard, Imran Khan has conveyed his decision to the party's core committee from jail," he added.

Furthermore, Marwat said, the former premier will himself decided the name for new PTI chief. "Once all the constitutional and legal obstacles are removed, Imran Khan will again become PTI chief," he added. In August, an Islamabad trial court sentenced the PTI chief to three years' imprisonment in a separate Toshakhana case. The case, filed by the

Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), had accused Khan of not mentioning the details of state gifts in his tax declarations. Later, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) set aside the sentence and ordered his release. However, he was not freed as he was undergoing trial in the cipher case. Responding to the claims, the PTI spokesperson said that the party 'strongly rejects'

the speculations regarding the intra-party elections. "Imran Khan has not conveyed any decision regarding contesting the polls," the spokesperson said, adding that the PTI chief has not taken any decision to withdraw from the election or nominate another leader. "A formal decision regarding intra-party election procedure and candidates will be issued," it added.

CM envisions economic triumph as historic agreements with UAE unveil new era of partnership

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi affirms that the historic agreements between Pakistan and the UAE are poised to bolster the economy, elevating mutual relations to unprecedented heights.

In his message from the United Arab Emirates, Naqvi anticipated positive effects soon as the implementation of these agreements takes effect, signaling the commencement of a new era of economic cooperation.

According to a handout issued here on Tuesday, the Pakistani delegation experienced a warm reception in the UAE, with a special welcome extended to them. Chief Minister Naqvi deemed the meeting with the President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed



Al Nahyan, as highly valuable. He applauded the commendable efforts of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and acknowledged the praiseworthy role played by the Army Chief in facilitating these significant agreements. Highlighting the transformative impact of the investment agreements on mutual relations, Chief Minister Naqvi emphasized that the UAE's

investment will diversify into key sectors such as energy, port operations, wastewater treatment, food security, banking, and financial services.

This substantial investment is anticipated to pave the way for economic stability in Pakistan, heralding a new era of economic partnership between the two nations.

Chief Minister Naqvi underscored the enduring historical and brotherly relations between Pakistan and the UAE, asserting that these ties have withstood the test of time.

He expressed the profound connection between the people of Pakistan and the UAE, bound by historical ties of love and brotherhood. Concluding his message, he affirmed that the relations of friendship and love between Pakistan and the UAE are eternal and will endure indefinitely.

Providing the best health facilities to the peoples is first priority: Dr Rana

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr Rana Altaf Ahmed has said that work is going on regarding shifting and adjustment of various departments. He said that providing the best health facilities to the people of South Punjab is our first priority to review various issues related to Nishtar 2. Pro Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani, MS Nishtar Hospital Dr. Muhammad Kazim, Dean of Surgery Prof. Dr. Khalid Hussain Qureshi, Head of Surgery Department Prof. Dr. Masudul Rauf Haraj, Head of Orthopedic Surgery Department Prof. Dr. Kamran Siddiqui were present in the meeting.

Associate Professor Dr. Khalid Chishti, Head of Department of Neurosurgery Dr. Liaqat Jaral, Associate Professor Neurosurgery Dr. Zahid Hussain and Dr. Shamsul Hasan Bukhari participated. In the meeting, the availability of medical staff and the medical and other facilities provided in Nishtar 2 Hospital were reviewed in detail and in order to further expand these facilities, consultations were also held regarding the transfer of some departments from Nishtar Hospital to Nishtar 2. In the meeting, a detailed discussion was held with the head of the Department of Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery and Neurosurgery.

And was directed to formulate recommendations. Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr. Rana Altaf Ahmed said on this occasion that providing the best health facilities to the people of South Punjab is our first priority and no effort will be spared in utilizing all the resources for this.



Construction work on Govt of Punjab schemes should be accelerated: Amir Khattak

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: A review meeting was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak.

The speed of work on the schemes should be accelerated. The Government of Punjab, Election Commission has also been written for permission to construct other schemes.

Commissioner Aamir Khattak said that the work of decorating Darbar Shah Shams is going on at a cost of 394 million rupees. Upgradation of Darbar Musa Pak is in progress at a cost of Rs 35 million. Chak RS Shujabad flyover should be completed soon. He said that due to the railway gate, traffic jams were normal, speed of work on the flyover site should be increased to redress public grievances. XEN Highways Ghulam Nabi said that the construction of the flyover is in progress at a cost of 1 billion rupees. The flyover will be completed by January 31, 2024. 87 piles, 53 ganders have been completed. XEN Building Hyder Ali said that the work on the upgradation of Nishtar 1, Darbar Hazrat Shah Shams (RA) is going on rapidly. The officers of the concerned departments were also present in the meeting.



DC hails new bookstore as 'man's best friend'

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK 28: Deputy commissioner, Rao Atif Reza, said that books are man's best friend and that he can work for women's society. He opened a bookstore in the city and said, "This is a great place Director of the University Commission Dr. Junid Moghul, Assistant Commissioner of the Shigfat Jabid, Chief Officer of Sardar Municipality Aftab Ahmad Khan were also present. Yes, no matter how different the books are, the bookstore managers are aware of the exact details of the existing books. Why, this site of Mr. Atif Reza is that the younger generation has moved away from books through social media, now it needs an American to tap towards books. Therefore, individuals in the younger generation are useful to the country and the nation through positive thinking. Book Mill's beliefs are an extremely good and commendable step in this era that can be attracted by a new generation of readers, who now believe that Book Mill is ready. In addition, the new book defines the organizer of the mill. I hope that in the future, there will be more such activities, but I will not participate in the book Mila, which will be published by Atif Rezaani.

VC Gomal Varsity inaugurates two-day free screening camp in the faculty

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Gomal University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah inaugurated a two-day free screening camp at the MLT Department of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences on Tuesday.

Dean Faculty of Allied Health Sciences Dr. Asif Nawaz along with teachers and students of MLT department were also present on this occasion. The free screening camp includes CBC, blood group, blood sugar (ABC), Uric acid, lipid profile, Anti HCV, HBSAG, H pylori, malaria parasite.

Gomal University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah also got his test done. Vice-Chancellor Gomal University said that the organization of free camp and charity is ongoing.

Because of such free camp, those poor and indigent people who cannot get expensive tests, those people benefit while students on the other hand get the opportunity to learn.

The VC said that I pay tribute to the Dean Faculty of Allied Health Sciences Dr. Asif Nawaz and his entire team for this excellent initiative and due to which this successful camp was possible.

Dean Faculty of Allied Health Sciences Dr. Asif Nawaz said that the students have priority in conducting such programs for success in their practical life along with education, because it gives students an opportunity to learn and motivates them.

Four People of a family killed over domestic dispute in DI Khan

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: A domestic dispute claimed the lives of 4 persons of the same family in Dera Ismail Khan on Tuesday.

According to the police, the husband killed his wife for unknown reasons in Rahmani Khel area of Paniyala Tehsil and husband fled.

After the incident, the brothers of the victim got angry and fired indiscriminately and killed the brother-in-law's father, mother and sister.

According to the police, the woman who was killed by her husband was pregnant, the bodies were shifted to the district hospital.

The accused Tofan, who killed his wife, was absconding in various incidents.

Sources said, the police have started an investigation regarding the incident, so far, the reasons for the killing and fight are not known.

Winter special

KARACHI: People are buying traditional "Chicken Yakhi" from vendor at Patel Para area in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Commissioner announces completion of Gurdwara's arrangements on Baba Guru Nanak's birthday

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chatha has said that the district and tehsil administrations have completed the preparations in Gurdwara Sri Panja Sahib Hasan Abdal on the occasion of Baba Guru Nanak's birthday. On this occasion Regional Police Officer Rawalpindi Syed Khurram Ali Shah, Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza, DPO Attock Dr. Ghiyas Gul Khan, Assistant Commissioner Hasan Abdal Dr. Sana and other relevant officers participated along with him. Liaquat Ali Chatha said that Sikhs yatrees will stay at Gurdwara Sri Panja Sahib Hasan Abdal from November 28 to 29 and perform their religious rituals. He said that provision of fool-proof security and other facilities to the Sikh pilgrims has been ensured. Commissioner Rawalpindi



di was given a detailed briefing by the concerned officers on the arrangements made on the occasion of Baba Guru Nanak's birthday. He visited Gurdwara Panja Sahib Hasan Abdal along with the officers of the administration and reviewed the arrangements made so far regarding Baba Guru Nanak's birthday and while issuing instructions, he said that the best arrangements have been made for the arrival of Sikh pilgrims and Efforts are being made to improve it so

that the Sikh pilgrims who come to our country go back to their countries with a good message from here. Commissioner Rawalpindi expressed his satisfaction over the arrangements made by various government departments so far. He instructed all the departments including Health Department, Civil Defence, Rescue 1122, IESCO and other administrative bodies that on the occasion of Baba Guru Nanak's birthday. There should be no opportunity for any kind of complaint and all the departments should perform their duties efficiently. DPO Attock Dr. Ghiyas Gul Khan gave a detailed briefing regarding the security and said that it is prohibited to carry meat, leather, cigarettes and other such items inside the Gurdwara. Measures have been taken to safeguard against any untoward incident and no compromise will be made in security matters.

Journalists' demand COAS: Take notice of making a market on the land of Press Club Wana

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: It is regrettable to make a market on the property and old land of District Press Club Wana.

The journalists appealed to the Army Chief and Corps Commander Peshawar to take notice and demanded permission to build a press club at the same place.

The important cabinet meeting of District Press Club Wana was held under the chairmanship of President District Press Club Wana Mujeeb Ur Rahman Wazir on Tuesday.

In which General Secretary Zardad Wazir, Press Secretary



Qismat Ullah Wazir and other office members participated. It was unanimously decided in the meeting that we will not allow any construction in place of the old press club building.

The old Press Club building was inaugurated by the former Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2004.

Later, as soon as the funds were released, the main build-

ing was constructed.

Unfortunately, in 2007, the Wana Press Club building was blown up by terrorists with explosives.

The EX Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Iftikhar Hussain, had allotted two canals of land for District Press Club Wana.

It is to be clear that 13500000 one crore thirty five lakh rupees was approved by the former provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the construction work of District Press Club Wana.

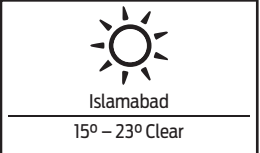
President Said, but now the work is still pending due to the refusal of Brigadier Awais Shamim of Wana Scouts Force

to give his place to the journalists.

He said, Several requests and applications have been made to IGFC South KP, but still no hearing, which is cruelty and injustice to Wana journalists.

President said, Now there are reports that Brigadier Mohammad Owais Shamim has leased this place and land, which is cruelty and injustice to the people of Waziristan.

President Press Club Mujeeb Ur Rehman said that this land is the property of Press Club Wana, the building of the press club should be constructed on it, if no one hears us.



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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHO	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79

Rain-wind/thunderstorm likely on Wednesday: PMD

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-wind/thunderstorm with snowfall over the hills in the Potohar region including north-east Punjab, upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir during the afternoon and evening/night on Wednesday.

Cloudy weather is expected in most upper parts of the country.

Hailstorm is also expected at isolated places during the period.

Smog/fog is likely in central/southern parts of Punjab and upper Sindh during morning hours.

In Islamabad, cold and cloudy weather with rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected during the afternoon and evening/night.

In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, cold and cloudy weather is expected in most upper districts of the province.

However, rain-wind/thunderstorm (with snowfall over the hill) is likely in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Balakot, Mardan, Haripur, Peshawar, Kohat, Kurram, Bannu and Waziristan.

In Punjab, cloudy weather is expected in the upper parts of the province with chances of rain-wind/thunderstorm with hailstorms at isolated places in Murree, Gallyyat, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahaud-din, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Wazirabad, Sialkot, Narawal, Lahore, Hafizabad, Sargodha, Mianwali, Faisalabad, Jhang, Khushab, Toba Tek Singh, Okara and Kasur from afternoon and evening/night.

China XPCC delegation meets Culture Minister Jamal Shah

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A China Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) delegation led by its Deputy Party Secretary, Deputy Political Commissioner Mr Liu Jianming met Jamal Shah, Interim Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture here at Heritage Division on Tuesday.

During meeting, they discussed the importance of further enhancing cultural connections between Pakistan and China.

The minister highly praised China visionary leadership of President Xi Jinping.

Jamal Shah highlighted the strong bond between Pakistan and China and encouraged Chinese investment in Pakistan historical heritage sites like Takht-e-Bahi.

Jamal Shah said that the opportunity for us to work with our Chinese friends and express our bonds through people-to-people contacts and bridges in the form of art such as cultural exchange will make our friendship more resilient and more lasting.

The cultural caravan will be composed of diverse groups of Pakistani, Chinese and Central Asian artists, musicians, photographers, anthropologists, writers and filmmakers.

XPCC Deputy Party Secretary, Deputy



Political Commissioner Liu Jianming said that we have long history of exchanges in cultural exchanges, adding that agriculture, tourism and culture are very important fields to further strengthen people to people contacts between Pakistan and China. He said that cultural exchanges, cooperation in agriculture and tourism sectors would help advance the exceptional friend between Pakistan and China.

The delegation was comprised of Tian Yonghao, Director-General of Bureau of Agricultural and Rural Affairs of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Wang Zhibin, Director-General of Bureau of Culture, Physical Education, Radio, Television and Tourism, Sun Wei, Director-General of Office of Foreign Affairs of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Han Gen, Director of Agricultural Department of Xinjiang Tianye (Group) Co., Ltd., Yuan Hongxing, Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Service Center of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (Interpreter), Yu Yu, Associate Dean of Xinjiang Academy of Agricultural and Reclamation Science, Ma Chunhui, Vice President of Shihezi University, Zhang Bin, Chairman of the Board of Xinjiang Beixin Road and Bridge Group Co., Ltd, Li Wenchun, General Manager of Xinjiang Yinfeng Modern Agricultural Equipment Co., Ltd and Li Jianping, Director of Department of International.

Marine research

Major General Shahid Mahmood HI(M) DG RV&FC called on Vice Admiral (Retd) Ahmed Saeed HI(M), Director General, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) on 28 November 2023. He was given a brief overview of NIMA's work and areas of expertise. Discussions were held on areas of mutual interest and cooperation for the establishment of the National Aquaculture Centre and promotion of sustainable marine research and food security. In the end, the Maj. General assured his department's coordination and support for working with NIMA on sustainable aquaculture and maritime research.



Minister of State for Tourism announces progress on Pakistan's new tourist app

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Tourism and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Wasi Shah, announced substantial progress in the development of the tourism app, emphasizing its potential to significantly boost both domestic and foreign tourism, leading to a substantial increase in revenue.

Addressing a high-level meeting also attended by Additional Foreign Secretary Middle East, Special Invest-



ment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and Economic Diplomacy Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, and DG Overseas Pakistan is Ahsan Wagan,, Wasi Shah highlighted the app's status as Pakistan's largest tourist information platform, providing comprehensive details on archaeological sites and tourist destinations with a single click. The participants also revealed efforts to secure foreign funding for the state-

of-the-art app.

During the extended meeting, IT companies provided a detailed briefing on the app's features. Wasi Shah expressed confidence that the ongoing efforts, combined with digitalization, would revolutionize Pakistani tourism. He emphasized the app's potential to make information on Pakistan's tourism, history, and cultural heritage easily accessible to people worldwide, anticipating a remarkable surge in domestic and foreign tourists, along with increased revenue.

All political parties claim success in upcoming election: Dr. Rubina Akhtar

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Political leader Dr Rubina Akhtar has said that all the political parties are claiming success in the election to be held on February 8. Every political party seems to want 172 seats. The performance of the parties is also in front of the public, social media has awakened the public and made people aware of the direction Pakistan has reached in this political game. Inflation, unemployment, law and order situation and lack of jobs, giving the gift of poverty and heavy debts, the heart wants to drown in the sea of wonder, with which mouth political leader's talk to the people.



That we will be elected next time and we will spill rivers of milk, but this time, God willing, the people will come out of the forest of electables and bring such candidates who will come to power with the power of the people's votes and not the slaked, who will serve the public. Will have the spirit of the upcoming election, the surprising results will be the guarantee of the country's development. Dr. Rubina Akhtar further said that each party is desirous of 172 seats in the election, while the nation will decide on its performance, surprising results will guarantee the development of the country

AIOU announces results of HSSC/FA

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has announced the results of HSSC/FA programs offered in the spring semester 2023, results have been uploaded to the CMS portal. Students who complete their program will receive completers soon.

Moreover, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has also announced the assignments schedule for Matric and F. A programs offered in autumn semester 2023 and details have been uploaded on official website. According to the schedule, 4th December is the submission deadline for the first assignment, December 28, for the second assignment, January 29, 2024, for third and, February 16, 2024, is the last submission date for the fourth assignment.

The submission deadline for two course assignments of matric and F. A programs is December 28, 2023, and February 16, 2024, respectively. Students can get names, addresses, and other information of their respective tutors on CMS portal at <http://enrollment.aiou.edu.pk> or from any nearest regional campus. Students will be responsible for late assignment submission, and assignments reaching after the due dates will not be accepted.

It is worth mentioning here that the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood has directed the heads of the Examination Department, Admissions Department, Regional Directors, and other departments to take steps to strengthen the student support system. Dr. Nasir further stated that admissions, examinations, and other teaching matters including declaration of results should be in accordance with the annual calendar of academic activities of the university.

Tourist interest in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

TOKYO: The Embassy of Pakistan in Japan has recently conducted a comprehensive survey aimed at gauging the interest of Japanese citizens in visiting Pakistan. The survey, administered on social media, engaged 527 Japanese participants and sought to unveil perceptions and attitudes towards visiting Pakistan.

20% of the respondents said that they had already visited Pakistan, emphasizing the existence of a segment of Japanese travelers who have explored the country. This statistic not only defies stereotypes but also underscores the untapped potential of Pakistan as a tourist destination.

Looking towards the future, the survey revealed that a substantial 59% of the participants expressed a strong intent to visit Pakistan. This response signifies a significant untapped market for tourism, presenting a valuable opportunity for Pakistan to attract a larger number of Japanese tourists. However, the survey also identified a cohort of 21% who identified apprehensions regarding security as a major hurdle in their plans.

The results paint a nuanced picture of Japanese attitudes toward tourism in Pakistan, showcasing both interest and potential challenges. The fact that a significant percentage of respondents have either visited Pakistan or expressed a desire to do so emphasizes the need for targeted efforts to promote the country's tourism offerings.

Third International Conference on Iqbal 2023 held at Bahria University

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd International Conference on Iqbal 2023 was organized at Bahria University at Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore Campuses on 28 November 2023. Chairman HEC Prof Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed was the Chief Guest of the Opening Ceremony held at Bahria University Islamabad Campus (BUIC). A number of foreign universities and institutes are conference partners and have featured speakers among their scholars on Iqbal.

The theme of this year's conference was 'Iqbal as a catalyst in the Renaissance of Muslim Ummah'. More than one hundred research scholars and teachers sent their research paper abstracts. Seventy-two papers were selected and presented in the conference.

Rector Bahria University Vice Admiral (Retd) Asif Khaliq HI(M) while inaugurating the conference, highlighted that the endeavour of this conference is to bring Iqbal's Qur'anic thoughts to practical implementable levels and educate our youth about his teachings and philosophy. Rector thanked the foreign ambassadors for their interest in the conference.

Chief Guest, Prof Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, elaborated that Iqbal's teachings are rooted in the authentic teachings of Islam and are relevant to the contemporary times. Dr. Mukhtar reminded that Iqbal's teachings encourage Muslims to rekindle their engagement in research and technology.

Earlier, Dr. Muhammad Fayyaz, Director Conference while welcoming the guests narrated how the Iqbal Conferences at Bahria University has grown from national to high profile International conference where we have received research abstracts from a number of foreign countries which include Iran, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Egypt, Australia, and the United States of America.

In her keynote address Prof. Dr. Najeeba Arif, Chairperson Academy of Letters reminded that Iqbal's message was not focused on the Indian Muslims only but was directed towards the Ummah. Iran could use his message in the reformation of society and so can other Muslim countries.

Chairman Iqbal Chair Bahria University recapped that the Muslim Ummah and Muslim countries should follow the teachings of Iqbal to make decisions that can help them solve their problems and carve pathways for the nation's development.

Rear Admiral (R) Muhammad Arshid Javed SI(M), Pro-Rector (Academics) and the conference chair, while addressing the concluding session, elaborated that this conference aimed to delve into and explore the profound ways in which Iqbal's teachings can contribute to the resurgence of the Muslim Ummah, rekindling its glorious past. He thanked national and international conference partners for participating in the conference.

Minister of Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz lays ground to boost Bilateral Trade in meeting with Kuwait Investment Authority

Spokesman Report

KUWAIT CITY: Minister of Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz, alongside Ministers of Finance, Law, and Energy, engaged in a productive dialogue with the top echelon of the Kuwait Investment Authority. The meeting, held in Kuwait, focused on fortifying the economic ties between Pakistan and Kuwait through enhanced investment cooperation.



During the meeting, Minister Gohar Ejaz held collaborative discussions with the CEOs of Kuwait's Largest Government Funds and Economic Development Institutions. The comprehensive talks explored avenues to deep-

en investment partnerships between the two nations, with a commitment to a mutually beneficial and enduring collaboration.

Highlighting Pakistan's strengths, Minister Gohar Ejaz emphasized the nation's honest and hardworking population of 250 million, positioning it as the fifth largest in the world. With 60% of the population below the age of 30,

he underscored Pakistan's ambitious vision for the decade—marking it as a pivotal period for the country's development and prosperity.

The Minister outlined Pakistan's strategy to unlock opportunities across diverse sectors, including Agriculture, Mining, Petrochemicals, Steel, and the exploration of oil, gas, and other natural resources. He also emphasized the development of human resources for the IT sector, opening doors for investment in industry, domestic commerce, and export.

While acknowledging the current trade standing at \$100 billion, Minister Gohar Ejaz envisioned Pakistan's trade

potential at \$1 trillion. He outlined the goal of elevating the GDP from \$300 billion to \$3 trillion, making Pakistan an unparalleled investment destination in the coming decade.

To facilitate and streamline investment, the Minister highlighted the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), emphasizing its one-window approach to meet investor needs effectively.

With its strategic geographical location, burgeoning population, and abundant natural resources, Pakistan stands poised to emerge as the most valuable asset for global investors in the forthcoming decade.

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Pakistan is the Cheapest country but for whom? - I

A high exchange rate where the local currency, such as the Pakistani Rupee, is weaker against the US dollar can make goods and services relatively more affordable for foreigners visiting or earning in stronger currencies. An exchange rate of Rs. 286 to 1 US dollar means that, in terms of US dollars, expenses might seem lower for those converting their money.

While Numbeo's Cost of Living Index offers a comparative perspective on expenses across countries, its reliance on self-reported data and specific factors presents limitations that render it subjective and erratic in determining the cheapest country in terms of living. The index's foundation on self-reported data can introduce inconsistencies and inaccuracies, as individual perceptions and reporting tendencies vary widely. Moreover, the Index's focus on standardized factors like consumer prices, rents, groceries, and restaurant costs neglects key elements influencing overall living expenses, such as taxes, healthcare, and individual spending behaviors. This lack of comprehensive consideration leads to a skewed assessment, overlooking critical components that significantly impact the actual affordability and quality of life within a country. Consequently, while the Cost of Living Index serves as a comparative tool, its reliance on limited data and exclusion of crucial factors underscores the subjective and erratic nature of declaring a country the cheapest based

solely on this criterion. Interestingly, the methodology used to assign first place to Pakistan in terms of the most affordable country was to compare the affordability of goods and services in Pakistan compared to a baseline location like New York City but ironically, Pakistan's exchange rate may suggest cost-effectiveness, high inflation rates significantly diminish the purchasing power of the local population. This economic factor can render basic necessities relatively expensive for many within the country, impacting their ability to afford essential services despite the apparent favorable exchange rate. Pakistan's economic landscape, marked by high unemployment rates and lower per capita income at approximately US \$1500 annually per person, contributes to economic challenges for its citizens. The unemployment rate, forecasted at 8.50% in 2023, curtails job opportunities and strains household budgets. This reality directly affects the affordability of goods and services, potentially creating a discrepancy between the perceived cost-effectiveness for foreigners and the actual affordability for the local population.

While the exchange rate might portray Pakistan as a cost-effective destination when converting currency, the economic constraints faced by the local population, including high inflation, unemployment, and lower income levels, challenge the assertion that Pakistan is the cheapest country. True affordability encompasses the ability of residents to afford not only individual goods but also basic necessities, healthcare, education, and overall quality of life, factors that might not align with the apparent affordability based solely on exchange rates.

Moreover, the high inflation rate in Pakistan, especially at 30%, significantly impacts the purchasing power of the local population. Inflation tends to erode the value of money, making everyday goods and services more expensive for residents, thereby reducing their purchasing power.

With the statistics that only 52.35% of the population are factually employed in 2023 (approximately 95.51 million people) which means that the burden of supporting a larger unemployed segment could affect their own spending power. In some cases, employed individuals might face constraints in meeting their financial needs and aspirations due to the economic pressures resulting from high unemployment rates.

High unemployment rates can also impact the overall economy by reducing consumer spending, affecting demand for goods and services, and potentially leading to slower economic growth. This can create a cycle where businesses face reduced revenues, leading to potential layoffs or salary cuts, further exacerbating the unemployment issue.

Persistently high unemployment rates can lead to social unrest, dissatisfaction with the government, and increased pressure on policymakers to address the employment crisis. It can also affect social cohesion and contribute to various societal issues.

Therefore, high unemployment rate in Pakistan not only affects the financial stability and purchasing power of the unemployed but also indirectly impacts the spending capacity of the employed population. This scenario can create economic challenges, social strains, and implications that go beyond individual financial constraints, influencing the overall economic well-being of the country.

Pakistan's forecasted GDP growth of -0.5% in 2023 presents an additional layer of economic strain for its citizens. Economic contraction amplifies the affordability challenges faced by the local population. With a shrinking economy, job opportunities might diminish further, exacerbating the unemployment situation and affecting household incomes.

The compounding effect of high inflation, unemployment, and now a contracting economy creates a stark reality where basic goods and services might become relatively more expensive, diminishing the purchasing power of individuals.

To be continued



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

COP28 climate change summit

This month's US-China deal on climate change, which arrived after days of discussions between US climate envoy John Kerry and his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua in California, was certainly a surprise because it came at a time when the overall ties between the two nations seemed to be at a historic low.

The two countries have been engaged in a battle of words and activities covering a vast range of spheres, including trade and geostrategic affairs, notably the growing power of China in the South China Sea, and the discomfort that the US feels over the near-total hegemony that Beijing seems to have developed over key products like semiconductors and electronics, as well as raw materials like lithium, nickel and copper.

With the two sides engaged in tit-for-tat sanctions, as well as daily haranguing over numerous issues, it is perhaps a miracle that the two climate envoys managed to come up with a deal at all.

It would have been far easier for the leaders of both China and the US to walk away from any deal and blame the other party for wrecking the discussions. Yet, they fortunately and wisely put aside their differences and decided to cooperate on issues that are critical not just for them but the entire world. Their cooperation is vital if the world is to stand any real chance of succeeding in slowing down climate change.

For now, the success is merely symbolic, as the two nations have agreed to revive their bilateral climate working group to discuss areas of cooperation ahead of the COP28 climate change summit, which gets underway in Dubai on Thursday.

The two nations also said they would support a new global target for renewable energy production and work together on curbing methane and plastic pollution. For the first time, both the US and China will outline actions and set targets for phasing down methane emissions, which is also a significant step as methane is hundreds of times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of global warming and its emissions have been rising around the world, mainly stemming from agriculture and oil and gas exploration.

In this context, it is also encouraging to note that the US, China and COP28 host the UAE will jointly organize a methane and non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gases summit in Dubai.

While significant differences remain between the US and China over the phasing out of fossil fuels and how the world must pay for it, the fact that the two have already taken their positions at the negotiating tables ahead of the Dubai summit is perhaps the best news that has come out in the run up to COP28.

Indeed, the past few months have seen a string of bad news stories and alarming reports emerge on climate change and the actions taken by governments around the world to fight it and curb their emissions.

In terms of bad news, the biggest headline-grabbing development came from the UK, where Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, in a vain bid to woo Conservative voters ahead of a by-election, promised to tone down British carbon emissions targets — a move that has come in for sound criticism not only from global environmental activists, but also several British leaders. It is, of course, a moot point now that Sunak's party has lost the by-election, but the PM has stayed firm on his decision to review and revise downward the British ambition to curb carbon emissions.



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

Reasons for the Repatriation of Illegal Afghan Refugees - II

Pakistan has a lengthy history of hosting Afghan refugees, dating back to the Soviet-Afghan War in the 1980s. The influx of displaced Afghans has significantly impacted Pakistan, presenting a complex array of challenges. According to the latest available data, Pakistan is home to one of the largest refugee populations globally, with a substantial portion being Afghan refugees. The majority reside in provinces bordering Afghanistan, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. While some live in refugee camps, many are integrated into local communities, adding to the complexity of the situation.

A primary challenge Pakistan confronts due to Afghan refugees is economic strain. Providing essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing to a significant refugee population demands substantial financial resources. The protracted nature of the Afghan refugee crisis has exacerbated the strain on Pakistan's economy, impacting the country's ability to adequately allocate resources for its own citizens. The presence of Afghan refugees has also raised security concerns for Pakistan. The porous border between the two countries has facilitated the movement of people, sometimes exploited by extremist elements. Pakistan has had to grapple with the challenge of distinguishing between genuine refugees seeking safety and those with malicious intent, leading to increased security measures and border controls.

The incorporation of Afghan refugees into Pakistani society has introduced social

challenges. Instances of cultural disparities, language barriers, and competition for jobs and resources have occasionally resulted in tensions between host communities and the refugee population. Striking a delicate equilibrium between compassion and the management of social cohesion has proven to be a nuanced undertaking for Pakistan. The education sector in Pakistan confronts hurdles due to the presence of Afghan refugees, with a surge in demand for educational facilities placing additional strain on an already stretched system. Policymakers now grapple with the considerable challenge of ensuring access to quality education for both Pakistani and Afghan refugee children. Another noteworthy issue is the strain on healthcare services. Afghan refugees frequently arrive with health conditions stemming from conflict and inadequate healthcare in their home country. Meeting the health-

care needs of both the local population and refugees has stretched Pakistan's healthcare infrastructure, making it difficult to provide comprehensive and timely services. Furthermore, the Afghan refugee crisis has impacted Pakistan's diplomatic relations. Navigating the delicate balance between humanitarian concerns and political and security considerations has proven challenging for the Pakistani government. The expectations and support of the international community in managing the refugee crisis have played a critical role, and strained relations with Afghanistan further compound the complexity of the situation.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Only a peace process can save Biden from electoral defeat

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib

US President Joe Biden has been slipping in the polls. While he was previously ahead of Donald Trump, the polls today favor the former president. Obviously, Israel's war on Gaza has had an important impact on Biden's approval rating. He seriously needs to change course if he wants to get reelected.

Biden is a self-proclaimed Zionist who has, throughout his career, been an ardent supporter of Israel. He stated this month that the state of Israel is necessary for the national security interests of the US. And he has said that "if there were not an Israel, we'd have to invent one." As a member of Congress, he topped the list of donations from pro-Israel political action committees. Nevertheless, his base is mainly the Democratic base of minorities, Blacks, progressives, Muslim Americans and Arab Americans. His policies regarding the aggression on Gaza have been unpopular with his base and the American public at large. He opposed a ceasefire, while 68 percent of the US public wanted one.

Also, as the war progressed and Israel showed nothing but brutality by bombing hospitals, churches and schools, while presenting no political vision, public opinion shifted more and more against Israel, while pro-Palestine protests spread across the country.

This month, 55 percent of Americans said they disapproved of Biden's handling of the conflict, which was three points worse than in October. Trump hyped up Biden's lack of leadership on this issue. In an interview with Univision this month, he said: "It's going to get worse because there is nobody from the United States who is leading." Still, one is not really sure how he would have behaved in Biden's shoes; but he definitely used Gaza to undermine his successor.

As Israel has been miserably failing to achieve its declared objectives and flagrantly abusing human rights, skepticism about its approach has been voiced in the US Congress. Senate Foreign Relations Committee member Sen. Brian Schatz voiced his concern over Israel's declared goal of eliminating every Hamas member and wondered whether it could enforce a military solution. He said: "Belligerence is not a strategy, fury is not a strategy, righteous outrage — righteous though it may be — is not a strategy."

Biden is supporting a losing cause just as he is electioneering. He also wants to ask Congress for \$14 billion to help Israel. Cardi B, the pop star who supported Biden during his 2020 election campaign, last week dropped her endorsement. Her argument was that the Biden administration's spending on wars in Ukraine and Israel meant that the budget for her home city, New York, had been cut. An image as a warmongering leader will not help him in the next election, certainly not with the Democratic base.

In the American electoral system, it is the swing states that determine the winner, as most states are either strictly Republican or Democratic. According to sources, Arab Americans could make Biden fail in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Georgia. A poll conducted by Sienna showed that Biden is trailing Trump by four to 10 points in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada and Pennsylvania. Hence, he badly needs the votes of progressives, Arab Americans and Muslim Americans.

The Arab American community knows that Trump will be worse for them. When he was president, he imposed the so-called Muslim ban and he last month announced that people who expressed support for Hamas would be deported. Hence, the best scenario for the Arab and Muslim communities would be to negotiate with Biden on a change of policy toward Israel.

Biden reportedly met with representatives of the Arab and Muslim communities, including

important donors, and they told him that, unless he changes course, they will not vote for him again. Somehow, a change of policy has started to materialize, although only a mild one: The US did not veto this month's UN Security Council resolution asking for a humanitarian pause.

But what will happen next? Israel does not seem to have a strategy. Despite the calls for a sustainable solution to the conflict and a two-state solution, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government is doubling down on its annexationist policy. Settlers are increasingly aggressing Palestinians in the West Bank. Politicians are calling for the expulsion of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. Israel's policy is indefensible and the Biden administration's support for Tel Aviv will not only lose him votes in the 2024 election — it will also damage US credibility.

The only way Biden can win the election is if he coerces Israel into a peace process. The humanitarian pause should be prolonged and the US should show leadership by garnering international support for a renewed peace process. Biden has already threatened to sanction settlers who attack Palestinians in the West Bank, but this is not enough. Sanctions should also target the American organizations that fund the illegal settlements.

The Biden administration should show resolve and push for a two-state solution, not keep it as an empty slogan as it is today. The American electorate would be enticed to vote for a president who was overseeing a peace process. In fact, the continuity of the peace process would be an important incentive for Americans to vote for Biden. This is the time for Biden to choose between his ardent Zionism and the interests of his country, including his own self-interest.

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib is a specialist in US-Arab relations with a focus on lobbying. She is co-founder of the Research Center for Cooperation and Peace Building, a Lebanese nongovernmental organization focused on Track II.

ISSI hosts Round Table Discussion on 'Climate Change and the Role of Media'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), organized a Round Table discussion on "Climate Change and the Role of Media." The keynote speaker at the event was Ms. Aisha Khan, Chief Executive of the Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC). Ambassador Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, Foreign Office Spokesperson, and Mr. Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, were among the prominent speakers.

Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director CSP in her introductory remarks stated that the acknowledgment of Pakistan's pivotal role in CoP27, particularly in the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund, underscores the country's proactive stance on this global issue. In this context, the role of media was pivotal in the global discourse on climate change, acknowledging its influence in shaping public perceptions, policy priorities, and advocacy endeavors.

In his welcome address, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the escalating seriousness of climate change, noting that it was

already acknowledged as an "existential threat" for humanity. He recalled that the UN Secretary General had recently pointed to the shift from "global warming" to "global boiling," and had underscored the need for immediate, dramatic action to handle the climate crisis. In the wake of this global warming trajectory, Pakistan had faced severe impacts which left no room for complacency. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood asserted that addressing the menace of climate change required a comprehensive, whole-of-society approach, positioning it at the forefront of national priorities. He highlighted the importance and urgency accorded to this issue in the National Security Policy (2022-26), which called for mobilizing a cohesive national response and building a climate-resilient Pakistan.

In her remarks, Ms. Aisha Khan emphasized the crucial need to comprehend the meaning of climate change to fully grasp its impact and effects. Regrettably, in Pakistan, the term "climate change" had not resonated with ordinary people. Its usage in diverse contexts had led to a lack of clarity, overshadowing its significance in critical areas such as food security, water security, energy security, and more. Ms. Aisha Khan

also highlighted the pervasive confusion surrounding the term and stressed the vital role of the media in resolving this issue. As a widely accessible source of information, the media could play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the common man and the multifaceted threats and challenges posed by climate change.

Ambassador Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, in her remarks on the media's role, highlighted that discussions on climate change could often be overly scientific and technical, posing challenges to general understanding. This was precisely where the media stepped in, breaking down complex information in a way that was accessible and easily comprehensible for the general public. She emphasized the importance of the media's role in bringing international discussions and debates on climate change to the national audience, avoiding any politicization. Ms. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stressed the need for the media to educate the masses on the threats and challenges posed by climate change, particularly when discussions occur on a global stage. Identifying a challenge, she noted the dearth of climate change experts in the media and emphasized the importance of devel-



oping expertise within media outlets.

In his remarks, Secretary Climate Change Mr. Asif Shah highlighted various government initiatives on addressing climate change and related factors. Among others, he pointed out that the Ministry had formed working groups with provinces to coordinate on diverse climate-related issues. Regarding the media's role, he emphasized its power to influence the masses with accurate information. He added that the Minis-

try was actively working on establishing a 'COP Cell' dedicated to COP matters, ensuring a sustainable cycle of policy and work continuity despite personnel changes. Additionally, the Ministry was going to launch a 'COP Portal' with crucial information and a real-time data bank, providing open public access to information relating to mitigation and adaptation actions and policies. Looking ahead to the upcoming CoP28, Secretary Asif Shah underscored the need to

be both "hopeful and realistic." He highlighted Pakistan's focus on showcasing the importance of collective resilience at national level. This collective effort was positioned as a national cause in combating the challenges posed by climate change, he concluded.

The event was concluded with a vote of thanks by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman Board of Governors ISSI.

Photos by Raja Farid

Solidarity

KARACHI: Activists of Palestine Foundation holds protest at Tariq Road to show solidarity with the oppressed Muslims of Palestine.



Photo: Online

Business Confidence on the increase – OICCI's Survey reports positive shift

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: In its latest Business Confidence Index Survey (BCI) – Wave 24, the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) unveiled a promising upswing in Pakistan's business confidence. Conducted from October to November 2023, the survey indicated a seven percent overall improvement compared to the previous wave in March to April 2023.

The survey paints a nuanced picture of business sentiments with the overall business confidence in Pakistan standing at negative 18 percent, marking a positive shift from the negative 25 percent recorded earlier.

The largest increase was recorded in the manufacturing sector at negative 10 percent (negative 19 percent previously), followed by the services sector at negative 18 percent (negative 26 percent previously). The retail & whole-

sale sector though still least confident, has seen an improvement at negative 31 percent compared to negative 35 percent in the last survey. Despite the positive momentum, over three-quarters of respondents expressed concern that the current economic situation could adversely affect their businesses. The top three threats identified were rising inflation, high taxation and PKR devaluation – concerns consistent with the previous wave.

President OICCI Amir Paracha attributed the improvement in business confidence to "relatively stable macroeconomic indicators, favourable changes in the political and economic landscape which was also supported by some stability in FX rates and a record performance at Pakistan Stock Exchange."

Key parameters contributing to the positive trend include Capital Investment and the outlook for Paki-

stan's business situation in the next six months." OICCI's BCI, a comprehensive survey conducted periodically across nine cities, gathered feedback from frontline business stakeholders. The survey encompasses regional, national, sectoral, and business entity levels, with business stakeholders representing almost 80 percent of the GDP.

OICCI CE/Secretary General M Abdul Aleem expressed that "while challenges persist, the overall trend indicates a resilient business community anticipating improvements in the coming months. Foreign investors, as represented by OICCI members, have expressed hope that the authorities will soon take control of anomalies including undue price controls, streamline taxation regime, which collectively is reflected in a particularly positive outlook, contributing to the overall upward trajectory in business confidence."

Speakers call for collective efforts to address economic challenges of Pakistan

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) organized a ceremony to commemorate the 67th anniversary of Pakistan Movement leader Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah and former Federal Minister Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry were the chief guests. Islamabad Bar Council Vice Chairman Raja Aleem Khan Abbasi, National Press Club Secretary Finance Ms. Nayar Ali and others addressed the ceremony and paid tribute to Maulana Zafar Ali Khan for his outstanding services for the Pakistan Movement.

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah said that the life of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan is a torchbearer for all of us as he always raised the voice of the oppressed before the oppressors. He said that brave and truthful personalities like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan

are a great asset of our national heritage and there is a need to educate the young generation about their valuable services for the country.

President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan played a leadership role in the Pakistan Movement and as a prominent journalist and poet he awakened the spirit of freedom among the Muslims of the subcontinent through his pen. He said that Pakistan needs the personalities like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan to overcome the economic challenges. He said that youth is 60 percent of our population who need better guidance to play an active role in making the future of Pakistan bright & prosperous.

PML-N leader and former federal minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said that heroes like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan will always be remembered in history for his great services for the creation of Pakistan. He said that all political leaders should play a role

for the development of the country instead of pulling each other's legs.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI, while paying tribute to the services of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan for Pakistan Movement, said that the business community, lawyers and journalist community are important stakeholders of this country and all should work together to get Pakistan's economy out of the current problems.

Islamabad Bar Council Vice Chairman Raja Aleem Khan Abbasi said that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was the father of journalism who never adopted journalism as a profession, but used it for a cause.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that we are forgetting our ancestors, which should be a cause of concern as those nations that forget their ancestors and heroes do not survive in history. He stressed the importance of educating youth about the country's history and its heroes. He said that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was



one of the founding members of the Muslim League and due to his high journalistic skills, he had made the Zamindar newspaper the most popular newspaper in the subcontinent within a few years. He said that we need the leaders like Maulana Zafar

Ali Khan to address the current difficulties being faced by Pakistan.

National Press Club Secretary Finance Ms. Nayar Ali said that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan is a beacon for all of us. He laid the foundation of resistance journalism and became

a great example for later journalists.

Ms. Afraz Sial, Convener, ICCI Literacy Committee said that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan always spoke the truth due to which he was imprisoned 14 times and his newspapers were banned 15 times.

TPNW can prevent nuclear disaster in South Asia: Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons began at the United Nations Headquarters on 27 November and will continue until 1 December 2023. Ambassador (Dr.) Juan Ramón de la Fuente (Mexico) was elected as President of the Meeting.

António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations calls the Treaty "an important step towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and a strong demonstration of support for multilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament."

Ambassador Melissa Parke of Australia and the Executive Director of 'International campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons' (ICAN) warned

the world body during the high level opening statement that "Nuclear-armed states, instead of pursuing disarmament in accordance with their legal obligations, are squandering tens of billions of dollars every year to 'improve' and expand their arsenals. A theft from the world's poor. An insult to all who value peace...Some of these states are also waging wars of aggression – with staggering death tolls and undeniable nuclear risks...Against this backdrop of bloodshed, we must renew our call not only for nuclear disarmament, but also, more broadly, for multilateral approaches to peace and security, and for adherence to the international rule of law, based on the UN Charter."

It is worth mentioning here that ICAN was awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for the lead-

ership role it played in achieving Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Arundhati Roy, an Indian novelist and activist was representing the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people all over the world when she wrote in "Cost of Living" that "It is such a supreme folly to believe that nuclear weapons are deadly only if they're used. The fact that they exist at all, their presence in our lives, will wreak more havoc than we can begin to fathom. Nuclear weapons pervade our thinking. Control our behavior. Administer our societies. Inform our dreams. They bury themselves like meat hooks deep in the base of our brains. They are purveyors of madness. They are the ultimate colonizer. Whiter than any white man that ever lived. The very heart of whiteness."

Kashmir currently has more than 900,000 military and paramilitary troops occupying the Valley with no more than 10 million people, a ratio of one soldier for every 10 citizens. However, because of their concentration in the towns and cities, the density is more like 5 to one. Imagine what that would be like on your city block.

Having so many troops in this small country whose size is no greater in square miles than the U. S. state of Tennessee should certainly be a cause for concern by anyone. Why are Indian forces there? Where's the war? Is neighboring Pakistan about to invade? Is China? Do they have a similar number of troops amassing at the border? This is more than three times the number of troops the U. S. had at the height of the Iraq War. The answer is None of the Above. It's a curious



fact that we have a very circular problem inherent in a deep paranoia India has long had of an uprising and its use of such troops to maintain control and put down any threat has become a way of life. It's like avoiding a fire by burning down the house first.

The possibility of such an uprising is greatly enhanced and exacerbated by the presence of these troops and would more likely be a direct provocation for such an uprising and in fact has been. Rather than relieve the pressure in the cooker by taking it off the fire, India's solution has been to simply turn up the burner. The greatest cause of

discontent is this constant abrasive to the social conscience, this erosion of trust in New Delhi, and a pervasive atmosphere of fear. People look for leadership elsewhere in their own ranks, and they have. There is a deeply entrenched movement at the grassroots level that has become very influential in being the voice of public opinion.

Perhaps it's time the major powers take this seriously. The answer is plain as day for anyone. Kashmir has international legitimacy. It has international sanctity. It has the commitment from the United Nations Security Council. These commitments should once and for all be honored. The clock is ticking. Every day that passes without resolution of Kashmir dispute is one day closer to a cataclysm that will reach far beyond the borders of all countries involved.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
60,730.26	59,811.34
Day's High	Day's Low
60,845.60	60,023.85
Index Value	Change
19,760,699,760	+918.92
Percentage	Time
+1.54%	28 Nov, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,455.24	-5.46
Percentage	Time
-0.073%	28 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
35,497.20	+163.73
Percentage	Time
+0.46%	28 Nov, 12:15 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
33,408.39	-39.28
Percentage	Time
-0.12%	28 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	187.2	189
Bahrain Dinar	750.11	758.11
Canadian Dollar	209	211
China Yuan	39.58	39.98
Danish Krone	41.38	41.78
Euro	312	315
Hong Kong Dollar	36.24	36.59
Indian Rupee	3.39	3.5
Japanese Yen	1.55	1.63
Kuwaiti Dinar	914.36	923.36
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	76.5	77.25
Singapore Dollar	211	213
Swedish Korona	26.93	27.23
Swiss Franc	320.1	322.6
Thai Bhat	8.01	8.16
U.A.E Dirham	78.25	79
UK Pound Sterling	360	363
US Dollar	285.7	288.5

Saudi Arabia halts fuel supply to PIA

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The fuel supply has been suspended to the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) planes at two major airports in Saudi Arabia, citing sources.

The fuel supply to the PIA planes has been suspended at two major airports in Saudi Arabia, Makkah and Madinah, due to non-payment of dues.

Sources added that the PIA flights were delayed for three to four hours due to the halt in fuel supply at Makkah and Madinah airports. The PIA spokesperson confirmed the development. In a statement, the PIA spokesperson clarified that swift payments were made to the concerned oil companies.

It added that the fuel supply was temporarily suspended due to a delay in the transfer of funds to the oil firms' accounts. The spokesperson said that the fuel supply would be resumed soon after the completion of the transactions.

The national flag carrier had already suffered a huge financial loss due to a days-long halt in fuel supply locally in October after the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) rejected to continue supplies due to non-payment of dues.

KE asserts investment has improved services in all areas

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) today heard K-Electric's petition for grant of non-exclusive distribution license and supplier license for the next 20 years to its service territory including Karachi, Dhabaji, Gharo in Sindh and Balochistan's Hub, Bela and Vinder regions.

The hearing was attended by various stakeholders including Karachi's industries and the general public. KE's senior leadership including Chief Financial Officer Aamir Ghaziani, Chief Distribution Officer Fawad Gilani, and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Sadia Dada, represented the company to address the questions framed by the regulator.

New taxes will turn the industrial estate into an industrial graveyard

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, on Tuesday criticized the decision to increase water and sanitation charges and property tax by Municipal Corporation, terming it illegal.

The decision to increase water charges, sanitation and property tax by 200% is illegal and immoral; therefore, he said residents and the business community of Islamabad reject it.

He warned that if the tax is increased, the citizens and traders will strongly resist it, for which the administration and concerned departments will be responsible.

Shahid Rashid Butt, while addressing an

emergency meeting of the residents of F-6 Sector and business people, said that water is not available and people have to buy it, the sanitation management is abysmal, and there are piles of garbage everywhere in the city.

He questioned how they can ask the people to pay more taxes when services have not improved but deteriorating rapidly.

The business leader said that if the income of the people has not increased and nothing has become cheaper, then it is immoral to burden the masses with taxes.

The elected officials are authorized to make such decisions. Bureaucracy has taken this decision by overstepping the mandate, causing great anxiety among the people and people in business.



He said this decision would increase the rents of houses and offices in Islamabad, which are already sky-high. Islamabad Industrial Area has become a graveyard of industries, and if this decision is implemented, the remaining sectors will die.

Mr. Butt said that investors will move their money out; thousands of people will be unemployed while the government will have to bear heavy revenue losses.

Shahid Rashid Butt said that why and how tax can be collected from the communities which CDA has declared illegal and where it has not provided any facilities.

If an organization goes bankrupt, it is due to their employees; he said trying to burden the public is reprehensible and will not be allowed.

Welcome

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Azeem Qureshi M. D. Legend hotels presenting the flower bouquet to H. E Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan on his arrival at hotel for dinner



Photo: Online

Pakistan's share in South Africa market 'nonspecific'—South African envoy

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Pakistan's share in the \$100 billion import market of South Africa is quite negligible and the private sector of Pakistan must aggressively penetrate in it under "Look Africa" policy, said Mr. Mthuzuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa. Addressing the business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that being an import economy, it offers Pakistan a wide range of products to this market.

He said that South Africa is a mineral rich country and Pakistani investors could also avail from this opportunity. He said that Pakistan could export mangoes in lieu of avocado under a barter system but direct contacts between the business communities of two countries are prerequisite. Responding to a question about law-and-order situation, he said that security issues are similar all over the world.

He said that South Africa is more suitable for import and export with other landlocked African countries as it has a well-equipped sea port. About tourism, he said that the scenic valleys of northern areas of Pakistan are more beautiful than Switzerland but Pakistan should make these areas easily accessible for the tourists. He also stressed the need to exploit the untapped opportunities in each other's countries.



Earlier President FCCI Dr Khurram Tariq welcomed the high commissioner and said that Faisalabad was established in 1898 as a "Mandi" town by British rulers. "This city was designed on the pattern of Union Jack", he said and added that now it has progressed and became the third largest city of the country which is also second in revenue generation and job creation.

He said that FCCI has 8500 members who represent more than 100 sectors and sub sectors. He said that Faisalabad is playing a key role in textile exports but we could not make exports to South Africa due to high tariffs.

He requested the high commissioner to review it to pave way for the textile exports to the South African market. He said that approximately one lac Pakistan-

is are settled in South Africa while a local firm is also providing consultancy services in your country.

Dr Khurram Tariq stressed the need to sign an FTA to enhance bilateral trade and arrange a single country exhibition to showcase exportable surplus. Muhammad Azhar Chaudhary, Rana Faysal and Mian Tayyab participated in the question answer session while President Dr Khurram Tariq presented FCCI shield to Mr. Mthuzuzeli Madikiza High Commissioner of South Africa. Senior Vice President Dr Sajjad Arshad offered a vote of thanks.

Later the high commissioner also recorded his comments in the FCCI visitor's book. Vice President Haji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli, Maqsood Akhtar Butt and Shafique Hussain Shah were also present during this event.

Zong 4G announces the launch of MZA for an enhanced user experience

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecommunications company, has launched a suite of new features on its My Zong App (MZA), further enriching the user experience and providing unparalleled convenience to its customers.

MZA Sprint has added 13 new Digital Value Added Services (VAS) to cater to diverse user preferences. From entertainment options and exclusive Golootlo deals to Islamic and infotainment services, instant gaming portals, tournaments, and sports and gaming currency, users can seamlessly access these services through the dedicated Z Play module, making MZA a one-stop platform for a variety of digital experiences.

In addition, MZA Sprint



introduces a Complaint Handling and Status Check feature that will enable customers to easily share their grievances through the app.

The update also brings convenient payment gateways for buying bundles and offers, offering multiple payment options like Debit/Credit Cards, Jazz Cash, and EasyPaisa. The user-friendly "Online Recharge" interface and exclusive Monthly Pro Max offers further elevate the financial services offered on MZA. MZA also offers an offline maps integration that streamlines the discovery of 250+ regional/city offers, contributing to an improved MZA experience for users.

Tetra Pak and WWF to mentor 10,000 Pak students on waste recycling awareness



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Tetra Pak Pakistan, a frontrunner in sustainable food processing and packaging solutions, has partnered with WWF Pakistan for the sixth consecutive year to continue its nationwide awareness program aimed at educating young Pakistani students on the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling. This year, the student engagement drive will span across 50 schools situated in the metropolitan cities of Lahore, Karachi, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad.

Over 10,000 Pakistani students, between the age group of 5 to 13 years

and studying in grades 1 to 7, will benefit from this unique opportunity which is based on the modern teaching method of experience-based learning. Volkan Aydeniz, Sustainability Director at Tetra Pak, officially kicked off the student engagement in partnership with WWF training executives. So far, the team has already conducted around 18 recycling awareness sessions, involving more than 1700 students from 17 schools in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad and moving fast towards the target. Both private and government schools are included in the campaign, which will comprise a total of 120 sessions.

5th Global Takaful, Re-Takaful and Interest-Free Banking Forum 2023 held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Spokesman Report

DUBAI, UAE: 5th Global Takaful, Re-Takaful and Interest-free Banking Forum was hosted by AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics in association with Ethiopian Reinsurance on 23rd November 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This event reflects the Ethiopian Interest-free Financial Industry booming where 5 Takaful windows are operational, and 18 plus banks are offering interest-free banking products line. Among all East African countries, Ethiopia is on top as per the number of institutions offering alternative products, it reflects the approach of stakeholders that interest-free financial alternatives are for all. The event aimed to increase collaboration and promote the growth of Takaful, Retakaful, and interest-free banking in Ethiopia and beyond.

The Chief Guest of the Forum

His Excellency Ato. Solomon Desta Vice Governor Financial Institutions Supervision, National Bank of Ethiopia discussed about the size of Ethiopian domestic market and express intention about inviting foreign direct institutional investment in Ethiopia. He also mentioned some of the challenges they are facing inadequate financial education and infrastructure for interest-free financial industry. To address the challenges, he mentioned that we need to have proper financial literacy system, Shariah infrastructure for interest-free banking, and regulatory framework to enable environment.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal, Chief Executive Officer AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics, United Arab Emirates acknowledge the support of Ethiopian Financial Industry. He highlighted the role of Ethiopian industry in East African financial market and the development made by



the domestic industry over the decade. He also mentioned that AlHuda CIBE from 15 years is dedicated towards the African markets through its consultancy services and capacity building programs. Among the distinguished speakers and well known industry stakeholders shared their experiences and opinions from Kenya, Ethiopia, USA, Mali, Somaliland, Morocco, Uganda, UAE and Pakistan.

This event was hosted by the

support of Organization of Eastern and Southern Africa Insurers, Association of Tanzania Insurers, National Insurance Authority Somaliland, Insurance Training College Uganda, AT Insurance Brokers and Association of Ethiopian Insurers. The main sponsors for the Forum were Awash Insurance (Salam Takaful), a frontrunner in the takaful sector, has a rich history of providing innovative and customer-centric risk covering solutions and

Oromia Insurance (Takaful), committed to delivering value-driven services with aim to provide alternative options for its customers.

The agenda of the forum was based on present day practices of takaful industry, takaful portfolio, product line, product innovation, marketing strategies, risk management, actuarial services, Shariah legitimacy, future prospects of the industry, re-takaful and Interest-Free Banking.

Sports Diplomacy

CAS-Serena Hotels Int'l Squash Tournament Begins!

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels in collaboration with Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Squash Federation, held a press conference announcing the beginning of the International Men & Women Squash Series 2023 in Islamabad starting from November 29th till December 4th, 2023.

During the press conference, the PSF Secretary Amir Nawaz announced that other than the Pakistani players, athletes hailing from Malaysia, Egypt, and Spain will compete in the forthcoming tournament. The prize money for the men's championship is USD 1805 for the winner and USD 1140 for the runner-up, while the prize money for the women's event is USD 902 for the winner and USD 570 for the runner-up. The championship finals are set to take place



on 4th December 2023, while the opening ceremony is set for 29th November 2023. "The PSF has been working really hard to raise squash's image throughout the nation. The feder-

ation wants to demonstrate to the world that we can organize major squash tournaments and host the world-class players in an effective way," the PSF secretary said. He also highlighted the federation was providing extensive support and the best available facilities to players and necessary arrangements have been made to hold the event successfully.

Serena Hotels under the initiative of Sports Diplomacy has always been committed to revitalizing and restoring the glory that squash once brought to our nation. In the efforts to do so, Serena Hotels aims to act as a bridge, encouraging a revived enthusiasm and deepened appreciation for this esteemed game and to ensure that squash not only regains its position as a treasured sporting legacy but also continues to inspire future generations.

Tom Kohler-Cadmore powers Deccan Gladiators to sink New York Strikers in Abu Dhabi T10 League



A Sports

ABU DHABI: Tom Kohler-Cadmore scored a blistering 68 runs followed by a combined bowling effort to help Deccan Gladiators defeat New York Strikers by 22 runs in the opening match of the Abu Dhabi T10 League here at Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium.

After being invited to bat first, Deccan Gladiators posted 118 runs on board at a loss of eight wickets in their accumulative 10 overs.

Opening batter Tom Kohler-Cadmore led the charge for Gladiators with a 33-ball 68 with the help of four boundaries and six sixes before being substituted out.

Other than Kohler-Cadmore only two batters managed to reach double figures as Andre Russell scored 17 off 9, while Dan Lawrence scored 10.

Chamika Karunaratne led the bowling charts for Strikers with figures of 3-25 in his two overs.

Muhammad Jawadullah and Ali Khan also picked one wicket each.

In response, the New York Strikers slipped to 14-2 in the third over with both openers back to the dugout.

Muhammad Waseem and Asif Ali then played quick cameos of 26 and 24 runs respectively, but got out at crucial times to leave their team reeling at 84-5 in the ninth over.

Sunil Narine remained unbeaten at 10, with the team scoring 96 runs at the loss of six wickets in their accumulative 10 overs.

Northern Warriors and Morrisville Samp Army will face each other in the second match of the Abu Dhabi T10 League tonight.

The seventh season of the Abu Dhabi T10 League features eight teams - Team Abu Dhabi, New York Strikers, Northern Warriors, Deccan Gladiators, Bangla Tigers, Chennai Braves, Morrisville SAMP ARMY, and Delhi Bulls.

The teams will go head-to-head in a round-robin format with the four best-performing teams competing in the knockout stages with the final set to take place on 9 December.

PCB announces team management for Australia tour



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced the Team Management for the upcoming tour of Australia.

Pakistan's 18-member squad is scheduled to play a three-match Test series against Australia commencing from 14 December 2023 to 7 January 2024.

This will be Shan Masood's first assignment as Test captain, after being named Pakistan's captain for the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle following Babar Azam's resignation last week.

Pakistan team will depart from Lahore on 30 November and will kick off the Test series with the first Test in Perth from 14-18 December 2023.

The second Test match will be played in Melbourne, from 26 to 30 December, while Sydney will host the last game of the tour from 3 to 7 January 2024.

Pakistan Team Management for the Tour of Australia Naveed Akram Cheema (Team manager), Mohammad Hafeez (Director - Pakistan men's cricket team), Adam Hoolio-ake (batting coach), Simon Grant Helmut (high-performance coach), Umar Gul (fast bowling coach), Saeed Ajmal (spin bowling coach), Abdul Majeed (fielding coach), Mansoor Rana (assistant team manager), Shahid Aslam (assistant batting coach), Drikus Saaiman (strength and conditioning coach/Trainer), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist), Talha Ejaz (team analyst), Lt Col (Rtd) Akhtar Hussain (security manager), Raza Rashid Kitchlew (media manager), Ammar Ahsan (videographer), Dr Sohail Saleem (team doctor) and Malang Ali (team masseur).

Pakistan squad for the tour of Australia

Shan Masood (c), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jr, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel and Shaheen Shah Afridi

Team Muhammad Aslam Clinched Int'l Musheer Rabbani Memorial 5 A Side Hockey Title

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Team Muhammad Aslam won the title of International Musheer Rabbani Memorial 5 A Side Hockey tournament 2023 by defeating Team Abdul Azeem Khan by 2-0 in the final at Mini Astro Turf of KHA Sports Complex on 26th November 2023.

The tournament is being organized by Rabbani Hockey Club in collaboration with Karachi Hockey Association.

6 teams participated in this tournament. The chief guest of the final match was Rameez Ahmed Chowdhary Business Head Middle East and a Africa Tech Matter UAE,

Olympian Hanif Khan Along with Amir Akhtar Director Dallas Field Hockey USA Master Manager

Head of the State Oklahoma Distributed medals, Shields and cash prizes to the participants and Officials.

Event Coordinator Ausaf Rabbani said This is 3rd Musheer Rabbani Memorial Hockey Tournament in which 70 Players participated, these Types of Events will boost and encourage new Young Players. Soon Will be Organizing this type of Event on Districts Level.



Details of Winners are as under with match details:

Winner: Team Muhammad Aslam.
 Runner: Team Abdul Azeem Khan.
 3rd Position: Team Munawwar uz Zaman.
 Man of the Final Match: Mubashir Atif.
 Player of the Tournament: Haris Naseer.
 Best Defender Senior: Zafeer Ahmed.

Best Defender Junior: Shahid Balti.
 Best Midfielder: Mohsin Nawaz.
 Emerging Players: Tanveer Ali & Abdul Sami.
 Best Forward: Fakhir Ali & Mubashir Atif.
 Top Scorer: Shahzaib Arbab
 1st Semifinal, Muhammad Aslam beat Abdul Naeem Khan by (3-2)
 Goal Scorers

Muhammad Aslam
 3 Shahzaib Arbab (6,8,16mins)
 Abdul Naeem Khan
 1 Fakhir Ali (3mins)
 1 Saad Alam (17mins)
 Man of the Match Zafeer Ahmed (Muhammad Aslam)
 2nd Semifinal, Abdul Azeem Khan beat Munawwar Uz Zaman by (1-0)
 Goal Scorers
 Abdul Azeem Khan
 1 Mohsin Nawaz (19mins)
 Man of the Match Mohsin Nawaz (Abdul Azeem Khan)
 3rd Position Match, Munawwar Uz Zaman beat Abdul Naeem Khan by (2-1)
 Goal Scorers
 Munawwar Uz Zaman
 1 Daniyal Rashid (12mins)
 1 Musab Faizan (18mins)
 Abdul Naeem Khan
 1 Abdullah Khan (19mins)
 Final:
 Muhammad Aslam beat Abdul Azeem Khan by (2-0)
 Goal Scorers
 Muhammad Aslam
 1 Mubashir Atif (17mins)
 1 Shahzaib Arbab (19mins)

Mohammad Hafeez opens up about contacting Imad Wasim, Mohammad Amir

A Sports

LAHORE: The Director of the Pakistan men's cricket team Mohammad Hafeez revealed that he contacted all-rounders Imad Wasim as well as pace bowler Mohammad Amir and opened up about the details of the discussion.

Mohammad Hafeez, during a press conference ahead of Pakistan's tour of Australia, disclosed that he contacted Imad Wasim prior to his retirement and told him that he is in the team's plans for the upcoming T20I series against New Zealand.

"I communicated to Imad Wasim that he was in my plans for Pakistan cricket. He had not signed the central contract by then, although he had been awarded one," said Hafeez.

"I asked him for his availability [for the New Zealand series] and he said that he would think about it and would let



me know. He made himself unavailable for the New Zealand series and then two days later announced his retirement."

He then acknowledged Imad Wasim's services for the Pakistan cricket team and wished him well for his future.

"I wish the best for Imad as he has served Pakistan Cricket with utmost integrity."

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Hafeez then shed light on his conversation with Mohammad Amir, who shocked the cricketing world in 2020 with his sudden retirement at the age of 28.

"I personally called Mohammad Amir and told him that if he wants to play for Pakistan, he is free to take back his retirement and get back in the system," said the team director.

"If he performs in domestic, he will be considered purely on the basis of merit and will be given equal opportunities like others."

"However, he [Amir] said that he has moved on in his life and his priorities have changed in life, which we have to respect," Hafeez concluded.

Sohail Tanvir aims to bring out the best players for U19 World Cup 2024

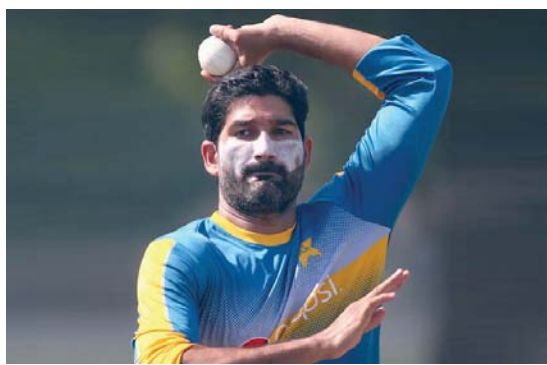
Sports Desk

KARACHI: Newly appointed chairperson of the junior selection committee Sohail Tanvir stated that he aims to bring out the best talent of Pakistan to make a formidable squad for the U19 World Cup 2024.

"After assuming the role of chief selector, I checked the records of all players and invited them to the camp to observe them," said Sohail Tanvir.

"My aim is to find the best players from our domestic cricket and make the best possible squad for the U19 World Cup."

He also said that producing players for the future is more important than



winning trophies in junior cricket.

"Every team wants to win, but at junior [age-group] level, bringing out the best talent is the first priority than winning trophies," Tanvir added.

"I have told players to play

with a fearless approach and adapt to the requirements of modern-day cricket."

Sohail Tanvir also stressed on arranging more international tours for under-19 teams to give players a better chance to be groomed for international cricket.

Sohail Tanvir's first assignment as chairperson of the junior selection committee is the selection of the Pakistan U19 squad for the 2023 ACC U19 Asia Cup scheduled to be held between 8 and 17 December in UAE.

Pakistan U19 will later take part in the ICC U19 World Cup from 13 January to 4 February in Sri Lanka.

He was appointed the chairperson of the junior selection committee earlier this month.

Sohail Tanvir made his international debut in 2007 and made two Test, 62 ODI and 57 T20I appearances for Pakistan. He picked up 130 wickets and scored 612 runs across the three formats.

Ronaldo tells referee to overturn penalty he won in AFC Champions League

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Cristiano Ronaldo convinced the referee to change his mind after awarding him a penalty in Al Nassr's AFC Champions League 0-0 draw with Iran's Persepolis.

The 38-year-old former Manchester United and Real Madrid great appeared to have been brought down by Soroush Rafiei inside the box and Chinese referee Ma Ning pointed to the spot.

Ronaldo leapt to his feet and approached the referee, wagging his finger, shaking his head and telling him there had been no foul.

After consulting VAR, the referee was sent to the pitch-side monitor and reversed his decision in the Group E clash in Riyadh.

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The Saudi Pro League side had to



play most of the match with 10 men after Ali Lajami was given a straight red card for a shin-raking challenge in the 17th minute.

They also lost Ronaldo to a neck injury with 13 minutes remaining, caused by Persepolis goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand landing on the Portuguese star when claiming a high ball.

But the 2018 and 2020 Champions League runners-up from Iran were unable to capitalise, the point proving enough for Al Nassr to seal their place in the knockout stages as group winners.

Ronaldo has little time to recover with Al Nassr facing Al Hilal on Friday in a top-of-the-table league clash.

Health issues

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on mental health issues in Pakistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

President calls for national policy to address mental health issues

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday emphasized the need for formulation of a national policy to address the mental health issues as 24% population of the country was suffering from various mental health problems. He stressed upon an institutional framework and public-private partnership to provide mental health services to the people.

The president expressed these views while chairing a follow-up meeting at the Aiwan-e-Sadr on mental health in Pakistan, the President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

A detailed presentation by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination on the National Mental Health App "Humraaz" highlighted that more than 240,000 calls had been received since its launch in April 2023.

President calls for national policy to address mental health issues the meeting was attended by Caretaker Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr Nadeem Jan and representatives of the National Commission for Human Rights, the World Health Organization, and senior government officials.

Representatives of the provincial health departments, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan Psychiatric Society, Taskeen Health Initiative, Pakistan Psychological Association, Pakistani American Psychiatric Association of North America, British Pakistani Psychiatrists Association, and other organizations working on mental health attended the meeting via video link.

The president appreciated the launching of "Humraaz" that was providing mental health assistance and counselling services to the people in need. He called for improving the effectiveness of the Humraaz app, besides strengthening the mental health support system in the country.

He highlighted that mental health was a major concern

for Pakistan which required coordinated efforts by both the public and private sectors to utilize their expertise. He further emphasized the need for an integrated approach on all mental health-related programmes and initiatives to effectively address the mental health challenge being faced by the country.

President Alvi stressed upon the need for the capacity building of human resources, besides providing online trainings to overcome the shortage of mental health professionals. The meeting underscored the need for raising awareness about mental health issues to educate the people about the importance of seeking mental health counselling.

The role of the family in providing psychological support and helping manage health issues was also highlighted. During the meeting, the need for collective measures and an integrated approach involving various stakeholders, including relevant ministries, Pakistani psychiatric associations based in the United States and the United Kingdom, and civil society was also stressed.

The minister for health services appreciated the role played by President Dr Arif Alvi and the First Lady in raising awareness about various health issues in Pakistan. He expressed the hope that the precedent set by the Presidency would be sustained and followed.

Education vital for progress of country: Education Minister

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education, Madad Ali Sindhi has said that education plays a vital role in the progress of a country. This he said on Tuesday, while addressing a conference on the topic of "Revolutionizing higher education: reconciling required & acquired learning" held at International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI).

The Education Minister said that the digital revolution has changed the learning methods, while hurdles of time and place for education are no longer an issue. He emphasized the use of technology in teaching and learning.

This international conference is being organized by the Faculty of Education of IIUI in collaboration with IQRA University and Intentional Centre of Excellence. Around 50 papers are being presented by national and international scholars in the conference.



Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC), said that no country may progress unless it invests in education. He said that Youth have the potential to change the fate of a nation. He added that Pakistan has won maximum scholarships for Europe in previous year.

Rector IIUI, Dr. Samina Malik in her address said that training of the teachers in the light of contemporary requirements of teaching is a prerequisite for a successful education system.

In the inaugural ceremony of the conference keynote addresses were delivered by Mr. Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder and CEO Nutshell Group and Prof. Dr. Graham Spickett-Jones. The conference was also addressed by President, IQRA University, Karachi, Dr. Nassar Ikram, Vice President, Academics Prof. Dr. Abdul Raheman and Dean Faculty of Education, Dr. Muhammad Sarwar.

CPEC's 10th anniversary a new starting point to build upgraded version of corridor: Chinese CG

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Consul General of China in Karachi Yang Yundong on Tuesday said that the 10th anniversary of the CPEC this year is a new starting point from which a new journey to build an "upgraded version" of the corridor highlighting growth, livelihood, innovation, greenness and openness is in front of us. He said that on the way forward, both countries shall continue to strengthen cooperation in areas such as industrial park, agriculture, mining and energy sector, and accelerate the implementation of major connectivity projects, creating more tangible benefits for the people of the two countries and make greater contributions to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

World Bank points out policy shifts for 'sustainable, productive' Pakistan

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank on Tuesday launched a series of Policy Notes that outline critical policy shifts required for a "productive, sustainable, resilient, and healthy" Pakistan.

According to a statement, World Bank's Regional Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser - who is in Pakistan to reaffirm the Bank's support - launched the policy notes.

The policy notes—focusing on child stunting, fiscal sustainability, private sector growth, energy, learning poverty, agriculture, and climate change—are the culmination of several months of outreach and engagements conducted across the country under the "Reforms for a Brighter Future - Time to Decide" banner. They are intended to help inform the public policy dialogue in the context of the upcoming elections.

"Pakistan's economy is stuck in a low-growth trap with poor human development outcomes and increasing poverty. Economic conditions leave Pakistan highly vulnerable to climate shocks, with insufficient public resources to finance development and climate adaptation," said Martin Raiser.

"It is now time for Pakistan to decide whether to maintain the patterns of the past or take difficult but crucial steps



towards a brighter future." The policy notes argue that Pakistan needs to address its acute human capital crisis—including the high prevalence of stunting and learning poverty—by adopting a coordinated and coherent cross-sectoral approach to basic services involving both provincial and federal governments.

He suggested Pakistan Improve the quality of public spending and take serious measures to expand the revenue base, ensuring that the better off pay their share. The country to Pursue business regulatory and trade reforms and reduce the presence of the state in the economy to increase productivity, competitiveness, and exports, he said.

He said that Pakistan should remove distortions that undermine the performance of the agricultural and energy sectors, including through subsidy

reform and privatisation of electricity distribution companies.

"Almost 40% of children in Pakistan suffer from stunted growth, more than 78% of Pakistan's children cannot read and understand a simple text by the age of 10. These are stark indicators of a silent human capital crisis that needs priority attention," said Martin Raiser. "With additional spending on water and sanitation of around 1% of GDP per year and better coordination at the local level, stunting could be halved over a decade with significant positive impacts on growth and incomes. This is just one example of the huge economic benefits a coherent and decisive reform strategy could have."

During his visit he will meet government officials at the Federal and Provincial levels, and representatives from the

private sector and academia. He will also visit the DASU and Tarbela Hydropower Projects, as well as project sites in Sindh and Punjab.

After launching the reforms report on Pakistan, while addressing the press conference, The World Bank's Regional Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser said that human capital investment is very important in Pakistan without which a sustainable economy will be difficult.

Bank's Regional Vice President for South Asia, said that the sectors of education, health and environment are important, where the economic growth in Pakistan can be improved by allocating more budget.

He called tax reform and important measures to improve tax to Gross Domestic Production (GDP) as necessary, without which the development program in the budget cannot run properly.

Martin Raiser said that fiscal discipline has a very important role in sustainable economic growth in which steps are needed.

He said that fiscal consolidation is the need of the hour and added that the environment is currently a regional issue in South Asia and countries are influencing each other in terms of environment.

Photo Raja Farid

PM visits UAE's Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi



Spokesman Report

ABU DHABI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday visited the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, the PM Office said. The prime minister commenced his visit by offering a message that highlights notions of coexistence, tolerance, and openness to other cultures, inspired by the nation's late founder's rich legacy. He was also apprised about the mosque's leading role in highlighting the Islamic culture's true essence and promoting cross-cultural communication worldwide. Caretaker Chief Minister of the Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi and Pakistan's Ambassador of the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmzi also accompanied the Prime Minister. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is a master piece of modern Islamic architecture with capacity to accommodate over 40,000 visitors. Sheikh Zayed Mosque is the largest mosque in UAE and third largest in the world.

He recalled late Sheikh Zayed's close relationship with the people and the leadership of Pakistan. During the visit, the prime minister was briefed about the mosque's noble

message that highlights notions of coexistence, tolerance, and openness to other cultures, inspired by the nation's late founder's rich legacy. He was also apprised about the mosque's leading role in highlighting the Islamic culture's true essence and promoting cross-cultural communication worldwide. Caretaker Chief Minister of the Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi and Pakistan's Ambassador of the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmzi also accompanied the Prime Minister. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is a master piece of modern Islamic architecture with capacity to accommodate over 40,000 visitors. Sheikh Zayed Mosque is the largest mosque in UAE and third largest in the world.

Govt to provide free SIMs, female abayas to Hujjaj: Minister



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed Tuesday said that the government would provide free of cost mobile SIMs with roaming internet packages, female abayas having a Pakistani flag on the backside and 13 Kg suitcases to pilgrims performing hajj this year.

Talking to a private news channel, minister said that it was a historic

step that caretaker government has declared a significant reduction of one lac in government Hajj expenses, adding, further 50,000 will also be reduced in coming few days after which hujjaj will get back their money in their accounts.

He said a new mobile application has been designed to assist pilgrims, which will provide navigation support and enable constant communication between pilgrims and relevant officials.

Pakistan 'cheapest country to live in', says report

City

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has been ranked as 'the cheapest country in the world to live in' by the Cost of Living Index for Countries 2023 report published by Numbeo.com.

The detailed list - issued by Numbeo.com - includes information regarding the Cost of Living Index of 140 countries along with city-by-city data for every individual country. The company uses six metrics to determine which countries are the most affordable.

The metrics used include rent index, local purchasing power index, cost of living index, groceries index, restaurants index, cost of living plus rent index and information compiled is compared to the cost of living in New York City, one of the most expensive cities in the world. According to the report, Pakistan

has been ranked as 'the cheapest country in the world to live in' with a cost of living index showing 17.6, followed by Egypt 21.7, India 22.9 and Nigeria 23.2.

Within Pakistan, Rawalpindi has been ranked as the cheapest city to live in followed by Karachi and Lahore (CPI 33.22).

The report stated that the estimated monthly cost for a family of four is Rs283,669.4 without the rent, while a single person's estimated monthly costs without rent are Rs87,985.3.

