



Women's access to Higher Education crucial to transform the World: Mushaal

Special Assistant to Prime Minister for human rights and women empowerment, Mushaal Husseain Mullick, has said that higher education is not just a pursuit of knowledge but a gateway to critical thinking and skills acquisition. It provides individuals, especially women, with the necessary resources to navigate an ever evolving world. (Details on Page 3)



Shan Masood reveals Pakistan's first choice wicketkeeper in Australia

Newly appointed Test captain of Pakistan cricket team Shan Masood has shown faith in former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed as the first-choice wicketkeeper during the Australian tour. Shan Masood, who replaced Babar Azam as Test captain, acknowledged Sarfaraz Ahmed's performance in recent Test matches for Pakistan while talking to the media ahead of the team's departure for Australia. (Details on Page 7)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

New era begins

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Interior of Kuwait, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and Pakistani delegation in a group photo after the signing of MoUs of cooperation between Pakistan and Kuwait on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties

Spokesman Report

KUWAIT: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Interior of Kuwait Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al Sabah on Wednesday underlined the importance of historical brotherly ties between the two countries. During a meeting, they reaffirmed the desire to strengthen the fraternal ties by transforming them into a mutually

rewarding economic partnership. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI(M) was also present during the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. The leaders also witnessed the signing of seven agreements concluded to attract multi-billion dollars invest-

ment from the State of Kuwait in various sectors of Pakistan including food security/ agriculture, hydel power, water supplies (safe drinking water and supporting mining activities), establishment of mining fund to support mineral industry, Technology Zones Development and Mangrove Preservation. In addition, three MoUs in the fields of culture & art, environment & sustainable development were also signed. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy

PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. The leaders expressed great satisfaction at the trajectory of relations, agreed to remain in close contact, and take swift steps in further strengthening and deepening of Pakistan-Kuwait relations. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties.

firm to strengthen fraternal ties. The prime minister of Pakistan termed these agreements with Kuwait another milestone in the achievements which the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) platform was bringing for the country. Caretaker PM, Kuwaiti First Deputy PM reaffirm to strengthen fraternal ties. The caretaker prime minister also prayed for the good health of Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of the State of Kuwait.

Politically stable, economically strong Pakistan vital for protection of Indian minorities: Solangi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday said that a politically stable and economically strong Pakistan was vital for the protection of the rights of minorities in India, especially Kashmiris who had been struggling for their right to self-determination for over seven decades. Addressing the Kashmir seminar, jointly organised by the Friends of Kashmir and the Kashmir Media Service, he said Pakistan had always extended its moral, political and diplomatic support for the just cause of Kashmiris and would continue to do so till freedom of the occupied territory.



said the reports by international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US State Development, Reporters Without Borders and others had been exposing incidents of atrocities against the minorities in India. Solangi said atrocities against religious minorities were continuing in India without any check and the international community had kept silent due to certain considerations. The minister said that unlike the Government of Pakistan, the Modi regime never supported the oppressed minorities of India who were continuously targeted by the extremist Hindu organisations. The Indian Government had forced various social media platforms to block the Pakistani social media accounts in India, and thus tried to hide the facts and figures about plight of minorities in the country, he added.

He said India was a so-called democracy where minorities were being mistreated and victimised by the majoritarian Hindu hardliners. He said after the unfortunate Jaranwala incident, the Government of Pakistan expressed solidarity with the victims, but the Government of India never supported the victims of the atrocities of Hindutva brigade. He

Govt to try to resolve missing person issue: Sarfraz Bugti

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister, Sarfraz Bugti said on Wednesday that the caretaker government would try its best to resolve the issue of missing persons. Talking to media persons after appearing before the Islamabad High Court's Chief Justice, he said that chief minister Baluchistan had constituted an inquiry commission to probe the murder allegations on Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and if allegation was proved correct, an action would be taken according to the law. The minister said that the issue was sub-judice and should not be discussed publicly however the commission earlier constituted for miss-



ing persons would present its report on the recovery of 25 missing persons to the court. Responding to a query, Bugti said that there was a very thin line between self-disappearance and enforced disappearance, and missing, adding there were many cases of self-disappearances however the cases of enforced disappearances yet to be decided under the UN charter. The minister further said that the commission would categorize the cases of self-disappearances, enforced disappearances and missing persons after reviewing all the cases.

ECP refutes news about delay in elections

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday categorically rejected media reports of potential delay in the holding of general elections, terming them misleading. An ECP spokesperson, in a statement, also refuted false news reports alleging inadequate preparation of electoral lists. The spokesperson said that the Election Commission had approached the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) against the individuals disseminating such misinformation, besides initiating legal proceedings against them.

Nawaz Sharif acquitted in Avenfield reference

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a major relief for the PML-N, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday acquitted former prime minister Nawaz Sharif in the Avenfield reference. A two-member bench comprising IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict on Nawaz's appeal against his conviction in the case. Talking to journalists outside the court after the IHC's verdict which acquitted him, Nawaz said that he had left his matter up to Allah. "I had left it up to Allah. In Al-Azizia [Steel Mills corruption reference] also, I've also left my matters up to Allah." Nawaz Sharif was convicted by accountability courts in Avenfield and Al-Azizia references. The accountability court had awarded a 10-year jail term with



eight million Pounds fine to Nawaz Sharif in the Avenfield case and 07 years sentence in Al-Azizia reference. He was also fined Rs1.5 billion and US\$25 million. The court also disqualified Sharif for holding public office for 10 years. However, in 2019, his sentence in Al-Azizia reference was suspended by the Lahore High Court (LHC)

on medical grounds. He was then permitted to fly to London on medical grounds. The IHC had declared him a proclaimed offender in both cases in December 2020. After returning from the exile in UK, the PML-N leader had filed two separate applications seeking the restoration of his appeals against his conviction in both the references.

Illegal immigrants to be repatriated at any cost, says Achakzai

Bureau Report

QUETTA: The Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai reiterated the government's resolve and said that the illegal immigrants will be repatriated to their own country at any cost. Addressing a press conference, on Wednesday, he said the government has set a target of deporting 10,000 immigrants every day. So far 135,000 illegal immigrants have returned to Afghanistan and this process is gradually progressing towards success.

Pakistan asks UN to investigate Israel's atrocity crimes in Palestine

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations Ambassador Usman Iqbal Jadoon has asked the General Assembly and UN Security Council to consider the establishment of a special tribunal and accountability mechanism to investigate Isra-

el's atrocity crimes in Palestine. Taking part in the UN General Assembly Debate on the "Question of Palestine", Ambassador Usman Iqbal Jadoon asked the deployment of an international protection force or mechanism to protect Palestinian civilians, especially women and children in Gaza and West Bank and play its role in the restoration of the

peace process, Radio Pakistan reported. The Ambassador regretted that the General Assembly's call was not heeded by Israel, which continued its indiscriminate and criminal attacks against the Palestinian people. Israel also ignored the call from the Security Council to comply with its obligations under international

law, including international humanitarian law, notably with regard to the protection of civilians, especially children; and to refrain from depriving the civilian population in the Gaza Strip of basic services and humanitarian assistance indispensable to their survival. He strongly condemned the indiscriminate use of force by

Israel. He said Israel's attacks on civilians, civilian objects and infrastructure, blockading of water, food and fuel, as well as the forced displacement of people within the occupied territory, are flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, and may amount to the crime of genocide.

Pakistan People's Party 56th Foundation Day celebrated

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani has said in his message on the occasion of the 56th foundation day of Pakistan People's Party that Pakistan People's Party is the name of a mission which was founded by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with the aim of stability of democracy and there was a struggle for the rights of the people and even today the three major problems we are facing are the eradication of terrorism, poverty and inflation.

A living example of which is the move forward between the former Prime Ministers Ms. Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif to implement the Charter of Democracy, on which Asif Ali Zardari really strug-

gled even though he gave his powers to the Parliament.

In order for democracy to be stable, the People's Party has worked a lot on the Charter of Democracy, what is left, will be given in the new manifesto. A ceremony was held today in Quetta, Balochistan region on November 30, so that the feeling of deprivation is not found in small provinces. Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani further said that the great achievement of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was nuclear, 73 constitution, identity to the people and common man. He gave representation to farmers in both Houses, took practical steps to give rights to laborers, youth and poor women.

And made many reforms, which is a great achievement to change the destiny of the country and the nation. His great achievement of missile technol-



ogy, highlighted the problem of Kashmir at the global level and made many reforms. Likewise, after his martyrdom, Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and former President Asif Ali Zardari continued his mission. The great achievement of the Charter of Democracy which was signed

by Shaheed Ms. Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif, followed it in the true sense and gave all the powers to the Parliament so that the democracy get stable.

We made every possible effort to end the deprivations of Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and struggled to make South Punjab a separate province which is in front of the entire nation. We laid the foundation of the party to end the deprivations of the small provinces. Chairman of the party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Asif Ali Zardari has been fighting for the rights of the people and is still fighting today, for which all the organizations of the party and overseas deserve congratulations. Inshallah People's Party will come to power with the power of people's votes and use all its capabilities to solve people's problems.

PM says police force responsible for maintaining law and order in Azad Kashmir



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the police force was responsible for maintaining law and order along with protecting the life and property of the people. While addressing the police passing out parade here today, the PM, while appreciating the AJK Police for its significant contribution in maintaining the law and order situation in the liberated territory, said that Azad Kashmir was reckoned to be the most peaceful region in South Asia with the lowest crime rate.

He said that the credit for this goes to the police department that has always performed the duties of national nature along with the Pakistan Army and paramilitary forces. He said that the AJK Police not only maintained peace and order in the region but also prevented many acts of terrorism from happening based on prior information. Praising the young girls for joining the police, he said, "I also pay tribute to my daughters who have taken the bold decision to join the police force".

He said more resources would be provided to CTD, service centers, women's police stations, and tourism police. He said that a series of new recruitments would start soon in the police department. The recruitment process, he said, would be completely transparent. Lauding the sacrifices of the police force, the PM said that martyrs of the police force have lit the candle of peace with their red-hot blood while fighting the enemy in the dark times of terrorism.

The Prime Minister, on the occasion, announced 20 lakh rupees for the Police Training School and also announced the construction of an Auditorium. The PM also distributed cash awards and certificates of appreciation among the constables who showed outstanding performance during the training. On this occasion, Senior Minister Col retired Waqar Ahmad Noor, Government Ministers Syed Basal Ali Naqvi, Chaudhry Akbar Ibrahim, Chaudhry Muhammad Rashid, Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir Dawood Muhammad Bareech and others were present on the occasion.

PPP's Hyderabad chief says PPP's upcoming event in Quetta will open eyes of opposition

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Leader of Pakistan People's Party Hyderabad Ishrat Hasan said that PPP's 30 November event in Quetta will open the eyes of the opposition. Ishrat Hasan, the activist woman leader of ppp Hyderabad, said in a statement that those who think that PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari have conflict, they are living in the paradise of fools. The picture of Bakhtawar Bhutto has silenced the opponents, He said that they were angry at the selection of Imran Khan, who played the tune of Mujhe kyon nikala, but now they want to be selected by the powerful stakeholders. He said that the People's Party has always supported democracy and respected the institutions. The people of the country are with the young leader Bilawal Bhutto. Ishrat hasan said that People's Party is in the interests of the country, putting the People's Party against the wall will be against the country and institutions.



Dinner in Honor of ILO's Ms. Chihoko Asada-Miyakawa

KARACHI: Employers' Federation of Pakistan honors ILO's Ms. Chihoko Asada-Miyakawa at a dinner attended by EFP President Malik Tahir Javaid, ILO Country Director Geir Tonstol, Sindh Labor Secretary Shariq Ahmed, PWF General Secretary Waqar Memon, and other distinguished guests, including former EFP President Majid Aziz, Directors Saadia Naveed, Humayun Nazir, Athar Iqbal, Hasnain Mazhar, EFP VP Feroz Alam, and Secretary General Syed Nazar Ali, along with ILO Senior Officials.



Illegal detention will not be tolerated in police stations of Multan Region

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Illegal detention will not be tolerated in police stations of Multan region. Strict action will be taken against the concerned police personnel on coming to the notice. These views were expressed by Regional Police Officer Captain (R) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhary and City Police Officer Multan Mansoorul Haque Rana during a visit to different police stations of District Multan. He further said that those who come to the police station should be treated with respect. Listen to their problems and try to solve them. RPO and City Police Officer visited Haram Gate, Shah Rukan Alam, Kotwali and Chelak police stations late at night. SP City Division



Hasan Raza Khakhi was also present. He looked at the references Malkhana, boundary wall and security arrangements were also reviewed. He also instructed the police officers to make the patrolling system effective. The vehicles of the concerned police stations were constantly on patrol.

So that it is possible to remedy the incidents. For which Multan Region Police is using all resources. Regional Police Officer Captain Retired Mohammad Sohail Chaudhry said that Cylans coming to the police station should be treated with respect. Meanwhile, the regional police

officer made late night visits to various police stations. The city police officer was also there On this occasion, Regional Police Officer Captain Retired Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry said that Illegal detention will not be tolerated under any circumstances

DFP seeks release of Kashmiri prisoners, condemns arrest of students

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINAGAR: Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (DFP), while voicing its serious concerns over the plight of Kashmiri prisoners has urged the United Nations and international human rights organizations to impress upon the Indian government to release all the prisoners who have been illegally arrested before and after 5th August 2019.

In a statement issued here today, the DFP spokesman advocate Arshad Iqbal expressed concern over the deteriorating political and human rights situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leaders and workers who have been arrested on trumped-up charges and left to rot in jails. He said that Kashmiri detainees languishing in jails for the past several years continue to suffer due to non-provision of basic facilities.

Police Encounter at Kucha Area 11 Killed

Asim Tanveer

SADIQABAD: In Rahim Yar Khan Kacha area of Machka, due to the long-standing enmity between the Shar and Machi tribes, 5 people of the Machi tribe were killed in an exchange of fire, while a passer-by woman of the Silera tribe was also killed in the firing. Immediate Response DPO Rahim Yar Khan Rizwan Umar Gondal led a heavy police force reached the spot. Three robbers were killed in the police action, a rocket launcher was recovered, three policeman martyred During Exchange Of Firing, two were injured, IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar paid tribute to Three Police Man Martyred.



The death toll in the shootout between the robbers and the police to 11 Police spokesman said

There was an exchange of fire between the Shar and Machhi tribes in Machhka police station limits, according to police spokesman.

Under the leadership of DPO Rizwan Umar Gondal, police operations are ongoing in the area.

As a result of retaliatory firing by the police, three robbers, including Umar Shar, Karmo Kosh, were killed, and a rocket launcher was recovered.

Circle SHOs including ASP Sadiqabad, elite team under the leadership of DPO Rizwan Umar Gondal in Kacha are continuing operations against dacoits,

Constable Muhammad Qasim was martyred while Asif and Abdul Razaq were injured.

Bandits are using rocket launchers and heavy weapons. DPO Rizwan Umar Gondal will deal with iron hands against those who disturb the law and order situation.

Police will ensure the safety of people's life and property while fulfilling their professional responsibilities, DPO Rahim Yar Khan said.

Daraz 11.11 sale connects local businesses and communities, enabling e-commerce for all

KARACHI: Daraz, the leading e-commerce platform in South Asia, has concluded its highly anticipated 11.11 Biggest Sale of the Year, with over 34 million users across Pakistan visiting Daraz and female sellers experiencing an average of over 170% increase in sales as opposed to a non-campaign day.

Daraz CEO, Bjarke Mikkelsen, highlighted the platform's role in these challenging times, stating, "In a time of economic uncertainty and rising inflation, our mission to uplift communities through the power of commerce has never been more relevant. This year, we doubled down on helping sellers maximise their sales while making online shopping more accessible, affordable, and rewarding for shoppers. We are thankful to everyone—shoppers, sellers, brands, creators, partners, and the incredible Daraz team—for without them, the success of Daraz 11.11 would not have been possible."

Managing Director of Daraz Pakistan, Ehsan Saya stated "We take immense pride at Daraz in the significant impact our large-scale campaigns have, particularly in these challenging economic times. These events are more than just promotional activities; they are vital in supporting our sellers and consumers throughout Pakistan. Each year, we make it a point to collect and analyze feedback from our community. This process enables us to continually introduce innovative initiatives and compelling offers, ensuring that our 11.11 campaign consistently brings value to the people of Pakistan. As we eagerly anticipate the 12.12 event, we are excited to present our community with something special to conclude the year on a positive and uplifting note."

The birthplace of the Buddhist movement Taxila

A significant archaeological and historical site, Taxila, in the northwest of the Indian sub-continent, now Pakistan, branded to world for its Buddhist background, had momentous plots in setting the world history. It was a frontier town and enriched by the blending of four great civilizations- Indian, Persian, Greek and Rome. The city flourished for nearly a thousand years, from the middle of the first millennium BCE to the middle of the first millennium CE, then went into decline around the fourth century CE, and was burned down by Huns in the fifth century CE.

Legend has it that an ancient Indian king Taksha, the son of Bharata and Mandavi, historical characters in Indian epic Ramayana, and ruler in a kingdom called Taksha Khan-da (Tashkent) founded the city of Takshashila, it was a Sanskrit word means "belong to the King Taksha".

Taxila, enjoyed a reputation of major commercial point as it stands at the crossroads of three major trade routes: The Royal highway from Pataliputra then Imperial Capital of Mauryan Empire, the north-western route towards Kabul and to Central Asia through Haripur.

The city had a special intellectual vibrancy, back in times it was the most renowned of the earliest Buddhist centers of higher education in India and drew students of talent or means from all over India. This was where Jivaka, the celebrated ancient physician, has his education, and it was also the home of Panini, the great Sanskrit grammarian and many illustrious gurus including Kautilya, the advisor of Chandragupta Maurya, founder of Mauryan Empire. Moreover, the celebrated

treatise Arthashastra was composed in Taxila.

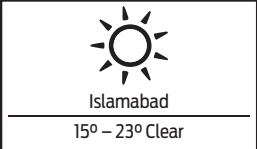
Taxila had been variously a capital for many dynasties, and a center of Vedic culture and Buddhist learning, with a population of Buddhists, Classical Hindu, and Greeks who probably have endured for centuries.

Today Taxila is one of the seven sub-district of Rawalpindi District of Pakistan. Scattering over an undulating land in the periphery of the Pothohar Plateau of the Punjab, Taxila is a mix of urban and rural environs. Urban residential areas are in the form of small colonies populated by the workers of heavy industries, educational institutes and hospitals that are located in the area.

There is a Museum, dedicated to the remains of Gandhara civilization, that needs serious attention by



Munaza Kazmi



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:24 am
Zohr	11:56 am
Asr	3:22 pm
Maghrib	5:00 pm
Isha	6:27 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224

Agreement

BNU Hashoo School Launch Joint Hospitality Management Degree

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Beaconhouse National University (BNU), Pakistan's first not-for-profit Liberal Arts University, and Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM) have formally launched a first-of-its-kind, joint Bachelor of Science (BS) Degree in Hospitality Management, a step that is set to transform the landscape of hospitality education in Pakistan.

An agreement signing and program launch ceremony was held at the Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Moeed W. Yusuf, Vice Chancellor, BNU, and Mr. Haseeb Gardezi, Chief Operating Officer, Hospitality and Education Division, Hashoo Group, in the presence of Mr. Murtaza Hashwani, Deputy Chairman and CEO, Hashoo Group and Mrs. Nasreen Mahmud Kasuri, Chairperson, BNU. Senior faculty and key officials from both institutions were also in attendance.

Addressing the joint venture, Mr. Haseeb A. Gardezi remarked, "We are excited to see where Pakistan's hospitality industry will be in the coming years. Through partnerships such as these, we hope to not only expand the arena of hospitality and tourism but also instill their guiding principles within the youth, who will lead the way to an exceptionally bright future."

"My dream is to create individual models of collaboration with the industry that become gold standards for all to follow. BNU wants to spearhead a mindset change in academia and industry, moving away from needless competition to sharing, cooperating, and creating win-win situations. Hospitality is a growth industry. Students will get guaranteed employment after this degree and have options of earning international certifications and degrees if they wish.", Dr. Moeed W. Yusuf, Vice Chancellor, BNU stated.

The Spring-2024 admissions for BS Hospitality Management at BNU in collaboration with HSHM are now open for potential students.

Zainab Alert

Women's access to Higher Education crucial to transform the World: Mushaal

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for human rights and women empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, has said that higher education is not just a pursuit of knowledge but a gateway to critical thinking and skills acquisition. It provides individuals, especially women, with the necessary resources to navigate an ever evolving world. She was addressing the opening ceremony of the two day international conference at Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi. The two days international conference would bring together distinguished guests, scholars, and policymakers to explore the nexus between higher education and women empowerment.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick threw light on the systematic obstacles women had faced in accessing higher education in the past. She said that though some milestone in this regard had been achieved,

challenges such as gender bias, cultural norms and economic disparities are still hindering women's educational access.

SAPM said that Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, 2020; Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act 2020; The Anti Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021; and The Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2022 are significant legislation enacted by the Government to protect and empower women.

She further said that Ministry of human rights had initiated work on a National Gender Policy in consultation with all stakeholders to end violence against women. She further said that the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020 enacted by the Federal Government provided legal and financial assistance to ensure access to justice to vulnerable groups, including women, in criminal cases.

She underscored the need to extend

women's empowerment beyond the classroom to mentorship and supportive networks. Mushaal said that the establishment of Provincial Commission on status of women (PCSW) helplines 1043, KPK Bolo helpline, Sindh Women Development Department Helpline 1094, and Tele Psycho Social Support Services were crucial in combating Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Describing the distressing situation in the Indian illegally occupied Kashmir and Palestine, Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that Kashmiri and Palestinian women were facing a complex and challenging reality due to the prolonged land disputes in the region. She said that many women have lost their loved ones, and the militarized environment has exposed them to violence and trauma. Despite these challenges, Kashmiri and Palestinian women exhibited resilience by actively participating in their communities and steadfastly facing the brutality of Indian and Israeli forces.



Praising Ahd Tamimi for her courage in the face of adversity, SAPM said that Kashmiri and Palestinian women were the women of substance and a beacon of hope for the women around the World. Mushaal Hussein Mullick called for

a future where every woman had the opportunity to access higher education. She further said that the transformative power of higher education would empower women who would transform the world.

National Day

ISLAMABAD: SAPM on Overseas Pakistanis Jawad Sohrab Malik, Chargé d'affaires of Romania H. E Eduard-Robert PREDA and others cutting the cake on National Day of Romania at Serena Hotel Islamabad.



Photo: Raja Farid

FGRF-Gaza-Relief

FGRF team off to Turkiye to send relief for War-hit Gazans

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Faizan Global Relief Foundation (FGRF) of Dawat-e-Islami team led by its head Syed Fuzail Raza Attari is off to Turkiye to ensure further relief supplies continue for the war-hit Palestinians.

The FGRF UK Head Syed Fuzail Raza Attari told APP that since the gigantic earthquake that shock Turkiye and Syria the Foundation was already active in the region to provide assistance to the quake-hit population.

However, due to the on ground presence of FGRF volunteers and staff the Foundation initiated its relief activities during the conflict in Gaza, he added.



Attari said, "Alhamdulillah (Thanks to Allah), our teams have been continuously distributing cooked food and drinking water among the victims in Gaza and we have sent 1,000 ration packs to Gaza through

Egypt. Now, I am going to Turkiye to supervise our teams are preparing ration packs which will be sent to Palestine via Egypt."

The Foundation was currently preparing 2,000 ration packs

in Turkiye for 10,000 oppressed brothers in Palestine. Moreover, the Foundation team along with this would also visit the houses that FGRF was building for the earthquake victims in Turkey, Attari said.

The FGRF head mentioned that he would distribute the new houses that have been built by FGRF in Turkiye to the victims.

"Some relief trucks of FGRF carrying warm clothes are ready in Egypt which will be delivered to the victims in Palestine. Alhamdulillah, we have distributed houses to around 5,000 flood victims in Pakistan and this is the determination that wherever Muslims are suffering in the world, FGRF Dawat-e-Islami is their support," he said.

Emerge

Pakistan's first TVET Incubation Center established

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The launch ceremony of EMERGE, Pakistan's first technical and vocational education and training (TVET) Incubation Centre was held recently. This initiative is a collaboration between The Hunar Foundation (THF) and Amir Sultan Chinoy Foundation (ASCF).

The establishment of Emerge on THF's Korangi campus was announced. The incubation centre has been set up with the aim to combine entrepreneurial learning, industry insights and practices



within the curriculum. In addition, the faculty and mentors will aid in accelerating entrepreneurial learning.

As part of the MoU signed between THF and ASCF earlier during 2023, EMERGE has been established with a dona-

tion provided by the Amir S. Chinoy Foundation with a vision to promote entrepreneurship and empower the youth of Pakistan.

"EMERGE aims to enable our youth with the power to establish their own enterprises, thus reviving the worsening unemployment situation and providing sustainability to the economic infrastructure in the long run" said Mr. Tahir Javid, CEO-The Hunar Foundation.

Through the collaboration between THF and ASCF, EMERGE is set to strengthen empowerment opportunities that can be sustained over time.

INGO donated medical equipment to AIOU



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD), an international NGO, has donated medical equipment and other supplies to Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Medical Center as part of the King Gift Pakistan program. Director Coordination and Follow-up Dr. Syed Ameer Shah, Controller of Examinations Mian Muhammad Riaz, Dr. Hira Ibrahim and the staff of the Medical Center were present on this occasion.

Dr. Amir Shah and Dr. Hira Ibrahim expressed their gratitude to the Helping Hand Organization for their contribution in strengthening the University Medical Center. Dr. Hira further mentioned that the items received from HHRD were much needed and will be of great help. She also stated that the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, is committed to enhancing the health facilities for the employees and plans to further strengthen the medical center.

BankIslami launches Tarjuman Call Center to enhance accessibility for differently-abled customers

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: BankIslami Pakistan Limited is proud to announce the inauguration of the Tarjuman call. This groundbreaking initiative, spearheaded by the HR and Phone Banking department, aims to provide unparalleled support and assistance to customers, with a particular focus on individuals who have hearing impairment.

This is a dedicated facility designed to cater to the unique needs of differently-abled customers, effectively. This facility is a testament to BankIslami's commitment to promoting inclusivity and accessibility in its services.

"Tarjuman call center is a pioneering initiative that reflects our dedication to providing exceptional customer service," said Mr. Rizwan Ata, the CEO and President at BankIslami Pakistan Limited. "By leveraging technology and employing highly skilled representatives, we are breaking down barriers and creating an inclusive banking experience for all."

BankIslami invites hearing-impaired customers to visit any branch and experience the seamless communication offered by the Tarjuman call center. The bank remains committed to continuously improving its services and ensuring that every customer feels valued and supported.

Facilities

Student Service Centre Inaugurated at NUML



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Rector National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Major General Muhammad Jaffar (Retd) inaugurated Student Service Center here on Wednesday. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Pro Rectors, Deans, Directors, HoDs and students.

Speaking on the occasion Rector NUML said that the purpose of establishing state of the art Service Centre was to provide all facilities to the students under one roof. A general/souvenir store, photocopier & composing shop, mobile/laptop repairing shop, stationery shop and a cafe along with faculty lounge were set up in the Centre.

The Rector said that NUML administration is committed to provide best facilities to the students, so they can concentrate well on their curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. He said that sports facilities were upgraded in the past and as a result, NUML students achieved some national and international medals in different games. He informed the students that due to upgradation of sports facilities and introduction of sports-based incentives NUML is currently Champion of 5 games out of 7 games held in HEC zone E, this year.

Rector believed that the youth is the future of Pakistan, and we should provide them all possible facilities to excel in life for the betterment of Pakistan.

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Financial Crisis in Universities and Role of the Government

For the past five days, faculty and other staff from all universities in Azad Kashmir have been protesting. The government had announced a relief allowance for employees in Budget 2023-24, but it has not yet been provided to university staff. The university staff demands that the allowances given to employees in all other government departments since July 2023 should also be extended to university employees. On the other hand, university administrators argue that they cannot bear the burden of increased salaries in the current financial situation and propose to proceed without this allowance.

The primary cause of the financial crisis dates back to the 2017 eighteenth amendment, which devolved the administration of universities to the provinces. Since then, there has been no increase in the budget of the Higher Education Commission at the federal level. While federal and provincial/regional governments announce increases in salaries in their budgets each year, there is no corresponding increase in the HEC budget.

Meanwhile, new universities have been established in both Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. Fifteen years ago, Azad Kashmir had only one university with some departments in Mirpur, Kotli, and Rawalakot. However, in the past few years, all these have been granted the status of permanent universities. Additionally, a separate women's university has been established in Bagh. Each new university has started offering education in various fields. Campuses of universities have been established in Haveli, Poonch, Bhimber, Hattian, and Athmuqam, and 48 colleges in the state have been allowed to conduct BS classes in various subjects. There are also three medical colleges, an

open university, and a private university in Azad Kashmir. However, the population of this small state with 4 million inhabitants is not enough to support so many universities, campuses, and affiliated colleges.

The institutions operating under the names of degree colleges and postgraduate colleges have their entire expenses covered by the government budget.

The Management of University Budgets has become a Double-Edged Sword. If fees are not increased, covering expenses becomes impossible; if increased, students opt for affiliated colleges instead of universities. In such a situation, where should university administrators turn?

Due to the aforementioned circumstances, universities are facing the most severe financial crisis. Departments within universities lack funds for essential matters, and now even the payment of full salaries to employees has become challenging. As a result, these institutions are heading towards a continuous decline.

However, the leaders of the state seem to be oblivious to the entire crisis. In the midst of this crisis, the Prime Minister is approving the establishment of two new universities. The question arises: when existing universities are already grappling with a severe financial crisis, what justification is there for establishing new universities? Will the government bear the expenses of these new institutions? If so, what fault lies with the existing universities that they are not being provided with such facilities? If these new universities are not given resources, what will be their financial future when exist-

ing universities are struggling to sustain themselves?

As the head of the state, the Prime Minister should have prioritized strengthening existing institutions instead of creating new ones. In Bhimber, where numerous colleges with existing BS classes are present, and where a campus of Mirpur University is already established, the Prime Minister should have focused on fortifying these institutions instead of creating a new one.

I want to convey to my readers that a student in a typical government high school costs the Azad Kashmir government approximately fifty thousand to one and a half lakh rupees annually. However, the annual expenses for university students under the government are zero.

The lack of government supervision over universities is justified by citing that the higher education is not included in fundamental human rights; therefore, the government is not bound to provide resources for it. If this principle is accepted, many questions arise:

- If the government is not obligated to provide resources for higher education, why does it cover all expenses for degree colleges and postgraduate colleges throughout the state?
- If the government is not responsible for higher education, why are politicians so enthusiastic about opening new universities? They should be honest and tell the public that it is not the government's responsibility to provide universities.
- The capitalist system that established the principle that higher education is not a fundamental human need also

has another principle: the government should not interfere in the market. When the government provides all means to colleges, it is essentially intervening in higher education. What justification do they have for this intervention?

In reality, our politicians have not understood the true meaning of this Western principle. Higher education is crucial for developed countries, which is why they attract students from around the world by offering scholarships worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. No government university in the United States or the United Kingdom receives less than 25% of its budget from the government.

We must understand that all universities are the state institutions, and the decline of universities is tantamount to the decline of state institutions. The government's role is to strengthen state institutions rather than pushing them towards destruction. The government needs to immediately take note of the dire situation of universities and take prompt actions for their improvement.

Alongside this, the public is urged to demand job opportunities for their children from the government instead of new universities or degree colleges. If the government cannot provide all resources to a university in Muzaffarabad or Rawalakot, it cannot provide resources for national standard education in Halmat and Khoi Ratta. Instead of demanding a new university or degree college, people should demand scholarships and job opportunities for their children. This will be more beneficial for you and your children's future!!

Writer is Associate Professor in Azad Jammu and Kashmir University



Analysis

Dr. Atiq-ur-Rehman

Clean energy

The International Energy Agency's forecast showed that by 2025, renewables will provide 10,799 TWh per year-35 percent of total global electricity demand. In this setting, decarbonization of the industrial chain, or supply chain, will become an unshakable future direction, triggering all-round changes in technologies, industrial forms, employment directions, and even lifestyles," Zhang Shaogang, Vice President of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, pointed out in opening speech at the Clean Energy Forum of the China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) held in Beijing.

Focusing on the theme of International Collaboration for Clean Energy Supply Chains, Zhang emphasized that being the world's largest energy producer and consumer, China has actively and steadily promoted carbon peaking and carbon neutrality, allowing clean energy to achieve leapfrog development. So far, China's hydro, wind, photovoltaic, biomass, and nuclear power installed capacity all rank first worldwide, becoming the largest clean energy market and equipment manufacturing country simultaneously. In order to actively promote the green Belt and Road joint construction, China also has cooperated with more than 100 countries and regions on green energy projects. It's photovoltaic module industry accounts for more than three-quarters of the world's share, and key wind power components output accounts for more than 70 percent of the global market, China Economic Net reported. "According to the International Energy Agency's expectations, the clean energy technology market will reach US \$ 650 billion by 2030, and the number of clean energy manufacturing jobs will reach 14 million, showing a very bright market prospect," Margit Molnar, Head of China Desk, OECD Economics Department, mentioned. "If it develops as expected, by 2050, global market size of clean energy under the prospect of net-zero emissions will be about 10 times that of the oil market. Of course, it assumes that all countries will fulfill their development commitments on schedule, which requires global efforts, thus every minute counts."

As of the end of September, China's renewable energy installed capacity reached 1.484 billion kilowatts, exceeding the scale of coal power installed capacity, among which the installed capacity of solar power generation is approximately 540 million kilowatts, as well as the wind power generation is approximately 410 million kilowatts. When it comes to the hydrogen energy, the country's annual hydrogen production exceeds 35 million tons, making it the world's largest hydrogen producer. More than 300 hydrogen refueling stations have been built, signifying hydrogen fuel cell vehicles gradually enter the lives of ordinary people. In every sense, a stable industry chain has begun to take shape. "The total annual carbon dioxide emissions of the global logistics industry are 3.5 billion tons, of which the international shipping industry accounts for about 3 percent," Jens Eskelund, North Asia Chief Representative of Maersk, proposed, "we choose green methanol as a short- and medium-term solution to help us achieve our decarbonization goals."



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

Why Missing Persons are missing?

The foundation for a nation's prosperity, stability, and autonomy lies in its commitment to national security. This entails an intricate framework of policies, strategies, and measures aimed at shielding the country from both external and internal threats. In the dynamic global landscape, the significance of national security cannot be overstated, exerting a direct impact on a nation's well-being and its ability to flourish.

National security functions as a safeguard, preserving a nation's sovereignty and ensuring the preservation of its political, economic, and cultural independence. A nation fortified with a robust defense capability is better positioned to withstand external pressures, fostering an environment where it can pursue its interests and uphold its values without succumbing to undue external influence. A secure nation invariably translates into a prosperous one, with economic stability and growth intricately linked to national security. When perceived as safe and stable, a country becomes an attractive hub for foreign investment, as a formidable defense apparatus deters potential aggressors, creating an atmosphere conducive to economic development, job creation, and innovation.

Beyond the protection of borders, national security extends to the well-being of citizens. A nation at peace is more likely to experience social stability, instilling a sense of security and confidence among its citizens. This stability significantly contributes to the overall quality of life, fostering a healthy and productive society.

In the prevention of conflicts, national security measures play a pivotal role. Diplomacy, intelligence, and military readiness act as

deterrents, dissuading potential adversaries from hostile actions. Maintaining a robust defense posture allows nations to discourage aggression and promote peaceful coexistence. In the digital era, national security goes beyond conventional military capabilities, with cybersecurity emerging as a critical component in safeguarding a nation's infrastructure, sensitive information, and economic assets. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the importance of protecting against cyber threats cannot be overstated.

Recognizing the imperative of robust national security measures, developed countries, often at the forefront of technological and economic advancements, adopt a comprehensive approach that extends beyond traditional military strength. This approach addresses a spectrum of threats in an interconnected world. Moreover, collaborative efforts in the realm of national security contribute to global stability, exemplifying the interconnected nature of international security. Countries working together to address common challenges, such as terrorism, pandemics, and climate change, underscore the necessity of a united front in the face of shared threats.

Advanced nations allocate substantial resources to maintain military forces that are technologically sophisticated and well-equipped. This encompasses investments in state-of-the-art weaponry, intelligence gathering, and cyber capabilities, with the aim of establishing a credible deterrent against potential adversaries and being ready for any unforeseen threat to national security.

Recognizing the crucial role of strong alliances in enhancing collective security, many developed nations actively engage in collaborative efforts. This involves participating in

military alliances like NATO and entering intelligence-sharing agreements, allowing countries to combine resources, share expertise, and collectively respond to emerging threats. Such alliances significantly enhance the effectiveness of individual nations in addressing complex challenges.

Diplomacy holds a central position in the strategies of developed nations for conflict prevention and international cooperation. Soft power, encompassing cultural influence, economic aid, and diplomatic engagement, is recognized as a vital component of national security. By cultivating positive relationships with other nations, developed countries create an environment conducive to mutual understanding and conflict resolution.

The secure management of borders is paramount for national security, and developed countries implement rigorous control measures. These measures involve leveraging advanced technologies for surveillance, implementing biometric screening, and collaborating with neighboring nations to address transnational threats such as terrorism and organized crime.

In the digital age, cybersecurity is a top priority for developed nations to safeguard critical infrastructure, sensitive data, and national interests. Robust cybersecurity measures include continuous monitoring, sharing threat intelligence, and developing cyber defense capabilities to counter evolving cyber threats.

Establishing and maintaining sophisticated intelligence agencies is a cornerstone of national security for developed countries. These agencies are tasked with gathering, analyzing, and disseminating critical information, playing a pivotal role in identifying potential threats, understanding adversary intentions, and providing decision-makers with timely and accurate intelligence to shape national security policies.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Pakistan is the Cheapest country but for whom? II

An economy experiencing negative growth can lead to a rise in the cost of living. This may directly impact the affordability of goods and services, making them relatively more expensive for the local population despite any perceived advantages stemming from exchange rates. Individuals and households might find it increasingly challenging to afford everyday necessities due to the economic contraction, further highlighting the disparity between apparent affordability and the actual purchasing power of residents.

Considering the additional strain of negative GDP growth alongside prevailing economic challenges, the initial assessment of affordability for the local population in Pakistan requires reassessment. The combination of high inflation, unemployment, lower income levels, and an economic downturn significantly undermines the real purchasing power of individuals. This complex economic scenario underscores the importance of a comprehensive understanding of local economic realities when gauging affordability, emphasizing that the country's economic conditions extend beyond exchange rates and require holistic consideration.

The staggering increase in prices of essential goods and services, such as petroleum products and bread, doubling within a year, adds acute strain to the economic woes faced by the Pakistani population. This surge in prices compounds the challenges brought by the economic downturn, with GDP growth plummeting from 6% to a forecasted -0.5%. In this dire economic landscape, the increasing cost of basic necessities significantly impacts the daily lives of citizens, straining household budgets and diminishing the purchasing power of individuals.

As unemployment rates rise and the GDP contracts, the labor market faces increased strain. Despite these economic challenges, the wages

and salaries for many remain stagnant. This static income amidst soaring prices of essential goods creates a disparity, making it increasingly difficult for individuals to afford basic necessities. The affordability gap widens as citizens grapple with the double blow of rising prices and stagnant incomes, significantly reducing their purchasing capacity.

In the face of an economic downturn, escalating prices of essential commodities, stagnant wages, and heightened unemployment rates, the initial notion of affordability in Pakistan for the local population needs reevaluation. The stark reality reflects a situation where economic challenges have severely eroded the real purchasing power of individuals. The combination of high inflation, stagnant incomes, and an economic downturn necessitates a holistic understanding of the economic hardships faced by citizens, challenging any notion of perceived affordability based solely on exchange rates or isolated indicators.

In conclusion, relying solely on studies that compare a country's cost of living to an expensive city like New York City without considering broader economic, social, and quality-of-life factors presents an incomplete view of affordability. This narrow approach overlooks local economic realities, quality-of-life indicators, and the complex dynamics affecting a population's purchasing power. To truly understand affordability, a holistic assessment that encompasses various economic conditions, including inflation rates, unemployment, wage stagnation, and quality-of-life aspects beyond basic goods and services, is crucial. Such comprehensive analysis ensures a more accurate depiction of the real affordability experienced by the local population, steering away from oversimplified comparisons that might misrepresent the true economic realities.

Writer is former press secretary to the President, former press minister to the embassy of Pakistan to France, former md, SRBC



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Historical Relations

Exhibition of 'Soekarno's Legacy in Building Stronger Bonds of Indonesia-Pakistan Brotherhood' launched

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with the National Archives of Indonesia, the National Library of Pakistan, and National Archives of Pakistan inaugurated today a week-long exhibition of "Soekarno's Legacy in Building Stronger Bonds of Indonesia-Pakistan Brotherhood, National Library of Pakistan, 29 November-2 December 2023. The main objective of the exhibition generate more awareness among the people of Pakistan about the historic multi-dimensional Indonesia-Pakistan relationship.

The exhibition showcases a compelling collection of photographs, videos, and letters, between the founding fathers of Indonesia (Soekarno) and Pakistan (Muhammad Ali Jinnah). It offers a unique glimpse into the visits of President Soekarno to Pakistan in 1960s, underlining the shared history that binds the two nations.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest and Head of Nation-

al Archives of Indonesia Mr. Imam Gunarto expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the people of Pakistan for their love and respect to the leaders of Indonesia especially President Soekarno. Mr Imam emphasized "such events will strengthen the cultural relations between the two countries especially in the fields of archives and history".

In his short remarks, the Charge d' Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy Mr. Yusran Hadromi extended his gratitude to National Library of Pakistan and National Archives of Pakistan for their valuable contribution and support in organizing this exhibition. Mr. Yusran highlighted, "as two of the world's largest Muslim countries, our two countries share lot of historic and cultural commonalities that provide many opportunities to grow together...President Soekarno is highly respected by the people and Government of Pakistan in recognition of his sincere efforts to bring two countries closer to each other".

The Guest of Honor, Senator



Mushahid Hussain, valued the exhibition and expressed deep appreciation to Soekarno's role as a statesman. Senator Mushahid further addressed, "Soekarno's revolutionary spirit echoes in the shared values of democracy, independence, and cultural diversity that continue to unite Indonesia and Pakistan. This exhibition is a timely reminder of the strong foundation

laid by our visionary leaders, paving the way for a future of collaboration and mutual prosperity".

The Director General of National Library of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Iqbal Khan elaborated, "this exhibition serves as a bridge between our two nations, connecting us through the rich tapestry of history that binds Indonesia and Pakistan together".



In addition, the Director of National Archives of Pakistan, Dr Mazhar Saeed remarked, "the showcased archives underscore the importance of preserving our shared heritage, ensuring that the legacy of leaders like Dr. Soekarno and Muhammad Ali Jinnah continues to inspire generations".

The event also featured captivating performances by Indonesian

students on the stage, showcasing brilliant angklung music and dance performances, including Pasambahan, Randai, and Indang dances—a vibrant representation of West Sumatra province. The Indang dance, in particular, reflects the cultural progression in the Minangkabau community, symbolizing the arrival of Islam in West Sumatra in the 13th century.

Academic journey

Faizzan Yasin, a trailblazing Pakistani student, has successfully completed a dual Master's degree program MSc in Strategic Communication and Public Relations from the University of Stirling, UK, and Pompeu Fabra University, Spain. He emerges as the sole Pakistani achiever in this distinguished program, marking a significant milestone in his academic journey.



Spotify Wrapped 2023

Atif Aslam remains the most streamed Pakistani artist

City Desk

KARACHI: As the year draws to a close, it's time for Spotify's 2023 Wrapped to unveil how Pakistan is listened to music this year. Year 2023 showcased 82% growth of local music consumption and sonic diversity across the charts. Spotify's top lists reflect various trends and the overall expansion of music as the music streaming giant continues to grow its user base.

This year saw Atif Aslam and Talha Anjum retain their respective spots at the helm among the top local artists, joined by a host of emerging talents like Umair, Abdul Hannan, and Rovalio, and seasoned artists including Talhah Yunus, Asim Azhar and Young Stunners. The legendary "Shehshah-e-Qawwali", Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, still holds an unflinching place in the hearts of audiences along with his nephew and renowned Sufi artist, Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, completing the list of top 10 most streamed local artists.

The list of top artists shows the eclectic taste of Pakistani listeners, with Arijit Singh securing the top spot, followed by Pritam, AP Dhillon, Shubh, and Sidhu Moose Wala, the artist from across the border receiving immense posthumous love

Changing World

ISSI organizes seminar on Pakistan-Philippines bilateral relations



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The China Pakistan Study Center, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Embassy of the Philippines, organized a seminar today, focusing on relations between Pakistan and the Philippines in the changing global landscape. The Seminar, titled "Pakistan-Philippines Bilateral Relations in the Changing World," aimed to explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration across a broad spectrum.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director-General ISSI, while giving his welcoming remarks, acknowledged the enduring strength of Pakistan-Philippines relations marked by friendship, trust and mutual understanding. He stressed the importance of upscaling bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation, sustaining a steady momentum of high-level visits, and fostering closer people-to-people exchanges.

Ambassador Maria Agnes M. Cervantes, Ambassador of the Philippines in Islamabad, reminded that Pakistan and the Philippines had signed 25 cooperation agreements — strengthening bilateral cooperation on various track of the relations. She highlighted the potential for increased economic cooperation, especially in Information Technology, and emphasized the importance of people-to-people exchanges and cultural understanding.

Ambassador Mohsin Razi, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the Philippines, shared his views on the excellent relations between Pakistan and the Philippines based on common values, dating back to the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1949. Chrystl Sicut from the Philippines Embassy discussed economic agreements between the two countries, highlighting diverse areas for increased economic cooperation.

Religious moderation

Pakistani scholars explore religious moderation, educational models in Indonesia



Spokesman Report

JAKARTA: National Rahmatul-Iil-Alameen Authority, Chairman Khurshid Ahmad Nadeem on Wednesday said Pakistani scholars should explore educational models that prioritize moderation and incorporation of local cultures and traditions. A delegation of Pakistani scholars and intellectuals visited Assididqiyah in Jakarta and appreciated the religious moderation observed in the madrasa, which provides modern education alongside teaching Islamic subjects to both male and female students.

Leader of the Wahdatul Madadis Board and Head of Ashat Tauheed-o-Sunnat, Maulana Muhammad Tayyib Tahiri, along with Maulana Rashid ul Haq Sami from Darul Uloom Haqqania, Akora Khatak, also expressed their interest in understanding various models of Islamic education in Indonesia. Assididqiyah Chairman Haji Ahmad Iskandar informed Pakistani delegates that the Pasentran (madrasa) emphasized instilling good manners in students and provided instruction in both Arabic and English. He expressed that fostering an appreciation for diversity, respecting various cultures, and striving for peace and coexistence constituted the core message instilled in their students. "The madrasa takes pride in its integrated studies approach and is affiliated with Indonesia's largest Islamic movement, Nahdlatul Ulama," he added. The delegation previously held meetings with the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs and visited the headquarters of two prominent Muslim organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Pakistan's newly appointed Ambassador to Indonesia, Khurram Rathore also accompanied the delegation to these high-profile engagements.

Roundtable

Sustained action amid global recession a must to avert financial implication: Experts

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Experts at an intellectual discourse enunciated multiple crises faced by the country and suggested a sustained action amid international economic recession to avert its serious implications affecting the in-house drivers of financial instability.

Speaking at a Roundtable titled: "Addressing Pakistan's Inflation Woes," at the 26th Sustainable Development Conference organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here, Dr Waqar Masood Khan, Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance, said that the inflationary situation started with the Ukraine war as the price of oil and other commodities skyrocketed, and Pakistan cannot be singled out in this respect. Normally our inflation stood at around 6% to 7% but during the past few years, it reached unprecedented levels, which should be debated, he said, adding that the middleman's control has an exponential impact on inflation because there is a big difference between wholesale market and the retail market.

Mr. Ali Rehman from Prime Institute said inflation has remained primary concern of successive governments in Pakistan. He said policy and administrative measures to control inflation have proved counterproductive.

Ms Hiba Zaidi from International Finance Corporation said in each sector, including food and petroleum,



there are different reasons for high cost or inflation. She said with regards to food prices there are structural issues along with dysfunctional markets as there are about 50 per cent losses of perishables from farm to market. Dr Aliya Hashmi Khan from Quaid-i-Azam University focused on monetary policy issues, saying that decision making is very important to control the inflationary trends. Mr Saud Bangash, a representative of Pakistan Business Council, said: "Our issue is primarily economic management while the issue of our economy is structural in nature."

Speaking at the final plenary titled: "Pathway to Recovery, Hope and Resilience", Dr Jehanzeb Khan, the Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) and Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, has said that in recent past, the caretaker government was able to mend things to a certain success which reflects the importance of an effective administration but now our problems are so huge and complicated

that a sustained action is imperative to control the situation.

Former Governor of the State Bank Dr Ishrat Hussain said development patterns in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are based on solid evidence. Recollecting the critical success factors, he told the audience how these countries could continue their "Pathway to Recovery, Hope and Resilience".

SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said Pakistan, since July 2023, has been facing severe economic challenges with the risk of default taking center stage. Referring to Ukraine war and the Middle East conflicts, he said, these conflicts have challenged the world peace involving two nuclear powers. About climate change, he said global warming has now turned into global boiling and with increasing temperature, the livelihood options for masses are freezing; therefore, we have to think out of the box.

Speaking at a thematic session titled: "Rethinking Public Debt Assessment

with SGDs Lens: Pakistan in Focus" at the Conference organized by SDPI in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Dr Hamza Ali Malik, Director, Macroeconomic Policy and Financing for Development, UNESCAP, Thailand, has said the management of fiscal policies and debt has emerged as a pressing policy challenge for the countries like Pakistan, and if managed properly, it can lead to sustainable growth.

Dr Malik, Dr Mohsin Hassan Ali Kemal said if we maintain debt to GDP ratio at 60% then the debt in real and nominal terms will be four times more than it was in 2000. "We need to ensure sustainability and make optimum use of the external loans," he said, adding that "we also need huge resources to meet SGDs targets."

At another panel titled: "Sustainability in the Digital Age: Potential of AI in Pakistan", experts said that tapping the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can bring significant foreign direct investment (FDI) into Pakistan and boost employment, but it requires long-term regulatory policies.

Major-General Hafeez-ur-Rehman (retired), the Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), said that creating an AI ecosystem in Pakistan is crucial for which regulatory policies must be developed in consultation with experts.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
60,501.99	60,730.26
Day's High	Day's Low
61,555.83	60,328.17
Index Value	Change
19,704,178,183	-228.27
Percentage	Time
-0.38%	29 Nov, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,423.46	-31.78
Percentage	Time
-0.43%	29 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
35,475.42	+58.44
Percentage	Time
+0.17%	29 Nov, 12:10 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
33,321.22	-87.17
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	29 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	187.2	189
Bahrain Dinar	759.67	767.67
Canadian Dollar	209	211
China Yuan	39.58	39.98
Danish Krone	41.38	41.78
Euro	311	314
Hong Kong Dollar	36.63	36.98
Indian Rupee	3.39	3.5
Japanese Yen	1.49	1.56
Kuwaiti Dinar	926.7	935.7
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	76.2	77
Singapore Dollar	211	213
Swedish Korona	26.93	27.23
Swiss Franc	325.9	328.4
Thai Bhat	8.23	8.38
U.A.E Dirham	78	78.7
UK Pound Sterling	358.5	361.5
US Dollar	285.4	288

PARC budget -FY 2023-24

All provinces should be benefiting from the research conducted at PARC: Federal Minister



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik, Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research (MNFSR) and President of the Board of Governors of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), chaired the 46th Meeting of the Board at the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) Islamabad. Provincial members of PARC BoG including Mr. Arif Niaz, Sindh, Mr. Ayaz Khan, KP, Mr. Muhammad Yousuf, Balochistan and Mr. Shafiullah, Gilgit-Baltistan also attended the meeting. During the inaugural address, Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik welcomed all the members of the PARC Board and lauded the efforts of PARC Scientists in revolutionizing country's agriculture sector. Dr. Kauser stressed the importance of active participation from all board members, particularly those from the Provinces, in providing suggestions to strengthen agricultural research in the country. Additionally, he highlighted PARC's significant contributions in advancing the agricultural sector. The federal minister stressed the importance of fair distribution of research benefits, emphasizing that all provinces should be benefiting from the research conducted at PARC.

During the briefing to the Board of Governors, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC, introduced newly launched high-tech research initiatives aimed at enhancing the agricultural sector of the country. The PARC budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 was presented to the Board and received approval. Additionally, Dr. Ali briefed the board on recent administrative and financial achievements.

Dr. Ali highlighted PARC's significant contributions in research, acknowledging its pivotal role in tackling challenges to the country's agricultural sector.

Investment

UAE decision to make significant investments admirable: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that discussing climate change is no longer a fashion but has become a real threat.

Ignoring this danger would be tantamount to suicide; thus, efforts should be made to manage resources to deal with the problem, he said.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that Pakistan is among the ten countries in the world that are most affected by climate change.

Millions have been affected, while more than 1700 precious lives have been exposed to the devastating rains caused by climate

change. Yet, unfortunately, no comprehensive plan has been put in place to deal with this menace permanently.

The business leader said we must work independently because the international community is doing nothing except making promises.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the IMF has also realized this weakness and advised the government to make progress in this regard, give importance to this sector in the budget, and pave the way for investments.

He informed that the IMF wants to create a better database for these matters, allocate funds in the budget, and ensure transparency.

He said that the current government should speed up the work in this regard so that the incoming government can get a complete plan to implement to secure the country's future. All political parties and other stakeholders



should be consulted to move forward better. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the United Arab Emirates' decision to invest 20

to 25 billion dollars in Pakistan is welcome, positively impacting the country's economy while increasing the business community's confidence.

The friendly country will invest heavily in various sectors, including energy, port operations, minerals, banking, and food security, which is good news for the economy.

The condition of the people pressed hard by inflation for many years will also improve. The investment decision was taken after the signs of improvement in Pakistan's economy, for which credit goes to the political and military leadership, on which even the IMF seems satisfied after many years.

Mian Zahid Hussain added that the role of the Investment Facilitation Council should be increased by making it more active so that the country's economy can get back on track and start the journey towards development.

Ignite program

Mastercard and CARE launch Strive Women to support women-led businesses in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Mastercard's Center for Inclusive Growth and CARE, an international humanitarian organization, announced the inception of Mastercard Strive Women, a program that aims to strengthen the financial health and resilience of women-led small businesses in Pakistan, as well as in Peru and Vietnam.

We are delighted to enter the new phase in this partnership with CARE and look forward to providing further support to women-led small businesses in the market," said Arslan Khan, Vice President and Country Business Manager, Pakistan, Mastercard.

Kausar Parveen, an entrepreneur from Pakistan who participated in Ignite commented: "In Pakistan, it is hard for a woman to start a business on her own, as a male guarantor is usually needed to get a start-up loan. As soon as the man is involved then financial control falls to



him, stealing hope from women. "CARE International in Pakistan remains dedicated to breaking down the barriers that hinder women's financial empowerment, and we are proud to see the tangible outcomes of our efforts reflected in the growing numbers of women acquiring loans to build their businesses. Our financial service provider partners tell us that women are excellent customers, as such they can contribute significantly to the economic landscape" said Adil

Sheraz, Country Director, CARE International in Pakistan.

Strive Women joins Mastercard's portfolio of philanthropic small business support programs, called Mastercard Strive, which helps small businesses thrive in the digital economy. The program will focus on four core pillars of work. These include supporting women-led small businesses to grow through increasing access and usage of financial products, partnering with financial service providers to

co-design tailored products that best serve women-led small businesses, innovating to overcome gender barriers for women-led small businesses, such as childcare, and building ecosystems of support for female entrepreneurs by activating networks and sharing learning tools.

More broadly, Mastercard is committed connecting 1 billion people and 50 million micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) worldwide to the digital economy by 2025. Part of this objective was reaching 25 million women entrepreneurs with solutions that can help them grow their businesses. Thanks in part to the Ignite program, the company achieved this global milestone in June 2023.

Women's Entrepreneurship at CARE aims to improve financial security and economic empowerment for 3 million entrepreneurs and employees, reach 30 million people, and mobilize more than \$500 million USD in private capital by 2030.

Contribution

Nestlé support hundreds of children at SOS Children's Village

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Committed to the welfare, upbringing, and education of orphaned children of Pakistan Nestlé Pakistan extended corporate contribution worth PKR 5 million to support SOS Children's Village in its endeavors, as part of its philosophy of Creating Shared Value (CSV).

Talking at the event, Jason Avanceña, CEO, Nestlé Pakistan said, "It's a privilege to be here today to witness the incredible work SOS Children's Villages is doing for the communities of Pakistan especially its voluntary efforts in providing a loving and nurturing environment for orphaned children.



Thanking Nestlé for its contribution, Souriya Anwar, President SOS Children's Villages said, "We are grateful for Nestlé's support towards our cause. The concept of SOS is to provide a

loving, caring, and secure home to the parent-deprived community of children. At present, SOS has 15 Children's Villages, 4 Children's Homes, 13 Youth Homes, 22 Herman Gmeiner

Schools and 4 Technical Training Centres in Pakistan."

Nestlé Pakistan is providing clean and safe drinking water to approximately 72,000 people through its seven water filtration facilities around its manufacturing sites in different cities. Nestlé also served 2.49 billion fortified servings of value-added nutritious products last year alone across all occasions and life stages. Meanwhile, Nestlé For Healthier Kids (N4HK), Nestlé's global nutritional awareness initiative has reached out to 360,000 students and 2200 teachers through a curriculum-based education program promoting healthy nutrition, hydration, hygiene and active lifestyle.

Meeting

All Pakistan Car Dealers meet with Senate Deputy Chairman to discuss dealers' problems



Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: A delegation from the All Pakistan Car Dealers Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, headed by Ghulam Bilal Javid, Chairman of the association, convened a meeting with Deputy Chairman of the Senate, Mr. Mirza Muhammad Afridi.

Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi, extended an invitation to the delegation of the All Pakistan Car Dealers to his office, facilitating in-depth discussions on the current challenges faced by dealers. Subsequently, he promptly contacted the Excise DG Islamabad and escorted the delegation to his office. Fortunately, after attentive

consideration and discourse on all the issues, DG Excise affirmed the resolution of the problems. The Car Dealers Association delegation expressed gratitude to DG Excise and extended special thanks to the Deputy Chairman of the Senate for allocating precious time despite his hectic schedule.

The delegation included Senior Vice Chairman of KP, Haji Fatah Khan, General Secretary of KPK, Mazz Ullah Khan, Vice President of Peshawar, Haji Munir Khan, General Secretary Sadiq Shah, and the General Secretary of Peshawar Traders Chamber, Dr. Anas Rashid. In conclusion, the Deputy Chairman of the Senate hosted a luncheon for the delegation.

Competition Appellate Tribunal fully functional with the appointment of Justice (Retd) Miankhel as its Chairman

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government has appointed Justice (Retd) Mazhar Alam Miankhel, former Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court and former judge of the Supreme Court, as the Chairman of the Competition Appellate Tribunal for a term of three years. The federal cabinet in its meeting held on Wednesday approved the appointment.

The Competition Appellate Tribunal has 212 cases pending its hearing. Since the Tribunal has not been functional for 7.5 years out

of last 10 years, the undertakings have sought alternative remedy from High Courts. The number of such petitions in High Courts across the country is 140.

CCP welcomes the news. It is hoped that a functional Competition Appellate Tribunal will enable swifter decisions in the pending cases. The delays in deciding upon appeals had adverse impact on implementing essential CCP orders across various sectors, including sugar, cement, fertilizer, telecom, banks, and consumer goods.

Visited

ICCI demands Auto City in the Capital to boost car showrooms business

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Motor and Importer Dealers Association led by its President Haji Tariq visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and discussed the issues being faced by their sector. Raja Amir Karim President Rawalpindi Region, Sardar Irfan President Islamabad Region, Muhammad Waseem Abbasi General Secretary Islamabad Region, Azhar Akhlaq Abbasi Chairman Islamabad Region, Ajab Gul President Islamabad Motor Dealers Association and others were

in the delegation.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that car showrooms provide employment to thousands of people along with promoting business activities, but the action against them by CDA authorities not only affects the business of this sector, it also increases unemployment.

Haji Tariq, President, Motor and Importer Dealers Association, said that motor dealers have an important role in the development of business and providing employment, but

many times CDA moved to close car showrooms in Islamabad due to which the business community of this sector had to suffer.

Engr. Azharul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI termed it important to address the problems of motor dealers for the better growth of the business activities of this sector and assured that ICCI will cooperate with the Association to solve their issues.

Former President ICCI and Secretary General of UBG Pakistan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the auto industry is playing a vital role in the development of the economy by paying



taxes of around 30 billion rupees and stressed that the government should facilitate this industry and motor dealers by creating favorable conditions for their business. It will enable the auto industry to play a more effective role in the revival of the economy.

Raja Amir Karim President Rawalpindi Region, Sardar Irfan

President Islamabad Region, Muhammad Waseem Abbasi General Secretary Islamabad Region, Azhar Akhlaq Abbasi Chairman Islamabad Region and Ajab Gul President Islamabad Motor Dealers Association also spoke on the occasion and stressed that the CDA should address their issues on priority basis.

DG Sports to prepare roadmap for betterment of youth



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that several youth affairs activities are being organized in December where our talented youth could demonstrate their potential adequately. "Besides this, the annual calendar of youth affairs activities is also being formulated. Working on Youth Exchange Programme among the provinces of the country is also in progress," he expressed these views while presiding over an important meeting of representatives of youth and several NGOs at the National Hockey Stadium

on Wednesday.

Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum, Deputy Director Attaur Rehman and other officials participated in the important meeting which was convened to find ways and means to engage youth of the country in constructive and healthy activities.

Addressing the meeting, Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that the purpose of today's meeting is to prepare a roadmap for the guidance of youth. "There is no doubt that our country has been blessed with 64 per cent youth and Punjab Youth Affairs Department is taking all possible

measures for providing these youth a suitable platform to learn modern earning skills. After getting proper training, these youngsters could contribute sufficiently in the development of the country in multiple fields".

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that it is beyond doubt that the young generation is the future of our country and that's why we are paying special attention to their character and career building. "It is very important to spread awareness among young boys and girls about the serious harms of electronic devices such as mobile phones, laptops and drug addiction as well".

Representatives of several NGOs including Sabeha Shaheen, Iqbal Haider, Javed, Osama Nasir, Ammara Manzoor, Meherbano, Fareeha, Faiza Maham and Qasim Mumtaz belonging to leading NGOs such as Bargad, Faces Pakistan, VSO, FOF and Chanan were also present on this occasion.

Representatives of several NGOs shared a number of valuable ideas through which a large number of youth of the country could be transformed into useful and skilled citizens. They also stressed key measures for saving young boys and girls from the menace of drugs and electronic devices.

PSL 9 Player Draft to take place on December 13

A Sports

LAHORE: The Pakistan Super League (PSL) Player Draft for the ninth season will take place at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore on Wednesday, 13 December 2023.

The flagship event is tentatively scheduled from 8 February to 24 March 2024.

The pick order for the PSL 9 Player Draft was finalised earlier this month with Quetta Gladiators set to make the first pick of the draft.

The selection order for the first round for the Platinum category was determined by the inverse order of the previous season's standings.

Meanwhile, Karachi Kings will have the first Diamond pick, Peshawar Zalmi will have the opening Gold pick, Multan Sultans will have the first pick in the Silver category, Islamabad United will pick the first player in the Emerging cate-



gory and Lahore Qalandars will have the first Supplementary pick.

The process of local player category renewals for the upcoming ninth edition of the tournament was completed on 10 November with categories upgraded for nine players.

The registration window for foreign players was opened on 25 October with several top players across the globe showing interest.

The retentions and trades are to be finalized before the PSL 9 Player Draft, after the completion of the National T20.

Earlier today, Karachi Kings traded Imad Wasim to Islamabad United for Hasan Ali and received Islamabad United's first-round silver pick in exchange for their second silver pick.

The exact time of the HBL PSL Player Draft 2024 will be unveiled later.

CRYPTO: Cristiano Ronaldo slapped with over \$1 billion lawsuit for Binance promotion

Portuguese football legend Cristiano Ronaldo is facing a lawsuit for his promotion of Binance, the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange.

The plaintiffs have demanded damages of "a sum over" \$1 billion (£790m).

The complaint alleges that Ronaldo played a role in the offer and sale of unregistered securities in coordination with Binance.

The footballer entered into a partnership with Binance in 2022 to promote his non-fungible tokens (NFTs), which became associated with the exchange.

Users who signed up for Ronaldo's NFTs are claimed to be more likely to use the exchange for other purposes, such as investing in unregistered securities.

The lawsuit argues that Ronaldo, with his investment experience and resources, should have known about Binance's sale of unregistered crypto securities.

Former Binance CEO Changpeng Zhao has pleaded guilty to causing the global cryptocurrency exchange to fail to maintain an effective anti-money laundering program.

Shan Masood reveals Pakistan's first choice wicketkeeper in Australia

A Sports

LAHORE: Newly appointed Test captain of Pakistan cricket team Shan Masood has shown faith in former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed as the first-choice wicketkeeper during the Australian tour.

Shan Masood, who replaced Babar Azam as Test captain, acknowledged Sarfaraz Ahmed's performance in recent Test matches for Pakistan while talking to the media ahead of the team's departure for Australia.

"Sarfaraz was player of the series in the last home series against New Zealand. He also performed well in Sri Lanka and secured his spot in the team. He is the settled wicketkeeper in this team," Shan said.

However, he also shed light on the importance of wicketkeeper Moham-



mad Rizwan as a better and did not rule out the possibility of playing him solely as a batter.

"We might require Rizwan as a bats-

man. His track record is fantastic in Australia. He was one of the top scorers when we last toured Australia for Test matches," Shan Masood added.

"We might encounter a situation where we might have to drop a spinner and play an extra batter, so Rizwan can come into the fore then," he concluded.

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

The 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.

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, Khuram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel and Shaheen Shah Afridi

Jason Roy aids Chennai Braves edge Team Abu Dhabi in Abu Dhabi T10 League



A Sports

ABU DHABI: Chennai Braves' Jason Roy scored a 39-ball 84 to single-handedly edge Team Abu Dhabi by four runs in the fourth Abu Dhabi T10 League match at Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium.

Chennai Braves were invited to bat first by Team Abu Dhabi in the first game of both teams during the current season of the Abu Dhabi T10 League.

Chennai Braves got off to 40 runs swiftly in four overs before opening batter Kobe Herft (14) was sent back to the dugout by Dwayne Pretorius.

The other opening batter Jason Roy remained firm and waged a lone battle against Team Abu Dhabi amid falling wickets on the other end.

Jason Roy remained unbeaten at 84 in 39 balls with the help of six boundaries and seven sixes to help push his side's total to 115-4 in their accumulative 10 overs.

Except for two openers, none of the Braves batters could reach double-figures as Team Abu Dhabi bowlers kept one end in control.

Pretorius returned with figures of 2-21, while Tymal Mills picked one wicket.

In response, Team Abu Dhabi had a horrible start to their pursuit of a 116-run target as they slipped to 30-2 in three overs.

They lost two more wickets with an addition of 25 runs in the next three overs.

Team Abu Dhabi needed 61 runs in the last four overs with Leus du Plooy and Colin Ingram on the crease.

Plooy and Ingram counter-attacked Braves' bowlers, but could not get their team over the line as they managed to score 17 runs in the final over while requiring 22 to win.

Leus du Plooy scored 18-ball 47, laced with three boundaries and four sixes, whereas, Colin Ingram scored 20 off 15.

Chennai Braves' bowlers Aayan Afzal Khan, Sam Cook, Imran Tahir and Junaid Siddique all picked one wicket each.

De Kock-led Delhi Bulls thump Deccan Gladiators in Abu Dhabi T10 League



A Sports

ABU DHABI: Quinton de Kock scored a dominant half-century, aided by Rovman Powell's quickfire 31 to power Delhi Bulls to a crushing nine-wicket win over Deccan Gladiators in the third Abu Dhabi T10 League match at Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium.

Deccan Gladiators had a flying start after opting to bat as they raced to 64 in the sixth over, courtesy of the fiery batting display by Tom Kohler-Cadmore and Andre Fletcher.

Kohler-Cadmore fell prey to Naveen-ul-Haq after scoring 42 runs from 21 balls, laced with five boundaries and three sixes.

Fletcher was joined by fellow West Indian Nicholas Pooran and they added 35 runs before the former was run out at a total of 99.

Fletcher scored 34 runs off 20 balls featuring three sixes and one boundary.

Pooran (18) and Gladiators' captain Andre Russell (19) added 21 runs from the last seven balls of the innings to push the total to 120 in ten overs.

In response, Quinton de Kock and Johnson Charles set the tone for the chase in the Bulls' first game of the ongoing Abu Dhabi T10 League season.

Together they raised 73 runs for the first wicket in five overs, before Luke Wood castled Charles to pick the only wicket for Gladiators.

Charles scored a 13-ball 36 with the help of five boundaries and two sixes.

Bulls' skipper Rovman Powell joined De Kock and both batters exhibited tremendous power-hitting skills to chase the total in 8.3 overs while losing only one wicket.

De Kock scored 50 runs from 26 balls, laced with three boundaries and four sixes, while Powell played a 12-ball cameo of 31 runs, which featured five boundaries and one six.

New Zealand trail Bangladesh despite Kane Williamson ton in first Test

Sports Desk

SYLHET: Kane Williamson struck a defiant century Wednesday but could not put New Zealand in control in the first Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet.

The visitors reached 266-8 at stumps on the second day, still trailing Bangladesh by 44 runs in the first innings.

Williamson hit 104 off 205 balls in his 29th Test century with 11 fours, before Taijul Islam broke through his defence to bowl out the right-hander.

"I mean, you just see all around the world, he's amazing and how he sort of works out different attacks, different sort of ways people are trying to get him out, different surfaces," New Zealand coach Luke Ronchi said in praise of Kane Williamson.

"So to be able to do it the way he does and the calmness he shows in situations is awesome," Ronchi added.

"He's done it a lot, but a lot of our young guys can see how he does it."

Taijul was the pick of the Bangladesh bowlers with 4-89, while Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Nayeem Hasan, Shoriful Islam and Mominul Haque claimed one wicket apiece.

"I think the spinners bowled well. We could have created some more pressure. We took eight wickets in the end, so it is a good day for us," Bangladesh spin coach Rangana Herath said.

Herath praised Taijul for bringing his wealth of experience to the fore.

"Taijul is always helping the attack. He is our leading spinner. He created a lot of pressure," said Herath.

"He created a lot of angles. He has great experience, knowledge and understanding. I am so happy that he took four wickets today."

Glenn Phillips scored 42 runs to boost Williamson in their 78-run sixth-wicket partnership — which dug the visitors out of a hole after

they lost the top half of their batting order for 175 runs.

Occasional left-arm spinner Mominul forced Phillips to give a catch at slip, ending their partnership.

Kane Williamson took a single off Nayeem to complete his hundred off 189 balls, drawing him level with Don Bradman and Virat Kohli in terms of Test centuries.

Ronchi remained confident of New Zealand's tail wagging.

"We've still got two wickets in hand and hopefully tomorrow morning we come back," he said.

"And the guys left can put some more runs on the board and get us closer to the Bangladesh score, definitely."

Taijul redeemed himself for dropping Williamson at midwicket on 63 by taking the wicket of the former New Zealand captain and Ish Sodhi (0) in successive overs.

Daryl Mitchell earlier rode his luck

to reach 41 before he was stumped by Nurul Hasan, off Taijul's bowling. Mitchell, who put on 66 runs with Williamson for the fourth wicket, had nicked pacer Shoriful while batting on four.

But Bangladesh did not review the caught-behind appeal, which was turned down by the on-field umpire.

New Zealand bowled out Bangladesh for 310 on the first ball of the morning when Tim Southee trapped last man Shoriful leg-before for 13.

Bangladesh's spinners slowly took control to check the initial batting surge.

Taijul dismissed Tom Latham for 21, Nayeem taking the catch at fine leg.

Fellow opener Devon Conway fell to off-spinner Mehidy two overs later after making 12.



Debutant Shahadat Hossain took a brilliant one-handed catch, diving to his right at silly point after an inside edge hit Conway's pad and popped up to the fielder.

Shoriful dismissed Henry Nicholls

for 19 after lunch to leave New Zealand struggling at 98-3.

The two-match series between New Zealand and Bangladesh is the beginning of a new cycle in the World Test Championship for both teams.

Shaking hands

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Interior Kuwait, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah shaking hands with Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan General Syed Asim Munir while Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar looks on.



Photo: Online

President directs bank to refund Rs 344,600 to fraud victim

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi, upholding the orders of Banking Mohtasib, has directed Allied Bank Ltd (ABL) to pay Rs 344,600 to a customer as the amount fraudulently transferred from his account. The bank had committed maladministration by opening the fund transfer facility without the consent of customer which caused him financial loss, the President House said Wednesday.

Deciding upon a representation filed by ABL against the decision of the Banking Mohtasib, the president



held that the bank failed to discharge the burden and statutory liability cast upon it under the law and that it had committed basic irregularity and non-compliance by activating Internet Bank-

ing/Electronic Funds Transfer (IB/EFT) channel without customer consent. In his decision, he observed that although the complainant received a phone call from a number similar to the bank's

helpline, after which, a sum of Rs 344,602 was transferred from his account, however, if the IB/EFT facility had not been opened by ABL, the customer could have been saved from the financial loss caused to him with no fault on his part. The president pointed out that the complainant had neither requested the IB/EFT facility nor had conducted any transaction through such channels in the past. Ameer Ali Wasan (the complainant), a citizen of Hyderabad, immediately filed a complaint with the bank after the fraud but his grievance was not resolved. Later, he approached Bank-

ing Mohtasib to get a refund of the lost amount. The Mohtasib directed ABL to refund the defrauded amount, but ABL filed a representation with the President against the decision. The president held a personal hearing of the case and in his decision noted that ABL failed to establish the legitimacy of the disputed transaction in terms of Section 41 of the Payment System and Electronic Funds Transfer Act, 2007. "From the perusal of the record, it is apparent that the transactions were conducted on a single date and almost in a very short span of time and on the same pattern.

Iranian CG, KP minister holds deliberations on promotion of culture, tourism

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Banafsheh Khah and KP Minister for Information, Culture and Tourism, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel held extensive deliberations here on Wednesday. The meeting underscored the profound historical, cultural,

and religious bonds between the people of Iran and the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The meeting emphasized the pivotal role of people-to-people connections, promoting cultural exchange, and unlocking the tourism potential inherent in the rich tapestry of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Iranian cities. Both digni-

ties emphasized the importance of mutual festivals celebrating shared culture, heritage, food, and traditions. Discussions also delved into avenues for enhancing trade, aiming to fortify economic ties between Iran and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A central focus of the meeting was the exploration of measures to facilitate trav-

el between Iranian cities and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, utilizing road, sea, and air routes. This included discussions on air flights connecting Iranian cities with Islamabad or Peshawar to cater to tourists and businesspersons from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Minister of Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highlighted the need for joint celebrations

and festivities, emphasizing the unique opportunities for religious and eco-tourism in both regions. Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah expressed gratitude for the warm reception, acknowledging the historical bonds uniting the two regions. He highlighted the untapped potential for attracting Iranian tourists to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

FBR deploys special teams in sugar mills

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has taken another step to curb tax theft and deployed special teams to monitor sugar mills across the country.

The FBR spokesperson said in a statement that field formation teams have been deployed in sugar mills across the country. The statement read that sugar was one of the notified commodities being monitored by the state.

The authorities used to monitor sugar production, sales, clearance, stock and other activities at the mills, whereas, the tax stamp was mandatory on each sack. The violation of tax stamp printing could lead to the seizure of entire stock and three-year imprisonment for the defaulter, it added.

The bureau said that any attempt of sales tax theft on sugar would be dealt with iron hands and cases would be lodged against those mill owners who were found involved in sugar theft.

In another development today, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has decided to launch an investigation into the income tax records of the country's powerful segment, including industrialists and lawyers. The decision was taken as negotiations between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) technical team and Task Force on tax and FBR reforms were underway.

IMF technical experts were collaborating with FBR tax officials, engaging in extensive discussions and analysis based on data from FBR subsidiary PRAL.

Sources told that the Board would probe the income tax records of the country's powerful segment and was actively collecting data on members associated with powerful entities such as industrialists, lawyers, and doctors associations.

The investigation involves scrutinising identity card numbers and verifying mobile numbers of members within these major associations.

Israeli Authorities Extend Detention of Al-Shifa Hospital Director for 45 Days

News Desk

GAZA: The Government Media Office in Gaza said on Monday evening that Israeli authorities had extended the detention of the director of Gaza's Al-Shifa Hospital for an additional 45 days, the Middle East Monitor reported.

"The occupation army extended the detention of the director of Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza for 45 days pending investigation," its statement said.

Israeli occupation forces arrested Dr. Muhammad Abu Salamiya on November 23, in addition to a number of doctors at the hospital.

The Ministry of Health in Gaza announced the "suspension of coordination with the World Health Organization regarding the process of evacuating patients and medical personnel from hospitals in the Gaza Strip following the detention of employees working in the medical sector by the Israeli occupation army."

In turn, the WHO confirmed that "we do not have information about the well-being of the four remaining health staff, including the director of Al-Shifa hospital," in reference to four of the six staff members arrested at Al-Shifa.

WHO called for "their legal and human rights to be fully observed during their detention."

The organization had said in a statement received by Quds Press last Saturday that, "the director of the biggest hospital in the besieged Palestinian territory had been arrested on Wednesday along with five other health workers, while they were taking part in a United Nations mission to evacuate patients."



Saudi Arabia extends term for \$3bn deposit to Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced on Wednesday that Saudi Arabia has extended its term for a \$3 billion deposit in the central bank, shoring up the country's foreign exchange reserves and strengthening domestic economy.

"The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has extended the term for the deposit of USD 3 billion maturing on 05 December 2023 for another one year," the SBP announced in a statement.

The extension of the term of the deposit is a continuation of the support provided by the kingdom to Pakistan, which will help to maintain the foreign currency reserves of Pakistan and contribute to the economic growth of the country, the statement added.

In November 2021, the SBP had signed an agreement with the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) to receive \$3bn, which would be placed in the central bank's account with an aim to improve its foreign exchange reserves.

Pakistan's economy has been grappling with its foreign reserves depleting quickly amid less inflows from the diaspora.

The country's foreign exchange reserves held by the central bank dropped by \$217 million to \$7.180 billion in the week ending November 17, the SBP said, noting that commercial banks' reserves had also fallen to \$5.122 billion — bringing the country's overall reserves to \$12.302 billion.

However, the SBP attributed the drop in reserves to debt repayment in its weekly statement.

Caretaker PM arrives in Dubai to attend COP-28

News Desk

DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday arrived in Dubai, United Arab Emirates to attend the 28th United Nations Conference of Parties (COP-28). Minister for Justice of the United Arab Emirates Abdullah Sultan bin Awad Al Nuaimi, Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi and the Pakistani diplomatic staff welcomed the prime minister at Dubai's Al-Maktoum airport, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Caretaker Prime Minister Kakar will head the Pakistani delegation at the 28th Conference of Parties (COP-28), besides he would also attend the World Climate Action Summit on December 01-02. Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, Caretaker Finance Minister Dr. Shamsah Akhtar, Care-

taker Minister for Climate Change Ahmed Irfan Aslam and Caretaker Energy Minister Muhammad Ali will also participate in COP-28. The COP28 summit is being held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates which officially begins on Thursday, November 30 and runs through December 12. Caretaker PM arrives in Dubai to attend COP-28 COP "Conference of the Parties," refers to signatories of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, an agreement which was signed by over 150 governments in 1992. COP28 is the 28th annual summit which will bring leaders from around the globe. About 70,000 participants are expected to attend the event including various heads of state and government, climate envoys, experts, business leaders, indigenous groups, activists, diplomats and others. The conference will seek agreement on goals and strategies to address the climate crisis.

Aneeq highlights youth's crucial role in shaping Pakistan's future



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Wednesday emphasized the pivotal role of youth in shaping Pakistan's future. During the Capital Youth Expo themed 'Quran and Today's Youth', he urged the youth to integrate Islamic principles into worldly knowledge, emphasizing the responsibility of carrying forward the message of religion.

Aneeq highlights youth's crucial role in shaping Pakistan's future. Minister Aneeq expressed high hopes for the youth, stating that the advent of the Last Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) marked the transition from the ancient to the modern era, highlighting the indispensable role of the Quran in life. He advised the youth to read, comprehend, and follow the verses of the Holy Quran, emphasizing the collective responsibility to establish Allah Almighty's system on His land.

Joint efforts in metals supply chain to make world greener

News Desk

BELJING: Alf Barrios, Rio Tinto Chief Commercial Officer and China Chair said on Wednesday that his company has put net-zero transition at the heart of its business strategy and pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. "We have plans to invest USD 7.5 billion by the end of the decade to help deliver this strategy," he told China Economic Net, at the ongoing China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE).

"To boost our net zero journey, we have a number of technical engagements and partnerships with our Chinese customers, suppliers, and academic institutions. These partnerships focus both on the short term research and development to improve performance and reduce carbon emissions," he added. Barrios believes that the exploration of green technology by Chinese steel companies has allowed his company to see the potential for further cooperation between the two parties. "For Rio Tinto, the products we produce, like high-grade iron ore, copper and aluminum are critical to



drive decarbonization. We are also planning to grow in other materials that enable the low-carbon transition." Rio Tinto also showcased its START? brand — a key technology for sustainable supply chain during the CISCE. "The START? provides traceability, transparency, and assurance, and helping our customers and end users make better material choices with the help of blockchain technology," said Barrios. The green transformation of the supply chain is inseparable from the joint efforts of all parties around the world. Rio Tinto's largest single shareholder, CHINALCO, has made successful explorations on different tracks as well. The carbon emissions of recycled aluminum are only about 5-6 percent of that of primary aluminum. For the traditional aluminum industry with high energy consumption, the energy saving and emission reduction effect could be extremely significant.

US charges Indian national Nikhil Gupta with conspiracy to kill Sikh leader

Reuters

MANHATTAN: The United States has charged an Indian national Nikhil Gupta with conspiring to assassinate a US citizen who advocated for a sovereign state for Sikhs, the U. S. attorney's office in Manhattan said on Wednesday. Nikhil Gupta was arrested by Czech authorities in June and is awaiting extradition. He could not be reached for comment.

"The defendant conspired from India to assassinate, right here in New York City, a U. S. citizen of Indian origin who has publicly advocated for the establishment of a sovereign state for Sikhs," Damian Williams, the top federal prosecutor in Manhattan,

said in a statement.

The charges come after a senior Biden administration official last week said U. S. authorities had thwarted a plot to kill a Sikh separatist in the United States and issued a warning to India over concerns the government in New Delhi was involved.

The official said Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who says he is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada, was the target of the foiled plot.

Prosecutors did not name the target of Nikhil Gupta's alleged plot, who they described as a vocal critic of the Indian government who leads a U. S.-based organization that advocates for the secession of India's Punjab state, which is home to a large population of Sikhs.