



**Artificial rain project in Lahore has achieved unprecedented successes: UAE Ambassador**

The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Islamabad His Excellency Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi said that the fruits of the first artificial rain project of the UAE to mitigate the dangerous effects of the smog affecting Lahore have achieved successes and positive results.... (Details on Page 5)



**Ahmed Saleem's unique treasure of archives needs to be preserved for future generations: Jamal Shah**

Caretaker Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Jamal Shah on Tuesday eulogized the renowned Punjabi and Urdu literati, researcher late Ahmed Saleem and urged the quarters concerned to ensure preservation of his archives for the future generations as a national asset. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Meeting**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired a meeting of the Balochistan administration, in Quetta on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

**COAS, US Centcom discuss joint training, enhance cooperation avenues**



**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir called on Commander United States Central Command (US CENTCOM), General Michael Erik Kurilla during his visit to the Headquarters Central Command at Tampa Bay, Florida. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on

Tuesday, during the meeting, matters of shared interests, particularly cooperation in regional security matters came under discussion. Both the sides discussed avenues of joint training and reiterated the need for enhancing training interactions between CENTCOM and the Pakistan Army. The COAS also visited the CENTCOM Joint Operations Center during the visit.

**Pakistan can no longer compromise its national security: PM**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that as Pakistan stood at the crossroads of history, it could no longer continue to compromise its national security by accommodating huge number of undocumented immigrants. "Our ultimate aim is to build a safer, more peaceful and prosperous Pakistan - with associated benefits for our own people, for the region, and the wider world," the prime minister wrote in an article published in The Telegraph on Sunday.

He said that the governments across the world were adapting to a new era of mass migration linked to conflict, climate change,

and economic opportunism. He said the UK Government's plan to deport illegal immigrants to Rwanda was a sign of that pressure. The heated debate surrounding the proposal and the many efforts to derail the scheme illustrated the huge challenges for policymakers as they sought to balance human rights with hard realities. Similarly, he said, France was also struggling, while Italy had expressed fears that it might become "Europe's refugee camp". After opening its arms to several million refugees in recent years, Germany was also feeling the strain, prompting the announcement of tough new deportation measures. The situation in the United

States was no easier, he remarked. "Pakistan's problem is of a different magnitude altogether. Over the last three to four decades, between four and five million migrants (roughly the population of Ireland) have arrived. Many have no right to remain. Despite being a non-signatory to 1951 Convention on Refugees (and its 1967 Protocol), we have generously accommodated the single largest case-load of refugees," the prime minister wrote. He said that since August 2021, at least 16 Afghan nationals had carried out suicide attacks inside Pakistan, while 65 terrorists killed in encounters with security forces, mainly in the bordering region, were identified as Afghans.

"No responsible government can ignore such concerns. Whenever we raised this with the interim Afghan government, they advised us to 'look inwards'. We have finally decided to heed to their advice to put our house in order," the prime minister commented. He said that Pakistan's painstaking repatriation programme had attracted predictable criticism from those who did not understand the complex history of the problem - or the extraordinary efforts that had been made to avoid forcible deportations. He said in order to ensure the welfare of those being repatriated, the government had strictly directed all the officials involved in the programme to treat depor-

tees with due respect and care. "Furthermore, our emphasis is on voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation of individuals (along with their legally acquired assets), and not on deportation. Some 93 per cent of those who have returned to Afghanistan have done so voluntarily. Importantly, none of the 1.46 million Afghans who applied for proof of registration cards have been returned; nor have 800,000 or so individuals who hold Afghan citizen cards." He said that some 79 transit centres had been set up, providing free meals, shelter and medical facilities while additional crossing points had been opened on the Pakistan-Afghan Border to facilitate the processes.

**PTV Bolan fulfills Hazara community's demand with Hazargi broadcast: Solangi**

**Bureau Report**

QUETTA: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Tuesday that long standing demand of Hazara community had been fulfilled by start of Hazargi language programmes at Pakistan Television Bolan from today.

Delivering his speech at the opening ceremony of "Hazargi language" programme on PTV Bolan, he said the PTV Bolan was already broadcasting programs in Balochi, Pashto and Brahvi languages. PTV Bolan broadcasts were available on cable and satellite, Murtaza Solangi said adding it could also be accessed through terrestrial antennas that would help people in remote areas too. "We are grateful to Prime



Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar for encouraging us to take this initiative," Murtaza Solangi remarked. The minister said that PTV Multan telecast's duration had been extended to 24 hours earlier this month. With the addition of Kan Maitarzi Rebroadcast Center, the number of transmitters of rebroadcast centers has increased from 22 to 23. "Our aim is to ensure equal representation of regional languages on PTV Bolan," Murtaza Solangi maintained.

**ECP orders removal of Ahad Cheema as SAPM**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has ordered to remove Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Ahad Cheema from his post. An ex-civil servant, who served in grade BPS-20 for more than 15 years, also remained Adviser to the then-PM Shehbaz Sharif on the establishment. The verdict was issued after a hearing on petitions moved against federal ministers and advisers over their political associations. The election commission had issued notices to Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hassan Fawad, Adviser Ahad Cheema and Principal Secretary to the PM Tauqeer Shah.

**Ambassador of Jordan meets Privatization Minister**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Dr Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Pakistan on Tuesday called on Caretaker Minister for Privatization, Fawad Hassan Fawad, to discuss issues of mutual interest and cooperation that came under discussion at length. The ambassador elaborated upon Jordan's experience with privatization and the resulting benefits that have accrued to the Jordanian economy, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Privatization. He explained the supportive policies adopted



by Jordan have opened up the country for international investment from across the world. The minister while citing similarities between the two brotherly countries appreciated the privatisation program of Jordan as a replicable model for Pakistan. The minister apprised the ambassador on progress in the privatization process in Pakistan. The potential areas for trade and investment between the two countries were also discussed. The minister also expressed his gratitude to King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein for his longstanding and continuous support for Pakistan.

**Swedish ambassador calls on FM Jilani**



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Swedish Ambassador in Islamabad Henrik Persson on Tuesday called on Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani. In the meeting, they agreed to further enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas including politics, trade and economy. They also discussed the regional and global developments.

**Ashrafi calls for int'l tribunal to probe Israel's war crimes**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Representative for Religious Harmony & Islamic Countries Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Tuesday called for the establishment of an international tribunal to probe Israel's war crimes. The United Nations should take immediate steps in that regard as it was the unanimous demand of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to hold Israel accountable for the war crimes it was committing in Palestine, he said

while addressing a conference on the current situation in Palestine and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. Ashrafi lauded Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir for effectively highlighting the issues of Kashmir and Palestine during his recent visit to the United States. The PUC chairman denounced the recent terrorist incidents that led to the martyrdom of soldiers. The foreigners residing in Pakistan should follow the laws of the land and refrain from creating unrest, he added.

While announcing the conference's declaration, Ashrafi stated that the PUC endorsed the Supreme Court's decision on military courts. Earlier, PUC leader Maulana Zulfikar, in his address, emphasized on the resolution of Palestine and Kashmir issues. He highlighted the significant casualties and displacement in Palestine, urging international organizations to take notice. PUC Islamabad President Maulana Abu Bakar Sabri also spoke. Prominent religious scholars and others attended the conference.

**Faiz Hamid to be summoned in Faizabad sit-in case**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Former Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief Faiz Hamid is likely to be summoned by a three-member commission, constituted to probe identify those who planned, financed, and supported a sit-in at Islamabad's Faizabad area six years back

**Over 9,800 FBR employees file tax returns**

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Over 9,800 out of 10,000 Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) employees have filed their tax returns. The FBR Chairman Amjad Tawana confirmed that only 180 employees were non-filers who will also file their tax returns in a few days. He detailed that 10,000 non-filer employees were salaried below Rs50,000. Earlier, it emerged that 10,000 out of 17,000 FBR employees were non-filers.

**Mushaal lauds COAS for raising Kashmir issue dispute in US**



**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Husain Mullick highly praised the successful visit of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir to the US during which he raised the longstanding Kashmir dispute in a befitting manner. Mushaal said that the COAS unequivocally conveyed to United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that peace in South Asia would remain elusive until the resolution of Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UNSC resolutions and the aspirations of Kashmiri people, which gave a fresh impetus to the ongo-

ing Kashmir freedom struggle and a testament that Pakistan was standing firmly with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters in this just war of right to self-determination. The SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, in a statement, lauded the Army chief for strongly taking up the unilateral, unconstitutional and illegal Narendra Modi-led Indian government's efforts to change the special status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) at the highest level. She underscored that the Indian notorious government crossed all limits of barbarism and terrorism to silence the dissenting voices in and abroad of India. Mushaal pointed out that all minority communities were being subjected to brutal state terrorism and coercive actions, which evident from its global terrorist networks targeting people in Pakistan, Canada and even in America.

# World Peace Jirga Program inaugurates 'Border Path' to promote peace and entrepreneurship

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: A prestigious oath-taking ceremony was held in Islamabad on behalf of the World Peace Jirga Program. Under the World Peace Jirga program, oath-taking ceremonies were held in Swabi district from Sindh, Karachi, Azad Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After taking the oath, prizes were also distributed among the district groups of the World Peace Jirga Program. The World Peace Jirga Program is a private organization that has been promoting peace and entrepreneurship for the past twenty years. It works to eliminate growing unrest and hatred among people. It promotes friendship among people by resolving their disputes through Jirga. It provides business opportunities and employment opportunities for poor and helpless people. Their aim is to support and be the voice of Pakistan's forces. All the defense institutions of the country of Pakistan have to be their voice whether it is print media or social media. Our aim is to raise the morale of the Pakistan Army. Leaders of the

World Peace Jirga Program, Musitalah Khan (Khan Baba) and Sadia Khan (Khan Bibi) visited different borders of Pakistan with their team. Among them Chaman, Taftan Panjgur, borders Balochistan while Angoor of KPK. He has also visited the border of Ada Karachi and Torkham. Apart from Khan Baba World Peace Jirga programme, Khan Baba is also running two other companies namely Khan Baba World Services and Khan Baba World Link Travels Private Limited.

Khan Baba uses the World Peace Jirga as a tool for peace and harmony and not only tries to solve the basic problems of the local people but also tries to improve the relations between different countries on the international stage.

Khan Baba is also actively involved in promoting mutual trade activities and is trying for trade gains between different countries like Russia, Iran, China and Afghanistan. For this purpose, Khan Baba and his wife Sadia Khan along with their team have prepared a plan to organize seminars in different cities like Kara-

chi, Lahore, Quetta, Rawalpindi and Islamabad and in this regard at the government level. Correspondence with the concerned departments is going on. The aim of these seminars is to promote business and create awareness among the people against illegal exports and imports and to maintain the peace situation. The first seminar will be held in Karachi on September 21, the second in Quetta on September 27, the third in Lahore on October 5, then Rawalpindi on October 24 and Islamabad on October 26.

World Peace Jirga Program groups from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir have participated in the ceremony held today at National Library Islamabad. In addition to the provinces, the World Peace Jirga Program is now promoting work at the district level. In which the cabinet of Karachi and Hyderabad cities from Sindh and Swabi from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been prepared. After their swearing ceremony and shield distribution today, these groups will start fighting for the welfare of their



respective areas. The Chairman of World Peace Jirga Program Musitalah Khan aka Khan Baba has said that we are also organizing a big seminar

on December 27 at the Convention Center Islamabad in which we will invite the Prime Minister of Pakistan as a special guest. The aim will be the

development and rehabilitation of the country and at the same time specific business opportunities will be created for the youth.

## Nomination

ISLAMABAD: A woman nominee for the National Assembly seat of minorities is taking nomination paper from the counter of the Election Commission of Pakistan, in Federal Capital.

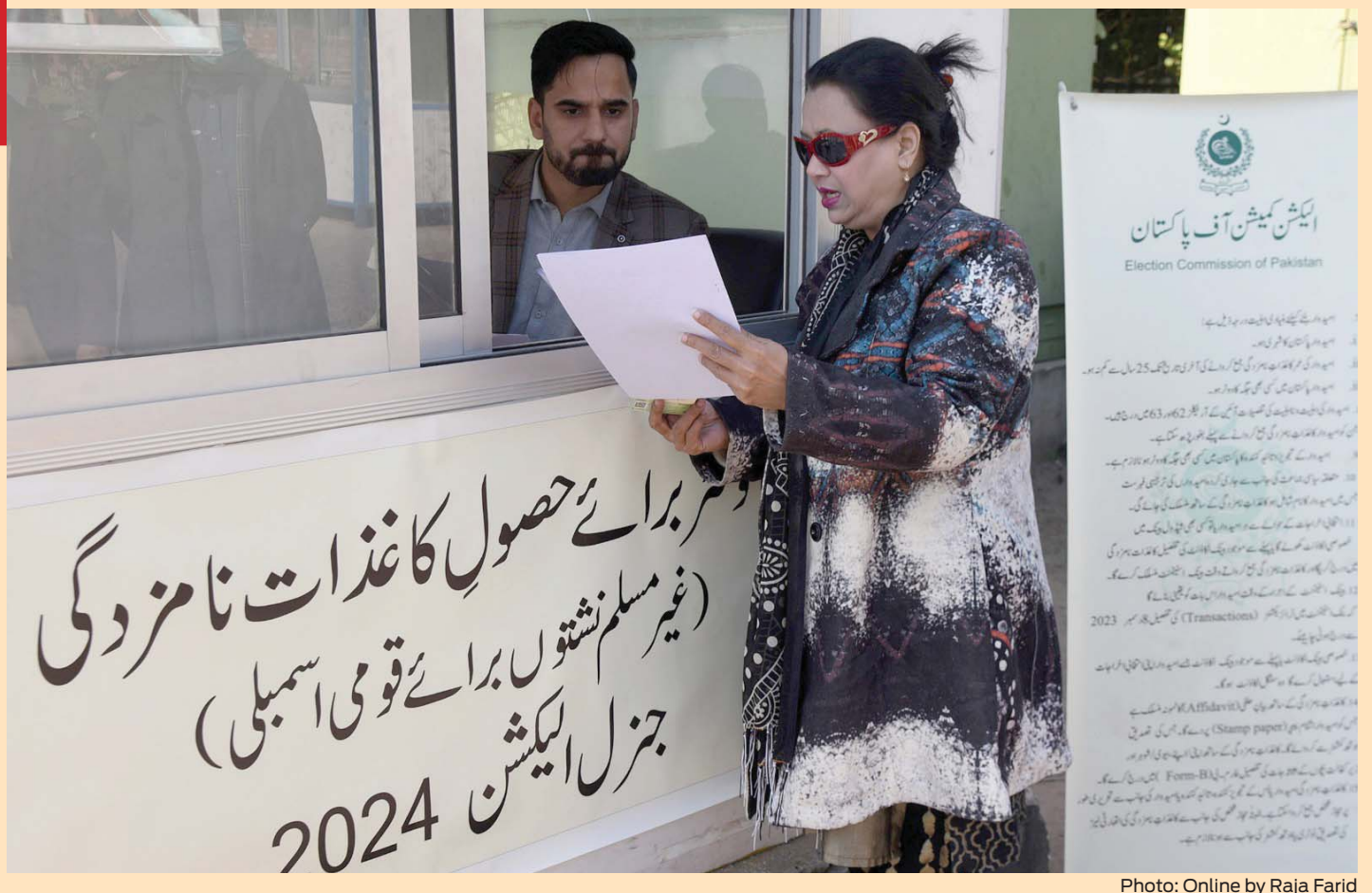


Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## Malik Wasif joined Pakistan People's Party



**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: The former MPA of Tehreek-e-Insaf and Shah Mehmood Qureshi's right-handed Malik Wasif Ran has announced to join the People's Party. Ex-Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani welcomed him and said that we are getting a very good response from the people. And I am sure that the people will give a decision in our favor. Sarfaraz Bugti and Wasif Ran are giving surprises all over Pakistan. Free and fair elections are the duty of Election Commission. People's Party always worked hard for all classes.

People's Party is a name of struggle and an ideological party. We made a consensus constitution and then restored it. The Charter of Democracy was signed and then President Asif Ali Zardari gave all his powers to the Parliament. PPP has its own manifesto, however, various committees are working for seat adjustment. Forming an opinion regarding a party is a violation of public mandate. People's Party was always accountable to the House and the people during its government. It is always ready for election. PPP will give good result from South Punjab. Numerous development works have been carried out in Qadirpur district and will be carried out in the future. Malik Wasif Ran will be our candidate along with Ali Musa.

## Azad Kashmir health card service restored



**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: The efforts of the Azad Kashmir government paid off, the health card service was restored in Azad Kashmir, while the quota of students from Azad Kashmir in federally sponsored medical colleges was also restored. With the hard work, dedication and special interest of the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and the Health Minister, the health card service has been restored throughout Pakistan only for Azad Kashmir.

On the instructions of Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Haq, Azad Kashmir Health Minister Nisar Ansarabadi met with the caretaker federal ministers and informed them about the concern of the patients benefiting from Health Facilitation Card in Azad Kashmir, while the quota of 30 seats for the medical students of Azad Kashmir in federally organized colleges.

Informed about the concern of the students regarding the termination, on which the federal government immediately restored the health card facility till December 31, 2023 and a committee was formed on behalf of the Prime Minister of Pakistan under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad in which the Azad Kashmir Govt.

Health card service in Azad Kashmir will continue even after December 31, 2023, however there will be some administrative changes which will be suggested by the committee established by the Prime Minister of Pakistan before December 31.

Azad Kashmir met the Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad in which he raised the concern of the people of Azad Kashmir due to the closure of health card and the issue of ending the quota of medical colleges. He instructed to restore the health card, on which the health card service was formally restored in Azad Kashmir. Yesterday, Azad Kashmir Health Minister met with Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan, Chairman Board of Directors of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan Sulaiman Mehdi, Chief Executive Officer of State Life Insurance Company Mr. Shoaib Javed, Chief Executive Officer of Health Facilitation Program Muhammad Arshad and Azad.

He raised the concern of the patients benefiting from the health facility card in Kashmir before the federal government and said that Azad Kashmir is a backward area, many poor people are benefiting from this facility and due to its closure, the patients are facing numerous problems. It has to be done.

## Millions of children are out of School in Pakistan: Mushtaq Mangat

**Quratulain Asim**

MULTAN: Two and a half million children are out of school in Pakistan. At the time of the establishment of Pakistan, the population of Pakistan was 30 million, today it is 240 million, but unfortunately, the government has not prioritized education and only 80 billion is kept in the budget, while 600 billion is kept for the Benazir Income Support Program. It is not difficult to guess what kind of people will be born instead of an educated and skilled nation. And does not have the resources for talent, give them opportunities for education and take Pakistan forward, the hands of



Al Khidmat Foundation should be strengthened to achieve these goals.

These views were expressed by Vice President Al Khidmat Foundation Pakistan Mushtaq Ahmed Mangat, President

of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Multan Mian Rashid Iqbal, Chairman Al Khidmat Foundation South Punjab Rao Muhammad Zafar addressed the student convention under the Al Khidmat Al Falah Schol-

arship Program organized by Al Khidmat Foundation South Punjab. During the convention, Sadar-ul-Khidmat Foundation South Punjab, Engineer Ahmed Amar Yasir, General Secretary Muhammad Arif Khan Jarwar, Director Al-Falah Scholarship Professor Dr. Abdul Qadir Buzzdar, Director Al-Falah Scholarship Pakistan Dr. Ahmed Gibran Baloch, Director of Education South Punjab Professor Dr. Abdul Qudous Soheib and Humayun Shahzad also spoke while on this occasion, cash prizes were also distributed among the students with the scholarship program to the talented students of Shield Orphan

Care, while General Secretary South Punjab Arif Khan Jarwar gave a pledge to the new students who joined the Al Falah Scholarship Program. Mushtaq Mangat, Rao Mohammad Zafar and Mian Rashid Iqbal while addressing added that Al Khidmat will never leave alone those students who do not have the resources to quench their thirst for knowledge.

Engineer Ahmed Ammar Siddiqui said that Al-Khidmat is in the field of action by feeling the pain and suffering of the society, sacrifices have to be made to achieve great goals, sacrifice is the only way to change.

## All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference takes oath at shrine of Quaid Millat

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference central officials, members of the central council and officials of other subsidiary organizations took oath. The swearing-in ceremony was held in Islamabad at the shrine of Quaid Millat Raees-ul-Ahrar Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas.

The ceremony was presided over by the President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Atique Ahmad Khan.

The former president of the conference, Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jaral, advocate, along with senior workers and office bearers of the Muslim Conference participated. At the swearing-in ceremony,



President Muslim Conference Sardar Atique Ahmad Khan congratulated the newly elected officials and said that the Muslim Conference is associated with the movement of the state.

When the Muslim Conference was strong, there was no crisis in Azad Kashmir. Azad Kashmir is the defense fence of Pakistan and

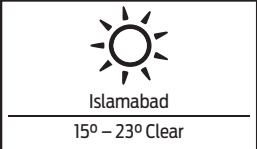
Quaid-e-Azam called it aorta and it means that the life and death roads of Pakistan pass through Kashmir. Therefore, our responsibility is great and everyone should fulfill this responsibility together.

The Muslim Conference is fulfilling its responsibilities. The Muslim Conference and the state of Jammu and Kashmir are inseparable.

The third generation of the Muslim Conference is also committed to its party ideologies.

The slogan of Mujahid e Awwal has been guarding Pakistan will be Kashmir.

He said that we had no expectation of justice from the Supreme Court of India. India is currently exposed to the world.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:38 am
Zohr	12:04 pm
Asr	3:24 pm
Maghrib	5:02 pm
Isha	6:31 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**High-level meeting on Azad Kashmir Inland Revenue held in Islamabad**



Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting of the Azad Kashmir Inland Revenue Department was held here today with Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq in the chair. The meeting discussed in detail the taxation related matters, setting up taxation targets and implementing fiscal policies to widen the tax base in the region. The Commissioner of Inland Revenue, on the occasion, gave a detailed briefing to the Prime Minister regarding the tax collection targets in Muzaffargarh, Neelum and Jhelum Valley and the problems faced by the department. Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that the department should pool in all its efforts to achieve the tax collection targets besides reducing the disparity between filers and non-filers. He said that the government would provide the required resources to the department but negligence in duties won't be tolerated under any circumstances. The Prime Minister directed the Inland Revenue officials to collect the data of all the private hospitals, hotels, tourism resorts, business centers, shops, local industries, marquees and private schools and furnish the report to the PM office within 15 days. The meeting was attended by senior Minister Colonel Retired Waqar Ahmed Noor, Communications Minister Azhar Sadiq, Health Minister Ansar Abdali, Special Secretary Masood-ur-Rahman and officers of the Inland Revenue Department.

**Hamdard Naunehal Assembly**

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan hailed as patriot, role model for Pakistan's youth**

KARACHI: Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of the Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, paid glowing tribute to Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and said he was a courageous and outspoken journalist, poet and leader who rendered matchless services to unify the nation and for the cause of independence of Pakistan. She was addressing the monthly meeting of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly titled: "Maulana Zafar Ali Khan the leader of Pakistan Movement", held yesterday at Bait-ul-Hikmah Auditorium, Madinat al-Hikmah. Renowned journalist, writer and teacher Dr. Auj-e-Kamal attended the proceedings as chief guest.

Ms. Sadia Rashid expressed that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was a devoted

patriot and a sincere well-wisher of the nation. Throughout his life, he committed himself to the rights and freedom of Muslims, envisioning a promising future for the country and its people in the youth of Pakistan. In his message to the younger generation, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan emphasized that the progress and security of Pakistan hinge on the shoulders of the youth. Therefore, youngsters must possess a combination of education, skills, patriotism and a sense of duty for the betterment of Pakistan.

She advised the youth to align with Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's ideals, prioritize education, foster national unity through courteous and dignified conduct, aiming for Pakistan to stand as a beacon globally. Children must exhibit



it honesty in both speech and actions, staying mindful of their rights, duties, and adherence to the law.

Dr. Auj-e-Kamal said that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, regarded as the father of journalism, was dedicated to upholding the principles of Islam. As an outspoken and honest journalist and thinker, throughout his life he championed truth. Transferring the knowledge of achievements to future generations is our duty. Ms. Sadia Rashid is actively shouldering this national responsibility by arranging meaningful events and meetings such as Naunehal Assembly. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said initiated a series of intellectual training for the cultivation of young minds. In his editorial for the monthly Hamdard Naunehal, he consistently maintained a flame of courage and hope, illuminating the path for the newer generations. He imparted the lesson that individuals

with the determination to face challenges inevitably find success.

The chief guest commended the young speakers, expressing satisfaction at the accurate pronunciation and usage of seldom-used words in their speeches. He remarked that witnessing this proficiency filled him with assurance about the promising future of Urdu.

Speakers from various schools shared their perspectives on the subject and paid homage to Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. Armin Khan, the Speaker of the Hamdard Naunehal Assembly and a student of Hamdard Public School, presided over the meeting. Students of PNG Secondary School presented a tableau, and Dua-i-Said was offered by students of Hamdard Public School and Hamdard Village School.

**Migrants Day**

**National Conference on 'Building a Global Future'**

PPA

ISLAMABAD: International Migrants Day, observed annually on 18th December, serves as a global platform to recognise, and celebrate the contributions of migrants to societies worldwide. International Migrants' Day promotes the opportunity to reflect on the positive impacts of migration, raise awareness on the challenges they face and encourages dialogue on the importance of safe and orderly migration with full respect for the dignity and human rights of migrants.

Ms. Raana Rahim, Head of Office/ Country Coordinator ICPMD, Pakistan in her opening remarks stated the importance of skills partnerships can contribute to effective tapping of the potential of migrants. Such partnerships can be an innovative mechanism for maximising brain gain, or the knowledge and skills of migrants, both in origin and destination countries.

Ms. Romina Kochius, Coordinator Sustainable Economic Development, Training and Development, GIZ, emphasised the critical role of sustainable economic development in



supporting migrant communities during her welcome remarks on the International Migrants Day event. She highlighted the necessity of comprehensive training programs to empower migrants with essential skills for integration.

Mr. Aurangzeb, Joint Secretary Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development highlighted the presence of all relevant authorities and stakeholders at the event as a testament of their commitment towards promoting safe and dignified migration from Pakistan.

Mr. Naseer Khan Kashani, Managing Director of Overseas Employment Cooperation, focused on the imperative shift from low-skilled to

semi and highly skilled migration. Mr. Kashani underscored the evolving landscape of global migration.

In another session on "Skills for Tomorrow", Mr. Abdul Hafeez Abbasi, Director General (SS&C), National Vocational and Technical Training Commission highlighted the importance of anticipating future labour market trends and advocated for fair recognition of migrant qualifications.

Ms. Michaelle Nintcheu, Researcher from the Institute of German Economy delivered a comprehensive presentation on the key features of Germany's Skilled Immigration Act underscoring the significance of policies that promote skilled immigration, fostering

economic growth and global collaboration.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Mansoor Zaib Khan, National Team Leader/DV, Programme Centres for Migration and Development (ZME), Head of Programme/AV, TVET Sector Support Programme (TVET SSP) encapsulated the essence of today's discussions on recognition of migrants' qualifications and skills. This event served as a platform for meaningful dialogue, bringing together stakeholders committed to shaping a more inclusive and supportive environment for migrants, recognizing the diverse skills and experiences that migrants bring, paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

**Youth Office Lower Chitral starts 7 days training of skills for women**

Adam Khan Wazir

LOWER CHITRAL: On Tuesday, District Youth Office Lower Chitral and High Tech started a seven-day training for women in Brus area of Lower Chitral under the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral Muhammad Imran.

District Youth Officer Sardar Ali Wazir said in this regard that the Youth Office will train women to learn modern sewing and Mutton/ embroidery in this training session.

He said that the main objective of such training is to make the women of Lower Chitral financially independent and teach them practical skills.

He said that a total of 30 women are participating in the daily training session, which will continue for a week.

Apart from District Youth Officer Sardar Ali Wazir, High Tech Director Zia Ur Rehman and Master Trainer Safat Gul Bi



Bi also participated in it. District Youth Officer Lower Chitral Sardar Ali Wazir said on this occasion that the Youth Office is making all possible efforts to empower women, so that they

do not face any difficulties in leading a good life. He said that the mission of the Youth Office is to ease the difficulties of women and provide them with employment opportunities.

**'We reject the forced occupation of signboards in Karachi': Amir Siddiqui**

PPA

KARACHI: The industry, which pays billions of rupees in taxes should be saved from destruction. We do not accept the forcible occupation of the signboards of Karachi city. The advertisements on the pedestrian bridges across the city are contrary to the Supreme Court's order, These shocking views were revealed by Amir Siddiqui, President Sindh Outdoor Advertiser Association in a press conference on Tuesday held at Karachi Press Club.

He said that Supreme Court's orders were being floated in the city. The Code of Conduct should be made according to the Supreme Court's order in 2018. Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab is favouring his blue eyed friends. The multi-billion rupee tax-paying industry is at the verge of destruction. We do not accept the forcible occupation of the signboards of Karachi city. Mayor Karachi should tell us under which law is the permission being given for signboards on public property across the city. In 2006, there were 400 companies in this industry and today there are 50 companies left in 2024.

The advertising sector which is a major contributor to the economy, pays substantial taxes and provides employment to thousands of families. So Mayor Karachi is not seriously taken this matter and the jobs of millions of peoples are in danger.

We have been working in this city for 20 years. The rules are changed after every 4-5 years which causes huge loss to the industry. Secretary General of association Aamir Ali, Information Secretary Najeeb Farooqi, Finance Secretary Mohammad Ahmed, Mohammad Ishtiaq, Mohammad Javed and Zafar Butt also attended the press conference.

**CPDI report highlights need for citizen budget in Pakistan**

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: CPDI has released its fourth annual report on the "State of Budget Transparency in Pakistan, International Best Practices The report pointed out shortcomings in the budgeting process at the federal and provincial levels and calls for budget proposals to be widely discussed with civic groups, government agencies and key stakeholders. The report says Pakistan should consider launching a centralized digital platform dedicated to fostering citizen participation. This platform should be designed to present intricate budgetary details in a manner easily digestible to the citizen. Governments must prioritize the initiation of nationwide public consultations, including town-hall meetings and workshops, during the crucial budget formulation phase. Report also demanded to develop and issue separate budget statements for Women, Minorities, Children, and PWDs, outlining specific allocations and strategies tailored to each group's unique needs and challenges. The reports urges to avoid the inconsistency observed in Pakistan, the practice of presenting a citizens' budget should be formalized through specific legislation or regulations.

While talking with elected representatives, LG representatives, CSOs and media persons, during "stake holder, s dialogue on transparent budgeting" organized by member organization of CNBA (Citizens Network for Budget Accountability). The said that for the past decade, CPDI has been working to improve the budgeting process in Pakistan from the district to the federal level to promote transparency in it. As a result, fourth report based on "State of Budget Transparency in Pakistan 2023" has been released.



**Humanitarian Actors in Pakistan Unite at National Dialogue Platform for Anticipatory Actions amidst Climate Challenges**

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, grappling with an array of climate-induced and geo-meteorological challenges, is taking a substantial stride toward proactive disaster management. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society, German Red Cross, and The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in collaboration with esteemed partners, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Concern Worldwide (CWW), and UN OCHA, organized the Inaugural National Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Actions in Pakistan here

on Tuesday. The event convened humanitarian actors, meteorologists, climate scientists, national governments, academia, community leaders, and decision-makers.

Discussions revolved around constructing, reinforcing, and amplifying anticipatory action and forecast-based financing to mitigate the impact of anticipated disasters. Participants delved into strategies for integrating anticipatory action concepts into existing projects and advancing the utilization of weather and climate data for enhanced disaster preparedness.

In his opening remarks on the first day, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari underscored the need for collaboration, stating, "In this era,

our focus must center on climate-led initiatives linked with timely early actions to diminish the impact of disasters on vulnerable communities. COP28 discussions align with Anticipatory Actions as well.

The National Dialogue Platform is a pivotal step towards building resilience, and the Red Crescent Society is committed to collaborating with all partners for effective anticipatory actions."

He mentioned that PRCS would develop Early Action Protocols on the Indus River basin in highly vulnerable districts of Sindh, Punjab & KP. To achieve this target, PRCS looks forward to NDMA and other stakeholders at the provincial level for their support.

Lt. General Inam Haider Malik,

Chairman NDMA, shared his perspective on the significance of the event, stating, "The challenges posed by climate-induced disasters necessitate a collective and anticipatory response.

This platform offers an opportunity for all stakeholders to converge, share knowledge, and formulate strategies for proactive disaster management."

He emphasized that this landmark event signifies Pakistan's commitment to fostering resilience and collaboration in the face of climate-related challenges.

By harnessing the collective expertise of diverse stakeholders, the National Dialogue Platform aims to chart the course for a more anticipatory and effective disaster management approach in Pakistan.



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# Secret for Chinese miracle: Selection and Election - I

In 2012, I had the privilege of participating in a Publication Workshop for Developing Countries in Beijing, which included an illuminating journey through Fujian Province in China. Over three days, we traversed this remarkable province, marveling at its stunning natural beauty, witnessing the speed and efficiency of bullet trains traversing hills, and learning about infrastructure feats, including roads beneath the sea. Fujian's mountains were dotted with tunnels, carving paths for roads, highways, and railways. Each city boasted its industrial zones, showcasing a plethora of products in local exhibitions. Markets teemed with fresh produce, restaurants bustled with customers, and beaches offered modern amenities. Ports hummed with vessels, and tourist spots were impeccably maintained. The province exuded affluence, modernity, and contentment among its populace. It was only later that I discovered Fujian's incredible transformation from poverty to prosperity, a feat attributed to President Xi's governance during his tenure as its governor. Fujian stands today as a testament to China's progress and prosperity under his leadership.

grasped one crucial secret of success: people-centric administration. They knew that their pump and show, their own authority and clout within and beyond the country did not rely on the most powerful army or weapons, but rather on the empowerment of the country's people.

This idea prompted Chinese leaders to transform their whole political system from ruling to serving the people. They directed all of the country's resources into developing an ethical, aggressive, educated, trained, high-value, and high-capacity human resource. This discovery was one of the primary reasons for China's extraordinary success and wealth, among many others.

The secret of this incredibly powerful political formula is based on selection and elections in which the fulcrum is not oratory skill, sycophancy, relationships with high-ranking officials, like or disliking, but one magic word meritocracy and meritocracy alone.

The Chinese political system has also developed a foolproof criterion for evaluating and measuring meritocracy, which is based on principles of tangible and measurable progress on five parameters: poverty reduction, job creation, local economic growth, social development, and, increasingly, environmental protection. These five important elements serve as the foundation for selecting administrative and political leaders.

The political system is designed to generate leaders that are completely tuned, capable, and committed to motivating, inspiring, and encouraging their target population to reach their maximum potential regardless of gender, ethnicity, or race. They gave their people with the means to provide high-quality education for their children, to train them in a highly effective vocational training center to impart high-quality skills, to teach them good management abilities, and to practice high ethics in running their enterprises. They provide opportunities for high-achieving students to enhance their critical and sensitive knowledge skills both at home and abroad. The Chinese government's concentration on nurturing a high-quality populous has resulted in the world's fastest-growing economy and drastically improved living standards for the vast majority of Chinese people.

President Xi's rise from the grassroots level to the highest position of the President is due to his ability to bring both qualitative and quantitative changes, beginning with village leadership qualifying to town, then province leadership, and finally as he rose to the highest position of the President.

President Xi's political career began in 1974, when he joined the Communist

Party of China (CPC) and was appointed Party secretary of Liangjiahe. When asked how they found Xi as a leader in an interview, the villagers all agreed that he was strong at planning and finding solutions, he was well-educated, he was tough in the face of adversity, and he was competent at farm labor. As the Party secretary of Liangjiahe hamlet, Xi oversaw a number of measures that helped the peasants, transforming him into "the man of the people."

When he took over as village leader, the inhabitants were destitute and had minimal agriculture due to a lack of water and floods sweeping away standing crops. Xi recognizes that the people will be unable to escape poverty until the water is harnessed. He had a desire to build a dam and worked day and night to fulfill his goal. He carried the stone barefooted and shoveled the ground day and night, leading the people from the front and successfully building the dams that provided the farmer with a regular flow of water and spared the crops from floods. Later, he returned to fire and decided to construct a methane tank to produce gas for the residents' cookers and lighting. He traveled to Sichuan to obtain the technology and successfully dug the first methane tanks using cow dung and manure. The first flame from methane gas not only cheered up the people, but it also boosted Xi's prospects of rising to the heights of glory that only he could fathom. The first biogas lamp was later replicated throughout Shaanxi Province.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Arabic language

Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Munir Akram, Monday joined the commemoration of 2023 Arabic Language Day at the UN, saying the language has been a source of solace, enlightenment, and unity for Muslims worldwide. "This commemoration holds immense importance, particularly for the Arab as well as the Muslim nations, including Pakistan, as Arabic is not merely a language; it is the vessel that carries the divine words of the Holy Quran," he told an event organized by Saudi Arabia at the spacious chamber of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

This year's commemoration coincides with the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of Arabic as one of the six UN official languages. The other languages are: English, French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese. "Together, let us forge a path of unity, understanding, and peace, recognizing that language is not merely a means of communication but a bridge that connects hearts and minds," Ambassador Akram said.

Urdu, Pakistan's national language, he said, traces at least one-third of its etymology to Arabic, and millions of Pakistanis learn it out of conviction and because of their love for Islam. "Millions more also learn Arabic because it is a gateway to their livelihood and prosperity, as they are welcomed by our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in other Arabic speaking countries. Therefore, Arabic for Pakistan is an essential reality and objective.

"The language came to Pakistan a few years after the emergence of Islam when Muhammad bin Qasim landed on the shores of Sindh and it has never left the sub-continent ever since", the Pakistani envoy added. "This was the initiation of Islam in South Asia." The Arabic language, he said, has served as a bridge from Maghreb to China, connecting diverse communities and fostering understanding among different cultures. "In our diverse global community, the United Nations aims to serve as a platform for dialogue, understanding, and cooperation," Ambassador Akram said. The inclusion of Arabic as one of the official UN languages not only upholds world's linguistic diversity but also amplifies the voices and aspirations of millions of people in the Arab and Islamic world.

"Today the Islamic world is concerned with all the challenges that we are facing whether it is in Palestine or in Africa," the Pakistani envoy said. "Our effort must be to utilize the Arabic language as a means of conveying our aspirations, of promoting our national interest, of fostering commerce, trade, industry and investment, which are the key to future prosperity and peace for all our peoples. "We therefore must look forward to an active effort not only by the Arab countries but also the Islamic countries and others who are aligned with our aspirations to promote greater and more effective utilization of the Arabic language," he added.



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

## Freedom of Speech: A Nightmare in Pakistan

What distinguishes human beings from animals are wisdom and the expression of thoughts, and similarly, what brings human beings back to the Stone Age is banning the right to expression. Right to expression is the freedom to express views fearlessly. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ensures the freedom of speech, and similarly Article 19 of the constitution of Pakistan also protects the right to speech subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of the glory of Islam, state's integrity, contempt of courts and international relations. However, in the name of "reasonable restrictions" the right to expression has been widely affected by dynastic politicians, religious clerics, state institutions, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), the courts, and so on. In this regard, it is safely stated that right to free speech has become a myth in Pakistan. Silencing sane voices leaves no stone unturned in hurting democracy, critical thinking and collective development. Currently, Pakistan is suffering from 'freedom after speech' to a large extent.

Indeed, restriction on free speech is tantamount to chopping off tongues. Freedom of free speech brings miracles. Free speech discloses corrupt practices, explores facts, spreads awareness, breaks status quo, discourages the concentration of wealth, strengthens transparency, tightens accountability, empowers women and awakens people from deep slumbers. Dictators, dynastic politicians and corrupt officers never want to be criticized or called in question by layperson or media.

In Pakistan, it is impossible to raise voice

against the menace of extra judicial killings, enforced disappearances, state's negotiations with yesterday's terrorists and military's blatant intervention into politics. Free-speech-deliverers and critical thinkers are persecuted, kidnapped, beaten and assassinated. Courts, in the name of "contempt of court"; the establishment, in the name of patriotism; and religious clerics, in the name of blasphemy continue to silencing sane voices. Whenever individuals are criticized or held accountable for their malpractices, they seek refuge in the institutions they belong to and get off scot-free. In Pakistan, there are many heinous laws that not only support such high profile criminals, but also muzzle voices raised against them. Section 124th of the Pakistan Panel Code (PPC) has still been in force since 1870. The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has struck down the prevention of electric crimes (Amendment) Ordinance, 2022, terming it unconstitutional. Section 500 of the PPC says that whoever defames or criticizes Pakistan's armed forces may face jail for two years, along with a fine worth Rs5000000 or both. Contempt of Parliament bill, 2023, Personal Data Protection bill, 2023, E-Safety bill, and specially Official Secrets Act bill introduced by the PDM government, have become new draconian restrictions in the face of freedom of speech in Pakistan.

Nexus between politicians and media houses has also affected the freedom of speech in the country. Media censorship develops published opinions rather than public opinions. Censorship affects women-folk, minorities, children and the poor the most. Pakistan ranks 30th out of 100 in terms of free speech.

However, it is hoped that superior judiciary, social media outlets, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, private media channels, Non-Governmental Organizations, progressive political leaders, students' unions and women activists may restore the spirit of free speech in Pakistan to some extent. Silencing sane voices at gun point or killing free-speech-deliverers extra judicially cannot be justified altogether. Freedom after speech must be ensured in Pakistan at all costs.

In the today's global world of internet and social media, if a speech or a statement is made in one corner of the world, it reaches the other corner of the world in the blink of an eye; so, free speech must have limitations as well. The world is heterogeneous; therefore, there should be space and respect for opposite races, religions, thoughts and genders. Before delivering a speech, it must be ensured that no religion, sect, ethnicity or race will be degraded, and no one's sentiments will be hurt. All religions, sects, ethnicities, races and genders are superior alike. Clash of civilizations, biblioclasm, misinterpretation of Islamic teachings, mixing terrorism with Jihad, Islamophobia in the West and Xenophobia in the East are the results of free speech without limitations.

To wrap up, neither a speech without limitations nor a speech chained with restrictions is the real solution to the problems. Neither hurting others' sentiments in the name of free speech is wisdom, nor depriving public of truth in the name of limitations is sanity—the best way is moderation. In order to put an end to terrorism, corruption, dynastic politics, religious fanaticism and military's blatant interference into politics, the freedom of expression needs to be restored in letter and spirit.

Prof. Fazal Tanha teaches at Govt Boys Degree College Pishin.



Analysis

Prof. Fazal Tanha

## Net Metering - an impending source of relief for consumers - I

Raziq Ali Shah

In an era of escalating power prices, selling power to national grid would definitely be a source of relief for consumers as alternate energy systems installed at houses would make them earn money instead of simply being the consumers. Yes, the Net Metering system that now enables them to sell extra electricity to Power Distribution Companies (DISCOs) generated easily through their solar and wind systems for years, just after one time spending.

Thousands have already converted to this system as power distribution companies are now providing them with this modern facility of selling extra electricity to concerned distribution company.

This novel facility of selling extra electricity has already started functioning with certain companies including K-Electric awarding net-metering connections to purchase surplus electricity.

"Instead of just keep paying as consumers, the clients of power distribution companies are now becoming sellers by selling their extra electricity," said Chief Executive Officer of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) Dr. Muhammad Amjad.

He said following successful models of several western and eastern countries, the government ultimately introduced this technology to facilitate power-producing customers.

"Net metering is also an innovative and immediate solution to current power shortage in the country," Dr Amjad stated and informed that IESCO was country's first power distri-

bution company facilitating both commercial and domestic customers to generate electricity through solar panels and sell their surplus electricity to IESCO.

Net-metering project was launched country-wide in 2016, allowing any domestic, commercial, industrial and other consumers to have at least a three-phase meter connection to avail this facility.

Under the arrangement, such a consumer could sell additional energy to respective power distribution companies and make stocktaking (calculations) with it at the end of a month.

Since the system allows the consumers to generate electricity from one kilowatt to one megawatt, NEPRA issues license to applicants seeking generation above 25kW in the service area jurisdiction of all distribution companies.

"We got extremely encouraging response from public. The IESCO has installed 21,218 net metering connections with a total generation capacity of 229.09 megawatts (MW) in its jurisdiction from January 2016 to October 2023," informed Manager Public Relations IESCO Asim Nazir Raja.

He said the company had received 22,174 applications for net metering connections worth 244.77 MW and so far licenses have been issued to 22,114 consumers with an accumulative capacity of 242.33 MW.

"The import and export of billing units had started from 18,310 net metering connections with a total capacity of 201.09 MW," he informed. "Total exports and imports from these connections stood at 254,454,591 units and 411,934,674 units respectively."

*To be continued*

Smog

# Artificial rain project in Lahore has achieved unprecedented successes: UAE Ambassador

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Islamabad His Excellency Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi said that the fruits of the first artificial rain project of the UAE to mitigate the dangerous effects of the smog affecting Lahore have achieved successes and positive results so far and will continue in the coming weeks, Ambassador Al Zaabi said that the artificial rain project in Pakistan specifically in the Lahore city came under the direct patronage and supervision of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President of the UAE, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of presi-

dential court, and through this project unprecedented scientific successes were achieved.

The UAE ambassador spoke about the artificial rain project in Pakistan and said that it comes in a step to combat high levels of air pollution, as the residents of Lahore city witnessed the first artificial rain on 16 December, and will continue in coming week, the initiative which was conducted by the government of the United Arab Emirates in cooperation with the Federal government of Pakistan and the government of Punjab province aims to mitigate the dangerous effects of smog affecting the city and its population of more than 22 million people, at



the same time artificial rain was implemented which covered 10-15 kilometers area in Lahore.

Ambassador Hamad Al Zaabi spoke about the UAE Research Program for Rain Enhancement Science and said that it is an international research initiative launched by His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President of the UAE, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of presidential court in 2015 to develop rain enhancement research in the UAE and support research proposals and innovative technologies that contribute to addressing water scarcity issues in arid and semi-arid regions by providing a financial grant to selected teams

of researchers and scientists.

The Ambassador spoke about artificial cloud seeding and said that it is a process of deliberate At the conclusion of his talk about the cooperation project between the UAE and Pakistan, Ambassador Al Zaabi said that the process of artificial rain seeding is carried out by planting clouds for condensation or catalysts for rainfall, as these catalysts are planted by aircraft or ground cannons using various materials such as dry ice, solid carbon dioxide, silver iodide, calcium chloride, sodium chloride, and water mist, and the process in which silver iodide is used to control the acceleration of the rainfall process is considered the most famous

process used for artificial cloud seeding, as it works to increase the density of clouds above their normal rate which makes the ice crystals inside the clouds freeze and then fall due to their weight to the ground before the rising heat returns them near the surface to its liquid state again, and to enhance the guarantee of the success of the artificial cloud seeding process, several natural factors must be present that help in cloud seeding such as the presence of cumulus clouds, the presence of rising air, determining the appropriate time for cloud seeding, and knowing the appropriate amount of stimulating materials that must be injected into the clouds.

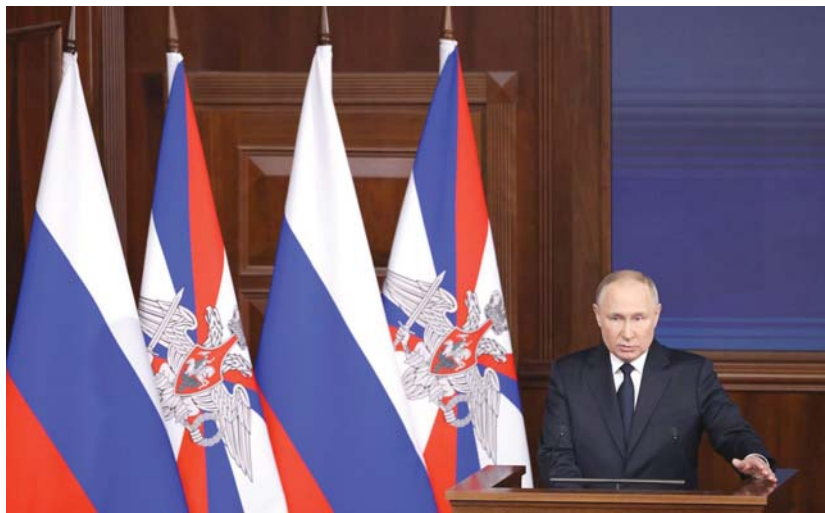
Key points

## President Vladimir Putin's speech at an expanded meeting of the Defence Ministry Board

News desk

ISLAMABAD: The year of 2023 was a tense one for the Russian Armed Forces, and I want to say at once that our soldiers and officers, commanders at all levels courageously and professionally carried out tasks during special military operation, ensuring the country's sovereignty at the global level, nuclear missile parity and Russia's strategic security.

The events of this year have confirmed that the West continues to wage hybrid warfare against Russia, actively providing the Kiev regime with real-time intelligence, sending military advisers, transferring modern weapons systems, including highly mobile multiple rocket launchers, long-range missile systems, cluster munitions and a large number of new UAVs. As we know, the West also planning to hand over F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine: pilots are



being trained in the West.

The activity of the NATO military bloc as a whole has also increased dramatically recently. Significant forces from the US, including aircraft, have been moved to our borders. The number of Alliance's troops in Eastern and Central Europe has increased. Finland, as we know, has already been drawn into NATO, and Sweden is planning to join.

In fact, this means another stage in the alliance's approach to our borders.

The West is not abandoning its strategy to deter Russia and its aggressive goals in Ukraine. Well, we are not going to give up our goals of a special military operation either.

Assessing the current situation on the ground, on the line of contact, we can say with confidence that

our troops have the initiative. The enemy is suffering heavy losses and has largely squandered its reserves. Incidentally, the myth of the invulnerability of Western military equipment has also collapsed.

All attempts, as they said in the West, to inflict on us a military defeat, a strategic defeat, crashed against the courage and fortitude of our soldiers.

## UNGA adopts Pakistan-Philippines sponsored resolution on "Promotion of inter-religious and intercultural dialogue"

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations General Assembly has adopted by consensus a resolution presented by Pakistan and the Philippines on the "Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace".

Initiated in 2004, the Pakistan-Philippines sponsored resolution seeks to foster interreligious and intercultural dialogue in promoting, understanding and cultivating a culture of peace. It stresses that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it, special responsibilities. The resolution also underlines the significance and respect for "religious symbols"; reaffirms that violence is never a justifiable or acceptable response to acts of intolerance; and that "violence should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group".

The unanimous adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly is particularly significant in view of the alarming rise in religious intolerance and racism, particularly Islamophobia, across the globe. It also sends a message of international solidarity and cooperation.



Naseem Ahmed Osmani, Chairman Pakistan National Unity Council met the Federal Minister of Education in his office. During the meeting the Federal Minister accepted his invitation to visit the Islamabad Model School Sector D-17 Margalla View Housing Scheme.

## Pakistan's envoy to EU calls on Czech counterpart



PPA

BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Amna Baloch on Tuesday called on the Permanent Representative of Czech Republic to the EU Edita Hrdá. In the meeting, they discussed the issues of mutual interest and agreed to strengthen diplomatic ties for deeper collaboration.

## AIOU extends registration date for convocation till January 5

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, has decided to extend the deadline for registration for the convocation till January 5th. This decision has been taken after receiving requests and insistence from the students. Graduates from Semester Autumn 2004 to Semester Spring 2022 are eligible for convocation. Graduates with 75% marks in B. Ed programs, at least 70% marks in all other degree programs, and all MPhil and PhD graduates can register themselves on <http://convocation.aiou.edu.pk> before 5th January 2024. All the necessary details and conditions are available on the provided link.

AIOU Convocation 2024 will be held on January 31, 2024, at the Jinnah Convention Center, Islamabad. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, who is also the Chancellor of the University, will be the chief guest at the event. The ceremony will be hosted by the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood.

Key talking points

## Statement by Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation General of the Army Sergei Shoigu

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: • Russian Groups of Forces have liberated an area five times larger than that of the Lugansk and Donetsk people's republics before the special military operation began.

• To date, Ukraine has received \$203 billion from external sources, which is \$30 billion more than its GDP. In fact, it is a bankrupt country. A significant part of these funds are loans that have to be repaid.

• In total, 5,220 tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, and armoured personnel carriers,



28 airplanes, 87 helicopters, 23,000 unmanned aerial vehicles, over 1,300 artillery systems, including 494 M777, Caesar, Paladin, and Krab howitzers, as well as 2,650,000

155-mm and 122-mm shells were delivered to Kiev.

• NATO military personnel have direct control over air defence systems, operational-tactical missiles, and multi-

ple launch rocket systems. A total of 410 military and dual-purpose spacecraft from NATO countries are working in the interests of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU).

• Since the special operation began, the AFU's losses have exceeded 383,000 troops killed and wounded, 14,000 tanks, IFVs, and APCs, 553 airplanes and 259 helicopters, 8,500 field artillery guns and MLRS vehicles.

• The mercenaries who have been actively involved since the beginning of the special military operation have been eliminated for the

most part. More than 5,800 militants were neutralised, including 1,427 from Poland, 466 from the US, and 344 from the UK.

• Every day, more than 1,500 people [in Russia] apply for military service. This year alone, about 490,000 contract servicemen and volunteers have been recruited.

• The number of foreign volunteers willing to fight in favour of the truth has increased seven times. In the Ukrainian army, the opposite trend is observed. The number of foreign mercenaries has decreased six times.

# Hashoo Group & Dewan Motors Join Forces to Power Sustainable Mobility in Pakistan

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo Group, in collaboration with Dewan Motors Pvt. Ltd., Pakistan's authorized BMW automobile importer, is launching a pioneering initiative to enhance the electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure in Pakistan. This collaboration focuses on a phased installation of BMW AC chargers for electric vehicles across Hashoo Group's extensive network of hotels and resorts, including the five-star Pearl-Continental, the four-star PC Legacy, and the three-star select-service Hotel One brand.

This initiative aims to foster green mobility nationwide and contribute to a more environmentally friendly Pakistan. These BMW AC chargers are designed to accommodate

vehicles adhering to European standards, ensuring broad compatibility for a diverse range of electric vehicles.

Hashoo Group is dedicated to ecologically friendly operations and has committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, along with supporting the country in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 set forth by the United Nations. An agreement signing ceremony was held recently in Islamabad, with senior management from both organizations in attendance.

Haseeb A. Gardezi, Chief Operating Officer, Hospitality and Education Division, Hashoo Group, shared his thoughts on this exciting collaboration, "Hashoo Group integrates its various business verticals

towards more environmentally conscious practices. In line with our sustainability agenda, we are thrilled to mark this significant milestone on our road to a greener Pakistan while at the same time elevating our customer experience by providing a convenient charging facility for their EVs across our properties."

Zacem Ul Haque, Director Operations, Dewan Motors Pvt. Ltd., remarked, "On this momentous occasion, we are proud to serve the nation and play a pivotal role in building essential infrastructure that aligns with global environmental goals. I am excited to see the outcome of this collaboration with Hashoo Group in line with our joint commitment to a cleaner, greener, and sustainable Pakistan."



This initiative not only underscores the dedication of both Dewan Motors and Hashoo Group to environmental stewardship but also exemplifies their collective commitment to supporting Pakistan's progress towards a more sustainable future.

Dewan Motors is Pakistan's authorized importer of BMW vehicles and maintains a stellar position in the automobile market for remarkable customer service and an innovative strategic mindset at its core. Dewan Motors has introduced a range of premium segments elec-

tric cars and SUVs in Pakistan offering All-electric models as BMW iX1, BMW iX2, BMW iX3, BMW iX, BMW i4, BMW i5 and BMW i7.

Hashoo Group is Pakistan's premium conglomerate with a diversified business portfolio spanning both nation-

al and international markets. The Group owns and operates the Pearl-Continental Hotels & Resorts and PC Legacy & Hotel One brands in Pakistan and has business interests encompassing the information technology, investment, travel & tourism, and real-estate sectors.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
62,833.03	65,204.67	
Day's High	Day's Low	
65,132.03	62,360.78	
Index Value	Change	
21,705,882,282	-2371.64	
Percentage	Time	
-3.64%	19 Dec, 2023 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,638.03	+23.55	
Percentage	Time	
+0.31%	19 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
37,484.73	+178.71	
Percentage	Time	
+0.48%	19 Dec, 12:59 pm GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
33,219.39	+460.41	
Percentage	Time	
+1.41%	19 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	188	190
Bahrain Dinar	745.89	753.89
Canadian Dollar	210	212
China Yuan	39.82	40.22
Danish Krone	41.4	41.8
Euro	309.5	312.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.97	36.32
Indian Rupee	3.41	3.52
Japanese Yen	1.39	1.45
Kuwaiti Dinar	911.82	920.82
Malaysian Ringgit	60.66	61.26
New Zealand \$	175.83	177.83
Norwegians Krone	26.98	27.28
Omani Riyal	728.49	736.49
Qatari Riyal	77.81	78.51
Saudi Riyal	75.5	76.2
Singapore Dollar	210.5	212.5
Swedish Korona	27.56	27.86
Swiss Franc	322.98	325.48
Thai Bhat	8.12	8.27
U.A.E Dirham	77.9	78.6
UK Pound Sterling	360	363.5
US Dollar	283.5	286.2

# PPIB, CERAD, Huawei launch White Paper on Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter

**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: PPIB, CERAD and Huawei Pakistan on Tuesday jointly unveiled the White Paper on Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) for Photovoltaic (PV) systems, marking a significant stride in realm of solar power technology.

The launch, a result of collaborative efforts with Private Power & Infrastructure Board (PPIB) and the Center for Advanced Research in Engineering and Development (CERAD), is poised to redefine the landscape of PV power plant development in the country.

The event, adorned with a technical white paper launch ceremony, featured Chief Executive Officer of Huawei Pakistan, Ethan Sun, who in his welcome address, emphasized importance of the AFCI in advancing technological frontiers, providing a comprehensive reference for enterprises involved in PV power plant development.

He said the objective is to establish a foundation for technological development and promotions. He said this technical white paper will serve as a guiding document for enterprises, enabling them to continuously enhance their products in response to evolving situations and application requirements.



Ethan Sun said this document serves as a comprehensive guide for industry stakeholders, elucidating the development background, technical principles, challenges, features, and the tangible results of AFCI technology verification and evaluation.

On the occasion, Managing Director of Private Power & Infrastructure Board, Shah Jahan Mirza lauded Huawei's commitment to technological advancement and expressed optimism that the introduction of this cutting-edge technology would play a pivotal role in

addressing Pakistan's power challenges. Shah Jahan Mirza, in his speech said that the Technical White Paper on Intelligent DC Arc Detection (AFCI) for PV Systems, jointly released by PPIB, CERAD, and Huawei, serves as a comprehensive guide for the industry. This white paper explores into the development background, technical principles, challenges, verification results, and application prospects of AFCI technology. It is a valuable resource that empowers stakeholders to navigate the details of this advanced technology with confidence.

He further went on to add that the incorporation of Huawei's insights and capabilities has undoubtedly added value to our endeavor, further solidifying the reliability of the evaluation results.

The event was also attended by the Commercial Counselor for the Embassy of Peoples Republic of China, Mr. Yang Guangyuan who along with Managing Director PPIB and CEO Huawei initiated the launch sequence for the White Paper document.

The White Paper on AFCI will serve as a catalyst for further innovation and set new benchmarks for the integration of cutting-edge technologies in our chase of sustainable, safe and energy-efficient energy for Pakistan.

## Crop

ISLAMABAD: A farmer is busy in harvesting the "Broccoli" from Crop at Chak Shahzad Farms area in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## Telenor Microfinance Bank & easypaisa Operations Unaffected by Telenor Pakistan Sale

**PPA**

KARACHI: Following recent news regarding Telenor Pakistan, Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB) and its flagship platform, easypaisa, would like to assure our valued customers that our operations remain unaffected. TMB and easypaisa are not part of the recent transaction, and your deposits are completely secure.

We are an independent financial institution, licensed and governed by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Our dedicated shareholders, Telenor B. V. and Ant Group, remain fully committed to TMB's ongoing transformation into a Digital Retail Bank, subject to regulatory approvals.

This commitment ensures a bright future for our customers and employees, offering a wider range of products and services within a robust digital banking framework.

# Bank Alfalah and U Microfinance Bank enter into strategic collaboration for a financing facility

**PPA**

PAKISTAN: U Microfinance Bank (U Bank), one of the largest microfinance banks in Pakistan, has forged a strategic partnership with Bank Alfalah Limited, one of the country's largest commercial banks, to secure a short-term financing facility of PKR 10 billion aimed to collaboratively facilitate U Bank's corporate funding.

The collaboration was officiated in a formal ceremony held recently in Karachi, where Mr. Mohamed Essa Al Taheri, President & CEO - U Bank, and Mr. Atif Bajwa, President & CEO - Bank Alfalah, signed a Memo-



randum of Understanding in the presence of key management representatives from both the organizations. The ceremony underlined resilience and harmony within the financial sector in Pakistan and signified a collective effort to drive positive change and a shared

commitment towards financial inclusion.

Mr. Mohamed Essa Al Taheri, President and CEO-U Bank, spoke about the collaboration: "We are delighted to enter into this strategic alliance with Bank Alfalah that significantly contributes to our efforts

towards offering inclusive financial products and services to the underbanked population, expanding our outreach further to more regions of Pakistan, and driving overall economic development in the country.

Mr. Atif Bajwa, President and CEO - Bank Alfalah, expressed on the collaboration: "The extension of this fully underwritten facility seeks to strengthen our partnership with U Microfinance Bank and reflects our commitment to promote financial inclusion in Pakistan. Our shared goal is to ultimately empower underserved communities and drive inclusive economic growth."

## ICCI holds Quran Khawani for its former President Munawar Mughal (Late)



**PNP**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) held Quran Khawani for its former President and renowned business leader Munawar Mughal (Late) on the occasion of his 9th anniversary.

ICCI Office Bearers of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Executive Committee Members, former Presidents Abdul Rauf Alam, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi,

Mian Shaikat Masud, Khalid Chaudhry, Nisar Mirza, Presidents of various markets, and a large number of business community participated in the Quran Khawani. Khurshed Ahmed Qadri offered Dua for the Easaal-e-Sawab of Munawar Mughal (Late). He also offered Dua for other deceased former Presidents ICCI Muzzamil Sabri, Ch. Muhammad Aslam, Khalid Masud Bhola, Muhammad Siddique Butt & Muhammad Raza Khan (Late) as well as Muhammad Hussain former Vice President ICCI.

## Concerns raised about decline in remittances



**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, expressed concern on Tuesday over the continued fall in remittances, which are an important source of foreign exchange earnings.

Overseas Pakistanis are again using illegal channels to send money, which is reducing the volume of remittances received through banking channels,

he said.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that from July to November, remittances declined to 11,044.7 million dollars, compared to 12,317.8 million dollars in the comparable period of last year.

This 10.3 percent decline is significant and cannot be overlooked due to the state of the economy, he added.

The business leader said that remittances jumped during the COVID-19 lockdown, compelling remitters to use the official channels to send money to their families.

The illegal hundi system was scarcely available at that time; therefore, the country received a record amount during the lockdown, but the situation has changed since then.

# EFP organises 1st Disability Inclusion Excellence Awards 2023

**PNP**

KARACHI: Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) in collaboration with the Pakistan Business and Disability Network, International Labor Organization (ILO), Sightsavers Pakistan, GIZ, organized 1st Disability Inclusion Excellence Awards 2023. This Disability Inclusion Excellence Award honored employers with exemplary disability inclusion practices. 35 organizations contested out of which those who met the basic threshold were recognized by awarding awards.

Agriauto Industries Ltd, Akhtar Textile Industries, Artistic Milliners, Bank Alfalah, Bank of Punjab, Dr. Essa Laborato-

ry & Diagnostic Center, Dubai Islamic Bank, Feroze1888 Mills, Herbion Pakistan, Ismail Industries, K-Electric, Lucky Textile Mills, Meezan Bank, Nestlé Pakistan, Pakistan Eye Bank Society Hospital, Pak-Qatar Takaful, Sadaqat Ltd, Standard Chartered Bank, Unilever Pakistan, and Zaamin Builders were recipients of the awards. The selected award winners demonstrated a strong commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace environment, ensuring that their policies and practices accommodated individuals with disabilities.

The ceremony was attended by more than 200 participants representing employers and their representatives, worker's federations, NOGs and Government

officers from the relevant departments in addition organisations dealing with disability and persons with disabilities. The Board Directors and representatives from Partners organizations including Sightsavers, ILO, GIZ, UNICEF and Standard Chartered Bank were also present. Whereas Dr. Saad Khalid Niaz, Minister for Health, Social welfare and Health Engineering was the Chief Guest.

On the occasion, Health Minister Dr. Saad Khalid Niaz congratulated the award winners and applauded the organizers of the event. He said empowering every individual, irrespective of ability, is not just a duty; it's the cornerstone of a compassionate society. He added that the



Disability Inclusion Excellence Awards 2023 illuminate our collective commitment to fostering inclusivity, and I am honored

to be part of this transformative journey. He said equality is a must to support differently-abled persons by providing them equal

opportunities to grow. Itfaq Khaliq Khan, Senior Programme Manager at Sightsavers Pakistan, Muham-

mad Ubaid, Project Manager for Women's Employment at GIZ, Muhammad Feroz Alam, Vice President EFP also addressed.

# President's Trophy: Saad Nasim's ton saves Ghani Glass, WAPDA seal first win

**A Sports**

LAHORE: The first round of President's Trophy Grade-I came to an end with the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) winning their games while the fixture between Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited and Ghani Glass ended in a draw.

Saad Nasim smashed an unbeaten hundred to save the game for Ghani Glass, while Asif Afridi struck regularly to help WAPDA reap triumph.

Ghani Glass managed to eke out a draw against Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) by batting out the whole day and only losing four wickets.

In pursuit of 408, Ghani Glass managed 300-6 in 96 overs. Continuing from their overnight score of 38-2, Kashif Ali (59, 115b, 10x4s) and Tayyab Tahir (60, 141b, 7x4s) scored fighting half-centuries.

Skipper Moez Ghani was dismissed



for a duck leaving Ghani Glass 168-5. At this point, Saad Nasim and Mohammad Irfan (55, 118b, 5x4s, 1x6) put on a sixth-wicket partnership of 124 runs to put SNGPL on the back foot. Saad (105 not out, 173b, 9x4s, 4x6s) scored

an unbeaten hundred to save the game for his team.

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Mohammad Ali managed four wickets while Mehran Mumtaz and Mubasir

Khan managed one wicket each. Other SNGPL bowlers remained wicketless.

Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) resumed from their overnight score of 39-1, whilst in pursuit of 286 to win.

WAPDA took the remaining nine wickets in 61.3 overs. Only Sarmad Bhatti (60, 152b, 6x4s) and Ali Zaryab (37, 65b, 4x4s) managed to put up some resistance but then KRL lost six wickets for 69 runs, awarding WAPDA a win by 48 runs.

Asif Afridi bagged four wickets. Nazeem Masood and Tahir Hussain picked up two wickets each. Captain Iftikhar Ahmed and Hassan Abid Kiyani dismissed one batter each.

The second round of the tournament will kick off on 22 December across four venues in Karachi.

SNGPL will face Pakistan Television (PTV) at UBL Sports Complex while Ghani Glass will face Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) at SBP Sports Complex in the second round of the President's Trophy.

## PCB introduces new rules for President's Trophy Grade-I

**A Sports**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has made some changes to four-day cricket playing conditions for the President's Trophy Grade-I on a trial basis to make the tournament more competitive and result-oriented.

Restricting the first innings of teams to 80 overs is aimed at improving scoring rates in domestic cricket, revamping the current approach and developing an attacking style of play in line with modern-day cricket.

This will provide data for comparing the competitive standards of this tournament with the previous tournament, which was played



according to traditional first-class rules.

The board will take input from all participants at the end of the President's Trophy to assess the outcomes of these rules.

The PCB expects fans and pundits alike to be patient with their assessment of this

domestic tournament, which is taking place after a gap of four years.

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The PCB affirms that a decision on the following revisions will be made after the conclusion of the President's Trophy. These changes include:

**9.1 Rolling**

After the toss, the captain of the batting side may request the umpires that the pitch be rolled for not more than 7 minutes. This request shall be entertained only if the request has been made within 5 minutes after the Toss.

**12.7 Hours of Play; Minimum Overs Requirement**

All matches in the subject tournament will be restricted to 80 overs in the first innings. The second innings will be open.

**16.9 Points**

If a captain decides to either declare or forfeit his team's first innings before the completion of 80 overs, the bowling side will get bowling bonus points.

## Principal ICC inaugurates annual Career Inter Colleges and Academies Sports Gala

**Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Principal ICC Muhammad Adnan Abbasi inaugurated the annual Career Inter Colleges and Academies Sports Gala. A large number of teachers and students of ICC Kayani Road and Simly Dam Road Bharu Kahu Colleges and Academies participated in the opening ceremony. Muhammad Adnan Abbasi while addressing the event said that sports is a mental, physical and nervous battlefield. In which every team and player comes with the hope of winning. Winning and losing is part of the game. Sportsman spirit is a reflection of the sport and human training. The losing player and the team can overcome their shortcomings and win in the future. A winning player and team can maintain a winning tradition through their performance, strategy and hard work rather than arrogance.

## Shadab Khan reacts on exclusion from Pakistan squad for New Zealand T20Is

**A Sports**

LAHORE: All-rounder Shadab Khan on Tuesday, reacted after being left out from the Pakistan squad for the upcoming five-match away T20I series against New Zealand.

Wahab Riaz, the head of the national men's selection committee, accompanied by selection consultant Kamran Akmal announced a 17-member Pakistan squad for the T20I series during a press conference.

Leg spinner Shadab Khan was not named in the squad due to an ankle injury, which he suffered during the National T20 Cup.

During the squad unveiling, Pakistan Chief Selector Wahab Riaz confirmed that Shadab Khan was rested from the series as he is recovering from a foot injury.

Hours after the squad unveiling, Shadab Khan took to his X, formerly Twitter, and opened up

on his exclusion from the Pakistan squad.

"Best of luck to everyone selected," wrote Shadab. "I am currently recovering well from my injury & will start playing 4-day cricket soon."

"We have a culture of disliking those who are selected in favour of those who aren't. Let's be positive, support Shaheen and all the players."

For the unversed, social media was flooded with reports of Shadab Khan likely to be dropped from the squad due to his below-par performances recently. However, chief selector Wahab Riaz's clarification put an end to the rumours.

Pakistan's squad for the New Zealand series feature a mix of established players, some new faces and a couple of returns.

Three emerging cricketers Abrar Ahmed, wicketkeeper batter Haseebullah Khan and pace bowler Abbas Afridi earned their maiden call



up to the T20I squad of Pakistan while Sahibzada Farhan and Azam Khan returned to the squad.

Farhan has previously represented Pakistan in three T20Is back in 2018.

Explosive wicketkeeper batter Azam Khan was also recalled into the T20I side, after missing out in the last T20I series against New Zealand.

Pakistan's squad will partake

in a training camp from 28 December 2023 to 03 January 2024 in Lahore to prepare for the tour.

In addition to the selected players in the squad, some additional players have also been invited to feature in the training camp, including, Ahmed Shehzad, Omair Bin Yousuf, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Amir Khan, Sajjad Ali, Mohammad Haris, Aarif Yaqoob, Shahab Khan and Mohammad Imran Jnr.

Pakistan squad for the tour of New Zealand

Shaheen Shah Afridi (c), Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Nawaz, Abrar Ahmed, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Zaman Khan, Aamir Jamal, Azam Khan (wk), Sahibzada Farhan, Haseebullah Khan (wk) and Abbas Afridi.

**Schedule of the Series**

First match: New Zealand vs Pakistan, 12 January, Auckland

Second match: New Zealand vs Pakistan, 14 January, Hamilton

Third match: New Zealand vs Pakistan, 17 January, Dunedin

Fourth match: New Zealand vs Pakistan, 19 January, Christchurch

Fifth match: New Zealand vs Pakistan, 21 January, Christchurch.

## Thomas Mueller extends with Bayern Munich until 2025

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Veteran Bayern Munich attacker Thomas Mueller has extended his deal by one year to 2025, the Bavarian club announced on Tuesday.

"I'm happy my journey at FC Bayern is continuing. I want to play my part in us remaining successful, both as a team and the whole club," Mueller said in a statement.

Thomas Mueller's contract was set to expire at the end of this season.

Calling Mueller "quality and reliability personified", Bayern sporting director Christoph Freund said the veteran was "a leader on and off the pitch, always a role model and incredibly



valuable for the entire team".

Despite wearing the captain's armband several times this season, the 34-year-old has received less game time under coach Thomas Tuchel, enjoying

just five league starts.

Mueller has become synonymous with the Bavarian giants and has been at Bayern for more than two decades, having joined as a 10-year-old in 2000 from

village club TSV Paehtl, located just 50 kilometres from Munich.

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A two-time Champions League winner, Thomas Mueller has won 12 Bundesliga titles with Bayern in a career spanning 684 games, scoring 237 goals and providing 261 assists.

Only former Bayern goalkeeper Sepp Maier has played more games for the club and only Gerd Mueller, with 568, and Robert Lewandowski, with 344, have more goals for the club.

For Germany, Mueller was first called up in March of 2010, where he played in a 1-0 defeat to Argentina.

Since then, the attacker has

played 126 games, scoring 45 times and winning the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Mueller was left out of the Germany squad after their group-stage exit at the 2022 Qatar World Cup, with many expecting his time with the four-time World Cup winners was over.

However, he was recalled in September, scoring a goal in a 2-1 win over France, and looks likely to play a role in next year's home European Championship under former Bayern boss Julian Nagelsmann.

In November, Thomas Mueller's captain and long-time teammate Manuel Neuer, 37, also extended his deal by a season to 2025.

## 2nd phase of divisional coaches training starts

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: The second phase of divisional coaches training has started at the Punjab Stadium on Tuesday.

Secretary Sports Punjab Shahid Zaman and DG Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail formally inaugurated the 5-day Track and Field Course in which 20 divisional coaches including three females are attaining modern training from master trainers.

Principal Institute of Sports Sciences Punjab (ISSP) Chand Parveen, Chief Instructor Hafeez Bhatti, Instructors Shaista Qaiser and Sajid Ali were also present at the opening ceremony.

Talking on this occasion, Secretary Sports Punjab said that it is a golden opportunity for provincial and divisional coaches to learn modern techniques and polish their coaching skills. "Definitely, the holding of high-profile coaching course is a historic initiative and it will have durable and positive impacts on the future of sports in the province."

Dr Asif Tufail said that a properly trained and competent coach is no less than a blessing for the athletes. He urged the participating coaches to pass on the valuable modern knowledge and techniques to their respective junior coaches and players.

Master trainer IAAF Level 4 Coach Tariq Sidhu delivered an in depth lecture on Principles of Training and Fitness Components. He told the coaches that coaching is a combination of art, skill and knowledge. He also taught the coaches about individualization, specificity, performance determining factors, individual training plan, active involvement, inherited qualities, biological and chronological age of athletes.

## New Zealand's Amelia Kerr hails Pakistan over historic win



**A Sports**

LAHORE: Star New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr hailed Pakistan following the Girls in Green's historic win over her side in the third WODI at Christchurch's Hagley Oval.

Pakistan beat New Zealand for the first time in Women's one-day cricket. The match was decided in the Super Over as the winners could not be decided in the 100 overs.

In the Super Over, Pakistan managed 11-2 with Aliya Riaz scoring eight runs off Amelia Kerr's bowling.

Sadia Iqbal's heroics saw New Zealand falling short by four runs. The spinner gave away eight runs and dismissed Amelia Kerr and Sophie Devine to seal a historic victory for the Girls in Green.

Amelia Kerr, who was judged Player of the Series for her exceptional performances, lauded Pakistan for keeping its composure to win the game in the post-match press conference.

"Credit to Pakistan for the way they have been on this tour and on the field as well," she said. "They were exceptional under pressure and took those catches. They were clean and stopped us from running twos and I think they just showed real composure and it got them across the line."

It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan's tour of New Zealand has been a remarkable affair as the Girls in Green became the first Asian side to win a T20I series in New Zealand.

Fatima Sana's side ended things on a high note as they beat the White Ferns for the first time in WODI history.

## Lionel Messi to face boyhood club Newell's Old Boys in friendly

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Lionel Messi is expected to line up against his boyhood club Newell's Old Boys after the Argentine team agreed to a pre-season friendly game at Inter Miami in February.

The Major League Soccer (MLS) club announced on Monday that they would host Newell's Old Boys at their DRV PNK Stadium on February 15.

Newell's Old Boys are based in the city of Rosario where Lionel Messi was born and grew up, playing for their youth team before moving to Spanish club Barcelona aged 13.

Inter coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino also hails from the city and played for the club in three spells before returning as the team's coach in 2012.

"I am delighted to welcome my beloved Newell's to our home here in Miami. It will be a special match due to everything Newell's Old Boys means to me," Martino said.

"It will also be a good opportunity to prepare for what will surely be an exciting season," he added.

The fixture is the latest in a busy pre-season schedule for Miami who will kick off the preparations by facing the El Salvador national team in San Salvador on January 19.

The club will then play two games in Saudi Arabia, including against Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr, before games in Hong Kong and Tokyo.

## PCB receives flak for dropping Haris from NZ T20I tour

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Tuesday earned large-scale criticism online after one of the Green Shirts' finest T20 batters Mohammad Haris was dropped from the national squad for the five-match T20I series against New Zealand.

Earlier today, Pakistan's squad for the T20I series against the Kiwis was announced by PCB Chief Selector Wahab Riaz and his consultant Kamran Akmal during a press conference in Lahore.

Haris emerged as one of the finest T20 batters in a very short period and showcased his prowess in leagues all over the world. The 22-year-old's exclusion from the squad came as a surprise to the fans as they were expecting to see the right-handed fearless batter in action in New Zealand's conditions.

"We have rested Mohammad Haris for this series. We know his capability and he is part of our plans going forward. There were some domestic performers in First Class cricket who we wanted to give a chance and increase our pool of players, so we rested Haris from this tour," Wahab said.

## Warm Welcome

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassadors-Designate of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Sultanate of Oman, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Republic of Cyprus and the High Commissioner-Designate of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka presenting their credentials to President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

# President urges enhanced cooperation as envoys of multiple nations present diplomatic credentials

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday underscored the need for increasing cooperation with Egypt, Oman, Bosnia, Sri Lanka and Cyprus in the fields of trade, economy, and culture as their envoys-designate presented diplomatic credentials to him. The president expressed these views while talking to the envoys of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Sultanate of Oman, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Republic of Cyprus and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The envoys presented their

diplomatic credentials to the president and separately called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr; a President House press release said. Welcoming the Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, Dr. Ihab Mohamed Abdelhamid Hassan, the president highlighted the importance Pakistan attached to its bilateral relations with Egypt reflected by shared bonds of common faith, cultural affinities and values between the people of the two brotherly countries.

Dr. Ihab Mohamed Abdelhamid Hassan informed that Egypt was supporting the humanitarian aid to Gaza. Talking to the Ambassador

of Sultanate of Oman Fahad Sulaiman Khalaf al Kharusi, President Alvi said that Pakistan and Oman enjoyed excellent relations in various fields. He informed the ambassador that Pakistan offered investment-friendly environment to the foreign investors and had constituted, in this regard, Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) that provided one window operation for investment in IT, cooperate farming, minerals and energy sector of Pakistan.

Welcoming the Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Emin Cohodarevic, the president stated that Pakistan deep-

ly valued its friendship with Bosnia & Herzegovina based on brotherhood and mutual trust. He highlighted that there was tremendous scope to further increase cooperation in the areas of trade, economy and people-to-people contacts.

While speaking to the High Commission of Sri Lanka, Admiral (R) Ravindra Chandrasiri Wijegunaratne, President Alvi said that relations between Sri Lanka and Pakistan had grown stronger over the last seven decades. He underlined the need for enhancing and strengthening cultural linkages between the two countries, besides

exchanging visits at the political and cultural levels.

During his discussion with the Ambassador of Republic of Cyprus, Andreas P. Kouzoupis, the president said that Pakistan considered Cyprus as an important friend and wanted to further improve bilateral relations with Cyprus. He appreciated the Republic of Cyprus' consistent support to Pakistan in the context of European Union. President Alvi congratulated the envoys on their appointment and expressed the hope that they would play their role to further boost bilateral cooperation with Pakistan.

# Gaza 'most dangerous place in world to be a child': UNICEF

## Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: Gaza, which continues to be under deadly Israeli attacks, is by far the most dangerous place in the world to be a child and deaths of youngsters from disease will likely surpass those from bombardment in the absence of a ceasefire, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) warned on Tuesday. "A lack of food, water, shelter and sanitation continues to put children's lives at risk as they suffer under relentless airstrikes with no safe place to go," said UNICEF spokesperson James Elder, who recently returned from the besieged enclave.

Ahead of a UN Security Council meeting on a pause in fighting to facilitate aid access, he told reporters in Geneva: "Every single child is enduring these 10 weeks of hell and not one of them can escape." "As a parent of a critically sick child told me, 'Our situation is pure misery...I don't know if

we will make it through this,' he said. According to the Gaza health authorities, over 19,400 Palestinians have been killed in the enclave since October 7 when the hostilities between Israel and Hamas erupted. Over 52,000 Palestinians have been injured and their access to life-saving care is extremely limited. UN health agency WHO said on Tuesday that only eight of the 36 hospitals in the Strip were at least partially functional. Hospitals were overwhelmed with children and their parents, all bearing "the ghastly wounds of war," Elder said. He stressed that while in the Strip he encountered many young amputees. Around 1,000 children in Gaza had lost one or both their legs, he said. From the UN World Health Organization (WHO), spokesperson Dr Margaret Harris added that WHO staff in Gaza spoke of not even being able to walk in the emergency wards "for fear of stepping on people"



lying on the floor "in severe pain" and asking for food and water. She called the situation "unconscionable" and said that it "is beyond belief that the world is allowing this to continue". Over the past 48 hours, the largest remaining hospital in Gaza, Al Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in the south, was shelled twice, Elder said. That hospital "not only shelters large numbers of children who had already been badly injured in attacks

on their homes, but hundreds of women and children seeking safety", he stressed, referring to those who have had to flee because of the hostilities and evacuation orders. Some 1.9 million people, or the vast majority of the enclave's population, are estimated to be displaced in Gaza. Injured children dealing with the loss of loved ones had been forced to move again and again, Mr Elder said. "Where do children and their families go?

They are not safe in hospitals. They are not safe in shelters. And they are certainly not safe in the so-called 'safe' zones," he insisted. The UNICEF spokesperson said that the "safe zones" were "anything but safe" because they had been designated unilaterally by Israel alone and lacked "sufficient resources for survival": food, water, medicine, protection. Elder described the zones as "tiny patches of barren land, or street corners, or half-built buildings, with no water, no facilities, no shelter from the cold and the rain and no sanitation". "Under the current besieged conditions, adequate supplies for such zones are impossible," he said, adding that during his recent stay in Gaza he had experienced that reality first-hand. The UNICEF spokesperson highlighted the dire lack of adequate sanitation, pointing out that in Gaza there was one toilet for 700 people on average. Diarrhoea cases in chil-

# Ahmed Saleem's unique treasure of archives needs to be preserved for future generations: Jamal Shah

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD, DEC 19 (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Jamal Shah on Tuesday eulogized the renowned Punjabi and Urdu literati, researcher late Ahmed Saleem and urged the quarters concerned to ensure preservation of his archives for the future generations as a national asset. He was speaking as the chief guest at the memorial reference jointly organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) to pay tribute to the great intellectual and active member of the Progressive Literary Movement of the country. A special documentary by SDPI on the life of Late Ahmed Saleem was also presented.



Executive Director SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri in his speech read out the poem of Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi as a tribute to Ahmed Saleem. Senator Pervaiz Rashid for playing an important role in securing

a special grant from Chief Minister Punjab's Fund for the liver transplant of Ahmed Saleem at Shifa Hospital. Nuzhat Abbass, from United Kingdom via videolink expressed her sentiments and paid tribute to the late author and researcher. Dr Pritam Singh from UK through online participation shared his sincere regards for the deceased. He said after his first interaction with Ahmed Saleem at Oxford, UK; he had found him a loving soul.

Rana Fawad, CEO Lahore Qalanders also shared his account of association with Ahmed Saleem during his theater life in Lahore.

Senator Haider requested the Minister for Culture to provide the archives of Ahmed Saleem to establish a separate institute to preserve those invaluable books. DG PAL, Sultan Muhammad

Nasir extended his vote of thanks to all participants and SDPI for organizing the reference and extended his gratitude to SDPI for supporting PAL in the endeavour. Ahmed Saleem's life sheds light on his life journey as a global citizen and as a beacon in dark times, he added. He assured that as per the directions of the Minister, SDPI Ahmed Saleem Resource Center and the family members of Ahmed Saleem, the PAL would be proud to take up the task of preserving the deceased's archives. Dr Humera Ashfaq, Zareena Salamat, Kulsum Zaib, Barrister Naseem Bajwa, UK, Dr Anwaar Ahmed, Akhtar Usman and Brig (R) Muhammad Yasin of SDPI also spoke their hearts out for Mr Ahmed Saleem in acknowledging his services to the nation and society.

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# Information Ministry vows zero tolerance against surrogate companies

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has vowed zero tolerance against the surrogate companies of the "betting houses", urging the stakeholders to prevent their promotion through any kind of advertisements during live coverage of the sports events.

Referring to its earlier advisory on the issue, the ministry noted "unambiguous violation" of the same during the live broadcast of Pakistan Cricket team's tour to Australia on multiple media outlets/channels, including the Pakistan Television, a news release said on Tuesday.

The Information Ministry, in its earlier advisory, had urged all the ministries, departments, and organizations not to engage in any kind of contract or cooperation with the surrogate companies illegally



operating in Pakistan, especially on print, electronic, and social media.

The ministry reiterated its advisory strictly warning the media outlets "not to promote the surrogate companies of betting houses through any kind of advertisements", besides immediately terminating all existing agreements with them.

The advisory, which had already been sent to the stakeholders, specifically mentioned a list of known surrogate companies "to address any unawareness, and to ensure strict and immediate compliance".

# Pakistan Ministry of Commerce celebrates historic milestone



## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Gohar Ejaz, the Minister of Commerce and Industries, is pleased to announce a significant breakthrough in Pakistan's agricultural exports to China with the inaugural shipment of dried chillies. This momentous achievement, made possible through the outstanding efforts of Litong Food Co. Ltd., marks the beginning of a new era in the trade relationship between Pakistan and China.

Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz extended heartfelt congratulations to Litong Food Co. Ltd. for their extraordinary feat and expressed sincere apprecia-

tion for the unwavering support of the Chinese government in creating a substantial market for Pakistani goods within China.

"I am delighted to announce that the first-ever consignment of dried chillies is on its way to China. This achievement not only showcases the capabilities of our exporters but also highlights the potential for further collaboration between Pakistani and Chinese businesses," stated Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz.

The Minister emphasised that the exports of Pakistan's products to China have the potential to exceed \$20 billion in the coming years. However, achieving this ambitious goal requires concerted efforts from Pakistani agricultural exporters. Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz encouraged the exporters to uphold high-quality standards, increase productivity, and implement effective marketing strategies to meet the expectations of the Chinese market.

# Nearly 60,000 apply for Govt Hajj Scheme: Ministry

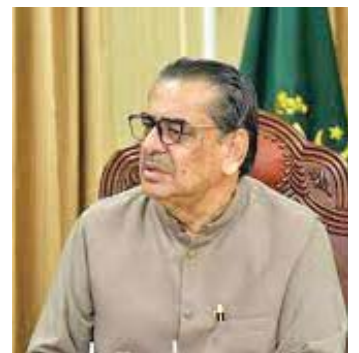
## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has received a total of 59,328 Hajj applications under the government scheme.

According to the ministry sources, the deadline for submitting applications for the Government Hajj Scheme has already been extended to December 22.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs extended an invitation for Hajj 2024 applications under the government's scheme starting from November 27, with the deadline earlier set on December 12.

Under the government's scheme,



the quota for Pakistanis participating in the annual Islamic pilgrimage next year is 89,605, with an anticipated cost of Rs1,075,000 [ \$3,769 ] per person.

# Ex-NA Speaker Fahmida Mirza injured in Karachi road accident

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Former speaker National Assembly Dr Fahmida Mirza got injured in a road accident occurred in Karachi.

According to police officials, two vehicles collided in Karachi and as a result the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) leader sustained injuries.

Furthermore, the police spokesperson said that the former speaker has been shifted to a private hospital in Karachi's Defence.

Fahmida Mirza, who previously served as the Speaker of the National Assembly during the previous government of the Pakistan Peoples Party, was the first and only woman to have held the position.

# Tougher immigration bill on cards in France

## Razia Khan

PARIS: A group of French lawmakers struck a tentative deal on Tuesday on a contested bill that will toughen immigration laws and has highlighted the difficulties for President Emmanuel Macron of running the country with no majority in parliament.

The government had initially said this would be a carrot-and-stick legislation that would make it easier for

migrants working in sectors that lack labour to get a residency permit, but would also make it easier to expel illegal migrants.

But, without a majority in the lower house of parliament since the June 2022 elections, and in order to gain support from the right, the government progressively agreed to water down measures meant to give some illegal migrants residency permits, while tightening access to welfare, among other steps.