

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے بیان بن بھرے ان سے نہیں بن
ہی ماہرے اور ان سے جبراً نہیں کیا کہ
رسول اللہ ﷺ چودھویں رات کو ہمارے
پاس تشریف لائے اور فرمایا کہ تم اپنے رب
کو قیامت کے دن اس طرح بخوبی سے جانتے
رہو اس پیمانہ کو کہ جو ہے اس کے دیکھنے
میں کوئی مزا امت نہیں ہوگی۔ حکم کھلاؤ بخوبی
کے لیے تقف، سے شفقت، سے زحمت۔
(بخاری ص ۱۶۶، ج ۱)
Barkat Rice Mills
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Dr. Al-Maliki receives a phone call from his French counterpart

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Dr. Riyad Al-Maliki, received a phone call from French Foreign Minister Catherine Corona, in which she affirmed her country's condemnation of the disgraceful statements issued by several Israeli officials, led by Ministers Ben Gvir and Smotrich, which incite the displacement of Palestinian citizens from the Gaza Strip. (Details on Page 8)



Heidi Green, a psychology student at King Saud University, says coming to Saudi Arabia 'was the right thing'

Heidi Green is loving her new life in Saudi Arabia, far away from her American roots. Effortlessly conversing in fluent Arabic, she seems to be adapting quite well in Riyadh. Green has been living in Riyadh for almost two years. Since arriving, she has always been complimentary about her experiences in the Kingdom. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

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Barbarism

GAZA: Palestinians mourn their relatives killed in the Israeli bombardment of the southern Gaza Strip in Rafah.



Govt forms committee to probe May 9 violence



Naveed Ahmad Khan

events leading up to the incidents of 9th May, 2023, with a view to ascertain the identity and role of mastermind, planners, facilitators and executors.

ISLAMABAD: The federal government constituted on Saturday a cabinet committee to investigate the incidents of May 9, when public and private property was vandalised by violent PTI supporters following the arrest of PTI founder.

According to the notification, the caretaker federal law and justice minister will be the convener committee. Other members of the committee include ministers of interior, information, and human rights.

The notification further stated that a new member can also be added to the committee to solve any problem.

According to the terms of reference (TORs), the committee is mandated to examine the

The committee will analyse the causes, and determine responsibility for these events. It will evaluate their immediate and long-term implications.

The committee will suggest preventive measures to ensure that such a breach of national security is not repeated; and, recommend measures to strengthen the existing legal regime to deter such recurrences.

The Ministry of Interior will provide secretarial support to the committee. The committee shall submit its report for consideration of the cabinet within a period of fourteen days.

Scores of civilian casualties due to indiscriminate Israeli strikes in Gaza

Wafa

GAZA: Scores of innocent civilians were killed over the past few hours as a result of the continuing Israeli airstrikes and artillery bombardments targeting various regions of the Gaza Strip, according to local sources.

In Gaza City, Israeli warplanes targeted a gathering of civilians near the Saraya junction, resulting in the tragic murder of 10 civilians, with dozens sustaining injuries.

In Deir el-Balah, the central Gaza Strip, it was reported that three casualties were transferred

to the Shuhada Al-Aqsa Hospital following an Israeli airstrike which targeted the Khattab family's residence west of the neighboring Nuseirat refugee camp.

Medical sources reported that Israeli warplanes targeted a group of civilians on Street 2 connecting Nuseirat refugee camp and town of Az-Zawayda, resulting in the murder of a child and injuries to others. Simultaneously, Israeli forces fired phosphorus bombs towards the tents of displaced families in Nuseirat.

In the meantime, Captain Hani Al-Masri, a prominent Palestinian football star and coach of the

Palestinian Olympic football team, was also reported killed as a result of the ongoing Israeli shelling of Gaza City.

Furthermore, Israeli warplanes bombed several houses in central Khan Yunis, accompanied by intense artillery shelling in the eastern areas of the city. Medical sources confirmed the arrival of a martyr to the European Hospital following the shelling in the Fakhari village east of Khan Yunis.

Also in Khan Yunis, local media reports said four civilians, including three children, in the shelling that targeted a house west of the city.

The Red Crescent added that Israeli artillery and drones are violently shelling the vicinity of the hospital in southern Gaza.

Furthermore, Israeli warplanes bombed several houses in central Khan Yunis, accompanied by intense artillery shelling in the eastern areas of the city. Medical sources confirmed the arrival of a martyr to the European Hospital following the shelling in the Fakhari village east of Khan Yunis.

Also in Khan Yunis, local media reports said four civilians, including three children, in the shelling that targeted a house west of the city.

In another tragic incident, a civilian lost his life in the Israeli shelling near the Sofa/Salah al-Din Street junction in the Nasr neighborhood northeast of Rafah.

The Ministry of Health announced earlier today that the death toll in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the aggression on October 7 has reached 22,600 martyrs, with more than 70% being women and children.

The ministry also mentioned 7,000 individuals are still missing under the rubble, with difficulties in obtaining accurate numbers due to the continuous attacks and insufficient rescue missions.

Pakistan's debt burden mounts to Rs63.399 trillion: report

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's total debt burden continued to rise and reached a whopping Rs 63,399 trillion, at the end of November in FY2023-24.

According to details, country's total debt increased by over Rs12.430 trillion during the tenure of the PDM and the caretaker government.

Pakistan's overall debt burden surged to Rs63.399 trillion including Rs40.956 trillion domestic loan and Rs22.434 trillion in international loans.

The report further said the country's overall debt stood at Rs50.959 trillion in November 2022. The burden of the loan was recorded at Rs63.390 trillion in November 2023.

Earlier it emerged that Pakistan assured the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of the fresh loan programme.

SC seeks written assurance from govt on 'enforced disappearances'

Waseem Khokhar

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan has sought a written assurance from the federal government that henceforth, no one shall be picked up other than in accordance with the law.

The orders were passed as a three-member bench comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Ali Hila-li heard a set of pleas in connection with enforced disappearances case.

"The Federal Government is directed to submit undertaking in writing, signed by senior most officers of the concerned ministries, that henceforth no one shall be picked up other than in accordance with the law," stated a written order of Jan 3 hearing issued today.

The apex court also directed the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances to submit 'comprehensive report' on missing persons case, along with the details of all production orders issued.

"The Commission is directed to collate and submit: (a) the names with parentage and addresses of those who went missing, (b) name and relationship of the person who reported the missing person, (c) the date they went missing, (d) those who were in government in the Federation and the concerned province at that time, (e) whether the missing person was recovered or not, and (f) if not recovered the efforts, if any, taken to find out the whereabouts of the missing person. In addition, (g) all those in respect of whom production orders were issued but were not produced, and (h) what was the follow-up by the Commission when its production orders were not complied with," stated the order.

According to the order, the 'comprehensive report' should be submitted to Attorney-General of Pakistan (AGP) within 10 days.

The written order stated that it would be appropriate if the budget, staff and resources of the Commission are disclosed, "as the people's fundamental right, under Article

19A of the Constitution, grants them the right to information".

Referring to Aitzaz Ahsan's plea, the SC said that his petition attends to the matter of missing persons, but also refers to a few politically aligned persons who are stated to have been picked up and have since returned home.

"Those persons who have returned cannot be categorised as missing persons, in respect of whom writs of habeas corpus can be issued", the order stated.

Moving on to 'mishandling' of Baloch protestors in Islamabad, the top court noted: "It was brought to our attention that during the court's winter vacations the families of protesting missing persons at Islamabad were manhandled by police/law enforcement personnel."

The Supreme Court noted that it took great exception to such high handedness because the right to peaceful protest is amongst the guaranteed fundamental rights which must be honoured in letter and spirit.

Elections on Feb 8 even if OIC passes resolution, says Bilawal

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari asserted on Saturday the general elections will take place on Feb 8 even if a resolution was passed by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

"Elections will take place on Feb 8, come what may," the PPP chief said when asked to comment on the Senate resolution calling for a delay in elections over security concerns.

During his media interaction in Lahore, Bilawal recalled Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa's remark about the election date being 'set in stone' which clarified the misconceptions and apprehensions about a delay in elections.

PML-N leadership decides to enter 'election fray' from mid-Jan



Bureau Report

LAHORE: The top leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has decided to enter 'election fray' from mid-January with the February 8 general election just a little over a month away.

Sources told ARY News that PML-N top leadership, Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif, along with central leaders would address the election rallies.

Sources claimed that preparations were underway to chalk out schedule of the public gatherings ahead of the elections.

The PML-N has decided to start a series of public gatherings after allotment of party tickets and announcement of

manifesto. Sources claimed the first public gathering would likely be held in Kasur if PML-N's election campaign starts from Punjab.

During his addresses, the three-time prime minister would point out "successful projects" of different eras. He would also point out the party's future economic and political strategy.

Meanwhile, PML-N leader Marriyum Aurangzeb said her party would start its election campaign from next week and present his economic agenda before people.

She also stated that the general elections in the country will be held as per schedule whoever may have been behind the resolution.

Former NAB chief, others put on notice in Tayyaba harassment case

Spokesman Report/ Web Desk

The Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAAH) has served notices on former National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman Justice (r) Javed Iqbal and other officials in connection with the Tayyaba Gul harassment case.

According to a private media outlet, the notices were issued by FOSPAAH Chairperson Fauzia Viqar on Saturday.

In 2022, Tayyaba Gul filed a case, alleging sexual harassment and rape by the former



NAB chief and other officials of the anti-graft watchdog.

Gul, whose controversial video surfaced in 2019, accused Iqbal of sexual harassment during her visit to the anti-graft body's office.

In her complaint, she claimed that her clothes were torn off, and she sustained bruises during a search directed by NAB Director General Shehzad Saleem.

Former PM Gilani, former Governor of Punjab express their support for Bilawal's leadership

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and former Governor of Punjab Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood said that Pakistan Peoples Party wants political, economic and internal stability in the country through democracy and stability in the country because the government elected by the people's election is also aware of the people. It should be kept, the country is a democracy-minded country at this time. There is a need for a national leadership that understands the sufferings of the people and knows the problems of the country and has the ability to solve them. Yes, and the people have decided to make him the prime minister in the next elections. He added that people will participate in lakhs of rallies in Bahawalpur on January 13 and Khan Bela Rahim Yar Khan on January 19 to express their confidence in Bilawal Bhutto. Former Prime Minister Syed expressed these views which will prove to be in favor of the People's Party. Yusuf Raza Gilani and Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mahmood

Bahawalpur, Khan Bela Rahimyar Khan addressed a joint meeting, the meeting was presided over by Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mahmood and the special guest was former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, on this occasion Abdul Qadir Shaheen, Khawaja Rizwan Alam, Sardar Genghis Khan Jamali President Balochistan, Shahrukh Malik, Ali Hassan Gilani also expressed his opinion and said that the people have decided that the next government will be of Pakistan People's Party. Bilawal Bhutto will be the future prime minister who has the passion to solve the problems of the people and knows how to face difficulties and challenges. And apart from them, there is no qualified leadership in the country who can lead the country. Hafiz Hussain Madani, Mohammad Ali Ahsan, Irshad Saroha, Rao Tariq Mehmood, Aamir Shah, Naseem Abbas Shah, Syed Murtaza Shah, Malik Shah Muhammad Chanar, Jam Yaqoob Jhalan, Farooq Mughal, Moazzam Kamal Vance, Mazharul Hassan Pappu were present in the meeting., Rana Muhammad Salim, Nawab Asim Abba-

si, Khawaja Qasim, Sahibzadi Saira Abbasi, Raw Sajid Ali, Wilayat Waraich, Javed. Raymond, Rafiur Rehman, Asif Farooqui were participants.

Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mehmood is presiding over the joint meeting of Pakistan People's Party regarding the preparations for the January 13 Bahawalpur and January 19 Khan Bela Rahim Yar Khan meetings. Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani was the special guest in the meeting. Abdul Qadir Shaheen, Khawaja Rizwan Alam, Sardar Chingiz Khan Jamali President Balochistan, Shahrukh Malik, Ali Hasan Geelani, Hafiz Hussain Madani, Muhammad Ali Ahsan, Irshad Saroha, Rao Tariq Mehmood, Aamir Shah, Naseem Abbas Shah, Syed Murtaza Shah, Malik Shah Muhammad Chanar, Jam Yakub Jhalan, Farooq Mughal, Moazzam Kamal Venus, Mazharul Hasan. Pappu, Rana Muhammad Saleem, Nawab Asim Abbasi, Khawaja Qasim, Sahibzadi Saira Abbasi, Raw Sajid Ali, Wilayat Waraich, Javed. Raymond, Rafiur Rehman, Asif Farooqui are participants.



Waiting for passengers

LAHORE: Coolies gather surround the fire to counter coldness during the winters in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Maj-ul-Qur'an Women's League celebrates 36th anniversary

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: On the occasion of the 36th founding day of Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Women's League, district president Farhat Dilbar Awan, speaking at the event, said that "Minhaj-ul-Quran Women's League is a great revolutionary group of the servants of Sayyida Kainat, who inculcates revolutionary thought in women with their religious, moral and spiritual training." Dr. Tahir-ul-Qadri provided the platform of Minhaj-ul-Quran Women's League to organize women around the world for a great cause. Our mothers and sisters will be seen in the first row as the first team. Nazma Farkhunda Fayyaz, Nazma Finance Farida Ali Akbar, Nazma Dawat Sana Dilbar Awan, Social Media Coordinator Tahrim Dilbar Awan and others participated in the ceremony. They said that when the time in Model Town When the Yazidis tried to rebuild Karbala, Sayeda Zeib's gangs became a leaden wall. Tanzeela and Shazia Murtaza, who were martyred in this tragedy, are our pride and the Minhaj-ul-Quran Women's League is a valuable asset. Al-Quran Women's League has always played a key role. He said that the services provided by the platform of "Egars" for the training of innocent children and the platform of "Mustafavi Students Movement Sisters" for the training of female students are exemplary. The Lahore-based "Aghosh" and An excellent system of education and training of orphan boys and girls is going on through "Bait Al-Zahra". Today we pledge that Mustafavi will continue his efforts for the establishment of the society. At the end of the ceremony, we cut the cake and concluded the program with prayerful words.



Lahore in grip of severe cold wave, disrupting air, vehicular traffic with dense fog

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The provincial capital is currently in the grip of a severe cold wave, intensifying the winter chill as the city's temperature plummeted to 8 degrees Celsius on Saturday, accompanied by dense fog that shrouded Lahore, disrupting both air and vehicular traffic.



According to sources, visibility on the Lahore airport runway dwindled to less than 100 metres.

The adverse weather conditions wreaked havoc on air travel, affecting flights to and from major airports in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Multan, Faisalabad, Sialkot and Islamabad, both domestically and internationally.

More than 25 flights were disrupted, causing inconvenience to countless passengers.

Key transportation routes in and around Lahore, including the Motorway, GT Road, Ring Road and others, were engulfed by thick fog. This dense fog significantly hampered visibility, leading to safety concerns for motorists.

Weather forecasts suggest that the foggy conditions might persist for the next two days, further exacerbating travel challenges.

In response to the adverse weather conditions, the M3 Motorway from Lahore to Samundri was temporarily closed due to intense fog.

The closure was not limited to this route alone, as the M1 Motorway from Peshawar to Burhan was also shut down, citing extremely low visibility caused by the fog.

The Motorway Police, through its spokesperson, requested travellers to refrain from unnecessary travel in the foggy conditions for their safety.

Muslim League (N) wins in Attock: A big blow to Major Sadaq

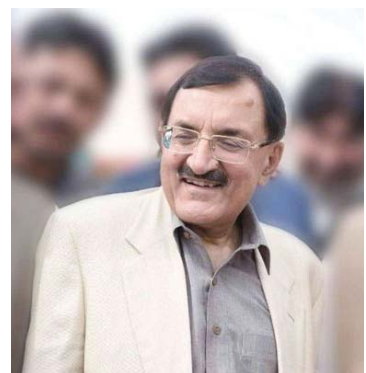
Raza naqvi

ATTOCK: A big blow to Major Group P, former City President Muslim League (Q) and Municipal Councillor Haji Muhammad Akram Khan left his 30-year friendship with Major R Tahir Sadaq and joined Muslim League (N), general election.

The Muslim League (N) will win with a huge majority, the leader of the Muslim League (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif will be elected as the Prime Minister, the development works of Attock during the period of the Muslim League (N) will be the foundation.

Reached the completion and brought my city to the list of developed cities, thanking my team workers to come to power, my first priority is to solve the traffic problems of Attock by building a ring road.

These thoughts were expressed by the former federal minister of Muslim League (N) and the candidate of



Constituency NA-49 Sheikh Aftab Ahmed while addressing the inclusion corner meeting. Vice President Haji Yaqoob Khan, Muslim League leader Sheikh Ajmal Mahmood, District Vice President Iftakhar Ahmad Awan, Secretary Tree Information of Attock District Mian Rashid Mushtaq, Tehsil President PP3 Mian Shahnawaz Shani, Tehsil Vice President Abdullah. Khan, City President Sheikh

Mahmood Elahi, Former Councillor Sheikh Zahoor Elahi, Former Councillor Muhammad Aslam, Waheed Suyanwala, City General Secretary Ambassador Ahmed Awan, City Secretary Atla Aat Muhammad Aamir, President Minority Wing Attock District Tariq William. A large number of other dignitaries of the region participated, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed said that I would first like to thank Haji Muhammad Akram Khan for joining the Muslim League (N) by trusting him. Announced, Haji Muhammad Akram's political connection is much older than PML-N. Now we will get the guidance of another important figure in the team, Mirza Rood, who was in power during the tenure of PML-N. D, two approaches were taken, technical college, cremation ground and Eid ground were implemented, provision of hearse was made possible, sewage drains were roofed in the center of the city so that this filth could not be collected.

Sixth death anniversary of Aitzaz Hasan observed



ISLAMABAD, JAN 6 (APP): The sixth death anniversary of Aitzaz Hasan, who laid his life to stop the attempt of a suicide bomber to enter his school in Hangu, was observed on Saturday.

He became a national hero after he saved hundreds of lives on January 6, 2014, thwarting the terrorist attack.

Aitzaz Hasan had grabbed the suicide bomber at the main gate to prevent him from entering the school.

Hasan was later awarded with Sitara-e-Shujaat for his bravery.

PHA cultural Mela

Sargodha is famous in all over the world for its bravery, literature, fertility, horsemanship, chivalry and production of citrus. In the Indo-Pak war of 1965, the world record of air combat was established in the skies of this city. MM Alam made us proud by shooting down several Indian planes in a few minutes. This is the reason that city was declared the city of Istiqlal. The crescent of his bravery on the building of Jinnah Hall still warms the hearts of the people of Sargodha. The Parks and Horticulture Authority in Sargodha was established before a few years ago but within a few years this department has played a significant role to providing entertainment

to the people of Sargodha. Many Director Generals have rendered valuable services for Parks and Horticulture Authority for public welfare and recreation according to their own standards, but the meritorious services for public entertainment are the current Director General Syed Toqeer Haider Kazmi will be remembered by the people of Sargodha. Historical welfare projects for the people. In fact, those nations who forget their traditions and culture are lost in the pages of history. Our history is centuries old and we have passed through different cultural and civilization periods.

to introduce the new generation with civilization and culture, that how our culture has passed through

different periods and entered today's modern era. A cultural Lok Mela was organized under the auspices of the Punjab in which the cultural activities of the entire Punjab got an opportunity to flourish. In this cultural folk mela the national exhibition of citrus and agricultural implements, A drama Anar Kali was also produced in the festival which was much appreciated by the participants. An industrial exhibition was also organized in a part of this cultural festival, in which handicraft samples made by the prison-

ers of District Jail Sargodha remained the attention of the Lok Mela participants. Prominent singers of our country including Sahir Ali Baga, Nooran Lal, Nadeem Abbas Loonewala, Mush-taq Ahmad Chhina, Maliko and Arif Lohar also performed and received appreciation by the participants. All the credit goes to Syed Toqeer Kazmi for organizing positive entertainment and cultural activities for the people goes to Toqeer Haider Kazmi, who organized a beautiful cultural festival. Farooq Haider, Director,

Deputy Director Shafiqur Rehman Niazi, Haris Ali Khokhar Assistant Director, Ali Khan, Dilawar Mumtaz, Ali Hussain Warach, Ali Hussain Rana Assistant Directors and others deserve for appreciation. It would be unfair not to mention here the name of Shafiqat Awan, media consultant of Parks and Horticulture Authority, who played an unforgettable role to make this cultural festival a success event. Shafiqat Awan's personality is a source of various qualities. Hardworking people like Shafiqat Awan are the backbone of any organization. The seven-days cultural Lok Mela continued at Sargodha with an aim to promote the rich and culture of the art of our country. A number of craftsmen, folk

artists, musicians, and folk dancers from all over the punjab participated in the festival and public enjoyed this cultural festival. In fact, these kinds of folk Melas plays an important role in protecting and promoting the ancient traditions and culture of our country, as well as connecting the new generation with their past. Undoubtedly, this effort of PHA Sargodha is admirable and worthy of emulation. To provide our young generation with awareness about our ancient way of life, dress, traditions, civilization, lifestyle and culture. This type activities should be organized in all over the country. It is need of hours to transfer our traditions, culture and civilization in our new generation.



Analysis

Zeshan Haider

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:44 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	3:36 pm
Maghrib	5:14 pm
Isha	6:42 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
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

IBA Karachi and The Jaffer Family of New York collaborate to establish a Data Sciences Center at IBA

PPA
KARACHI: The Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi hosted The Jaffer Family Foundation (JFF), a leading global non-profit organization committed to fostering education and innovation, in partnership with UGI (United Global Initiative), at the IBA through the recently held groundbreaking ceremony for The Jaffer Family of New York Data Sciences Center at IBA Main Campus on January 03, 2024. The ceremony brought together the senior leadership and faculty of IBA Karachi along with the Directors of the Jaffer Family Foundation to break ground on the site for the new facility.

To further cement JFF and UGI's commitment to supporting quality education, an MoU signing ceremony was held at the Movenpick hotel on January 05, 2024. The event included notable business and civic leaders includ-

ing Chief Guest, Honorable Chief Minister of Sindh, Justice (Retd.) Maqbool Baqar; Professor Emeritus and Chairman IBA Centre for Excellence in Islamic Finance, Dr. Ishrat Hussain; Executive Director, UGI, Dr. Hasnain Walji; Caretaker Minister, College Education Department, Mrs. Rana Hussain; and Honorable Home Minister of Sindh, Brigadier (Retd.) Haris Nawaz.

The ceremony commenced with a welcome note by Director Alumni Affairs, Resource Mobilization and Corporate Relations, IBA, Malahat Awan. She welcomed the Jaffer family to IBA and thanked them profusely for their generosity towards establishing a state-of-the-art data sciences center at IBA.

Dean, School of Mathematics and Computer Science (SMCS), Dr. Shakeel Khoja, informed the audience about the cutting-edge facilities being built in the center and its impact on the quality of research and academic rigor at the insti-



tute. Executive Director IBA, Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, welcomed the guests to the momen-

tous occasion and thanked the JFF family for their support. Dr. Zaidi reinforced the importance of philanthropic support

in enabling the growth and quality of academic initiatives that are a long-term investment and not a short-term return. Chairman, JFF, Alhaj Mohamedtaji Jaffer said that all praises belongs to the Almighty and that the Jaffer family are the custodians and stewards for this endeavor and humble executives for His divine work. He also said that this contribution reflects a deep-rooted commitment to education, empowerment, and serving humanity.

Concluding the ceremony, Justice (Retd.) Baqar expressed his support for such collaborations and commended JFF's incredible initiative. He applauded the foundation for their pivotal role in reshaping the future of higher education in Pakistan and for donating \$1.5 million to the SMCS, IBA. He said that this act of generosity represents more than just financial support as it is a significant investment in the intellectual capital of our nation.

Souvenir

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah presenting a copy of souvenir to Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Qazi Faez Isa in the Conference at the Federal Judicial Academy.



Winter camp concluded at AIOU



PPA
ISLAMABAD: "In order to develop children's creativity, it is important to keep them in their imaginary world. Parents should allow their children to do activities from an early age that will bring out their hidden talents", said Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood at the closing ceremony of two-week

winter camp for children and the graduation ceremony of three-month Turkish language course. Dr. Nasir said that we organize summer camp, winter camp and other educational activities for children in cooperation with Yunus Emre Institute of Turkiye. Ceremony began with the national anthems of Pakistan and Turkiye. The Education Attaché of Turkish Embassy, Dr. Mehmet Toyran and

Director, Yunus Emre Institute, Dr. Halil Tokar were the guests of honor. Country Director, Red Crescent Turkiye, Ergest Limka, Muhsin Bali, Turkish language teachers Mrs. Halil Tokar, Dr. Rashid and calligrapher, Wasil Shahid also participated in the event. The closing ceremony was hosted by Director, Academic Planning and Course Production, Dr. Zahid Majeed. Deans, Professors and Principal

Officers of AIOU also participated in the event. VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, announced that an activity will be organized for parents and schoolteachers to improve children's creativity so that they can be trained better. Dr. Mehmet Toyran and Professor Dr. Halil Tokar expressed that Pakistan and Turkey share a unique friendship that is unparalleled in the world.

All Pakistan Railways Pensioners' Association demands end to payments of pensions to old-age pensioners

Abdul Majeed
FAISALABAD: Aurangzeb Tanoli, Secretary General of All Pakistan Railways Pensioners' Association strongly demanded the President of Pakistan, Prime Minister, Chief Justice of Pakistan and the officials of the railways that 1 lac 35 thousand retired employees of railways across the country should not pay their pensions. Still the file is lying in the finance ministry. The pension funds have not been released yet. Every month the pensioners are facing such problems as a result of which the patience of the pensioners has been exhausted. If the

problems of the pensioners are not resolved immediately, the responsibility of the protest will fall on the organizers. We will not be responsible for this situation at all. In an emergency meeting organized by the Secretary General of All Pakistan Railways Pensioners' Association Aurangzeb Tanoli appealed to President Arif Alvi, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul HaQ Kakar, Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faiz Isa, Federal Minister for Finance Shahid Ashraf Tarr and Federal Minister for Railways Islamabad and to other officials that even January 6, 2024 has passed, but the

funds have not been released for the payment of pension to the old-age pensioners, widows and orphans retired from the railways. The file for approval of pension funds is on the table of the Finance Secretary from 28 December 2023 but he has not yet approved the funds. Due to which there is serious concern among the retired railway employees. The old railway retired employees are forced to scramble to get their pensions. The retired employees are forced to live a very poor life with domestic problems due to inflation. In such situations, they are unable to pay utility bills, house rent and

children's school fees. All Pakistan Pensioners Association's platform wants to convince the officials that if funds are not released immediately for pension, and in the meantime Due to lack of money for serious diseases, if someone loses his life in case of not getting medicine, or people go out to protest on the streets, then the responsibility of all this bad situation is the responsibility of the finance secretary and others too. It is strongly demanded from the platform of the association that orders be issued to release funds for pensions on an emergency basis so that the shortage of pensioners can be remedied.

Film 'Muhafiz' - A Cinematic Tribute to Law Enforcement Agencies

PPA
ISLAMABAD: Embarking on an unparalleled journey that transcends borders, the highly anticipated film "Muhafiz" emerges as a cinematic marvel, masterfully crafted by the multi-talented Mr. Khadim Hussain Chakrmai. As the creative force behind the project, Mr. Chakrmai assumes the roles of Director, Producer, Writer, Actor, and Financier, bringing forth a cinematic masterpiece that promises to captivate audiences worldwide.



In an unprecedented collaboration, Tahir Ashraf Mughal, Ambassador representing the Commonwealth Entrepreneur Club (UNITED KINGDOM) in the Pakistan, has played a pivotal role in orchestrating high-profile meetings to garner support for "Muhafiz." These meetings have included discussions with key figures such as Federal Minister for Culture, Syed Jamal Shah, who, with resounding support, has granted approval for the grand showcase of "Muhafiz" at the prestigious PNCA (Pakistan National Council of the Arts). The collaboration has extended to DG PNCA and the Federal Minister for Information, further solidifying the film's significance on a national scale.

Breaking new ground, the Islamabad Police has pledged its full support to "Muhafiz," marking a pivotal alliance in the film's journey. With the collective efforts of these esteemed stakeholders, "Muhafiz" is poised to become an award-winning film, with aspirations to secure the esteemed OSCAR Award, Inshallah.

100 Retaining Piles Completed For Walton Road Flyover

PNP
LAHORE: The Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), known as the Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), proudly announces a significant milestone in the CBD Punjab Boulevard and Walton Road Upgradation projects. The completion of 100 out of 148 retaining piles for the CBD Punjab Boulevard, Walton Road Railway Crossing Flyover, marks a crucial step forward in advancing Punjab's infrastructure.

CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, personally inspected the site, emphasizing CBD Punjab's hands-on approach in overseeing these monumental projects. Executive Director Technical, Riaz Hussain, provided a detailed update on the CBD Punjab Boulevard and Walton Road Railway Crossing Flyover developments, showcasing meticulous planning and execution.

The visit witnessed the presence of distinguished officials, including Chairman CBD Punjab, Fazeel Asif Jah, Executive Director Commercial CBD Punjab, Mohammed Omer, Director Project Management CBD Punjab, Asif Iqbal, Director Construction CBD Punjab, Asif Babar, Director Architecture CBD Punjab, Sameer Afrab, and senior representatives from Nespak and NLC. Their collaboration signifies strong support for these ventures.

With an allocated budget of approximately 9.1 billion PKR, CBD Punjab reiterates its commitment to building a modern, interconnected business district. Spanning 4.2 KM, the CBD Punjab Boulevard, along with a three-lane two-way flyover, will seamlessly connect Kalma Chowk to Walton Road, linking the CBD Punjab Quaid District to the CBD Punjab Bab District.

Japan Embassy announces MEXT Teachers Training Scholarship 2024

PPA
ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Japan in Pakistan has announced MEXT Teachers Training Scholarship 2024 for Pakistani teachers who have teaching experience of 5 years in primary or secondary school, public or private. Age should be 35 or less. The purpose of this training course is to provide an opportunity to Pakistani teachers to conduct research on school education in Japan and learn new methodologies and teaching techniques from Japanese experts which may help them in their professional growth. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) of Japan offers each year scholarships to international teachers who wish to conduct research on school education at designated educational institutions in Japan as teacher training students under the Japanese Government MEXT Scholarship program. This is maximum 18 month duration non-degree training course, but applicant will get a certificate after completing the required course at the university in Japan. The last date to send applications is 9th February, 2024. The detailed information of the program can be found on the Embassy's website.

Embark on a thrilling journey with Ali Gul Pir's debut podcast in our groundbreaking campaign! Catch the inaugural episode here. Don't miss out on the excitement-tune in every Thursday for subsequent podcasts on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Additionally, join us every Friday on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for ProPakistan's captivating video series throughout January. Get ready for a month filled with engaging content and compelling conversations!

Meta Launches Love Local Pakistan to Celebrate Local Businesses

PNP
KARACHI: Meta has launched #LoveLocalPakistan video series to celebrate the vibrant community of local small and medium businesses in Pakistan.

In collaboration with content creator Ali Gul Pir and one of Pakistan's digital news platform, Meta hopes to share inspiring stories of local businesses that have used social platforms like Facebook and Instagram to start and grow. The video series will run throughout the month of January and give a platform to entrepreneurs to share how digital tools can transform ideas into reality and help grow online communities.

Hala Kashgar's locally sourced handcrafted tiles offer unique design placements for home decor, showcasing rural Sindh's artistry.

Colish draws inspiration from Pakistan's vibrant gardens and celebrates self expression through the language of fragrance.

GROOVY embraces sustainable fashion through curated collections that bring new designs in streetwear.

Mana's Cookie Co uses wholesome ingredients for homemade taste and offers a variety of flavors to choose from.

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Govt's machinery supports private education system

In Pakistan, parents, observing the practical benefits of the English language in daily life, prefer enrolling their children in private schools over public schools. This preference is driven by the desire of both rich and poor parents to see their children become successful individuals, leading them to choose private schools instead of government schools. Instead of embracing the public education standards, the government machinery is seen to illegitimately and unlawfully support private schools.

The school system and network emerged, leading to a simultaneous transformation and disruption of the education system structure. Schools successfully standardized the dual educational standards and the concept of "status race." Education then evolved into a business, attracting owners, traders, and businessmen. Media and NGOs actively create false and negative campaigns for government schools. Politicians and government officials criticized public schools and related institutions, creating confusion in our education system.

People of privileged backgrounds abandoned government schools, considering private schools as the path to their children's success. When a child of a shopkeeper, labourer, or low-income employee walked out of the house with a school bag slung over their shoulder, adorned with a tie, parents felt a sense of pride. Over time, schools became symbols of wealth and prosperity for

owners and their children. English usage increased, and while education improved, there was no institution or mechanism to regulate the curriculum, educational activities, and rules and regulations of these institutions. It is very bad each school became a "one and a half-inch school," with its own identity and approach. I've witnessed teachers working in these schools for as low as one thousand rupees or less without completing their matriculation. They teach for a while, change to another city if there's a better opportunity, or switch to a nearby school. Some teachers marry and move on, and if a girl remains unmarried, she may join a school after completing her education.

According to the United Nations, all countries worldwide should allocate at least four percent of their GDP for education. In Pakistan, this figure has not exceeded two percent for the past eighty years. As per the Pakistan Economic Survey, an average middle-class individual spends 60 percent of their income on their children's education. Despite this, why are we still producing children with substandard education and high dropout rates?

Over time, local schools in neighbourhoods have progressed so much that they have now reached the level of colleges and universities. These private

schools are selling international education standards and, even in the digital age, burdening children with the weight of up to twenty textbooks on their shoulders. It wouldn't be wrong to say that, currently, the most profitable businesses in Pakistan are private educational institutions. Beyond hefty monthly fees, they also charge for uniforms separately.

However, when it comes to the qualifications of teachers and the educational system, these institutions successfully deceive parents by presenting themselves as innocent.

The Punjab government has mandated that all private educational institutions in the province register their buildings as commercial buildings, which seems nearly impossible. The clear reason behind this is to reduce the profits of these educational institutions. Currently, in Punjab, rules and regulations for school registration are being relaxed, and certificates of registration are being issued to schools located in small rooms and shops. These schools lack facilities such as qualified teachers, playgrounds, libraries, and science labs.

Pakistan is lagging behind in the education system compared to countries like India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and even Nigeria. Unfortunately, education has never been a priority for any government. The United Nations and various international organizations are actively

working on education-related projects and investments in Pakistan. However, expecting better results is impossible until the government includes education in its priorities.

Pakistan's gradually deteriorating economic situation is continuously increasing the burden of essential life necessities on the public. In this scenario, basic education, which is the responsibility of the state under Article 21 of the Constitution of Pakistan, is becoming a burden instead of serving as a fundamental need. The primary reason for this is the profit-oriented business model of private educational institutions.

In government schools, children enter in the first grade, while in private schools, their entry is in nursery and playgroups, which is considered a necessary stage according to people's perception. There is a need to eliminate these discrepancies near us. Starting admission in government schools from the nursery class could bring improvement in the enrollment process.

It's essential to establish an effective body for private schools that can audit their infrastructure, staff, teachers, curriculum, fees, basic rights, and security. We need something that can inquire, inform, and advise them. The government must address this urgently; otherwise, the education provided by private school owners is sinking in profit, leading to ruin; it's a downward spiral. But "I have no idea what my writing is going to be about. I'll put on my thinking cap and get back to you about it."



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

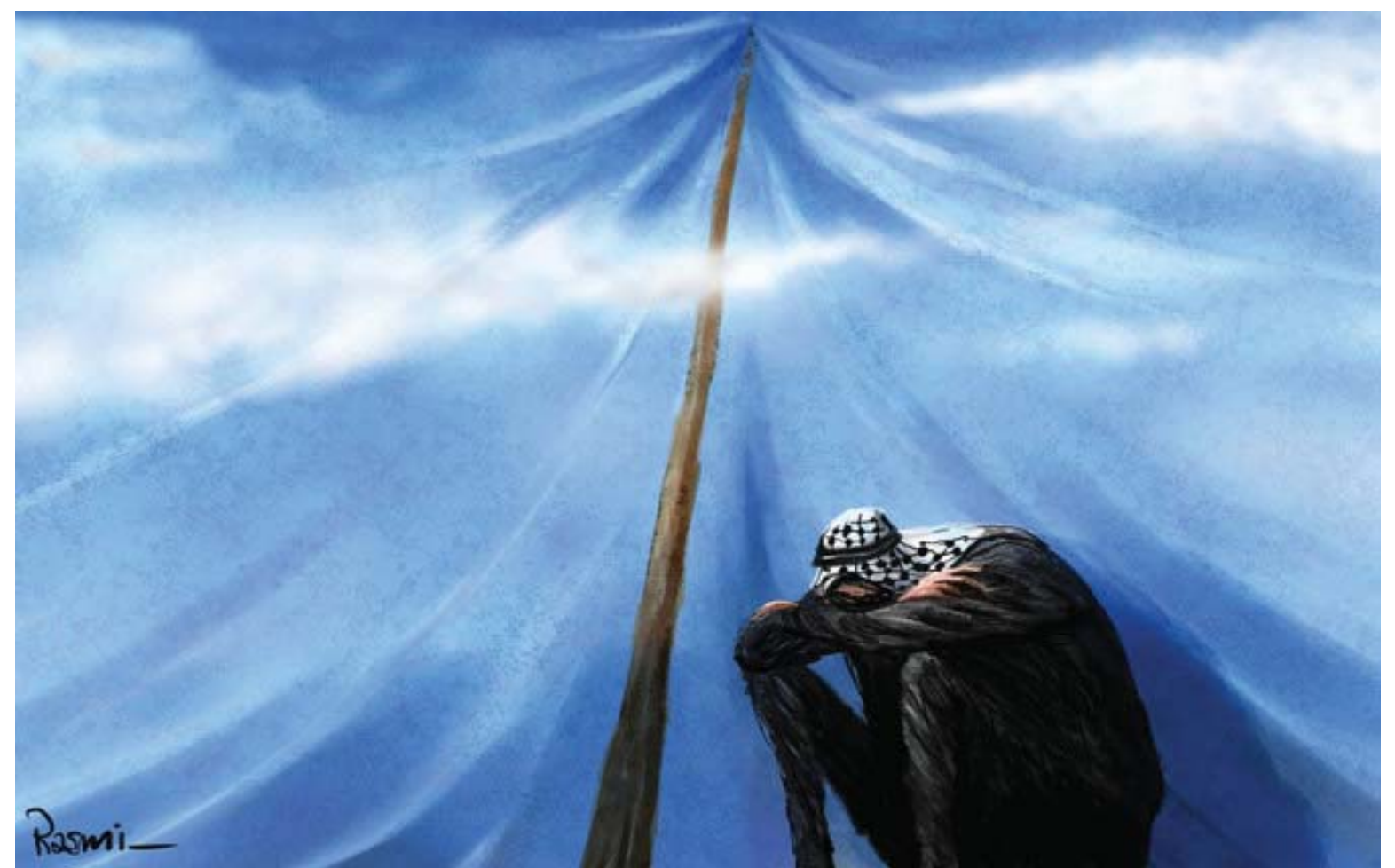
Digital messages urging UN to resolve Kashmir dispute

A noted Kashmir advocacy organization rented mobile digital advertising trucks displaying sharp messages around New York City that exhorted the United Nations to implement its decades-old resolutions pledging to the people of Kashmir their right to self-determination as they drove around the landmarks of Manhattan. The electronic screens on the trucks carried messages such as "From Kashmir to Palestine: Occupation is Crime"; "(Indian) Supreme Court Decision is a Delusion: Kashmir Needs a Resolution"; "Indian Forces on Killing Spree: Kashmir Needs to be Set Free"; "Kashmiris Reject Indian Occupation: UN Resolution Only Solution"; "Indian Brutality in Kashmir Galore: World Community Cannot Ignore"; "Kashmir Facing Existential Threat: United States Needs to Act"; "Settler Colonialism and Demographic Alterations: India Shreds UN Resolutions"; and "Indian Judiciary a False Glitter: Manipulated by Hindutva Litter".

Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, secretary general of the Washington-based World Kashmir Awareness Forum (WKAFA), which rented the trucks, called the move an effective way to spread a message as the brightly lit words on the screens catch the attention of the people walking on the streets and those coming in and out of government and commercial buildings. The digital trucks were operational all day on Friday, passing by the UN headquarters,

Times Square, Freedom Tower, Battery Park, Central Park, Indian Mission, and Indian Consulate while crisscrossing several city streets and avenues as part of observance of Right of Self-Determination Day. On Jan. 5, 1949, the UN Security Council passed a resolution supporting the Kashmiris' right to decide their future by themselves through a UN-supervised plebiscite. In a statement issued on August 8, 2019, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, while commenting on the deteriorating situation in Indian-occupied Kashmir following New Delhi's annexation of the disputed territory, said,

The position of the United Nations in this region is governed by the e UN Charter a applicable Security Council I resolutions." Speaking at the event, Dr. Fai emphasized that the unresolved conflict over Kashmir threatens the international peace and security of the world. "It is far past time for the UN to take forceful action to restore the faith of common people that it is an agency that can live up to its bold charter and mission of bringing peace and stability to the world," he said.



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

Post-election hope: Will the people be happy?

In the current political landscape, leaders and groups associated with them often paint a rosy picture, and pledge to address the financial, economic, social and societal challenges facing the people when given the chance to form a government. Ironically, however, the mainstream political parties, despite being in power in the past, have not only failed to quell the popular struggle, but in many cases have also intensified it. This contradiction deepens as politicians bask in the glow of their perceived success, while citizens continue to suffer. Public attention has now shifted to scrutiny of the Election Commission and judiciary, emphasizing the need for a fair electoral process. This ensures that every political party has the opportunity to participate in the elections with

Analysis



Ahsan Ansari

ing for the common man.

However, the historical track record of political parties raises doubts. Past experience shows that the gap between campaign promises and actions taken later in office can be substantial. Although politicians may articulate comprehensive plans for development, their implementation often fails, leaving the public disillusioned. Despite promises and assurances, the general public seems to be locked in a perpetual struggle. Economic hardship, unemployment, and social inequality persist, if not worsen, under the rule of mainstream political parties. This raises questions about the effectiveness of the strategies used by these parties to address fundamental issues affecting the lives of ordinary citizens. The disconnect between leaders' perception of success and the ground reality facing the public underscores the need for a reassessment of political priorities. While politicians may enjoy their successes, it is important to recognize that the true measure of success lies in significant improvements in the quality of life of the people they serve.

In recent times, the debate about electoral reforms has gained importance. The focus is on ensuring that the electoral process is fair, transparent and accessible to all political parties. This includes allowing each party to participate in elections with their recognized symbols, making

it easier for voters to identify and choose their preferred candidates.

Scrutiny of the Election Commission and the Judiciary is rooted in the desire to remove obstacles to a free and fair electoral process. If political parties can participate without hindrance, citizens can exercise their right to vote without unnecessary complications. Furthermore, the emphasis on providing avenues for redressal of grievances to failed parties serves to increase the accountability of the political system. As the nation approaches the upcoming elections, the question is looming: Will the post-election scenario bring happiness to the people? The answer depends on the ability of political leaders to move beyond rhetoric and turn promises into concrete actions. It also depends on the effectiveness of electoral reforms to create a level playing field for all parties, ensuring that the voice of the people is truly heard. Hope lies in the possibility of positive change. If the political parties prioritize the welfare of the people over political maneuvers, there is a chance for an era of change. The onus is not only on leaders but also on citizens to be actively involved in the democratic process, holding their elected representatives accountable for their actions. The post-election period holds promise for change, provided political leaders recognize the seriousness of the challenges facing the people and take concrete steps to address them. It is a collective responsibility to build a future where people's happiness is not just a campaign slogan but a reality through real efforts and accountable governance.

Globalization

Muhammad Sufyan

Globalization is a term used to describe how trade, technology, exchanging goods, flow of information and migration of people across the borders, and the cultural exchange of different societies have brought the world closer to each other. Growing interdependence of the world has made it a global village owing to the technological advancement and the modernization of the cultures. The term "Globalization" got popular after the Cold War because the new world order was prevailing in the world.

Since ancient times, humans have struggled to settle, produce, and exchange goods for their better sustenance. They worked towards betterment of communication among each other to improve cooperation and integration of a society. The 19th century witnessed global integration stepping up with the advancement of the steam engine, railroads, telegraph, and other breakthroughs of that century. Owing to these advancements, 1st wave of global incorporation started. Global integration started declining after World War I because of the changing landscape of the world order, especially the Europe continent, but again, it commenced after World War 2. The US made efforts to reintegrate the countries for the new world order.

Global cooperation and integration lead towards collective benefits of societies especially, the underdeveloped ones. Various types of globalization help us understand how it works for the collective benefits of the countries. For instance, the integration of the international financial markets and coordination of finance through the multilateral trade among the states lead towards economic globalization. The states get involved in financial coordination, which ultimately leads to the collective benefits. Like, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) reaps benefits for all the North American countries through free trade because they have got free access to import and export to other countries' markets. Some multinational corporations, like Amazon,

Apple, Microsoft, etc., are working in multiple countries, benefiting the local consumers as well as themselves. The diffusion and the exchanging of ideas across the borders give rise to political globalization, which shapes the diplomatic relations among the states, and it also leads toward establishing international organisations such as the United Nations, etc.

The growing interdependence of the world has highlighted the importance of globalization. Industrialised countries look for cheaper raw materials from other less developed countries and find more efficient ways to make finished products, besides giving rich countries access to lower cost resources and also promotes free trade among states. In this way, work opportunities are created for the labourers from the different regions who travel to other countries for better job opportunities, spurring economic development by giving poorer countries access to foreign capitals. Globalization is inevitable in our increasingly connected world. It enables us to work together for the greater good. Globalization has lifted many countries out of poverty by rapid increase of trade, economics, and financial exchanges, fostering an integration and bridging gaps between the developed and the developing states.

Critics have viewed globalization from a diverse lens, calling it a barrier to national prosperity. They claim that removing trade barriers and the free movement of people across the borders undermine national policies and cultures, besides other factors, like emission of greenhouse gases from the transport, overfishing, and deforestation, etc., which have caused social and environmental issues. Nonetheless, breakthroughs in technology, like mobile communication, banking systems, and transportation, all are contributing to the ease of people. Communication has become instantaneous, allowing us to connect with people hailing from different regions of the world at any time. To further reap benefits from globalization, a sustainable and inclusive integration is essential for navigating the challenges and maximising the benefits of the interconnected world.

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Int'l tourism festival featuring frozen waterfalls opens at Jiuzhaigou National Park

Xinhua

Tourists take photos in front of a frozen waterfall at the Jiuzhaigou National Park in southwest China's Sichuan Province, Jan. 4, 2024. An international tourism festival featuring frozen waterfalls opened Thursday at the Jiuzhaigou National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The national park, also known as the Jiuzhai Valley, contains around 20 tourist sites and is known for its spectacular waterfalls, lush forest, serene plateau lakes, and karst rock formations.

This photo taken on Jan. 4, 2024 shows the frozen Nuorilang Waterfall at the Jiuzhaigou National Park in southwest China's Sichuan Province. An international tourism festival featuring frozen waterfalls opened Thursday at the Jiuzhaigou National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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North China land port handles 3,294 China-Europe freight train trips in 2023

Xinhua

HOHHOT: Erenhot Port in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region handled 3,294 China-Europe freight train trips throughout 2023, a surge of 30.8 percent year on year, the local entry-exit border checkpoint said Saturday.

Import and export cargo throughput handled by the port totaled 4.08 million tonnes, an increase of 34.5 percent year on year. The port handled 375,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of goods during the year, an increase of 39.4 percent.

Erenhot Port is the largest land port between China and Mongo-



lia, and the only port of entry and exit on the middle corridor of the China-Europe freight train service.

Goods transported by China-Europe freight trains pass-

ing through Erenhot Port include footwear and apparel, mechanical and electrical products, vehicles and car parts, among some 1,000 categories of commodities.

World food price index falls in December

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Food Agency's World Price Index ended last year about 10% below its 2022, with values in December also down from the previous month, helping further ease concerns over global food price inflation.

The Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) price index, which tracks the most globally traded food commodities, averaged 118.5 points in December, down 1.5% from November and 10.1% below December 2022 levels. For 2023 as a whole, the index averaged 13.7% below year-earlier levels, with only sugar prices higher over the period. The FAO's sugar price index did, however, decline 16.6% in

December from November.

The FAO Cereal Price Index increased 1.5 per cent from November, as wheat, maize, rice, and barley prices all rose, partly reflecting logistical disruptions that hindered shipments from major exporting countries.

For the year as a whole, the index was 15.4 per cent below the 2022 average, reflecting well-supplied global markets, although FAO's All Rice Price Index (part of the FAO Cereal Price Index) registered a 21 per cent increase, largely owing to concerns about the impact of El Niño on rice production and in the aftermath of export restrictions imposed by India.

The FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index by contrast, declined by 1.4 per cent from November, reflect-

ing subdued purchases of palm, soy, rapeseed, and sunflower seed oil, with soy oil in particular impacted by a slowdown in demand from the biodiesel sector as well as improving weather conditions in major growing areas of Brazil. For 2023 as a whole, this index was 32.7 per cent below the previous year's level.

The FAO Sugar Price Index declined 16.6 per cent from November, hitting a nine-month low although still up 14.9 per cent from December 2022.

The plunge in sugar quotations was mainly driven by the strong pace of production in Brazil, along with the reduced use of sugarcane for ethanol production in India.

The FAO Meat Price Index dipped 1.0 per cent from November, reaching a level 1.8 per cent

below that of December 2022, impacted by persistent weak import demand from Asia for pig meat. Regional buying interest also slowed for bovine and poultry meat despite ample exportable supplies in large producing regions.

Ovine meat prices by contrast rose ahead of holidays. Bucking the trend, the FAO Dairy Price Index increased by 1.6 per cent from November, although still standing 16.1 per cent below its December 2022 value. The monthly increase was led by higher price quotations for butter and cheese, underpinned by strong internal sales in Western Europe ahead of the holiday season. At the same time, strong global import demand led international whole milk powders to rise.

Heidi Green, a psychology student at King Saud University, says coming to Saudi Arabia 'was the right thing'

News Desk

JEDDAH: Heidi Green is loving her new life in Saudi Arabia, far away from her American roots. Effortlessly conversing in fluent Arabic, she seems to be adapting quite well in Riyadh.

Green has been living in Riyadh for almost two years. Since arriving, she has always been complimentary about her experiences in the Kingdom.

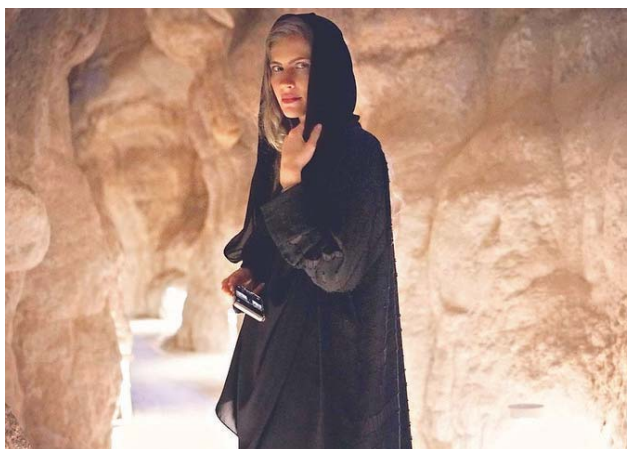
The move from the US to Riyadh was not an instant decision. She had been applying for jobs in Saudi Arabia since 2014 and had no idea about Saudi Vision 2030.

Heidi Green came to the Kingdom not only to discover a new culture but also to pursue a master's degree in psychology from King Saud University.

She told Arab News: "I feel lucky I was guided here." She also believes that her life has turned around and she is enjoying every minute of it.

"I was born in Utah, grew up in Las Vegas, and lived most of my adult life in Hawaii and the Washington D. C. area, and now am achieving my long-time goal by living in Riyadh," she added.

Speaking in high spirits from her home in Riyadh about how her journey began, she said: "Americans live here but don't often assimilate to the culture. My journey started by learning Arabic and making Saudi friends in the US. I went to cultural events and sometimes interpreted into Sign Language for deaf students. My love for Saudi



Arabia grew during that time."

Living in Saudi Arabia, Green is open to new experiences and exploring the country through the people. (Supplied)

Green is an American Sign Language interpreter who interprets between English and ASL, as well as Arabic and ASL. She is also proficient in Saudi Sign Language.

When Green told her family she was moving to Saudi Arabia, they were not shocked, but worried that she was going to a country considered by Americans to be deeply conservative.

"I (had) talked about Saudi Arabia for years, so it was not a surprise for them, but they expressed their fear. The unknown always has an element of fear. Some tried to convince me against it. I told them I would either go to Saudi Arabia or die trying, so they knew I was determined. I felt strongly it was the right thing for me," she said.

I always show people the positive aspects of Saudi Arabia, although there's no need to prove anything because people will learn and see for themselves what Saudi Arabia is all about as it continues to make a global impact.

"I studied psychology in America and Britain, but I want to see psychology in Saudi Arabia because I see that society is healthy and beautiful here."

Explaining the significance of pursuing further education in the Kingdom's cultural context, she said: "The field of psychology uses methods historically rooted from one culture. As a result, our understanding of 'disorders' and how they are categorized is flawed, and misdiagnoses is a problem. Improvement will come from multicultural perspectives."

"I wanted to understand psychology from a collectivist culture. I was fascinated by Saudi

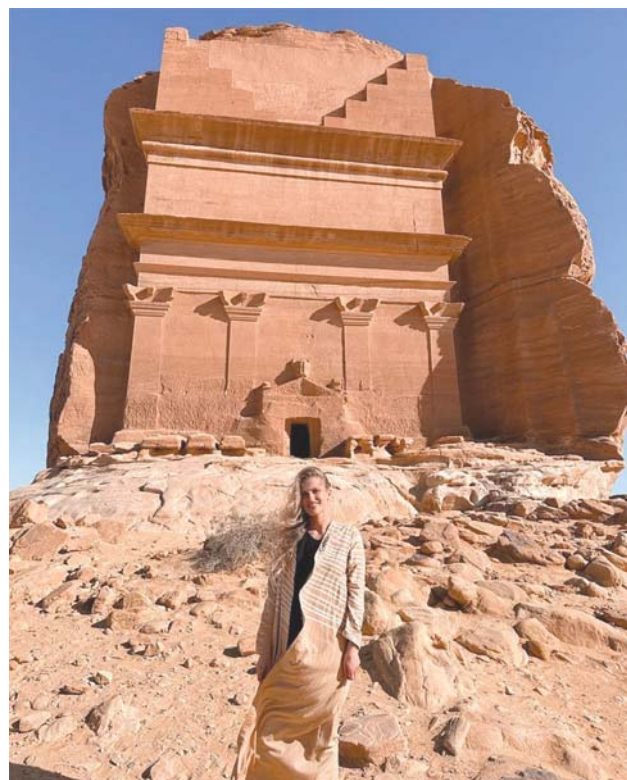
families and the psychological impacts of societal values. Also, through my career I research psychological well-being at work. Saudi Arabia is a great place to explore that topic because of transformation."

Going to a foreign country may be challenging mainly due to the cultural differences, but for Green, getting to know Saudi culture has opened doors to a new and exciting experience. She said that she "was eager to show respect for the culture," as she "didn't want to assume my way was right, I wanted to hear other perspectives."

"As I became part of the community, I was thinking about things I never considered before, like, should I cover my hair at work? How much should I socialize with men? Is it OK to show my face on social media?"

Explaining the impact this cultural exchange had on her, she said: "I learned a lot that way. It transformed me positively. Assimilation into a new society with new rules helps you learn about yourself. You must analyze and understand values deeply, and bargain with yourself how much you will or will not change, as a result of learning. In that process I became stronger and found that I could be myself here and was accepted."

Settling into Saudi society and adapting to her new life was aided by her ability to speak almost fluently in Arabic, which she learned through watching Saudi shows before coming to the Kingdom. She watched



"Khawatir" and read the book "40" by the documentary show's host Ahmed Al-Shugairi. To learn Najdi dialect, she watched "Masameer County" and Telfaz11 comedies.

"Comedy is a great language learning tool," Green said. "It exaggerates things, so you see nuances and culturally shared experiences. I grew to love the culture from these shows. I am inspired by their creators who paved the way for the film industry emerging in Saudi Arabia

now. As it grows, there will likely be more people like me who love Saudi Arabia and want to learn Arabic because storytelling is powerful."

Living in the Kingdom, Green is open to new experiences and exploring the country through the people. "I've talked to random people from Makkah to Qassim to Hafr Al-Batin. Once a driver took me to his camel farm and I met his family. Other times I've met sheikhs, CEOs, and actors. I have also sat in the

homes of many Saudi families, and families from nearby countries. I love learning about tribe histories and traditions. I find many opportunities by simply talking to people with genuine interest. Knowing Arabic helps, too," she said.

Green is often asked whether she feels safe in Saudi Arabia. "Safety is something I value. When I travel, I miss Saudi Arabia, and when I'm back, it feels like coming home because it's safe. I feel if I had an emergency, the people, neighbors, and systems around me would help," she said.

Commenting on how Saudis are building on Vision 2030, she said: "I admire Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for delivering on promises, supporting women, and making Saudi dreams happen. Saudi Arabia has improved life for its citizens and shown social responsibility to the world through green initiatives, international aid, and diplomacy efforts."

After having lived in Riyadh for several years, Green realizes that many assumptions people make about Saudi Arabia are wrong.

"Most misconceptions are dissolving, which is great. I always show people the positive aspects of Saudi Arabia, although there's no need to prove anything because people will learn and see for themselves what Saudi Arabia is all about as it continues to make a global impact."

(Courtesy Arab News)

GTR celebrates 60 years of driving Pakistan



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ghandhara Tyre (GTR) recently celebrated its 60th anniversary, marking six decades of leadership and reliability with German-Engineered Technology, perfectly tailored for the roads of Pakistan.

A grand event was organized in Lahore to commemorate this milestone, attended by more than 160 esteemed dealers of the company. The celebration was not just an acknowledgment of GTR's journey but also a tribute to the partnerships that have fueled its success. During the event, top dealers were honored.

Hussain Kuli Khan, CEO of GTR, reflected on the company's journey: "Today, GTR stands as the number one tyre manufacturer in Pakistan, serving all OEMs with our advanced technology, reliability, and commitment to safe and empowered driving in Pakistan."

He reminisced about the company's beginnings in 1963 and its rapid growth: "Driven by a vision of excellence, we doubled our capacity within just nine years, laying the foundation of a legacy built on quality, trust, and the pursuit of perfection."

Highlighting the significance of the inauguration of the new plant in 1985 by the President of Pakistan, Hussain Kuli Khan described it as a testament to the company's growing impact and ambition.

Our latest range, meticulously crafted for Pakistani roads, embodies the precision of German engineering, ensuring safety and performance in every journey," added Hussain.

New investment challenges keep on burdening weak economy: FRIA

PPA

LAHORE: The Ferozpur Road Industrial Association (FRIA) senior vice chairman and prominent leader of the PIAF Shahbaz Aslam has said that the new investment challenges keeping on burdening the already weak economic landscape in the country mainly due to constant escalation in energy cost, as asking the government to take concrete steps to attract foreign investment, saving the livelihood of millions of workers associated with various sectors.

Shahbaz Aslam said that poor economic and political climate have been additional factors in bogging down the business and investment in the country over the last one year. He said there is no visible improvement in employment while the small and medium industries (SMEs) — the main providers of jobs — are struggling because of lack of funds and demand. The BMP chairman said that the larger industries are also operating partially. Textile sector that was the major provider of permanent and daily wage jobs has lost 50 percent of both domestic and export market.

Business Facilitation Center has removed all Obstacles to Investment, SM Tanveer

PPA

LAHORE: A meeting of the Board of Directors of Punjab Small Industries Corporation was held at the PSIC Office under the chairmanship of Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce SM Tanveer, in which the five-point agenda was considered.

The Board approved the Service Level Agreement for running the Business Facilitation Center—In the meeting, colonization and development issues of Small Industrial Estates were also reviewed and some administrative issues of PSIC were also approved. Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce SM Tanveer while addressing the meeting said that the Business Facilitation Center has removed every obstacle in investment and has made the process of issuing NOC for setting up a new factory easy and fast.

Colonization is the first priority of the government—industrialists are being provided all possible facilities to set up new factories, he added. SM Tanveer said that if new factories are set up, economic activities will increase and people will get employment. He said that the establishment of Business Facilitation Center is an important development towards speeding up economic activities. Secretary Industry and Commerce Ehsan Bhutta, MD PSIC Sidra Yunus, DMD and board members attended the meeting.

Pakistan and UAE to Maximize Bilateral Trade and Facilitate Investment in Key Sectors

Spokesman Report

ABU DHABI: Dr. Gohar Ejaz (HI, SI), Pakistan's Minister for Commerce, Industries and Investment, and Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates, held a productive meeting at Abu Dhabi to strengthen bilateral economic ties between the two nations.

The discussions focused on maximizing bilateral trade volume and identifying promising avenues for UAE's investment in Pakistan's service and logistics sectors. These avenues encompass vital areas such as Infrastructure development of ports, logistics hubs, and aviation facilities, Expansion of shipping & cargo services, and Investment in modern technologies & services to enhance efficiency.

Both ministers expressed their unwavering commitment to streamlining procedures and creating an



environment conducive for UAE investors. They acknowledged the immense potential for collaboration in these sectors, which would not only boost trade but also generate employment opportunities and contribute to the overall economic growth of both countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ejaz said "We are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead with this renewed focus on economic cooperation with the UAE. Our shared vision for a vibrant and interconnected future paves the way for mutually beneficial investments and trade initiatives."

This meeting marks a significant step forward in the Pak-UAE economic partnership. By prioritizing investments in infrastructure development, modern technologies, and key service sectors, both nations aim to achieve sustainable growth and strengthen their presence in the global marketplace.

CDA to hold first auction of FY 2024 on January 10, 11 & 12, 2024

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Nauman Khalid, Member Technical & Digitization, CDA along with his team visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and briefed the business community about the auction of CDA plots on January 10, 11 & 12, 2024 in F-9 Park, Islamabad. CDA would auction a total of 35 plots out of which 11 plots would be auctioned on the first day, 10 on the second day, and 14 on the third day. The categories of plots include Marakaz, Blue Area, Park Road, apartments, hotels, petrol pumps, hospitals, timber, agro farms, I&T Centers, Aabpara Market, Class-III shopping centers, and revision of deferred plots.

Nauman Khalid said that CDA would give possession of auctioned plots on payment of 75% of the premium while a 10% rebate would be given on payment of the lumpsum amount. He also briefed the business community about various development initiatives of CDA including the development of a cycling lane in Islamabad to reduce traffic congestion, the introduction of more bus routes, digitization of land records, automation of approval of building



plans and automated parking, etc.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that CDA should ensure the provision of all required infrastructure and civic amenities for the plots being auctioned to save the investors from unnecessary problems.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI and Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI emphasized that CDA should utilize the revenue generated from the auction of plots for the better development of markets and the city.

Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, former President ICCI said that CDA should consider giving possession of auctioned plots on payment of 25% of the downpayment with timelines for completion of projects on auctioned plots.

Ms. Tabinda Tariq, Director Estate-II and Tariq Lateef, Head of Treasury CDA also briefed the business community about the auction of plots.

Khalid Chaudhry, Ashfaq Chatha, Maqsood Tabish and others also gave suggestions to make CDA auction successful.

FBR restructuring on agenda to improve governance, efficiency, effectiveness

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Ministry said here on Saturday that restructuring of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) was on the government's agenda to improve its governance, efficiency and effectiveness.

The ministry in a press statement said, certain proposals have been prepared in line with international best practices to rationalize and streamline the functions of the FBR, strengthen the FBR policy board, and overall governance, integrity and performance of the revenue agency based on a creative oversight structure that would enhance its accountability to the state and clients.

The creation of specialized administrative structures will be accompanied by

better delegation & accountability of administration, it added.

According to the statement, an institutional mechanism is being considered to establish a Tax policy group with the right expertise and analytical capability to facilitate rationalization of the tax regime emphasizing fairness and equity in the tax regime. These proposals have been prepared by the government after months of deliberation and consultation with experts, academics, and senior leadership of FBR and its members.

However, these proposals do not include any item relating to the downsizing of the workforce or any outside interference in the administrative matters of Customs or Inland Revenue service by any other agency and ministry, the ministry clarified.

Price Hike

ISLAMABAD: Vendors are busy in altering the onions outside their pavilion during the preparation for Weekly (Sunday) Margala Bazaar of Sector H-9 in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Cut in key policy rate vital to ensure Ease of Doing Business: APBF

PPA

ISLAMABAD: As the central bank is likely to announce the new monetary policy in the next meeting this month, the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has called for a cut in the monetary policy rate to attain the high position in Ease of Doing Business ranking, amidst record high markup rate, hyperinflation and rising energy prices.

The APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood said that already unprecedented inflation and high markup rate have drastically reduced private sector borrowings during the outgoing fiscal year, besides the country has been far behind in the ease of

doing business ranking. So, further hike in discount rate will deteriorate the economic conditions, he added.

Maaz Mahmood said that the central bank raised its key interest rate to 22 percent, exceeding investor expectations, as the cash-strapped country attempts to encourage the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to release critical funding. The key rate of the State Bank of Pakistan now stands at 22 percent, its highest level since October 1996.

Now, there are reports that the SBP would raise the interest rate by another 1 percent at the upcoming meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to please IMF.

Chinese company exports 160 high-end electric buses to Pakistan

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: A Chinese company handed over 160 high-end pure electric buses to Pakistan at a ceremony held in Suzhou Industrial Park, China. The officials from Pakistan, including General Manager Suzhou Higer, Qiu Yuanhong, Deputy General Manager Xie Jianghong, Customer Service Director Jiang Haifeng, and General Manager of Overseas Sales, attended the ceremony.

The value of the order exceeds RMB 150 million, which is the first time that Pakistan has introduced

pure electric buses in large quantities, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. The officials from Pakistan delivered speeches, respectively, expressing high recognition for this batch of buses. The day before the ceremony, the Pakistani side tested these buses, which performed perfectly in appearance, performance, and all other aspects. Currently, Higer's new energy buses have occupied the largest market share in Pakistan, contributing to Pakistan's green and low-carbon travel. Since entering the Pakistani market in 2006, in response to the local dusty and congested

road traffic characteristics, Higer has continued to carry out technological innovation and customize high-quality buses for Pakistan that can calmly cope with the local climate environment and complex road conditions. The batch of pure electric buses exported this time has the advantages of zero emissions, low operating costs, and low noise pollution, which will greatly improve the efficiency of public transportation operations and the quality of residents' travel. In addition, the cruising range of the buses exceeds 250 kilometers, and the entire vehicle uses



the most advanced cathodic electroplating technology, which has an anti-corrosion period of more than ten years.

In terms of software intelligence, 160 pure electric buses are equipped with the intelligent operation system T-BOX, which can monitor driver behavior and vehicle operation data in real time to ensure operational safety and protect passenger

travel. As an important part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Belt and Road Initiative, the transportation field will continue to usher in more efficient and green reforms in the future.

The arrival of 160 e-buses to Pakistan is a new starting point, promoting the high-quality development of CPEC and BRI in the field of public transportation.

Mardan, Peshawar, Bannu, Peshawar Academy record win in Pak Army Inter-Region Volleyball

Sports Desk

PESHAWAR: Spirited Mardan, strong titles contenders Bannu and Peshawar and Peshawar Academy recorded victories against their respective rivals in the ongoing Pakistan Army Inter-Regional Boys Volleyball Championship League being played here at the Indoor Hall of PSB Coaching Center on Saturday.

Mardan Region stunned strong Hazara in a thrilling 3-1 battle in the League round match of the ongoing Pakistan Army Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inter-Regional Boys Volleyball Championship. Mardan lost the first set by 22-25 but later won three consecutive sets at 25-22, 25-21 and 27-25. Mardan players including Sajid Nawaz, Ibrahim, Tahir Ullah and Irfan Ullah played well and did not give many chances to the strong Hazara team to strike back. Hazara, Ajmal, Ahmad Hassan, Nouman, Baqir Ali, and Rizwan Ahmad played and after winning the first set at 22-25, it was looking like Hazara would win the battle but Mardan dominated the rest of the match and raced up to victory.

Strong title contender Bannu, the last



time winner, recorded a one-sided victory against Malakand team in straight sets, the score was 25-21, 25-19 and 27-20. Malakand players did some resistance in the third set wherein both stretched to 27-25 before being locked at 5-5, 6-6, 7-7, 10-10, 13-13, 17-17, 19-19, 20-20, 21-21, 22-22, 23-23, 24-24, 25-25 and thus Bannu took the set. For Bannu team main spikers Wajid and Saud Khan with setter Shakeel Khan along with blockers Irfan Ullah and Asmat Ullah gave

tough time to Malakand strikers at the net. For Mardan Aftab, Shakir Ullah, Asmat Ullah, Nisar Khan and Jibran played well.

Peshawar beat Kohat 3-0, the score was 25-23, 25-21 and 25-22. Peshawar another top title contender, who defeated strong Bannu, the defending champion, did not give much time to Kohat to settle down in the whole match and dominated the proceedings.

A peshawar team including main

spikers Tufail and Azad with Nigar and Awais Senior strongly defended at the net and setter Awais Junior played tremendously by succeeding in dodging Kohat main blockers Zeeshan Ullah and Barkat.

The Peshawar libro Talha also played well with his excellent receptions and had no room for Malakand strikers to get points, thus the match was decided in straight sets.

In the last match of the League round Peshawar Academy beat Dera Ismail Khan by 3-0, the score was 25-23, 25-22 and 25-20. Peshawar Academy players including Inayat Ullah, Bilal, Mikail, Shakir, and Usman with coach Wasif Ullah combined well and did not give much time to the Dera Ismail Khan team to strike back, thus winning the match in straight sets.

Now Peshawar topped the group-A, would play the first semi-final against Mardan, the runners-up of group B while the Bannu, the winners of the group-A would play the runners-up of group A Peshawar Academy team in the second semi-final to be played on Sunday while the final of the League would be played on Monday at 11.30 a.m.

Hamza lifts junior singles title of Federal Cup Tennis C'ships

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: In the Junior 18&U category, Second Seed Hamza Roman clinched the junior singles' title as he eliminated top seed Hamid Israr in a well-contested straight-set final at PTF-SDA Tennis Complex, Islamabad. Hamza toppled Hamid 7-5 6-3 to secure the title.

In the boys 14&U category, 5th seed M. Hassan Usmani proved his skills to grab the title. He overpowered Zohaib Afzal Malik in a well-contested straight-set final 7-6(3) 6-2. Top seed Muhammad Shoaib and 2nd Seed Aqeel Khan will vie for the top honours in the men's singles final on Sunday.

In the ladies singles event, top seed Sarah Mahboob Khan and Aman Ali Qayum qualified for the final after beating their respective



opponents. In the first semi-final top Sarah Mahboob Khan struggled hard to win her match against upcoming Natalia Zaman from Karachi in a three-set match. Talented Natalia Zaman proved her metal against Sarah Mahboob and won the first set at 6-4 by breaking the 5th game of Sarah and taking the lead 1-0. In the 2nd set Sarah bounced back aggressively and gained her strength, utilising experience and leveled

the match 1-1 set all. In the final set Sarah Khan kept the same pressure and did not allow her opponent to settle down and won the set without conceding a single game and match at score line of 4-6 6-2 6-3. The match lasted for hour and 45 minutes. The best encounter of the day was played in men's fables final when 2nd seed Muhammad Shoaib paring with Muzammil Murtaza struggled hard to win the title against top seed Yousaf

Khalil and Barkatullah with score of 4-6 7-6(2) 10-6.

Results in brief: Men's Singles Semifinal Aqeel Khan beat Murtaza 6-1 6-1

Men's Doubles Final Muhammad Shoaib / Muzammil Murtaza beat Yousaf Khalil / Barkatullah 4-6 7-6(2) 10-6.

Ladies Singles Semifinal Sarah Mahboob Khan beat Natalia Zaman 4-6 6-3 6-0, Amna Ali Qayum beat Sheeza Sajid 6-3 6-1.

Junior 18&U Singles Final

Hamza Roman beat Hamid Israr 7-5 6-3

Boys 14&U Singles Final M. Hassan Usmani beat Zohaib Afzal Malik 7-6(3), 6-2.

Boys 14&U Singles Semifinal

Muhammad Arsh beat M. Ibrahim Hussain Gill 4-2 4-2, Amir Masood beat Muhammad Faizan 4-0 4-0.

Shaheen Afridi bids farewell to David Warner with heart-warming note



A Sports

SYDNEY: Pakistan's ace pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi penned an emotional farewell note for Australia's David Warner, following the latter's retirement from Test cricket.

Warner had a fairytale ending to his glittering Test career as the left-handed opener scored 57 in his side's eight-wicket victory over Pakistan in the third Test.

Warner finished his Test career with a tally of 8,786 runs in 112 Tests at an average of 44.59 with 26 centuries. He has the second-most number of centuries (49) for Australia, only behind legendary captain Ricky Ponting.

England to carry own chef for India tour

A Sports

LONDON: The England cricket team will carry Manchester United chef Omar Meziane on their Test tour to India, English media outlet The Telegraph reported Saturday.

According to the details, the decision to carry their own chef was taken in a bid to try and avoid players from getting ill during their seven-week-long trip to India.

"England will take their own chef on tour to India later this month to try and avoid players falling ill during the seven-week trip. The chef will join the squad in Hyderabad before the first Test on January 25 in an attempt to keep on top of the players' nutrition," The Telegraph reported.

Notably, this is not the first time that the England team would carry their own



chef on a tour to a sub-continent nation.

Omar Meziane also accompanied England on their historic tour to Pakistan in December 2021.

England, however, insisted that the measure did not mean to undermine the local hotels but to ensure players' safeguard, especially those who are reluctant

to eat spicy food.

"England insist it has nothing to do with not trusting hotels to provide clean facilities and is instead about ensuring players, especially those who refuse to eat spicy food, are eating nutritious meals rather than filling up on energy bars and pizzas," the publication reported.

It is worth mentioning here that England will tour India for a five-match Test series, scheduled to run from January 25 to March 7.

England last won a Test series in India in 2012 and have been hammered in the nation since then.

But with an aggressive approach — casually called BazBall — adopted after the appointment of Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum as England's Test captain and head coach respectively, the side will be hoping for a better outcome from their tour of India.

U-16 Inter-Division Athletics C'ship begins



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Under-16 Talent Hunt Programme Inter-Division Athletics Championship exploded into action at Punjab Stadium where young athletes offered wonderful performances in multiple athletics contests on Saturday.

Hundreds of male and female players from all divisions are participating in the Annual Sports Calendar Programme event being organised under the banner of Punjab Sports Department.

M Ijaz of Bahawalpur division got first position in U-16 Boys javelin throw event with a throw of 45.32. Sargodha's Umer Farooq remained second (44.70m) followed by Tehseen of Faisalabad who threw his javelin to 44.64m.

In U-16 Boys' 200m event Mudassar Ali of Sargodha secured top position with a time of 23.56 followed by M Roman of Gujranwala (23.81) and M Shehbaz of Bahawalpur (24.47).

Following are other athletics results on the opening day.

Boys' Long Jump:

1st: Ghulam Murtaza (Fsd) 6.29, 2nd: M Ijaz (Bwp) 6.18, 3rd: M Numan (Srgd) 5.98.

Girls Javelin throw:

1st: Noor Fatima (Lhr) 23.57, 2nd: Sehar Fatima (Bwp) 19.33, 3rd: Meljheen Zahra (Srgd) 18.40.

Girls 200m:

1st: Munazza Muneer (DGK) 31.12, 2nd: Bushra Perveen (Srgd) 31.40, 3rd: Bisma Raza (Lhr) 31.47.

Girls Long Jump:

1st: Irsa Fatima (Lhr) 3.95, 2nd: Rabia Bibi (Fsd) 3.86, 3rd: Sara Bibi (Srgd) 3.83.

Babar Azam hard worker, but needs 'big innings': Mohammad Hafeez

SYDNEY: Pakistan Cricket team's Director Mohammad Hafeez Saturday said former captain Babar Azam is a hard worker and trains hard in practice sessions, but needs a "big" innings to restore his confidence.

The veteran cricketer's statement during a post-match presser in Australia after the Green Shirts lost their third and final match in the Test series against the Aussies, keeping the score 3-0.

"A big innings will restore his confidence. Red ball cricket brings sophistication to the game. A red-ball cricketer can play all formats," Hafeez said, adding that red-ball cricket polishes the skills of cricketers.

The team director appreciated the former skipper for playing well in matches but also hinted at letting Babar rest. He said it is important to consider what the former skipper himself wishes. He

Hafeez maintained that the management is there for Babar if it requires any help. "Not necessarily to rest, [he] can talk about improving any technique."

Speaking about Shaheen Shah Afridi, the veteran cricketer said the pacer himself sought rest ahead of the third Test.

"[We] rested Shaheen Afridi due to workload. We didn't want him to suffer any injuries due to the workload. Shaheen's return after injury put a lot of load on him," he said, adding that the management doesn't want to ruin anyone's career due to workload.

"The impression that Shaheen was rested because of the T20 series is wrong," he added.

Meanwhile, the veteran batter acknowledged pacer Naseem Shah's talent but said he was replaced by Aamer Jamal, as he is suffering from injury.

"It is not like the team can't function without him or his injury is causing immense damage to the team," he added.

The fast bowler has been reeling from an injury he endured during an Asia Cup game last year in September. According to an update shared by the Pakistan Cricket Board, Shah started the final stage of his rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Lahore in December 2023.

Hafeez, when commenting on the performance of the team in the Test series, said Pakistan played good cricket during the tour of Australia.

"There were moments that the team could not capitalise on immediately. The Melbourne Test was defeated due to dropped catches," said Hafeez.

He added that the mistakes made on the tour also need to be corrected. Australia beat Pakistan by eight wickets in the third and last Test match, drawing a curtain to the Green Shirts' hopes to conclude a run of 16 successive losses in the host nation since 1995.

Pakistan could add only 47 runs to their overnight tally at the cost of the last three wickets, to be dismissed for 115 an hour before lunch.

Commenting on the matter of match fee, Hafeez said he would share a proposal with the International Cricket Council (ICC) regarding Test cricket remuneration.

Australia defeat Pakistan by eight wickets in third Test

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: David Warner enjoyed a fairytale finish to his Test career as his half-century spearheaded Australia's comfortable chase of the 130-run target on day four of the SCG Test against Pakistan. Australia's eight-wicket win, following victories in Perth and Melbourne, sees them claim a series sweep over Pakistan.

The day began with solid resistance offered by Mohammad Rizwan and Aamir Jamal over the course of the first hour, according to information made available here by the Pakistan Cricket Board.

The two nudged the ball around to help Pakistan cross the 100-run mark before Rizwan (28, 57b, 1x4) eventually fell to Nathan Lyon. The

wicketkeeper-batter, who ends the series as Pakistan's leading scorer with 193 runs in four innings, inside-edged the Lyon delivery to Warner at first slip.

Pakistan's woes worsened when Aamir (18, 47b, 2x4s) was caught by Travis Head at deep square leg while attempting to whack one out of the park off the bowling of Pat Cummins. Lyon did the honors of taking the last Pakistan wicket to fall when he dismissed Hasan Ali as the visitors were all out for 115.

Australia's pursuit of the modest target of 130 was disrupted early with the wicket of Usman Khawaja in the first over. Khawaja, dismissed for naught, was beaten by a Sajid Khan delivery to hit his pads and was adjudged LBW.

The first-over wicket did little to deter Australia's charge

as Warner unleashed an array of attacking strokes to put his team in the ascendancy. He employed some adventurous strokeplay, marked by the use of switch-hits and reverse sweeps, to bring up the 37th and final fifty of his Test career.

Australia went to lunch needing only 39 runs more for victory, with Marnus Labuschagne also growing in confidence. With Australia 11 runs short of the target, Sajid removed Warner (57, 75b, 7x4s) following a successful review of an LBW shout turned down by the on-field umpire.

Labuschagne knocked off the winning run, finishing the chase unbeaten on 62 off 73 balls with nine fours.

Aamir was declared player of the match for his stellar 82 in the first inning, followed by

a brilliant six-fer with the ball. Meanwhile, Australia captain Cummins was named player of the series for his series-topping tally of 19 wickets.

The post-match presentation ceremony, highlighted by heartwarming tributes for Warner, also saw Pakistan skipper Shan Masood present a signed Babar Azam jersey as a parting gift to the retiring opener.

Scores in brief

Australia beat Pakistan by eight wickets.

Pakistan 313 all out, 77.1 overs (Mohammad Rizwan 88, Aamir Jamal 82, Salman Ali Agha 53, Shan Masood 35; Pat Cummins 5-61, Mitchell Starc 2-75, Mitchell Marsh 1-27) and 115 all out, 43.1 overs (Saim Ayub 33, Mohammad Rizwan 28, Babar Azam 23;



Josh Hazlewood 4-16, Nathan Lyon 3-36).

Australia 299 all out, 109.4 overs (Marnus Labuschagne 60, Mitchell Marsh 54, Usman

Khawaja 47, Alex Carey 38, Steven Smith 38; Aamir Jamal 6-69, Salman Ali Agha 2-43)

and 130-2, 25.5 overs (Marnus Labuschagne 62 not out, David

Warner 57; Sajid Khan 2-49)

Player of the Match: Aamir Jamal (Pakistan)
Player of the Series: Pat Cummins (Australia)

Kindnesses

KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi visited Saylani Welfare Turst at M Ali Society on Saturday.



Photo: PID

President orders restoration of WAPDA welfare grant to special person

PPA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has directed WAPDA to immediately pay/restore the welfare grant to a retired employee's special child from the date of its discontinuation. He also ordered WAPDA to initiate disciplinary proceedings against delinquent officials who decided to stop the welfare grant despite the fact that the grant had been issued for life after fulfilling the required criteria.

While accepting a representation of Syed Noor

Ali Zaidi (the complainant) against Wafaqi Mohtasib's decision, the President said that the delinquent officials caused an embarrassing situation, not only for the family of a retired employee but also for WAPDA by unjustly stopping the welfare grant to a person with disability (PWD) who had been declared unemployable for life and was totally dependent on his parents. He added that WAPDA should contact the Ministry of Human Rights, which had a definite program to teach more than 50 skill sets

to PWDs and later link them to possible employers. He stressed that on such issues, it was the responsibility of institutions like WAPDA to guide PWDs, take social responsibility, and ensure that they become employable.

The President in his decision observed that a few key facts had escaped the notice of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, which established that the complainant was entitled to the welfare grant. He pointed out that the complainant had been declared by WAPDA's own Medical Board as "Deaf and

Dumb since birth", "unemployable for life" and "totally dependent on his parents" in 1996. He further observed that the Managing Committee of WWF had sanctioned a welfare grant for life for the complainant in 1996. He also referred to WWF Rules which provided for the provision of welfare grants to special children of WAPDA employees subject to the provision of medical certificates. He added that NADRA had also issued a CNIC to the complainant depicting him as a "person with disability for life".

The President concluded that the welfare grant was issued to the complainant as per rules and the question that who decided to stop the welfare grant and why needed to be investigated. He rejected the order of Wafaqi Mohtasib and directed WAPDA to immediately pay the welfare grant to the complainant from the date of discontinuation. He also asked WAPDA to initiate disciplinary proceedings against delinquent officials and report compliance within 30 days to the Mohtasib.

Dr. Al-Maliki receives a phone call from his French counterpart

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Dr. Riyadh Al-Maliki, received a phone call from French Foreign Minister Catherine Corona, in which she affirmed her country's condemnation of the disgraceful statements issued by several Israeli officials, led by Ministers Ben Gvir and Smotrich, which incite the displacement of Palestinian citizens from the Gaza Strip. She also reiterated her country's commitment to provide all forms of humanitarian support and urgent aid to the residents of the Gaza Strip to alleviate the suffering they have been facing since the declaration of war on the Gaza Strip three months ago, and the last of that aid was sending two ships loaded with hundreds of tons of aid to alleviate the extent of that suffering. She also stressed that her country rejects all forms of Israel-



li interference in the future of the Gaza Strip, which along with the West Bank forms a single geographical unit, and that the future of the occupied Palestinian territory is determined by its citizens, and her country's commitment to providing support to the Palestinian Authority to carry out its duties to the fullest extent as a legitimate authority over all of the Palestinian land.

For his part, Minister Al-Maliki thanked France for the assistance it provided

and is providing to alleviate the amount of suffering that came as a result of the war declared unilaterally by Israel, which aims to complete genocide against our people in the Gaza Strip and destroy all elements of life there. Minister Al-Maliki focused on the need to pay attention to restoring the health sector. Because of its importance in providing treatment for this large number of wounded who no longer have any opportunity for treatment within the

Gaza Strip after the occupying state completely destroyed the health sector, he called on France to establish field hospitals in many areas within the Gaza Strip to alleviate the burden of the health situation and provide the minimum amount of treatment for the wounded. And the sick. He also drew the minister's attention to the occupation army's bombing of aid trucks entering the Gaza Strip despite prior coordination with them for the movement of those trucks, or the bombing of citizens who adhere to the instructions of the occupation army to leave their areas and head to the so-called safe roads or safe areas, but they are not safe from conspiracy. The occupation army opened fire on them and bombed them with tanks and planes. Minister Al-Maliki also expressed to his French counterpart his country's rejection of all the impractical proposals issued by some Israeli officials regard-

ing their vision for the day following the end of the war, and rejected any presence of the Israeli army on the land of the Gaza Strip under any name of occupation, security, military intervention, iron control, or surveillance. On the entry of goods and aid or any other capacity, he also affirmed his refusal to appoint new village associations in the Gaza Strip, or to appoint local committees that follow the orders of the occupation army, stressing that the Palestinian National Authority is the only body authorized to administer the Gaza Strip just as it administers the West Bank, and it is the only legitimate decision-maker.

The two ministers agreed to continue communications between them due to the importance of reviewing and following up on all issues raised or new developments, and the necessary coordination to serve the common goals between the two countries.

PTI Spokesperson castigates PML-N for awarding tickets to conscience sellers

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) hit out at PML-N for awarding tickets to Raja Riaz-led conscience sellers group as a reward for their shameful act to topple prime minister Imran Khan-led democratically elected government under the regime change conspiracy.

In a strongly-worded reaction, PTI spokesperson chastised the PML-N apolitical, undemocratic and convicted leader for awarding tickets to the PTI's dissidents because

the absconder national criminal's sole aim and objective was to grab power by hook or by crook that was the reason he was always looking for crutches.

He said that the PML-N's grant of tickets to conscience sellers who were instrumental in the regime change conspiracy was an open admission of guilt of the characters involved in the shameful conspiracy to remove Imran Khan-led government under a nefarious plot by decorating a bazaar of conscience sellers.

PTI Spokesperson pointed

out that the PML-N's special favors to PTI dissidents in lieu of their role of facilitators in the conspiracy against an elected government was a step towards the death to democracy.

He noted that after facing humiliating from the people, the PML-N now felt the need of the support of those who sold their conscience in lieu of a few crores of rupees. PTI Spokesperson mocked

that the popularity of PML-N could be judged from the fact that even it needed crutches of PTI's deserters and dissidents instead of fielding party's loyalists in the elections, adding that after being completely rejected by the people, the award of tickets to the conscience sellers would prove a last nail in the political coffin of the PML-N.

He made it clear that people of the country had made their mind and they would inflict a crushing defeat on the conscience sellers and their buyers on February 8, 2024



Constituency-wise preliminary polling station lists unveiled

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Returning officers (ROs), in line with the directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), have published the constituency-wise preliminary lists of polling stations.

Candidates and voters have the opportunity to submit their suggestions or objections regarding polling stations to the District Returning Officers (DROs) until January 11, 2024.



DROs are set to declare their decisions on these objections or suggestions from January 12 to 17, with the final list of polling stations to be revealed 15 days before the elections.

FBR to be restructured to streamline, improve accountability: reports

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The restructuring of FBR is on the agenda of the Government, to improve its governance, efficiency and effectiveness. Certain proposals have been prepared in line with international best practices to rationalize and streamline the functions of the FBR, strengthen the FBR policy board, and overall governance, integrity and performance of the revenue agency based on a creative oversight structure that would enhance its accountability to the state and clients. The creation of specialized administrative structures will be accompanied by better delegation & accountability of administration. An institutional mechanism is being considered to establish a Tax Policy group with the right expertise and analytical capability to facilitate rationalization of tax regime emphasizing fairness and equity in tax regime.

These proposals have been



prepared by the government after months of deliberation and consultation with experts, academics, and senior leadership of FBR and its members. However, these proposals do not include any item relating to the downsizing of workforce or any outside interference in the administrative matters of Customs or Inland Revenue service by any other agency and ministry.

Reports carried by digital media on the restructuring of the Federal Board of Revenue misrepresent the objective and scope of reforms that are much needed to lift the tax/GDP ratio, while ensuring level playing in burden sharing and allowing for tax and investment facilities.

Fazlur Rehman says TTP on agenda during upcoming Afghanistan visit

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has stated that the issue of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is set to be discussed during his upcoming visit to Afghanistan, a private media outlet has reported.

The JUI-F chief was interacting with a group of reporters at his Islamabad residence on Saturday.

Fazlur Rehman was extended an invitation by the interim Afghan government last month, marking his first visit to Afghanistan since the Taliban assumed control in 2021.

His previous visit to Afghanistan took place in 2013, when he met with Hamid Karzai, the then-president.

Fazl confirmed receiving an invitation with the approval of the Taliban supreme leader, and he expressed his intention to meet with Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada, the rare-



ly accessible supreme leader of the Taliban, during his trip to Kandahar.

Responding to inquiries about addressing the TTP issue with the Afghan authorities, Fazl acknowledged the possibility, emphasising the use of his diplomatic ties for positive outcomes.

Regarding his representation of the government, the JUI-F chief clarified that although his party organised the visit, he had been in contact with the Foreign Office and relevant government officials. He asserted that the visit would consider the interests of both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Parvez Elahi once again hospitalised with chest infection



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi has once again been shifted to hospital from Adiala Jail due to chest pain.

Doctors diagnosed chest infection after Parvez Elahi's thallium scan was done at the Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology (RIC) last

week.

Jail sources say detailed medical examination of Elahi will be done. His medical examination was also conducted in the jail's hospital as usual.

Elahi was detained in Adiala Jail for his alleged involvement in various cases including money laundering and illegal appointments in the Punjab Assembly.