



China welcomes good progress between Pak-Iran relations

China welcomes the good progress that Iran and Pakistan have made in repairing their ties and supports them in further enhancing mutual trust and deepening cooperation through friendly consultation, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Tuesday. (Report on Page 8)



Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the People's Republic of China in a New Era

On January 23-25 of this year, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev will pay a state visit to the People's Republic of China, which, will undoubtedly be of high significance and will give a new impetus to the expansion and deepening of Uzbek-Chinese cooperation. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Federal Cabinet Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Caretaker Federal Cabinet on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

Elections 2024: Cabinet approves deployment of Pak army, civil armed forces

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet on Tuesday approved the deployment of Pakistan army and the civil armed forces to ensure the peaceful conduct of general elections across the country. These forces will perform duties at sensitive constituencies and polling stations, and will also act as a rapid response force. The decision came following the submission of a summary by the federal Interior Ministry in the meeting. The cabinet which met here under the chairmanship of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, also discussed in detail the recommendation with respect to the digitization and restructuring of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). After a thorough discussion of

the proposals made in light of the opinions of the cabinet members regarding the restructuring and digitization of the FBR, the prime minister directed to establish of an inter-ministerial committee under the supervision of the caretaker finance minister. Other members of the committee will include federal ministers for privatisation, foreign affairs, commerce, energy, law and justice and information technology. The committee will present its recommendations regarding these proposals in the next meeting of the federal cabinet. The cabinet appreciated the efforts of Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar in increasing the tax revenue and improving the tax-GDP ratio. The cabinet also admired the finance minister for presenting detailed proposals

regarding the administrative structure of the FBR. The prime minister and all members of the cabinet unanimously supported the proposals regarding the FBR reforms and reiterated that the caretaker government should play its due role in concluding the FBR reform agenda. On the recommendation of the finance ministry, the federal cabinet approved the extension of the tenure of Tahir Hussain Qureshi as the President of SME Bank for three months or till the formal closure of the institution. The cabinet, On the recommendation of the Ministry of National Health, appointed Principal Shifa College of Dentistry, Shifa-e-Milat University Islamabad Prof. Dr. Anwar Ali Shah as the representative of medical colleges in the registration board of Islamabad Health

Regulatory Authority. Likewise, the cabinet also approved the appointment of Dr. Dur e Shehwar Faisal as the representative of the Private Healthcare Establishment Sector in the Board. On the recommendation of the Ministry of National Health, the cabinet also approved the formation of a search committee for the appointment of the vice-chancellor of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University Islamabad. The minister for national health will head the committee. The cabinet also approved the decisions taken in the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) held on January 9, 2024. Similarly, the cabinet approved the decisions taken in the meetings of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases held on January 9 and 17, 2024.

SC reserves verdict in Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui dismissal case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday reserved its verdict in former Islamabad High Court judge Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui dismissal case.

The former judge had challenged the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) about his removal from service after a speech he had delivered at Rawalpindi Bar Association. A five-member bench led by CJP Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan conducted proceedings on the plea of Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui against his removal as IHC judge.



Lawyer Hamid Khan represented the former IHC judge in the case, while Khawaja Haris appeared before the apex court to represent former director general of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Lieutenant General (ret'd) Faiz Hameed and Brigadier (ret'd) Irfan Ramay.

LHC restores PTI founder's interim bail in seven cases

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday restored interim bails, granted to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, in seven cases pertaining to the May 9 riots - the day deposed prime minister was arrested.

A two-member LHC bench - headed by Justice Aalia Neelum - announced the verdict reserved on the disqualified prime minister's petition challenging the cancellation of bail in seven cases pertaining to the May 9 events. Moreover, the Lahore High Court also ordered the trial court to give a verdict on PTI founder Imran Khan's interim bail pleas. Earlier on Jan 11, PTI founder Imran Khan, who is already imprisoned in Adiala Jail in multiple cases, was arrested in GHQ attack case relating to the May 9 riots.

The verdict comes after an anti-terrorism court (ATC) had rejected the petitions seeking bail extension for the deposed prime minister in seven cases.

Mushaal Mullick denounces opening of 'Ram temple' on demolished Babri Mosque



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that notorious Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is using the inauguration of 'Ram temple' event as a political gimmick as his popularity graph witnessed alarming decline due to his anti-minority policies and state operation.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick also called upon upon the muslim world to announce diplomatic boycott against India for wiping out all traces of Muslim or Islamic civilization from India. The SAPM said that Hindus and Muslims were living

in Ayodhya town in peace for centuries. "Since this notorious bloodsucker usurped powers in India, the Muslim community has been facing all hardship as they have suffered loss of life, property and religious places," she added. Mushaal Hussein Mullick recalled that On December 6, 1992, a Hindu mob had razed the 16th century Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on the bogus claim that Muslims had built it over the place of an ancient temple. The mosque destruction is celebrated as a day victory by Hindutva supporters, while for Muslims, it was a day of terror.

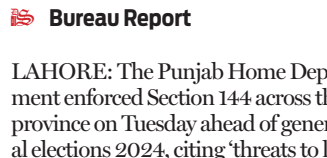
Nehal Hashmi accepts Bilawal's challenge to Nawaz Sharif



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Nehal Hashmi has accepted Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's challenge for a debate on behalf of the party supreme Nawaz Sharif. Nehal Hashmi asked the PPP chairman to 'raise' his level to Nawaz Sharif before challenging the three-time prime minister, while accepting the debate challenge. He asked Bilawal Bhutto to choose the time and place of his convenience, adding that the people will decide who is right. "Bilawal is free to pick any other topic of his choice, whether it is foreign policy, economy, or social issue," he added.

Elections 2024: Section 144 imposed across Punjab



Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Home Department enforced Section 144 across the province on Tuesday ahead of general elections 2024, citing 'threats to law and order situation and public peace'. According to a notification, the Punjab Home Department pointed out that a large number of public gatherings, rallies, corner meetings - related to upcoming general elections - may "serve as soft targets for any desperate act by terrorists and miscreants". "Besides, given the past history, possibility of clashes between contesting candidates and rival political parties/ groups in different areas, cannot be ruled out, which may pose threats to public peace and order in the province," read the notification. It further stated that the ensuing security milieu demands "extraordinary vigilance and extensive security measures to pre-empt any toward incident". Citing such threats, the Home Department enforced Section 144 till Feb 12 and prohibit the following actions across Punjab: Carrying and display of all kinds of weapons including the licensed ones. All types of firing. Violation of any clause of Code of Conduct issued by ECP

MQM-P says will not let mandate to be 'stolen'



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said that if someone tries to steal the party's mandate, this time around, they would give a befitting reply. Addressing the party's NA committee and COC officials, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said the dream of some elements to 'occupy' urban Sindh has been shattered after the party's 'successful' power show at Baghe Jinnah. "Today's MQM-P is united and well organized and has the full support of the people," he added. The MQM-P convener said that whoever wants to protect their rights in Pakistan has to show public power the way MQM-P has shown. He further said that the party will not remain silent until the common people get their legitimate rights. He directed the party workers and leaders to speed up the preparations for the elections 2024.

KP Caretaker CM launches Bannu Economic Zone



Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (Ret'd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah formally launched the Bannu Economic Zone here on Tuesday. The launching ceremony was held here in the Chief Minister's Secretariat wherein the Caretaker Chief Minister also distributed plot allotment letters among intending investors. Bannu Economic Zone is 14th zone of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Besides, Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Dr. Amer Abdullah, Secretary Industries, Commerce & Technical Education, Zulfiqar Ali Shah and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), Javed Iqbal Khatak, members of the Board of Directors also attended the ceremony.

گیس کے استعمال میں لازم ہے احتیاط

کھڑکیاں اور دروازے کھولیں

ماتریں یا لائٹس گزرتے جائیں

بجلی کا سوچنا آف نہ کریں

مین واوینر کریں

کھلی فضاں آجائیں

گیس لیکجی رازدوست نہ گزرتی رہے

آپ کی حفاظت کی ضمانت ہمیں لائن: 1199

احتیاط کی عادت یقینی حفاظت

Chairman Bilawal to present party manifesto in Multan on 26 January: Gillani

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Central Senior Vice Chairman Pakistan People's Party and former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani (Senator and candidate NA-148) at the residence of Divisional General Secretary People's Party Multan and former member of Punjab Assembly Dr Javed Siddiqui NA 150 nominated candidate of Pakistan People's Party Rana Mehmoodul Hasan, while talking to the media on the occasion of the Breakfast Party organized in the honor of candidate PP-217 Malik Rizwan Abid Thahim, has said that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's meeting at Multan Qasimpur Colony Ground will be a source of strength for the People's Party. And Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardai on Friday 26th January at 1 pm Addressing a Public meeting at the Multan Qasimpur Colony Technology College Ground, he will present the party manifesto and inform the public about his 10-point agenda, while no other political party has made as many sacrifices as Pakistan People's Party in the public and

democratic struggle. Rather, the leadership of the People's Party where People's Party workers also committed self-immolation, ate whips, sacrificed their precious lives, endured the hardships of imprisonment and exile, how many workers, including those who were imprisoned and imprisoned, sacrificed their lives, but any kind of sacrifice for the stability of democracy, did not hesitate, whereas today Pakistan's defense is impregnable it is also due to Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's nuclear program and Shaheed Ms. Benazir Bhutto's missile technology programs.

Today, no enemy power can look at Pakistan with a blind eye, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani while answering the journalist's question. More He said that the establishment of a separate province of South Punjab, Pakistan People's Party is part of the manifesto of the party and we not only presented the resolution for the establishment of a separate province during our tenure, but also got the resolution approved by both the upper houses, the Senate and the National Assembly, but



Unfortunately, it was separated by not supporting the provincial government of Punjab. The establishment of the province could not have been possible if the provincial government of Punjab was not ours. When would a separate province have been formed if she had supported him, he added that from today, the campaign for the nominated candidates of Pakistan People's Party has started from within the city and all the

officials and workers of People's Party and Allaidongs and all the dignitaries including the political leaders of the area. And social leader candidate NA 150 Rana Mahmood Al Hasan and Ensure the success of the candidate PP 217 Rizwan Abid Thahim by going from street to street and from house to house and on February 8, take out as many voters as possible and cast the vote and deliver the public manifesto of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto

to Zardari from house to house while Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari South including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Upper Punjab Addressing the public meetings in the cities of Punjab, they are presenting their 10-point public agenda to the public and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto is getting full public acceptance throughout the country and all the hopes of the people are attached to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto. On

this occasion, the candidate of Pakistan People's Party NA 150 and The candidate Rizwan Abid Thahim while speaking said that under the leadership of former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Geelani, he will continue the struggle for all the deprivations of the region and for the establishment of a separate province and will not tolerate any more slavery of the throne of Lahore, while South For the construction and development

of Punjab and public prosperity Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani's public service history is full and the future also will leave no stone unturned to solve public problems by the side of Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani. No, on this occasion, PPP Senior Vice President South Punjab Khawaja Rizwan Alam, Divisional President Khalid Hanif Lodhi, City President Malik Naseem Labar and City General Secretary Rao Muhammad Sajid Were Present

Promotion of tourism

ISLAMABAD: Commissioner (Bahawalpur) Ehtasham Anwar, Azerbaijani Ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov, and others stands with trophy during TDCP 19th International Cholistan Desert Rally and Culture Festival, at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Asif Rafiq Rijwana congratulate new VC of Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Former governor of Punjab Malik Muhammad Rafique Rajwana Son Malik Asif Rafique Rajwana and senior Muslim League leader Usman Khan Babar congratulated the newly appointed VC Malik Ishtiaq Rajwana on his arrival at Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University. Expressed his wishes and also presented a bouquet of flowers to him. Malik Ghulam Shabbir Lati, Malik Ishaq Rajwana, Malik Iqbal Thahim, Malik Haseeb Rajwana, Malik Qamar Abbas Lati were also present on this occasion. On this occasion, VC Malik Ishtiaq Rajwana said that Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University is one of the major educational institutions of South Punjab, where students from far-off areas including Multan are making the name of the country and nations famous around the world, while Malik Asif Rafiq Rajwana. Usman Khan Babar said that God willing PML-N will ensure the steps for further development of Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University in power.

Jamaat-e-Islami to protect integrity of Pakistan: Mian Asif Akhwani



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Naib Amer of Jamaat-e-Islami Multan met with Maulana Muhammad Hanif Jalandhri Mohtamam (incharge) Jamia Khairul Madaras Multan and Nazeem Ala Wafaq ul Madaris Al Arabiya Pakistan. On this occasion Qari Hanif Jalandhri said that this country is incomplete without Islamic system. The efforts of Jamaat-e-Islami to establish a fair and just system of Islam in this country are not hidden from anyone. Jamaat-e-Islami maintains a complete service network. On this occasion, Deputy Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Multan Mian Asif Akhwani thanked him and assured him that Jamaat-e-Islami will protect the ideological and geographical borders of Pakistan.

All Parties Alliance demands early reshuffle of Azad Kashmir government

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The All Parties Alliance has criticized the extremely poor performance of some ministers of the tripartite coalition government, neglect of public issues, continuous unavailability of offices, retaliatory actions, seams in development projects, manipulation by a notorious group, violations of merit Mr. Shaukat Javed Mir has demanded for early reshuffle in cabinet. He recalled that in PPP tenure 2011-16 ministers of the People's Party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Chaudhry Abdul Majeed, strongly demanded the change from had made history by making three medi-



cal colleges with huge amount of Rs10 billion. He urged AJK premier Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq to taking steps for amendments in the Accountability Act for neutral accountability

process in Azad Kashmir, construction of migrant colonies, distribution of platoon, development projects, food department, forestry, public health, education, looting political figures and their After arresting the facilitators and dismissing them through the Special Powers Act, their properties should be confiscated. Shaukat Javed Mir, the founding candidate of the All Parties Alliance,

Shaukat Javed Mir Emphasizing the need to implement the 16-point charter of demand on the seven issues, to get separate constituencies in Wadi Lipa on humanitarian grounds, keeping in mind the specific border geographical and climatic conditions and the sacrifices of human lives in the

past. Federal Government and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir, Leader of Muslim League-N Mian Nawaz Sharif, Chairman of People's Party, Fakhar Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chief of Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the entire political leadership of Azad Kashmir, Hurriyat Conference, students, lawyers, traders, journalistic organizations. The political forces should agree on a one-point agenda to play their role in sustaining the pleasure of Allah and the welfare of humanity. He has written the history of the passions of Lipa Valley. Can't force. Now Lipa Valley circle and tunnel project construction mega projects will continue and this is not charity or aid.

Azad Kashmir to promote information technology to help create jobs: Dr. Khalid Rafique

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Director General IT Board Azad Jammu and Kashmir Dr. Khalid Rafique has said that the government is committed to provide employment and self-reliance to the youth at their doorsteps through the promotion of information technology and computer sciences across the state under the dynamic leadership of Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq. All the resources and facilities are being provided for the development of IT in the state. Currently, computer education is being given at

the school level across the state, while the first IT park has been established in Mirpur, which will be inaugurated soon.

He was addressing a one-day seminar organized by United Nations Development Organization UNDP and Information Technology Board Azad Jammu and Kashmir at Mirpur University of Science and Technology on the topic of Digital Kashmir Policy. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Yasir Riaz, SSP Kamran Ali and many other officers spoke.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General Yasir Mahmood, Chair-

man District Council Raja Naveed Akhtar Goga, President Chamber of Commerce and Industries Syed Sabir Hussain Shah, Former President Chamber of Commerce and Industries Faisal Manzoor, President Anjuman e Tajran Sohail Shuja Mujahid, Director Planning MDA Mirza were present in the ceremony. Kaleem Ahmed, Director MDHA Yasir Bashir, District Education Officer Niswan Farrukh Owais, Executive Member Chamber of Commerce Abid Hussain, Senior Vice President Chaudhry Kashif Nazir, Deputy Drug Controller Dr. Zaheer Iqbal, Coordinator Ali Akhtar Awan,

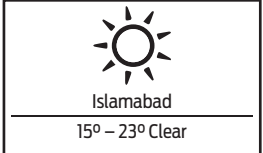
Department of Education Zahra Basharat, Project Manager Muhammad Rasheed, Database Administrator Higher Education College Dr. Farrukh Shehzad Ahmed, Riyazuddin Ahmed, Admin Allied Officer Schools Hamza Idris, MT Officer Bank of AJ Sir Mud Mehmood, Additional Director Ali Asghar, SCO Mian Osama, Beacon Samira Tanveer of House School, District Education Officer Saba Owais, Chairman Moboride Fahad Raja, Director Moboride Umar Mir, Cor deanitor IT Board Ali Shahryar Abbasi, Former President Chamber of Commerce and Indus-

try Ghulam Murtaza, Lecturer Saud Ijaz Khan, and Chief Instructor A. G. K. Tayota Muhammad Naseem Khan and others participated.

Deputy Commissioner Yasir Riaz emphasized on the establishment of digital policy in the institutions that due to the digital policy in the developed countries of the world, the performance of the institutions there is very satisfactory, but the institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir have a traditional system due to which Interruption and access to immediate information is also difficult compared to digital system where complete

information can be obtained immediately from a moment.

Addressing the meeting, Director General IT Board Dr. Khalid Rafiq also informed the participants about the efficiency of the institution and e-governance initiatives in the state, the formation and effectiveness of digital policy and the useful suggestions presented by him. Welcome. He said that useful suggestions were given by all the participants in the seminar and it was felt that an IT excellence center and software technology park should be established in Azad Kashmir as soon as possible.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:43 am
Zohr	12:19 pm
Asr	3:51 pm
Maghrib	5:29 pm
Isha	6:56 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
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

Ending the Rising Inflation and Economic Crisis is our First Priority: Barrister Ali Tareen



Quaratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Barrister Ali Khan Tareen the son of Jahangir Khan Tareen, the head of the Istahkam Pakistan Party IPP and the candidate of NA 149, has said that ending the rising inflation and economic crisis is our first priority. Multan is our home. If the mandate is given, they will ensure the steps for the development and prosperity of the constituency in the real sense. On the instructions of Quaid Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, we are standing by the side of NA-149 candidate Jahangir Tareen and our election campaign is also going on for his success. During the Women Workers Convention, Ali Khan Tareen further said that after Lodhran, Multan is also our home and with the love given by the people of Multan, on February 8th, my father Jahangir Tareen should succeed with a heavy mandate so that he can succeed, being able to serve the people of this constituency, we will only play an important role in providing employment to the unemployed youth of this constituency, but also education and Health. He will play a practical role in solving other problems including street lights while the League leaders have assured him that they are standing by his side and are also running his election campaign.

Jamal Shah shares plan of Second CPEC Cultural Caravan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah, on Tuesday held a meeting with Ambassadors of Central Asian States Russia and China to discuss the initial plan of second 'CPEC Cultural Caravan 2024,' aimed at strengthening cultural bonds between Pakistan, China, Russia and the Central Asian States.

The high level meeting held here at Pakistan National Council of the Arts attended by Ambassador of Russia to Pakistan His Excellency Albert Khorev, Embassy of China Counselor Bao Zhong, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan H. E. Mr. Atajan Movlamov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H. E. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan H. E. Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich, Ambassador of Uzbekistan H. E. Aybek Arif Usmanov and Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan H. E. Khazar Farhadov.

Federal Secretary National

Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed, Advisor National Heritage and Culture Muhammad Kashif Irshad, Director General PNCA Ayuob Jamali, Executive Director Lok Virsa Uzair Khan and Chairperson Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Dr Najeeba Arif were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the diplomats, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah apprised that his ministry plans to organize a second China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Cultural Caravan aimed at promoting economic ties and strengthening cultural bonds between Pakistan, China and the Central Asian States.

Jamal Shah said that CPEC Cultural Caravan will commence its journey from Xi'an, China, and traverse through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, UAE, Gwadar, Karachi, ultimately concluding in Islamabad.

"Cultural Caravan to Docu-



ment Diverse Lives on CPEC, Silk Route" he added.

He said that the idea is this that cultural excursion under

the title 'CPEC Cultural Caravan 2024' will be composed of diverse groups of Pakistani, Chinese and Central Asian artists, musicians,

photographers, anthropologists, writers and filmmakers.

The caravan will bring together a diverse group of artists, musi-

cians, photographers, anthropologists, writers, and filmmakers from Pakistan, China, and Central Asia.

In their separate remarks, the Ambassadors commended the idea of joint CPEC cultural caravan. They said that it was very important to promote people to people contacts by organizing such mega cultural activities. They assured full support in convening this important event and agreed to continue work on the overall plan of Cultural Caravan 2024.

Earlier, Secretary National Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed in her welcome note, highlighted the importance of CPEC cultural caravan. The meeting was moderated by Advisor National Heritage and Culture Muhammad Kashif Irshad.

A documentary showcasing first CPEC Cultural Caravan work of professional photographers and artists of Pakistan and China was also screened.

The meeting concluded with flute performance by Salman Adil.

Preparation of election

ISLAMABAD: People walk past banners of political parties' candidates on street light poles on a green belt in the Federal Capital, ahead of the country's general elections 2024.



Photo: Online

National Foods Limited

Leading the Change in Education, Literacy, and Women Empowerment on International Day of Education

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On International Day of Education celebrated across the world annually on 24th January 2024, National Foods Limited proudly reaffirms its steadfast commitment to transformative education, literacy, and women empowerment through two impactful projects rooted in its rich history and visionary leadership.

National Foods Limited celebrates a two-decade partnership with The Citizens Foundation (TCF) in the Aagahi Adult Literacy Program. Pioneered under the guidance of the late Mr. Abdul Majeed, Co-Founder of National Foods, and TCF Co-Founders, Mr. Ahsan Saleem and Mr. Ateed Riaz,



this program has changed the lives of countless individuals. In January 2024, the partnership was strengthened through a strategic MoU signing, amplifying the program's impact on communities across Pakistan.

Mr. Zahid Majeed, Chairperson at National Foods Limited, emphasized the program's

transformative impact, stating: "Aagahi is not just a literacy initiative; it's a catalyst for change. We believe in empowering women with the tools they need to shape their lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities."

The Aagahi Adult Literacy Program embodies National

Foods Limited's commitment to fostering lasting change, breaking barriers, and creating a more inclusive and literate society. Along with the Aagahi program, National Foods Limited continues its impactful journey in education with the School Khana Program in collaboration with Allah Waley Trust. By onboarding a government primary school in Jaranwala, Faisalabad, and sustaining the program in Bhattapind, Lahore, the company addresses the critical issue of child hunger in schools. Approximately 650 primary school children will receive nutritious meals, promoting better health, improved performance in classrooms, and increased retention rates.

Pakistan's ambassador meets Vice President EU Parliament in Brussels

Spokesman report

ISLAMABAD:

Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Anna Baloch on Tuesday met Vice-President of the European Parliament and the Rapporteur Heidi Hautala in Brussels. During the meeting they discussed pathways to enhance trade relations between Pakistan and the EU.

They also agreed to strengthen parliamentary linkages between the two sides.



Awareness helps treating over 100 Children with Autism

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Major

General (R) Dr. Suhaib Ahmed, HI(M) has said as a chief guest in a regular meeting of Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan held here in Islamabad. During his detailed and comprehensive presentation on Autism and subsequently address to the audience, Major General (R) Dr. Suhaib Ahmed shared personal insights, emphasizing the need for increased awareness for those living with Autism. He highlighted that as a community, it is our collective responsibility to create an environment where individuals with Autism feel understood, accepted, and supported. By raising awareness and fostering inclusivity, we can make a real difference in the lives of those affected by Autism, he added.

Major General (R) Dr. Suhaib Ahmed, HI(M) has brought to light that in era of 90s there was no medical facility specially in public sector hospitals of Pakistan to address Autism and provide facilities to individuals with Autism. This is what he committed to make a difference; and took the initiative to establish the Autism Society, a pioneer organization dedicated to providing comprehensive care and support for those affected by Autism. Over the past decade, the society has made remarkable strides, becoming a beacon of hope for families grappling with the challenges of Autism.

Since its inception, the Autism Society of Pakistan has grown exponentially, and today, they proudly announce that they are currently treating over 100 children affected by Autism and around 70 children have been sent back to main stream schools and colleges after providing them treatment. He also informed the audience that apart from environment parent's role is also very crucial for kids with Autism and there is an equal need to provide training to parents of Autism children which can play an important role in addressing the burning issue. At the end the audience applauded the efforts of The Autism Society of Pakistan and especially the personal attributes of Dr. Suhaib Ahmed in addressing this important issue and giving hope to affected children.



24 January: International Day of Education

Education is a human right, a public good and a public responsibility. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as International Day of Education, in celebration of the role of education for peace and development.

Without inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind.

Today, 250 million children and youth are out of school, and 763 million adults are illiterate. Their right to education is being violated and it is unacceptable. It's time to transform education.

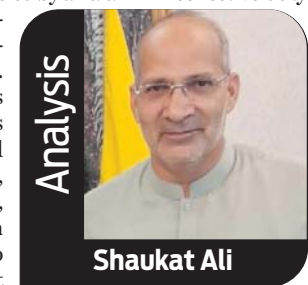
UNESCO would like to dedicate the fifth edition of this International Day to all the girls and women in Afghanistan, who have been denied their right to learn, study and teach. The Organization condemns this serious attack on

human dignity and on the fundamental right to education.

The sixth International Day of Education will be celebrated on 24 January 2024 under the theme "learning for lasting peace". The world is seeing a surge of violent conflicts paralleled by an alarming rise of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and hate speech. The impact of this violence transcends any boundary based on geography, gender, race, religion, politics, offline and online. An active commitment to peace is more urgent today than ever: Education is central to this endeavor, as underlined by the UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development. Learning for peace must be transformative, and help empower learners with the necessary knowledge, values, attitudes and

skills and behaviours to become agents of peace in their communities.

The accelerated spread of hate speech is a threat to all communities. Our best defense is education, which must be at the heart of any peace efforts. It is our collective duty to empower learners of all ages to deconstruct hate speech, and lay the foundations for inclusive, democratic and human-rights respecting societies. To succeed, we need to better train and support teachers who are on the front lines in overcoming this



Shaukat Ali

phenomenon.

Audrey Azoulay UNESCO Director-General On January 24, UNESCO will organize a one-day online training for several thousand teachers from around the world on the deconstruction of hate speech, which will give them the tools to better spot, tackle and prevent hate

speech incidents. This training is part of UNESCO's action to help its Member States and education professionals address hate speech through education. The same day at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, UNESCO will bring together Ministers, education leaders, and educators from around the globe to discuss the central role of education in achieving sustainable global peace. In November 2023, UNESCO's 194 Member States adopted a new recommendation which establishes a global framework in this area.

Recent explosion of hate speech Hateful messages and conspiracy theories that target and scapegoat specific communities have become increasingly amplified on social media and other online platforms. A recent UNESCO/IPSOS survey conducted in 16 countries revealed that 67% of internet users reported had encountered online hate speech and that 85% were concerned about the impact and influence of disinformation on their fellow citizens, view-

ing it as a real threat which can destabilize societies.

Following the 7 October 2023 Hamas terrorist attack against Israeli civilians, the Anti-Defamation League found a 337% increase of antisemitic incidents in the USA, 320% increase in Germany, 961% increase in Brazil in comparison to the previous year; and an increase of 818% compared to the past 3 years in the Netherlands. The UK-based Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) also found a 43-fold increase in the volume of anti-Muslim discourses on YouTube comparing the four days before and after the attack.

New standard-setting instrument on education for lasting peace

Education offers multiple opportunities to address the root causes of hate speech and sensitize learners of all ages to its forms and consequences online and offline. This includes equipping learners with the skills to recognize and respond to hate and injustice, preparing them to respect the value of diversity

and human rights, and teaching them to recognize the difference between hate speech and freedom of expression.

UNESCO's General Conference recently revised its Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development with this goal. It is the only global standard-setting instrument that lays out how education can bring about lasting peace and foster human development. This instrument will shape education systems and policies in the next decades, from laws and policies to curricula development, teaching practices, learning environments and assessments.

In 2023 UNESCO published the guide "Addressing hate speech through education" to help decision-makers strengthen their public policies in this area. The Organization is also stepping up its efforts to promote anti-racist guidelines and address racism in textbooks as well as a global initiative to combat antisemitism in and through education.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**
 (mszk786@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

Elections 2024-lofty promises hollow economy... - I

The elections-2024 are unfolding in a landscape marked by intense competition and heightened political rhetoric. Major parties are engaging in a familiar cycle of blame games and lofty promises, often overlooking the complex economic and financial situation of the country. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has adopted a strategy that focuses on criticizing its main rival, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), branding it as responsible for the May-9 incident. Interestingly, PML-N appears to be distancing itself from its recent governance period from April 2022 to August 2023, instead choosing to spotlight the successes of its previous three tenures. The party argues that had its past governments not been disrupted, Pakistan might have achieved greater economic and financial stability and vow that a return to power would enable the party to reconnect with its past accomplishments and transform Pakistan's future.

The PML-N's manifesto for the February 2024 elections, set to be officially released on January 27th, is expected to address a range of critical issues across various sectors including combating inflation, stabilizing Pakistani rupee, attracting foreign investment, and enhancing export capabilities. It promises to build roads, railways, power projects, and water management, improving seed quality, enhancing irrigation systems, and increasing access to agricultural loans. It promises to provide relief to underprivileged communities, through targeted subsidies and social safety net programs, improving health-

care and education, empowering youth and women, including programs to boost employment and workforce participation. On the national security front, the PML-N is expected to reaffirm its commitment to combating terrorism and extremism and outline steps to improve diplomatic relations with neighboring countries, including India.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is strategically positioning itself against its key political rival, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). PPP's campaign focuses heavily on countering Nawaz Sharif, in his bid for a fourth term as Prime Minister. PPP's chairman asserts a significant role in the ouster of the PTI government and targets PML(N) for alleged injustices against women, promising to rectify these upon coming to power.

The PPP manifesto articulates a 10-point welfare agenda aimed at addressing social welfare, poverty, unemployment, and inflation. This includes promises to double the real income of wage earners, provide free solar energy to the poor, ensure education and healthcare for all, build housing for flood affectees and the impoverished, expand welfare schemes, and support farmers and laborers. The manifesto also highlights youth empowerment and the 'Bhook Mitao Programme'.

The political landscape for PTI, now led by Barrister Gohar Mohammad Khan, is notably challenging. With its

founder Imran Khan incarcerated for over six months, the party faces significant internal strife, manifesting in splits like the Istehkam Pakistan Party (IPP) and PTI Patriots. The situation is compounded by the legal troubles of many of its leaders, with some in jail, others in hiding, or having abandoned politics altogether. Lately it lost its iconic "BAT" election symbol is a symbolic setback.

Despite these challenges, PTI is envisioning a prosperous Pakistan where justice, self-esteem, and mutual respect prevail. The party aspires to build a just society, emphasizing Pakistan's untapped potential due to past leadership failures. PTI's dream is for Pakistan to be self-reliant, respected globally, and for its justice system to be fair and impartial, serving all citizens equally. Its manifesto reflects a commitment to governance reforms, including enhancing government accountability, empowering local governance, depoliticizing the police force, reforming the criminal justice system, and introducing E-Governance and legislative reforms. These initiatives aim to improve public service delivery and ensure press freedom, highlighting PTI's focus on structural changes over immediate financial gains.

The Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), officially registered in October 2023, presents a distinct political narrative in Pakistan's political arena. The party, emerging in a context marked by allegations of being orchestrated by the govern-

ment of Shahbaz Sharif and supported by the interim government, has faced controversies regarding the wealth of its top leaders. Despite these challenges, the IPP crafted a comprehensive manifesto emphasizing political and economic reforms aimed at bridging societal divisions.

The party, adopting the slogan "Tameer, Taraqqi, Khushhali" (Development, Progress, Prosperity), aims to embody the principles of Quaid-e-Azam and seeks to reform Pakistan's political landscape. Key manifesto commitments include setting a minimum labor salary of Rs 50,000 with mandatory insurance, providing free electricity up to 300 units, and granting ownership rights in "Kachi Abadis." It promises low-cost housing solutions, integrating madrasa graduates into mainstream society. It promises half-priced petrol for motorcyclists and free air-conditioned transport for seniors, women, and students besides offering interest-free loans for youth and women, and the establishment of new educational and technical institutions.

The election landscape in Pakistan is witnessing a trend where various political parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, PTIP, MQM, and JUI, are presenting manifestos filled with ambitious and grandiose promises. These manifestos seem to paint an overly optimistic picture of the country's economic and social capabilities. They suggest that upon their election, the complexities and challenges currently facing Pakistan will be swiftly resolved, almost miraculously transforming the nation's fortunes.

To be continued



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

Mature Response on Iranian Aggression - II

The historical, cultural, and geopolitical ties between Pakistan and Iran have deep roots spanning centuries. Situated in South Asia and the Middle East respectively, both nations share commonalities in language, religion, and historical influences. The history of Pak-Iran relations has witnessed periods of collaboration, cooperation,

During the Mughal era in the Indian subcontinent (16th to 19th centuries), the Mughal Empire and the Safavid Empire in Iran maintained diplomatic and trade relations. The Mughals, originating from Central Asian Turkic roots, engaged in cultural and artistic exchanges with the Safavids, contributing to the development of a syncretic Indo-Persian culture. Nevertheless, occasional tensions arose due to regional rivalries. The modern era witnessed the establishment of Pakistan and Iran as sovereign nations in 1947 and 1979, respectively. Bilateral relations between the two nations have experienced periods of cooperation and challenges. Both countries, sharing commonalities as Muslim-majority nations with a strong commitment to their cultural heritage, collaborated in the late 20th century on various strategic fronts.

Pakistan and Iran played key roles in the creation of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 1985, a regional economic forum aimed at fostering economic development and integration. Additionally, the two nations cooperated on energy projects, such as the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline, and engaged in joint efforts to enhance regional stability. Despite the historical and cultural ties, Pak-Iran relations have faced challenges over the years. Issues such as border security concerns, sectarian tensions, and external pressures have at times strained the relationship. However, both nations have consistently expressed their commitment to resolving disputes through diplomatic channels and strengthening cooperation.

To be continued

Broken Promises, eroding trust and Disillusionment in Politics - I

In recent years, there has been a growing trend of distrust in politicians across the globe. Many people feel that politicians are lying, out of touch with their constituents, and only interested in their own agenda. Broken promises and disillusionment have all played a role in this growing sense of distrust. However, the reasons behind this trend are complex and multifaceted. In this article we will delve deeper into this issue, exploring the reasons behind the erosion of trust in politicians. You will encounter many different viewpoints and a lot of hot air when you begin to discuss politics, especially in today's democratic society. Regardless, there is a common theme: the government or at least one group cannot be trusted. Mistrust and politics seem to go hand in hand, so why?

Distrust in politicians has become a deeply ingrained sentiment in societies worldwide. From the local level to the highest echelons of government, politicians often face skepticism and disbelief from their constituents. This pervasive issue has far-reaching consequences, impacting the very foundation of democratic systems and the relationship between citizens and their elected representatives.

In this article we will delve deeper into the reasons behind the prevalent issue of distrust in politicians. By examining the impact of broken promises, corruption scandals, media influence, and the growing divide between politicians and the public, we hope to shed light on this complex issue. Only by understanding the root causes can

we begin to address and rebuild trust in our political systems, fostering a healthier and more engaged relationship between citizens and their elected representatives.

The broken promises epidemic has become an all too familiar occurrence in the realm of politics. Time and time again, politicians make grandiose pledges and commitments during their campaigns, only to fall short on delivering once they are in power. This phenomenon has significantly contributed to the growing distrust and disillusionment among the general public towards politicians.

One notable example of broken promises can be seen in the healthcare sector. Numerous politicians have vowed to provide affordable and accessible healthcare for all citizens, promising to address the rising costs and ensure quality care. However, as time goes by, these promises often fade into the background, leaving the public grappling with skyrocketing insurance premiums, limited coverage options, and inadequate healthcare services.

Another area where broken promises have had a profound impact is in economic policies. Politicians frequently promise to create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and improve the standard of living for the working class. However, in many cases, these promises remain unfulfilled, leaving

communities struggling with stagnant wages, unemployment, and a widening wealth gap.

The role of corruption in eroding trust

Corruption plays a significant role in eroding trust in politicians. When individuals enter public office with the promise of serving the best interests of their constituents, any indication of corruption or unethical behaviour shatters the trust that citizens have placed in them.

One of the main reasons corruption erodes trust is due to the fact that it undermines the very foundations of democracy. When politicians engage in corrupt practices such as bribery, nepotism, or embezzlement, it creates a sense of injustice and inequality among the public. It fosters the perception that those in power are only concerned with personal gain, rather than the welfare of the people they are meant to represent.

Public perception and media influence

In today's digital age, where news travels at the speed of light, public perception and media influence play a crucial role in shaping how people view politicians. It's no secret that negative news tends to grab more attention and dominate headlines. Scandals, corruption allegations, and broken promises often make for sensational stories that capture the public's interest.

To be continued

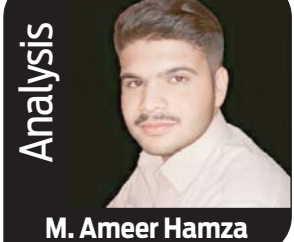
Analysis



Abdul Basit Alvi

The historical ties between the populations inhabiting the regions that now make up Pakistan and Iran can be traced back to ancient times. Both areas boast a rich history of trade, cultural exchanges, and shared influences from empires like the Persian Achaemenids and the Indus Valley Civilization. The Silk Road, an ancient network of trade routes, facilitated extensive interaction between the people of these two regions, fostering cultural and economic ties. The advent of Islam in the 7th century brought a new dimension to the region through Arab conquests. The spread of Islam played a crucial role in connecting the people of present-day Pakistan and Iran under a common religious identity. Subsequent Islamic empires, including the Abbasids and the Umayyads, further solidified these religious and cultural bonds.

Analysis



M. Ameer Hamza

Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the People's Republic of China in a New Era

Madina Aripova

On January 23-25 of this year, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev will pay a state visit to the People's Republic of China, which, will undoubtedly be of high significance and will give a new impetus to the expansion and deepening of Uzbek-Chinese cooperation.

At present, despite geopolitical tensions and growing instability centers in the world, the relations between Uzbekistan and China are experiencing the best stage in their development, demonstrating an excellent model of bilateral interaction.

Promotion of Comprehensive Political Dialogue

For more than 30 years, Uzbekistan and China have been continuously strengthening political mutual trust and developing bilateral relations based on the principles of equality, friendship, good-neighborliness, mutual support, mutual benefit, respect and consideration of each other's interests.

With the election of Shavkat Mirziyoyev as President of Uzbekistan, Uzbek-Chinese interaction has entered a trajectory of more dynamic development. This is facilitated by both regular political dialogue at the highest level and the existing friendly and trusting relations between the leaders of the two countries.

Thanks to the political will and efforts of the heads of state, in September 2022, bilateral relations were raised to the level of "comprehensive strategic partnership in a new era," which reflects the similarity of their views and geopolitical priorities, the mutual desire to take cooperation to a higher level and fill it with new content.

Since 2017, 3 telephone conversations and 8 meetings have taken place. Chinese President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to Uzbekistan in 2022. In turn, the leader of Uzbekistan visited China 5 times (in 2017, 2019, 2022, 2023).

As a result of mutual state visits over the past two years, about 60 documents have been signed, agreements have been reached on the implementation of trade contracts and investment agreements worth more than 40 billion dollars.

Active dialogue supported at the intergovernmental, interparliamentary, and interdepartmental levels also plays a key role in deepening multifaceted interaction.

Since 2011, meetings of the Uzbek-Chinese Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee, which includes 7 specialized subcommittees, have been held. An agreement has been reached in 2022 on the creation of a subcommittee on poverty reduction.

Since 2017, the Inter-Parliamentary Group on Cooperation between the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the National People's Congress has been operating, which helps to intensify mutual visits of parliamentary delegations and conduct joint events to exchange experience in the field of rule-making. In addition, political consultations are held on a regular basis at the level of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries.

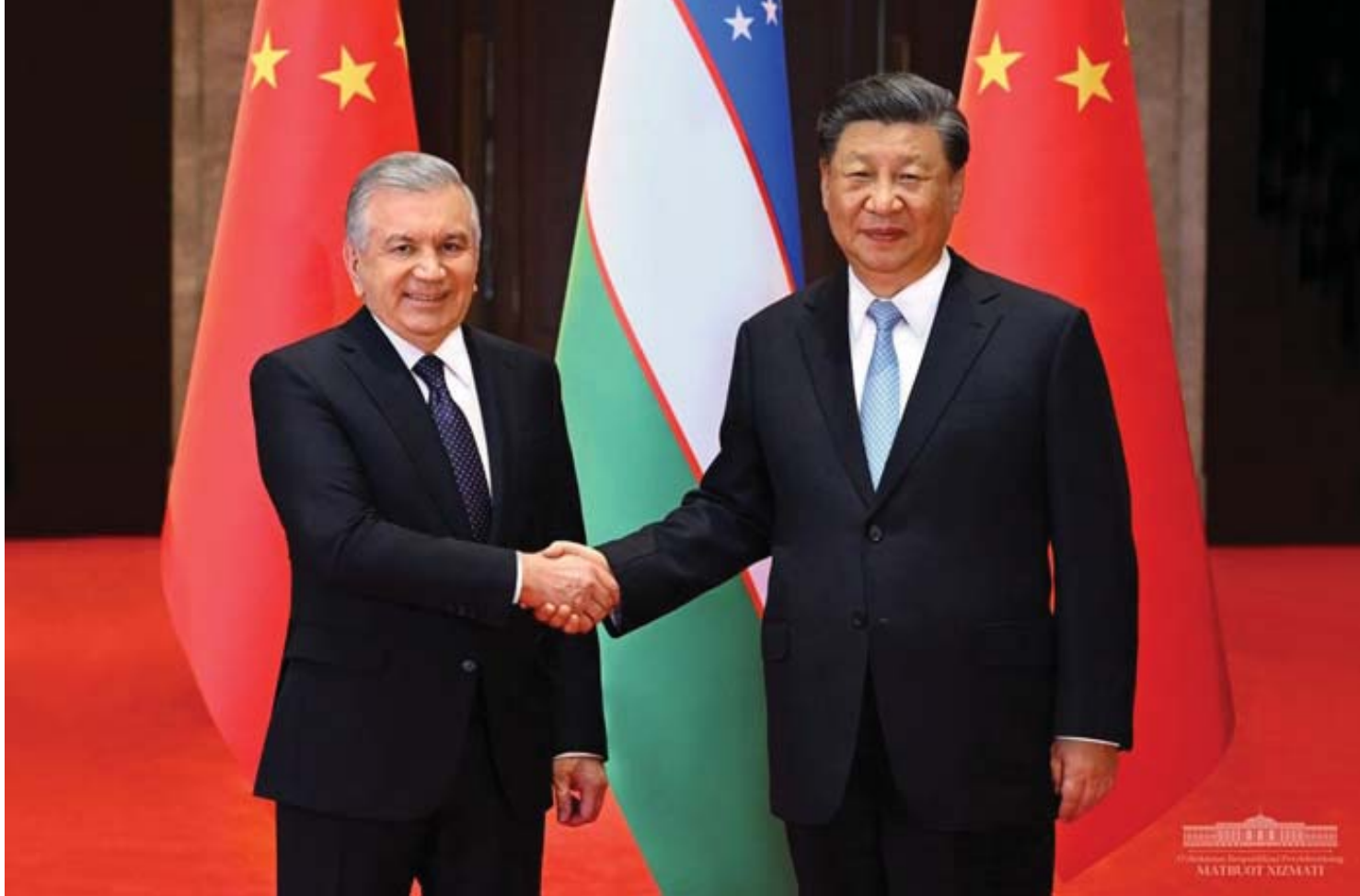
In November 2023, the first Strategic Dialogue between the foreign ministers of the two countries was launched in Beijing, which became a new mechanism for the implementation of agreements reached at the highest level.

At the same time, interregional exchanges have been noticeably intensified. Last year, delegations from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Shaanxi, Shandong, Jiangsu and Jiangxi provinces visited Uzbekistan. As a result of the visits, more than 100 investment contracts and agreements worth a total of \$3.5 billion were signed. A number of agreements on establishing partnership relations between cities and regions of Uzbekistan and cities and provinces of China have also been signed.

Over the years of cooperation, a solid legal framework of over 285 documents has been created, covering virtually all areas of interstate relations. To date, the Program for the Development of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in a New Era for 2023-2027, as well as the Program for the Development of Trade, Economic and Investment Cooperation between China and Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 are being implemented.

In addition to the bilateral agenda, China and Uzbekistan have significantly enhanced coordination within regional and international organizations such as the UN, SCO, CICA, BRICS Plus and others. The two sides provide each other with mutual support, demonstrating proximity and similarity of positions on the most pressing global and regional issues.

Beijing has supported a number of resolutions initiated by Uzbekistan at the UN in recent years. Tashkent, in



turn, highly appreciates and supports the initiatives promoted by China on global development, global security and global civilization, which are of key importance for the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring peace and security, and strengthening inter-civilizational dialogue.

To date, the Central Asia-China format at the level of heads of state has become a new platform for China's interaction with Central Asian countries. As a result of the first face-to-face summit of the heads of state of Central Asia and China, held in May 2023, the Xi'an Declaration was signed, which established the institutional basis for deepening cooperation in the new format.

The interaction of the parties within the framework of China's flagship project "Belt and Road" is of no small importance for the intensification of bilateral cooperation. The leader of our state has already participated three times in the work of the international "Belt and Road" forums held in 2017, 2019 and 2023.

As rightly characterized by our President, speaking at the jubilee third forum dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the initiative: "over the years, the ambitious idea to revitalize the Great Silk Road has gained many supporters and turned into a sought-after, inclusive and open platform of interaction".

At the same time, Uzbekistan's priority areas of cooperation within the framework of this initiative are:

- 1) implementation of transport and logistics projects that increase transit potential and can provide our state with the shortest possible access to world markets;
- 2) realization of investment projects in the sphere of high technologies, providing for the creation of integrated industrial technoparks, scientific and innovation clusters, free and special economic zones for the production of competitive and knowledge-intensive products;
- 3) adaptation to climate change and intensification of cooperation within the framework of the "Green Silk Road", providing for the development of renewable energy sources, water-saving technologies, "smart" agriculture, etc.;
- 4) development of cultural and humanitarian ties by using the huge tourism potential of our republic, as well as strengthening cooperation in education, science, culture and health care.

Expansion of mutually beneficial economic and investment cooperation

The central place in bilateral relations is given to trade, economic and investment cooperation, which in recent years has demonstrated positive dynamics and stable growth.

China has become a leading trade partner and a major investor in Uzbekistan's economy. According to the results of 2022, the volume of bilateral trade amounted to about 9 billion dollars (increased by 20% compared to 2021) and increased almost two times compared to the indicator of 2017.

In January-November 2023, bilateral trade turnover increased by 34% and exceeded 12 billion dollars. In the total volume of Uzbekistan's foreign trade turnover, the share of China amounted to about 20%. At the same time, there is every reason to bring the trade turnover to 20 billion dollars in the next five years.

The basis of Uzbek exports to China are mineral fuels, petroleum products,

copper and copper products, cotton yarn and silk, and plastics. The basis of Uzbek imports from China are machinery and equipment, vehicles, plastics, rubber, and metals. At the same time, most of the imports account for the purchase of high-tech equipment, machine tools and machines necessary to modernize the industrial sector of our country's economy.

It is pleasant to note that with the signing of a package of protocols on phytosanitary requirements in 2018, the nomenclature and volumes of agricultural and food products exported by Uzbekistan to PRC have significantly increased.

Today, Uzbekistan has received permission to export 21 types of such products (mash, dried grapes, cherries, melon, peanuts, pomegranate, sesame, apricots, honey, dried prunes, lemon, beans, dried melon, chicken feet, etc.). For example, exports of mash and dried grapes have increased significantly in recent years. Uzbekistan's share in the total volume of Chinese imports of mash has reached 37%, and in the import of dried grapes—50%.

Since the launch of large-scale reforms and an open foreign economic policy, Chinese investors have demonstrated a steady interest in Uzbekistan, investing heavily in the oil and gas, chemical, telecommunications, hydropower, agriculture, light industry, pharmaceuticals, automotive, and construction materials sectors.

The total volume of Chinese investments in Uzbekistan for 2017-2022 has increased five times, reaching almost 11 billion dollars. Today, we have 2,125 enterprises with Chinese capital participation, which is 15% of the total number of enterprises established with the participation of foreign capital.

A number of large projects have already been implemented with Chinese partners, such as the Kungurd soda plant, the Dehkanabad potash fertilizer plant, the Huaxin Cement Jizzakh and Farg'ona Yasin Qurilish Mollari cement plants, the Navoiyazot joint-stock company complex for the production of polyvinyl chloride, caustic soda and methanol. In 2023, the largest cement plant with a capacity of 3 million tonnes per year was opened in the Samarkand region in partnership with Energy China, and a truck production plant was established in the Andijan region in partnership with the Chinese automobile company FAW.

It is important to note that Chinese investors are actively participating in the creation of joint high-tech industrial parks in our country. A successful example in this direction is the park "Peng Sheng", which was established in 2009 in free economic zone "Jizzak". In this park, together with the Chinese company "ZTE" was built a line for the production of smartphones, were opened factories for the production of fittings, ceramic tiles, sanitary ware and footwear products based on domestic raw materials. Their activity has brought 40-50% of the region's income in foreign currency and created jobs for about 2,000 local people.

In the near future, it is planned to create an Uzbek-Chinese agro-industrial park, an agro-innovation park, and an Uzbek-Chinese biotechnological cluster, which will also contribute to the deepening of bilateral cooperation in the production of high-tech products and the creation of new jobs.

At the same time, the countries are deepening cooperation in the production of new-generation cars based on electric and hybrid engines. In 2023,

relevant agreements were signed with the Chinese companies EXEED and BYD Auto Industry.

In addition, agreements have also been signed on the joint development of technologies and the installation of chargers for electric vehicles. According to the plans, by 2033 70 centralized and 50 thousand decentralized electric filling stations will be built in all regions of our country.

In the context of the global trend towards a transition to "green" development, the implementation of joint projects on the widespread introduction of renewable energy sources (solar, wind and hydroelectric power plants) is an important area of Uzbek-Chinese cooperation.

China is the undisputed global leader in the introduction of renewable energy sources (RES). By the end of 2023, the total installed capacity of green energy in the country's energy balance reached 49.6%. Chinese manufacturers of solar panels, wind turbines, and batteries hold about 70% of the global market share.

Strengthening Uzbek-Chinese interaction in the field of RES implementation will undoubtedly contribute to improving energy security and environmental sustainability of our republic. It will also contribute to a more effective implementation of the "Program on Transition to a Green Economy and Ensuring Green Growth in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030", according to which it is planned to increase the RES capacity in the total energy balance of the country up to 30%.

Chinese companies are already implementing a number of projects for the construction of solar and wind power plants in the Kashkadarya, Bukhara and Andijan regions. Moreover, in May 2023, new agreements were reached on the construction of 11 solar and wind power plants with a total capacity of 4.8 GW at a cost of 4.4 billion dollars. In addition, the Chinese side is actively involved in the preparation of feasibility studies for hydropower construction projects in the Namangan and Tashkent regions.

Another promising area of Uzbek-Chinese partnership is digital development. In the last decade, China has made a great leap in the field of digital innovations, taking the lead in the development of 5G, blockchain, big data, artificial intelligence and e-commerce technologies.

Thanks to the development of e-commerce platforms such as Alibaba, Taobao, AliExpress, China has become a global leader in e-commerce with a total transaction volume of 2 trillion dollars.

Given China's rich experience and success in this area, Uzbekistan is interested in technology transfer and attracting Chinese investments in the development of electronic commerce, digital platforms, creation of centers for processing and storage of big data, and others.

In recent years, the interaction between the two countries in the sphere of e-commerce development has entered a new stage of development. Thus, in September 2022, a permanent national pavilion of Uzbekistan was launched on the Alibaba platform, where more than 100 items of textile, agricultural and food products were placed. In the future, it is planned to open new industry sections and increase the number of product names to 300.

Strengthening cultural and humanitarian ties

Uzbekistan and China pay special attention to the expansion of cultural and humanitarian ties, which contribute to the full rapprochement, deepening mutual understanding and mutual enrichment of the cultures of the two peoples.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his author's article published on the eve of his state visit to Uzbekistan in September 2022, focused on the fact that the Great Silk Road testifies to friendly contacts between our peoples for more than 2000 years. The countries still keep a good memory of such pioneers and envoys of Sino-Uzbek friendship as Zhang Qian, Xuan Zang, Wu Zhu, Seyid Ajal Shamsuddin and others. Such centuries-old Chinese-Uzbek friendship, passed down from generation to generation, still serves as a solid foundation for further strengthening multifaceted cooperation.

The Uzbekistan-China Friendship Society, the China-Central Asia Friendship Society, as well as the Chinese National Cultural Center in Tashkent make a worthy contribution to strengthening mutual understanding between the two peoples.

Cooperation in the fields of education, science, tourism, healthcare, sports, and archaeology is actively developing every year, and exchanges between educational and academic institutions, youth organizations, and the media are strengthening. This is facilitated by regularly held joint conferences, symposiums, exhibitions, tourist fairs, cultural and film days, concerts and festivals.

The year 2023 was busy in terms of holding various joint cultural events. For example, in October, an exhibition of Uzbek historical heritage was organized at the Archaeological Cooperation Exhibition within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative at the Gugun Palace Museum in Beijing. In addition, Chinese Culture Days were held in Uzbekistan.

It is also necessary to emphasize the growing interest among the youth of the two countries in mutual language learning. For example, two Chinese universities have opened departments for the study of the Uzbek language, and a Center for Uzbek Language and Culture has been established. In Uzbekistan, Chinese is taught in six universities of the country.

At the same time, the basic university specializing in the training of Sinologists is the Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, where a separate faculty of Chinese Studies has been opened in the following three areas: "Chinese Language and Literature", "Politics, History and International Relations of the People's Republic of China" and "Chinese Economy". The entire teaching staff of the faculty is trained and regularly improves their qualifications at prestigious universities in China.

The activities of the Confucius Institutes opened in Tashkent and Samarkand make a great contribution to the study of the Chinese language and the popularization of Chinese culture. It is important to note that China signed the first agreement on the opening of the Confucius Institute in Central Asia with Uzbekistan in 2004.

As we know, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the opening of the first Confucius institutes in the world. In this regard, the academic circles of Uzbekistan and China could consider the possibility of holding a joint scientific and practical conference in Tashkent dedicated to the legacy of Confucius.

Cooperation between the countries in the field of tourism is also developing steadily. Uzbeks and Chinese are interested in the common history of the two ancient Eastern civilizations, which were connected by Great Silk Road, rich historical and cultural heritage and unique ancient architectural monuments located on the territory of the states, which serves as the basis for the intensification of tourist exchanges.

Since 2010, Uzbekistan has been granted the status of a tourist country for group travel of Chinese citizens, and since 2021, a 10-day visa-free regime has been in effect for residents of the People's Republic of China.

In addition, a lot of work is being done to popularize the Uzbek tourism brand in the territory of the People's Republic of China. In particular, study tours to Uzbekistan have been organized for popular Chinese media and journalists, and videos about Uzbekistan are being broadcast on Chinese channels.

Thanks to the measures taken, the flow of Chinese tourists to Uzbekistan has significantly increased in recent years. At the end of last year, their number exceeded 40 thousand people.

Thanks to the measures taken, the flow of Chinese tourists to Uzbekistan has increased significantly in recent years. By the end of last year, their number exceeded 40 thousand people.

In addition, the number of flights between the countries is increasing. Currently, three airlines "Uzbekistan Airways", "China Southern Airlines" and "Looong Air" carry out 11 flights per week between the cities of Uzbekistan and China (Urumqi, Beijing, Guangzhou, Xi'an, Chengdu).

In general, the high dynamics of development of the entire spectrum of Uzbek-Chinese relations observed today gives a clear reason to assert that this trend will grow and gain new momentum. However, despite the successes achieved, bilateral cooperation has a great untapped potential that needs to be explored and used for the benefit of the peoples of the two States.

The countries need to continue searching for new "points of growth" in bilateral interaction by intensifying cooperation in the following areas:

First, strengthening political dialog. Against the background of ongoing geopolitical turbulence and growing instability in the world, strengthening strategic mutual trust and dialog between the countries, both at the bilateral level and within the framework of regional and global structures, will contribute to strengthening common positions and promoting the interests of the two countries in the international arena;

Second, expansion of trade, economic and investment interaction. In particular, by strengthening industrial cooperation, balanced growth of trade turnover, attracting Chinese investments in high-tech sectors of Uzbekistan's economy for the production of high value-added products, as well as creating joint production facilities for the cultivation and processing of agricultural products;

Third, strengthening cooperation in the development of transport and logistics interconnectivity. Under current conditions, it is important for the countries to strengthen cooperation in building a multivariate system of transportation and logistics routes that will facilitate access to new export markets.

In this context, the implementation of China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan, Termez-Mazari-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railways and other alternative routes is of particular importance;

Fourth, the intensification of cooperation on the transition to "green" development. Further exchange of experience and attraction of Chinese investments in the field of alternative energy development, introduction of modern resource-saving, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly technologies in Uzbekistan will play an important role in this direction;

Fifth, deepening cultural and humanitarian ties. In particular, by expanding interaction in the spheres of culture, science, education and tourism. For example, in order to increase mutual tourist exchanges, the countries need to work out issues related to the reduction of visa restrictions, and to expand cooperation in education, it is important to accelerate the launch of double degree programs between leading universities of China and Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the upcoming high-level contacts will undoubtedly contribute to bringing the bilateral interaction to a higher level, strengthen the bonds of traditional friendship and good-neighborliness, as well as identify new promising areas of multifaceted strategic partnership.

Writer is Chief Research Fellow at the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
64,454.22	63,939.41
Day's High	Day's Low
64,658.17	63,549.60
Index Value	Change
21,256,927,967	+514.81
Percentage	Time
+0.81%	19 Jan, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,461.93	+2.84
Percentage	Time
+0.038%	23 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
37,827.97	-173.84
Percentage	Time
-0.46%	23 Jan, 12:34 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
36,517.57	-29.38
Percentage	Time
-0.080%	23 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182	183.8
Bahrain Dinar	744.69	752.69
Canadian Dollar	205	207
China Yuan	39.32	39.72
Danish Krone	40.88	41.28
Euro	305.5	308.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.79	36.14
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.02	2.11
Kuwaiti Dinar	910.01	919.01
Malaysian Ringgit	59.32	59.92
New Zealand \$	170.83	172.83
Norwegians Krone	26.7	27
Omani Riyal	727.32	735.32
Qatari Riyal	76.87	77.57
Saudi Riyal	74.45	75.2
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	26.75	27.05
Swiss Franc	322.33	324.83
Thai Bhat	7.87	8.02
U. A.E Dirham	76.5	77.3
UK Pound Sterling	357	360
US Dollar	279	281

SCCI welcomes reopening of Torkham border

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Tuesday welcomed the reopening of the Torkham border for trade after successful Pak-Afghan talks and said that bilateral trade will be promoted after this important development.

In a joint statement issued here, President SCCI Fuad Ishaq and senior vice President Sanaullah Khan and vice President, Ijaz Khan Afridi said the opening of the Torkham border will not only promote mutual trade but also address difficulties faced by the traders and exporters owing to the closure of the border since the last 10 days.

Decision to completely restore of Pak-Iran diplomatic relations lauded

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Iftikhar Khan, advisor to the President of the FPCCI, expressed his admiration on Tuesday for the decision made by the leadership of Pakistan and Iran to completely restore diplomatic relations between the two brotherly countries.

Iftikhar Khan said that within the next few days, the ambassadors of both countries will report back to their respective capitals of Tehran and Islamabad.

Moreover, both nations will work to improve their cooperation and close coordination about counterterrorism and other issues that are of mutual importance, he informed.

In a statement issued here today, the business leader said that this action on the part of leadership of both the countries is a commendable demonstration of the amount of political maturity that the leadership of both countries possesses.

He went on to say that tensions were having

a detrimental effect on both nations, that both economies were experiencing hardship, and that millions of people who relied on trade over the border were concerned.

Iftikhar Khan stated that millions of individuals who are involved in the trade between the two countries have finally been able to exhale a sigh of relief and that the prices of things that have increased as a result of tensions are gradually decreasing after having increased.

According to him, the two countries that are geographically close to one another have maintained strong relations for generations, and tensions were not in anyone's best interest because they will have an impact on the entire region in addition to the two countries.

Iran imports grain, fruit, citrus, and a few other products from Pakistan, whereas Pakistan imports petrol, LPG, leather, plastic, tiles, iron, edible oil, medicine, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and a wide variety of other items from Iran.

It may be recalled that following Tehran's



strikes within Pakistan's Panjur, Balochistan,

which targeted what Tehran characterised as the "headquarters" of the militant group Jaish al-Adl, which is responsible for terror acts inside Iran tensions between the two neighbouring nations rose.

The attack prompted Islamabad to launch a series of strikes inside Iranian territory in less than forty-eight hours, targeting "hide-outs" used by terrorist organisations, specifically the Balochistan Liberation Army and the Balochistan Liberation Front in the province of Sistan-Balochistan.

However, things soon improved at a rapid pace because of the positive attitude of the leaders of both countries.

He also praised the role of China and other friendly countries that have also played a very important role in diffusing tensions through back-channel diplomacy, he said.

Iftikhar Khan said that neither nation should permit the elements that are active in the border regions to come into contact with one another in a brotherly manner.

Golden orange

ISLAMABAD: Visitors look Kinnow during Orange Festival, at COMSTech in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Making 2024 a pivotal year for automotive sector-expert-with localization

Mashood Khan, Auto Sector Expert and Director of Mehran Commercial Enterprises, supports the idea of localisation, stressing its role in future-proofing businesses and aligning with global trends toward sustainability. Khan believes that making 2024 a pivotal year for the automotive sector, centred on localisation, will not only insulate the industry from external shocks but also position it as a significant player in the international market.

"In embracing localisation, we not only future-proof our businesses but also align with the global shift towards sustainable and resilient practices.

Let's make 2024 a defining chapter for the automotive sector—a year where localisation becomes the bedrock of our industry's sustainability," asserted Khan.

He underscored that localisation is more than just production—it involves creating cost-effective solutions that resonate with consumers. By reducing dependency on imported components, the industry can navigate economic fluctuations, ensuring stable and reasonable prices. Moreover, he contends that localisation strengthens the industry's capacity to weather global disruptions and contribute to the development of a robust, self-sustaining ecosystem.

11th African Islamic Finance Summit is going to be Hosted by Hargeisa, Somaliland

Spokesman Report

DUBAI: 11th Edition of African Islamic Finance Summit is going to be hosted in Hargeisa, Somaliland scheduled on 25th February 2024, followed by 2-Days Post Event Workshop for Islamic Banking, Takaful and Microfinance scheduled on 26th – 27th February 2024. The theme is to highlight the emerging opportunities in Africa for the Islamic Finance Industry. This event is going to be organized by AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics UAE in association with National Insurance Authority, Somaliland and Bank of Somaliland under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Muse Bihl Abdi, President, Republic of Somaliland.

The agenda of the Summit is comprised on Islamic Banking and Finance Industry Practices, Islamic banking products and innova-

tion, regulatory framework, policies and strategies. It also will include Takaful products, models and how takaful stands as pillar to support Islamic financial industry. Islamic Microfinance as a tool for poverty alleviation, and how to achieve socio-economic sustainability. Islamic Capital Market Instruments and Investment Opportunities in Africa will be the part of the summit.

The program agenda is based on all significant areas, opportunities, challenges, gaps and adaptability of financial industry across the continent.

The objective of the summit is to create a platform for the global

thinktank to share their experience about different aspects of Islamic finance industry. The expected speakers are from Malaysia, Canada, United States, Tajikistan, Bahrain, Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Somaliland etc. This event expectedly will be followed by 15+ Nationalities to participate. It reflects the demand for Islamic finance

appetite in the region. As this summit is happening in association with National Insurance Authority and Bank of Somaliland, the technical committee for the summit highlight the significance of the platform where international schol-

ars will share their experience, and how through international practices, learning will be supportive for local execution to develop financial industry in more sustainable way.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair, Chief Executive Officer of AlHuda Center of Islamic Banking and Economics (CIBE) shared his thoughts about Islamic Finance Industry as an emerging opportunity in Africa. Islamic Finance is not an option rather it is a full-fledged alternative financial system, he also said that across the continents all nations are ready to embrace the concept of Islamic finance. He acknowledged the support of National Insurance Authority and Bank of Somaliland to host 11th Edition of African Islamic Finance Summit in Hargeisa. AlHuda CIBE is pleased to invite financial industry of Africa to join in the prestigious event on 25th February 2024 in Hargeisa, Somaliland.



Tanzeem-e-Tajran visit Peshawar Cantonment Time Center after fire

Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: The delegation from Tanzeem-e-Tajran Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar Traders Chamber visited the Time Center in Peshawar Cantonment. Former Adviser to CM KPK, Malik Mehr Elahi, held a telephonic conversation with Governor KPK regarding the Time Center issue. The delegation, led by President of Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajran Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Malik Mehr Elahi, and including Amin Hussain Babar and Ghulam Bilal Javed, met with affected shopkeepers after a fire incident yesterday that resulted in the entire plaza burning down. Shopkeepers requested entry to salvage goods, prompting Malik Mehr Elahi to contact Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for permission, which the Governor assured would be granted tomorrow morning.

SECP and UN Women Hosts its 3rd ESG Symposium to advance sustainable Development

PPA

KARACHI: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan, convened its third Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Symposium focused on ESG based investing and Climate Change. The full-day event, held in Karachi, drew dynamic participation from the relevant stakeholders including leadership from key capital market institutions, multilateral representation, academia and companies, all committed to fostering sustainable investment and responsible business practices.

Addressing to the guests, the chief guest, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar commended the efforts of SECP in promoting sustainable business practices in the corporate sector of Pakistan. She also appreciated the active involvement of UN-Women Pakistan in promoting gender inclusive interventions and enabling construc-

ive deliberations. She elaborated on commitment of government of Pakistan in addressing climate change related focusing on developing a green taxonomy, strengthening disclosure guidelines, establishing a blended agriculture finance fund, and collaborating with global re-insurers for disaster risk financing. She emphasized the importance of accountability, transparency, and sustainability-linked products, highlighting the private sector's role in climate investments. She appreciated SECP's initiatives, including the ESG Guidelines, ESG Sustain portal and collaborations with ICAP, PICG, and PSX for capacity as steps in right direction.

Opening the dialogue, Ms. Musarat Jabeen, Executive Director at SECP, highlighted the shift in regulators' roles from enforcing laws to promoting sustainable development. In this perspective the need for integrating ESG considerations into regulatory regime, inevitable role of capac-

ity building in context of evolving disclosure frameworks and a tangible action plan for collaborative and cohesive ESG implementation.

Ms. Sharmeela Rasool, Country Representative of UN Women Pakistan, encouraged the investors, regulators, private sector and assurance providers to adopt ESG framework and benchmark performance for attracting investments and contributions to sustainability.

The session featured detailed technical presentation by Mr. Asif Iqbal, Director on SECP's draft ESG Disclosure Guidelines, elaborating the key disclosure metrics and sought feedback by stakeholders for finalizing the disclosure requirements under the Guidelines.

Mr. Barkaat from UN Women Pakistan unveiled the first look of "ESG Sustain", a centralized web based portal which will serve as a centralized repository for all the ESG related regulatory requirements.



A high-level plenary discussion, moderated by Ms. Mashmoona Zahra, brought together esteemed panelists comprising of Mr. Farrukh Khan (CEO, PSX), Mr. Memosh Khawaja (CEO, PICG), Mr. Ehsan Malik (CEO, PBC), Ms. Maheen Rehman (CEO InfraZamin), Mr. Arup Chatterjee (ADB), Ms. Rukhsana (CFA Pakistan), Ms. Naz Khan (IFC) and Ayesha Aziz (Packages). The panel explored the critical role of institutions in combating climate change which presents an exist-

tential threat, emphasized the need for addressing challenges by ensuring relevant data availability, identifying linkages with gender inclusive measures, increased awareness and incentivizing private sector for promoting ESG investments in Pakistan.

Mr. Farrukh Rahman from ICAP gave a detailed presentation on sustainability reporting and discussed various aspects of the IFRS S1 and IFRS S2, particularly climate based risks and opportunities, its implications as well

as phased adoption criteria for companies to make sustainability-related disclosures under the sustainability standards.

A fireside chat on ESG action plan moderated by Mr. Mohammad Shoaib, Director CFA with panelist including Ms. Mashmoona Zehra (MUFAP), Mr. Farrukh H Khan (PSX), Mr. Farrukh Rehman (ICAP), Mr. Muhammad Imran Moten (ACCA), Mr. Fauz-ul-Azeem (Interloop), and Mr. Ephyro Luis Amatong of IFC shared feedback on SECP's ESG

Action Plan. The panelist identified potential areas for improvement, with a specific emphasis on ESG sustainability, suggested creating a working group to foster collaboration and need for more consultations on diverse perspectives of sustainability prior to the formal launch of the action plan.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Akif Saeed, Chairman of SECP, commended the leadership from diverse stakeholders for their passionate involvement and active participation in the symposium. He reiterated that ESG is a priority area for SECP and emphasized the need for consolidated, inclusive, and focused efforts towards building a sustainable ecosystem.

Mr. Saeed stressed the importance of data and disclosures for development of robust and sustainable capital markets and reiterated SECP's commitment in fostering a regulatory environment that considers environmental impact, encourages corporate social responsibilities, and promotes good governance.

Sindh Premier League to begin from Jan 25

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Minister for Sports and Culture Syed Junaid Ali Shah and Minister for Information, Minority Affairs and Social Protection Ahmed Shah announced that the Sindh Premier League (SPL) 2024 would be commenced on January 25.

Addressing a press conference at the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, the ministers said that the SPL would continue till February 05 at National Bank Stadium Karachi.

SPL President Arif Malik, and renowned cricketers Abdul Razaq and Chaudhry Shehzad were also present on the occasion.

All six franchise teams of Sindh province would take part in the inaugural season of SPL.

The ministers announced that the first day of SPL would be free for all.

Sports Minister Syed Junaid Ali Shah said that SPL was providing a platform



to the young talent of Sindh.

Renowned cricketer Abdul Razaq expressed his gratitude to the Sindh

government for organizing SPL and commended the ministers for their support.

SPL President Arif Malik said that the original song of Sindh Premier League would be released on January 25.

SA20: Bowlers star as Durban's Super Giants edge MI Cape Town

A Sports

CAPE TOWN: Marcus Stoinis and Noor Ahmad bagged three wickets each to script Durban's Super Giants' 36-run victory over home side MI Cape Town in the 16th match of the SA20 here on Tuesday.

Put into bat first, the Super Giants registered a commendable total of 157/6 on the board on a tricky surface, courtesy of Matthew Breetzke's 46, followed by Wiaan Mulder's quickfire cameo.

The visitors had a shaky start to their innings as they were reduced to 23/2 in 2.4 overs after Tony de Zorzi (20) and Quinton de Kock (11) fell victim to George Linde on the consequent deliveries.

JJ Smuts then joined Breetzke in the middle and they soon anchored the innings with a cautious 46-run partnership which lasted in the 10th over with Thomas Kabir removing the former.

Smuts scored 26 off 23 with the help of two boundaries and a six.

The Super Giants then further slipped to 94/5 in 14.4 overs as Heinrich Klaas-



en (6) and Marcus Stoinis (11) walked back after modest contributions.

Meanwhile, Breetzke was involved in another crucial partnership for the Super Giants when he added 39 runs for the sixth wicket before finally departing in the 18th over.

He remained the top-scorer for the Super Giants with a gritty 48 off 46 deliveries, laced with three boundaries and two sixes.

Mulder, on the other hand, carried his bat all the way through and bolstered the team's total.

He scored an unbeaten 38 off just 20 deliveries with the help of six boundaries.

For MI Cape Town, Kabir and Linde took two wickets each while Sam Curran and Olly Stone had a wicket apiece to their names.

In return, MI Cape Town's batting lineup struggled on the challenging surface at Newlands and finished at 121/9 in the allotted 20 overs.

Sam Curran waged a lone battle for MI Cape Town with his 27-ball 38 which featured one boundary and four sixes.

He was also involved in the most notable partnership for the home side when he put together 48 runs for the fourth wicket with Dewald Brevis, who scored 21 off 19.

Boult and Ahmad led the bowling attack for the Super Giants with three wickets each, followed by Naveen-ul-Haq, who picked up two.

The 36-run victory lifted Durban's Super Giants to the second in SA20 standings with 18 points in six matches while MI Cape Town remained fourth with nine points in as many matches.

Bugti approves Pakistan team for FIH Hockey5s World Cup



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti on Tuesday approved Pakistan team to participate in the FIH Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024, commencing on January 28 in Muscat. "The PHF president has approved the team after consultation with the hockey team management," said a PHF spokesman.

With new competing nations and a format never associated with a World Cup so far, the event ushers in a new era for international hockey. The inaugural edition of the Hockey5s World Cup will see participation from across the globe with 16 men's and 16 women's teams, from across 5 continents, competing for the title of the first-ever Hockey5s World Champions. Squad: Rana Abdul Waheed (captain), Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muneeb ur Rehman, Muhammad Abdullah, Murtaza Yaqoob, Ghazanfar Ali, Arshad Liaquat, Zakaria Hayat, Abdul Hannan Shahid and Moin Shakeel.

Olympian Shakeel Abbasi has been appointed as the head coach of the team, while Olympian Dilawar Hussain will accompany them as manager. Waqas Mehmood will leave with the team as a physiotherapist, while Junaid Akhtar will be the video operator.

Karachi Grammar School won the U-19 and U-17 titles in the National Inter-Schools Girls Netball Championship

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Karachi Grammar School won the U-19 and U-17 titles while Habib School Karachi won the U-15 titles in the National Inter-Schools Girls Netball Championship. At the end of the championship, the Chairman of Pakistan Netball Federation Captain Retired Zafar Iqbal Awan distributed trophies, medals, and certificates among the players of the winning teams. On this occasion, Pakistan Netball Federation President Mudassir Araim, Vice President Samin Malik, and Acting Secretary General Mohammad Riaz were also present in large number of fans. Gold medals were also distributed among the players of the national team who won the Hong Kong Challenge Cup.

Habib Girls School Karachi defeated Karachi Grammar School by 12-14 in the final of Girls under 15 in the championship played at Liaquat Gymnasium yesterday.

In the final of Girls under 17, Karachi Grammar School defeated City School PAF Chapter Karachi by 15-18 score.

In the final of Girls under 19, Karachi Grammar School defeated Danish School Wahari by 9-18 score.

In the Girls U-15 third position match, Government Girls High School Hyderabad defeated APS Fort Road, Rawalpindi, by 9 to 8 scores. In the Girls U-17 third position match, APS Fort Road, Rawalpindi defeated Govt Shah Latif Girls College Hyderabad by 8-18. In the Girls U-19 third position match, City School, PAF Chapter, Karachi defeated Habib School Karachi by 12 to 9. 20 teams from across the country participated in the championship.

Palestine reach Asian Cup knockouts for first time



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Palestine reached the Asian Cup knockout rounds for the first time after beating Hong Kong 3-0 on Tuesday for their maiden win in the history of the competition.

They just missed out on the second spot in Group C but advanced as one of the four best third-placed teams, with Oday Dabbagh the hero for his two goals.

United Arab Emirates went through in second place despite losing 2-1 to group winners Iran.

The historic victory in Doha comes against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas war in the Palestinian territory of Gaza.

"Thank you to the fans who are coming to support Palestine and the national team of Palestine. Thank you from our heart," captain Musab Al-Battat told beIN SPORTS after the game. "We will do our best to put a smile for the people."

Palestinian players and staff have lost loved ones in the conflict and said before the tournament that they hoped to provide some comfort to those suffering back home.

A pre-match moment's silence was overruled by shouts of "Free Palestine".

No side had played more Asian Cup matches without a win than Hong Kong (12 games) or Palestine (eight), but victory would offer either side a chance of making the last 16.

In the 12th minute, Palestine scored their first goal on the way to breaking that duck.

Battat made an overlapping run from right-back and launched a cross into the box which Dabbagh headed into the net.

Hong Kong were dealt a blow when centre-back and match-day captain Vas Nunez sustained an arm injury and had to be replaced by Li Ngai-hoi.

But they started creating chances as the half wore on, Philip Chan and Everton Camargo blazing over.

Throughout the game the 6,568 people inside the Abdullah Bin Khalifa Stadium were almost entirely supporting Palestine, like at most grounds during the team's campaign.

But a dense and boisterous red-clad bloc of Hong Kong fans provided an unending beat of encouragement for the 150th-ranked side from southern China.

Minutes into the second half Palestine doubled their lead, Battat again the provider from the right wing, this time Zeid Qunbar taking him up on a generous invitation to score.

Palestine got a third after the hour, Tamer Seyam's long-range effort hitting the bar and falling to Dabbagh, who tapped in his second of the match.

They were given a scare during the eighth minute of added time when referee Shaun Evans awarded Hong Kong a penalty after a VAR review for a handball by Battat.

But Everton's spot-kick thudded against the bar as Hong Kong headed home.

Bowlers-led MI Emirates crush Abu Dhabi Knight Riders in ILT20

A Sports

ABU DHABI: MI Emirates bowlers ran through home side Abu Dhabi Knight Riders' batting unit and powered their side to a thumping nine-wicket victory in the sixth match of the ILT20 here on Tuesday.

Put into bat first, the Knight Riders batting lineup folded for a paltry total of 95 despite Andre Russell's counterattacking 48-run knock.

The home side failed to recover from a dismal start and kept losing wickets at an alarming rate to consequently slip to 59/9.



West Indian all-rounder Emirates bowlers.

Russell played a counterpunching knock and went after the MI Russell smashed three boundaries and four sixes on his

way to top score for the Knight Riders with a 25-ball 48.

He also put together a one-sided 10th-wicket partnership with Josh Little (5) and added 36 runs to the total before finally perishing on the first delivery of the 15th over.

Trent Boult and Muhammad Rohid led the bowling attack for MI Emirates with three wickets each, followed by Akeal Hosein, who bagged two.

In return, MI Emirates comfortably chased down the modest 96-run target for the loss of just one wicket and 71 balls to spare.

Emirates openers Kusal

Mendis and Muhammad Waseem gave the side a flourishing start to the pursuit as their stand yielded 42 runs before being halted in the fifth over by Matiullah Khan.

Matiullah got rid of Mendis with a fuller delivery on middle and off. Mendis went hard after the ball but handed it a straightforward catch to Sunil Narine.

He scored a brisk 22 off just 13 deliveries with the help of two boundaries and as many sixes.

Skipper Nicholas Pooran then joined Waseem at the crease and the pair made sure to lead MI Emirates to glory without any further hiccups.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Syed Hasnain Abbas s/o Mehboob Shah, allottee of plot No. 20-C, Block-C, Area Development Scheme, Attock have appointed General Power of Attorney to Syed Azhar Abbas s/o Mehboob Shah vide registered deed at No. 588/4 dated 04-10-2022 from Sub Registrar, Attock. Furthermore, General Power of attorney holder wish to transfer of the above mentioned plot to Mr. Amir Ramzan s/o Muhammad Ramzan.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.

Deputy Director Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency Sub Region Rawalpindi

Rameez spins web as Ghani Glass edge SBP in President's Trophy

A Sports

LAHORE: Mohammad Rameez Jnr claimed a ten-wicket haul and steered Ghani Glass to a narrow victory over the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Day 3 of the last round of President's Trophy Grade I 2023-24.

SBP continued from their overnight score of 139-2 and immediately found themselves amidst a batting collapse. Umar Amin (104, 125b, 14x4s, 1x6) notched his 30th first-class hundred after adding 18 more runs to his overnight score.

Salman Ali Agha (14, 35b, 1x4) was dismissed by Mohammad Rameez Jnr who wreaked havoc with the ball on his way to his fifth first-class five-wicket haul.

Muhammad Irfan Khan

and Mohammad Mohsin bagged ducks while wicket-keeper batter Ali Shan too returned for a paltry score of four runs.

Kashif Bhatti and Mohammad Abbas were dismissed for ducks as well as Ghani Glass bowlers bundled out SBP for 179.

Leg spinner Rameez Jnr returned with figures of 6-59 in 14.3 overs taking his match tally to 10 wickets. In pursuit of the 176-run target, Ghani Glass lost their opening batter Shahbaz Javed early on as he copped a two-ball duck.

Mohammad Azeem Ghumman (16, 49b, 2x4s) and Tayyab Tahir (17, 28b, 3x4s) put on a 26-run second-wicket partnership before the latter was run out by Usman.

Shan Masood walked out all guns blazing as he played a valuable cameo of 34 runs off 16 balls comprising of five boundaries and two sixes before getting stumped on Kashif Bhatti's bowling.

Skipper Moez Ghani returned to the dugout after adding only five runs in his 28-ball stay as Zahid Mehmood struck to remove him leaving Ghani Glass reeling at 77-5.

Saad Nasim (29, 30b, 6x4s) and Saad Ali's (40, 67b, 7x4s) valuable contributions meant that Ghani Glass inched close to the target.

Rameez Jnr added 11 valuable runs to the total before falling prey to Afaq Afridi. With two wickets in the bag, Ghulam Haider (14 not out, 44b, 2x4s) and Shoaib Akhtar (9 not out, 12b, 2x4s)

took their team home.

Afaq bagged three wickets while Kashif and Zahid returned with two wickets each.

In another last-round fixture of the President's Trophy, Kamran Ghulam struck a brilliant hundred to give Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) an edge over the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

HEC required 283 runs to win on the last day of the game as they finished 93-1 in 24 overs after the stumps were drawn.

Earlier in the day, SNGPL posted a target of 374 runs. Continuing from their overnight score of 54-0, the SNGPL opening batters, Azhar Ali (38, 71b, 4x4s) and Omair Bin Yousuf (82, 139b, 10x4s) put on an open-



ing partnership of 76 runs.

Abid Ali had to depart from the middle after being retired hurt.

Kamran Ghulam struck his 15th first-class ton, accumulating 104 runs in his 140-ball stay on the crease, hitting nine boundaries and four sixes.

Saud Shakeel (49, 55b, 5x4s) did well to keep the

scoreboard ticking but missed his half-century by a single run.

Skipper Asad Shafiq hit a brisk 42 from 40 balls comprising of three boundaries and as many sixes.

Mubasir Khan (3 not out, 3b) and Mir Hamza (13 not out, 7b, 2x6s) were on the crease when SNGPL declared their innings on 351-5.

Asif Ali Chandio bagged two wickets while Waseem Akram, Syed Tayyab Hussain and Umar Lohya picked up one wicket each.

HEC's opening batter Mohammad Mohsin Khan (6 not out, 12b) went after being retired hurt while Mohammad Huraira (36, 50b, 6x4s) was dismissed by Mohammad Ali leaving them 34-1.

Skipper Saad Khan (29 not out, 48b, 4x4s, 1x6) and Mohammad Ghazi Ghori (19 not out, 35b, 3x4s) put on an unbeaten partnership of 58 runs before the close of play.

The other last-round fixture of the President's Trophy that concluded on Monday saw the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) edging Pakistan Television Network (PTV) by three wickets.

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the participants of the inaugural session of the Regional Dialogue 2024 on "Climate Crisis: Shaping South Asia's Resilience" organized by the Institute of Regional Studies on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

Modern Agri technology, effective decision making vital to cope with climate change challenge: President

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday citing the abundance of natural resources, said that adopting modern agricultural technology and effective decision-making were inevitable for Pakistan to cope with the challenge of climate change. The president, in his inaugural address at the Regional Dialogue 2024 on "Climate Crisis: Shaping South Asia's Resilience" arranged by the Institute of Regional Studies, said that Pakistan was rich in water, renewable energy potential and other resources but it direly needed a driving force

to implement the decisions and make it compete with the world.

He told the gathering of former diplomats, academicians and researchers that Pakistan had around 150 million acre-feet of water which was sufficient to meet its needs if modern agriculture techniques like spray and drip irrigation were adopted and flood irrigation was done away with. Emphasising the implementation of national water policy and other relevant legislation, he said a pricing mechanism could also lead to water conservation. He said around 400 million gallons per day of

water in Karachi was drained into the sea through sewerage which was a criminality. He also highlighted the use of prohibited nets by the fishermen which also swept small fish resulting in a huge loss of marine life. He said due to the very reasons, Europe was not allowing fish import from Pakistan. The president exemplified the Netherlands which was the second largest food supplier on earth despite being 19 times smaller in size than Pakistan and not having such an abundance of water similar to Pakistan. Similarly, Vietnam has taken its fishery exports to around \$10 billion per annum by adopting

international standards and techniques, he added. He said by pushing the farmers to adopt modern agriculture technology, Pakistan could also feed the world. He recalled Pakistan's successes in fighting COVID-19 through a data-based approach and national unity and said that the world would follow its footprints if the country set such an example as it had also achieved recognition through massive tree plantation.

Earlier, the IRS President Ambassador Nadeem Riaz in his introductory remarks, said the Regional Dialogue was the annual flagship event of the Institute which attract-

ed ambassadors, policymakers, researchers, strategists and academicians from Pakistan and abroad.

Established in 1982, the IRS was focused on regional countries including India, China, Iran, Afghanistan, and South Asia, cyber security and other challenges. The Institute had 42 national and international collaborations and has been providing insight to policymakers and strategists through its research work, he added. He said South Asia was the most vulnerable region the climate change threats which posed risks to its ecosystem, food security and energy.

49 foreign journalists issued visas so far for coverage of upcoming elections: Solangi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Tuesday that certain elements were just harping on the rumours that "no foreign journalists and observers would be arriving Pakistan for coverage of upcoming general elections" which was contrary to facts.

He was addressing a press conference flanked by Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid, Executive Director General External Publicity Wing Ambreen Jan, Principal Information Officer Dr Tariq Mehmood and Director General Radio Pakistan Saeed Sheikh.

Many international media persons had applied for visas



to cover the elections, Murtaza Solangi said adding that 49 visas (for Islamabad Lahore and Karachi) had been issued as of today while 32 requests were under process with many other requests were still being received from different stations of the world.

He said that these 32 visa applications for coverage of elections were under process which had been received in Pakistan High Commission New Delhi

and were being processed due to manual visa system in India for issuing visas.

He said that so far 174 requests for ECP Accreditation Cards had been received and processed for foreign media representatives and their associated Pakistani staff who were based in Pakistan.

Responding to a question by media, he said so far 25 applications were under process from the UK alone, 08 from Russian

Federation, 13 from Japan, 02 from South Africa while 05 from Commonwealth under the category of International Observers.

Accreditation Cards had also been processed for local Pakistani media houses, Murtaza Solangi said and added so far 6,065 journalists had been processed including 1200 from Lahore, 1470 from Karachi, 1050 from Peshawar, 600 from Quetta, 355 from Hyder-

abad, 250 from Faisalabad and 290 from Multan.

Executive Director General EP Wing, Ambreen Jan said visa applications for election coverage were received from 14 countries. She added in total 81 foreign journalists applied for visas, out of which 49 had been issued visas while others were under the process.

To a question she said Press Information Department would set up a media cell for election coverage to provide facilities to the media and a 24-hour election cell will also be operational in the EP Wing to provide facilities to foreign journalists.

Replying to a question, Murtaza Solangi said that it was the responsibility of the state to protect its citizens and it would take necessary measures to provide security to foreign journalists and observers.

Interior Ministry sets up control room for General Elections 2024



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister of Communications Shahid Ashraf Tarar on Tuesday visited the control room established in the Ministry of Interior for monitoring of security arrangements and law and order situation during the general election 2024.

The caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar appointed Shahid Ashraf Tarar as the Chairman of the Committee for the Security and Administrative Affairs of General Elections 2024.

The coordinator National Action Plan briefed the minister in detail about the functioning of the control room on behalf of the Secretary of

Interior Aftab Akbar Durrani, who was also present in the meeting.

Shahid Ashraf Tarar assured to take all possible measures for the maintenance of the security and law and order situation in the country during the general elections of 2024 and the establishment of a control room is also a link of the same chain.

He said that the law and order situation should be monitored all the time direct contact should be maintained with all stakeholders and action should be taken in case of any emergency.

The minister further said that on the instructions of the Prime Minister, all the provinces will also be visited to review the overall security situation and to finalize the arrangements in this regard.

SBP to announce monetary policy on January 29

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will announce Monetary Policy on January 29 in a meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee.

According to the SBP's press release, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will meet on Monday, January 29 to decide about the Monetary Policy, a press release issued by SBP said.

Governor, SBP Jameel Ahmad



will announce the monetary policy decision at a press conference on the same day after the MPC meeting.

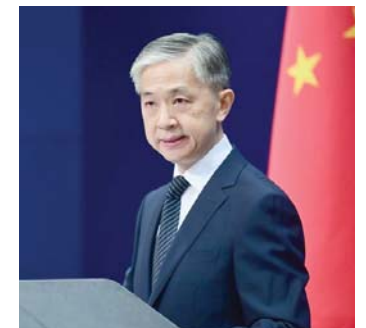
China welcomes good progress between Pak-Iran relations

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: China welcomes the good progress that Iran and Pakistan have made in repairing their ties and supports them in further enhancing mutual trust and deepening cooperation through friendly consultation, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Tuesday.

"We stand ready to work with Iran and Pakistan to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation and safeguard regional peace, stability and development," he said during his regular briefing.

Pakistani and Iranian foreign ministries yesterday said in a joint statement that ambassadors of both countries may return to their respective posts by January 26 and that Iranian Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian will visit Pakistan upon invitation on January 29. Meanwhile, Qian Feng, direc-



tor of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University, told the Global Times, "While having friendly relations with both countries, China is committed to promoting the relationship between Iran and Pakistan in the long run."

Qian noted that China has played a crucial role as a responsible power by promoting bilateral relations of the two countries and regional peace and stability.

Pakistan Solar Market is launching Trading App. A new innovation in Solar Energy in Renewable Sector

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The CEO of NZ Trading Private Ltd, Nibras Zaman said in an interview that I have been working in the solar field for the last 5 years. He said that I started my career in a Job USA based solar company and I worked for this company for one and half years and I gained more experience through this job. Nibras Zaman further said that for a few years I have been running my own Solar Company with the name of NZ Trading and I am the CEO of this company and doing the work on Solar. He said that I import solar items from China and give the supply of solar panels inverters and use 40 Containers for this supply in a month.

He said that our credibility is very good in the market and people are trusting on us and I have good bilateral relations with multiple

countries regarding my business like China, USA, UK, Saudi Arabia, and Dubai. He said that Pakistan Solar Market is launching an App with the name of PSM RN (Trading App) which will be a new innovation in Solar in the solar energy renewable energy sector and for this PSM will be 10 board director's from 10 major leading companies.

Nibras said that we are also building up a solar market which will be affiliated with PSM and 10 directors will keep the coordination regarding the solar business in the market. He said that all the members of PSM will have to be compulsory to register their company, and should verify their NTN, office locations and official bank accounts. He said that PSM will give the benefit to all the members. He said that the following are the agenda where the members will do the work.



1. A customer who could not deal with other then members will have to played the vital role to adjust the deal with each other and they will create the situation to make the deal possible and they



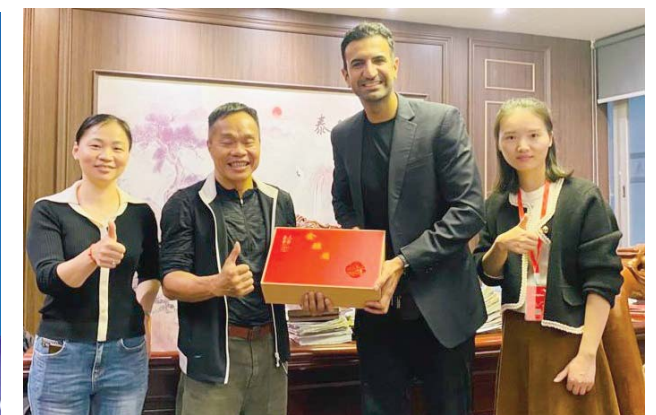
will have to play also the positive role to build up the policy in the safe hand in the capital investment.

2. The members will make the community like Importers, Traders and Consumers in which they will



negotiate the daily rates regarding solar business.

3. The PSM members will get the negotiated rates from Chinese manufacturer Companies and in suitable rates they will provide the rates to Importers and furthermore any problems facing on transaction issues and any dealing issue with customers and any adjust-



ment issue the members will play the role to win and win situations through deals with them. At last he said that the following will be the director board members of PSM.

1. Mr. Rizwan, CEO, (Makkah Solar).
2. Mr. Abdul Qadir, CEO, (MD Solar)
3. Mr. Ilyas, CEO, (Rezon Energy).
4. Mr. Surendar, CEO, (Cristal Enterprises).

5. Mr. Feezan, CEO, (Saleem Winding)
6. Mr. AASIM ALLAH WALA (MD Techno Group and PHONO Solar)
7. Mr. Usman Mehmood (MD: NZ Trading)
8. Mr. Abubakkr (CEO VPS solar)
9. Muhammad shafique (Director Sales: Shaffique Traders)
10. Aman Mansoori (CEO: Alfah Green Energy)