



**Movie 'Kazakh Khanate –Diamond Sword' screened at PNCA**

In a bid to further strengthen cultural relations, PNCA and the Embassy of Kazakhstan organized screening of a movie titled "Kazakh Khanate –Diamond Sword" here at PNCA, auditorium. Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Minister for National Heritage & Culture Jamal Shah and Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H. E Yezhan Kistafin... (Details on Page 3)



**Govt jacks up petrol price by Rs13.55 per litre for next fortnight**

The caretaker government on Wednesday hiked the price of petrol by Rs13.55 per litre for the next fortnight. The new price of petrol is now Rs272.89 per litre from the previous price of Rs259.34, according to a notification from the Finance Division. The price of high-speed diesel (HSD) was increased by Rs2.75 to Rs278.96 per litre. The notification did not mention any changes in the prices of light-diesel oil (LDO) and kerosene oil.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**262nd CCC**

Rawalpindi: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) presided over the 262nd Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) held at GHQ.



Photo: ISPR

**Chinese Ambassador calls on Air Chief**



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, H. E. Mr. Jiang Zaidong, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office today. During the meeting matters pertaining to evolving geo-strategic environment and regional developments were discussed. The dignitaries underscored the necessity of revitalizing the framework for operational training across all domains, emphasizing the paramount importance of preparedness and seamless coordination in the face of evolving security challenges.

Chief of the Air Staff shared broad contours of PAF's modernization drive in order to transform Pakistan Air Force into Next Generation Air Force through induction of niche technologies with a special focus on indigenization and revamping of training. Highlighting the significance of the longstanding strategic partnership between the two countries, the Air Chief emphasized that PAF leadership wishes to further deepen the existing aviation cooperation and exchanges with China in the fields of human resource and technology so as to jointly address shared security challenges. He further said, "Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic, defence relationship and time-tested friendship with China which are based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability".

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and lauded the steadfast determination of PAF leadership to ensure balance of power in the region. Both the dignitaries emphasized the need for enhanced Air Force to Air Force collaboration, with a particular emphasis on cutting-edge niche technologies in Cyber, Space and Electronic Warfare domains. They also expressed a firm commitment to fostering bilateral and multilateral operational exercises, aimed at fortifying collective response to emerging threats in the region.

The meeting between the Chinese envoy and Chief of the Air Staff is a testament to the strong commitment of both nations to further consolidate their strategic partnership through continued dialogue and military collaboration.

**COAS stated that Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity are sacrosanct and inviolable**

PPA

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) presided over the 262nd Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) held at GHQ, today.

Forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhadas including officers and men of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies and the citizens who have laid their lives for ensuring peace and stability in the country.

Forum resolved that terrorists, their facilitators and abettors, working on behalf of hostile forces to destabilise Pakistan, will be

dealt with full might of the state.

COAS stated that Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity are sacrosanct and inviolable. Pakistan believes in peaceful co-existence with all states, however, there would never be any compromise over country's sovereignty, national honour and aspirations of Pakistani people.

The forum was briefed on the callous Indian campaign of extra-territorial and extra-judicial killings, perpetuating state-sponsored terrorism and targeting Pakistani citizens. The forum agreed that blatant violation of international laws by India and its real face be exposed to the world.

The international community has already shown serious concerns over the criminal behaviour of India and its use of state apparatus for killing spree around the world.

The forum reiterated unequivocal support for Palestine and the people of Gaza while noting the extremely negative fallout of the conflict and the potential to spill over in the wider region. The immediate need for a permanent ceasefire and enduring solution to the Palestinian question was unanimously recognised. In the same vein, Pakistan's resolve to support the people of IIOJK for their right of self-determination

was reiterated. Pakistan would continue to morally, politically and diplomatically support Kashmir brothers and sisters till justice is served in accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions.

The forum also discussed deployment of Pakistan Army to assist Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the peaceful conduct of General Elections 2024. Pakistan Army will perform assigned duties as per the Constitutional mandate, under the guidelines of ECP. No one would be allowed to indulge in violence in the name of political activity and sabotage the quintessential democratic exercise of conduct of

free and fair elections.

The forum acknowledged and appreciated the steps taken against spectrum of illegal activities and criminal mafias including smuggling, hoarding, money laundering, power theft and illegal aliens. The participants emphasised that such actions and their positive impact on the economy and wellbeing of the people need to continue without any let up.

The forum was briefed on operational preparedness of the formations. COAS asked formation commanders to continue their focus on the training, administration and morale of the soldiers.

**FBR collects Rs 5,150 billion in 7 months**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has collected Rs 5,150 billion during the first seven months of the current fiscal year 2023-24 against the target of Rs 5,115 billion.

According to the FBR official Twitter handle, the board has collected Rs 3,973 billion during the corresponding months of the previous year.

During January 2024, FBR collected Rs 681 billion against Rs 545 billion collected during January 2023.

**PTI founder, Bushra Bibi awarded 14 years imprisonment in Toshakhana case**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: An Accountability Court (AC) on Wednesday awarded 14 years each imprisonment to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana case.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on December 19, last year, filed a reference against the PTI founder and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana case.

The verdict was pronounced by AC Judge Muhammad Bashir. PTI founder and his wife were also disqualified from holding any public office for 10 years.

The judge also slapped a fine of Rs787 million.

In today's hearing, the Pakistan



Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder was brought to court, however, Bushra Bibi did not appear. After being asked about his statement of 342, the former prime minister replied: "The statement is in the room, I was only called to appear before the court." The judge directed Imran Khan to submit his statement immediately and remarked: "Don't waste court time."

"The lawyers have not come yet, I will submit the statement after showing them," the PTI founder

and then left the courtroom.

Read more: PTI founder, Qureshi handed 10-year jail term in cipher case

Bushra Bibi surrenders

Following the verdict of the NAB court, former first lady Bushra Bibi reached Adiala Jail to surrender before the graft-buster team.

Bushra Bibi, who did not appear before the court in today's hearing, reached Adiala Jail in her car to surrender.

The former PM's wife was arrested by ladies' police.

The Toshakhana case became a major sticking point in national politics after the Election Commission of Pakistan disqualified the PTI chief for making "false statements and incorrect declaration" last year.

**US calls Imran's imprisonment sentence 'matter for Pak courts'**

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: The United States Tuesday sidestepped comments on the 10-year sentence awarded to ex-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief, Imran Khan, for leaking state secrets — known as "cipher case", saying it was a matter for the Pakistani courts. "It is a legal matter ultimately for Pakistan's courts," State Department Spokesperson Mathew Miller told reporters at his daily press briefing while responding to. Series of questions.

"We have been following the cases... brought against the former prime minister but I don't have any comment on the sentencing," Miller said. "As we have stated consistently, we continue to call for the respect of democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law in Pakistan, as we do around the world,"

**Saudi Investment Minister hails steps by caretaker govt in bringing Pakistan on financial stability**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs had a virtual meeting with H. E Mr. Khalid Al-Falih, the Investment Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

and discussed matters of mutual interest and cooperation. Dr. Shamshad Akhtar highlighting the steps taken by caretaker government in bringing the financial stability said, that Pakistan has achieved macro economic stability

and reversed the negativity, by building the confidence of bilateral and multilateral donors in International market.

Finance Minister appreciated the efforts of SIFC which has played a positive role in ease of doing business and made implementation of projects a success.

While gratifying the efforts of Saudi Sovereign wealth fund which has brought financial boom in Saudi Arabia, emphasized that Pakistan wanted to learn from its best practices for



developing Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund, which had been tasked with

privatization of government assets in financial difficulty.

**Bushra Bibi moved to Bani Gala 'sub-jail'**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, who received 14-year sentence in the Toshakhana reference, has been moved to Bani Gala, the Islamabad residence of his husband Imran Khan, following its designation as a sub-jail, ARY News reported on Wednesday.

The former first lady voluntarily surrendered before the accountability court in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team, already at the jail, where the hearing was being conducted, took her into custody as soon as she reached.

According to a notification

issued by Islamabad Chief Commissioner, Bushra Bibi has been moved to Bani Gala, following its designation as a sub-jail.

"The Chief Commissioner, Islamabad Capital Territory is pleased to declare the residence of convict Bushra Bibi (Residential Compound, Khan House Banigala, Mohra Noor, Islamabad) as Sub-Jail till further orders," stated the notification.

Sources told that stringent security protocols are in place, with jail staff to station inside Bani Gala. Meanwhile, Islamabad Police personnel will remain outside Imran Khan's residence.

# Sardar Attique demands support of Pakistan Muslim League-N in upcoming election

Abdul Majeed Tahir

RAWALPINDI: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference President and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that the relationship between Pakistan Muslim League-N and Muslim Conference is historical. This relationship has to be taken forward. Pakistan Muslim League-N should be supported in the February 8 election. Workers should not listen to rumours. The propaganda of the opponents should not be taken into account. He expressed these views while talking to the media here at Mujahid Manzil. He said that regarding the recent elections of Pakistan, a Muslim Conference work consultative meeting was called at the shrine of Rais-ul-Ah-rar Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas in which senior workers and in consultation with the officials, it was decided by consensus that the authority of the alliance regarding the election should be hand over to the President Muslim Conference. And there was a group of workers with

me, we met President PML-N Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore the while on the other side, there were also other senior leaders including Azad Kashmir President Shah Ghulam Qadir in which it was agreed that the Muslim League-N should be supported in the context of the current situation in Pakistan. Assuring the success of the PML-N candidate by announcing full support from the President Muslim Conference. On this occasion, Raja Saqib Majeed, Major Sardar Nasrullah Khan, Sajid Qureshi Advocate, Asim Zahid Abbasi, Sardar Abid Razak, Sardar Akhlaq Abbasi and others were also present.

Meanwhile: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference has set up an election cell in the central secretariat of the party to make the candidates of Muslim League-Nawaz successful in the general election of Pakistan on February 8. Major (Retd) Sardar Nasrullah Khan Election Cell Chairman and Rana Ghulam Hussain Secretary while Secretary General Ms. Maher Nisa, Muhammad Sajid Qureshi



Advocate, Sardar Abid Razzaq Khan, Sardar Asim Zahid Abbasi, Sardar Ajmal Khan Nakyalvi, Raja Shahid Raza Khan, Sardar Ashfaq Khan., Dr. Muhammad Abid Abbasi, Syed Shahid Hussain Shah and Sardar Yasir Abbasi will be its members. More names will be released soon. This decision to establish an elec-

tion cell was taken after the meeting between Muslim Conference President Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan and Muslim League Nawaz President Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif after consultation with the party's senior officials in the central secretariat. Secretary General Ms Mehru Nasa, Sardar Altaf Hussain Khan, Secretary Finance of Muslim Conference Sardar Manzoor Chaghtai, Major (R) Sardar Nasrullah Khan, Sardar Mushtaq Nayar, Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Sardar Azhar Nazr Khan, Syed Azhar Ali Shah, Sardar Asim Zahid Abbasi. Sardar Abid Razak Khan, Sardar Ajmal Nakyalvi, Pirzada Muhammad Afsar Khan Naqshbandi, Raja Shahid Raza Khan and others were participants. President of Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has instructed the officials and workers of Muslim Conference based all over Pakistan to use their influence in their respective constituencies and vote for the nominated candidates of Muslim League-Nawaz.

## Awesome Weather

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at Faisal Avenue during rainy weather in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## Gillani family to support Tareen in General Election



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Gilani family has announced their support for the chairman of Pakistan Istahkam Party Jahangir Khan Tareen in NA-149. The arrival of the Chairman Pakistan Istahkam Party Jahangir Khan Tareen at the residence of the head of the Gilani family and member of the Central Executive Committee of the Pakistan Muslim League, Quaid-e-Azam Makhdoom Ghulam Yazdani Gilani. Incharge Of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed Makhdoom Wilayat Mustafa Gilani, Makhdoomzada Zainul Abedin Gilani, Candidate PP 215 Shahid Mehmood Khan, Khalid Bhuta and other important personalities were present. Speaking on the occasion, Makhdoom Ghulam Yazdani Gilani said that the Gilani family is an honest servant of Multan region and Pakistan. We stand with sincere leaders Always supported those politicians who want to build and develop Pakistan, today we are announcing the support of Jahangir Khan Tareen, which includes our friends, friends and devotees of the constituency. We will make this region a separate province together with Jahangir Khan Tareen and we will work together for the construction and development of the region. We also support Jahangir Khan Tareen in Lodhran NA 154 Lodhran. Makhdoom Tanvir Al Hasan Gilani, Makhdoom Wajahat Mustafa Gilani, Makhdoomzada Zain Al Abidine Gilani and other family members, he said that you people have supported me by trusting me, I will fulfill it and solve the problems and development of the area, Jahangir Khan Tareen said that my past is a witness. That I have served the country apart from myself and would continue to do Soon this occasion, Incharge Of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed Makhdoom Wajahat Mustafa Gilani prayed for the success of Jahangir Khan Tareen.

## Mullana Qadri demands to extend election date by three to four weeks



Waqar Paracha

KHANEWAL: Dr Mullana Ajmal Qadri Patron-in-Chief of Central Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Addressing to the Press conference at the District Press Club Khanewal, Dr. Ajmal Qadri demanded to extend the date of the election.

Maulana Dr Ajmal Qadri said that the current election should be held in the month of March. He said that considering the current economic climate of the country, the election should be moved forward by three to four weeks and it is inevitable that the election be held in this season. The chief has been sentenced by the courts and decided. He said that he wanted to give him a field in the general election to be held in this country so that the party can participate in the election freely. China can hold elections in UK after six months, Pakistan can have elections. Why can't the election be brought forward by three to four weeks? It was also said that if the election is brought forward by three to four weeks, it will be equal to the election held in India, so that the international community will have to accept this election while the election is held in this season.

## Delegation of MCCI visits the Business Facilitation Center

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: A delegation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, visited the Business Facilitation Center, inspected the desks of various departments and took information. In this regard, a delegation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, under the leadership of Mian Rashid Iqbal, Senior Vice President Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, visited Business Fossilization Center, Abdali Road, Nawab Shahr., Khwaja Muhammad Younis, Khwaja Muhammad Hussain, Khwaja Muhammad Usman, Bakhtawar TanveerSheikh,



Khawaja Salahuddin, Naveed Iqbal Chaghtai, Chaudhry Mohammad Azam, Aurangzeb Alamgir, Sheikh Faheem Sattar, Sheikh Faisal Saeed Secretary General Muhammad Shafiq were included. Inspected and took information from the representatives of these departments on this occasion Talking to the media, President Mian Rashid Iqbal Sr. Vice Presi-

dent Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh on the proposal and demand of the Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, for ensuring the establishment of Business Fossilization Center in six major cities of Punjab including Multan. Tried and hoped that the supervisor the governments that come after the government will also

maintain it and maintain the continuity of this policy. He said that there are business facilitation centers in six cities of Punjab 50% of Punjab businessmen and citizens will be benefited by its establishment and it is hoped that the remaining desks of the federal and provincial departments at the fossilization center will also be established soon and the business community will have all under one roof. Facilities will be available and they will be available for visiting the offices of various departments and so on the time and capital will also be saved because this institution will be obliged to provide all the facilities in 14 days.

## Allama Anns says on February 8, end of injustice in South Punjab



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Allama Anns Hussain Rizvi the central leader of Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan, arrived in Multan, where he was warmly welcomed and showered with rose petals by the workers. That the sun of February 8 should rise with the promise of Nizam Mustafa will Now the era of the slaves of Rasool Allah is coming. On February 8, the entire nation will be sealed and the system will be changed. The day of reckoning for those who crushed the nation in lines has begun.

## Deputy Commissioner says to start work on Multan Gymkhana soon

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Deputy Commissioner Multan Captain (R) Rizwan Qadeer said that the work on the Multan Gymkhana project will be started soon. Serious measures are being taken to eliminate encroachment. The water filtration plants established in the city will be reworked to restart them. Work is also going on for the construction and repair of roads. He expressed these things while addressing a ceremony at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan. On this occasion, Mian Rashid Iqbal, President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Multan, Senior Vice President Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, Former President Khawaja Muhammad Yusuf, Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Mirza Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Sheikh Fazal Elahi, Naveed Ahmed Chughtai, Anwar Saleem Kane, Khawaja Sohail, Tufail, Zafar Iqbal Siddiqui, Ehtishamul Haq, Saleha Hasan and Secretary

Awam Muhammad Shafiq among others The members were present. Deputy Commissioner Multan said that providing clean water to the residents of the city is the first priority. The existing water filtration plants in different areas will be reviewed and restarted. Philanthropists should also play their role in this regard. There is a problem of lack of human resources in the government departments due to which the affairs are affected. There are many encroachments in the city which affect the flow of traffic and the citizens also face problems. When the operation was started to eliminate encroachment from Nishtar Road, the doctors became the advocates, which is a sad situation. Many things will improve after the election. The district government is developing an app to follow up on the requests made by the citizens and speed up the work. In response to a question, DC Multan said that the work of rehabilitation of various roads including Nawabpur Road has started, which will

provide relief to the citizens and business in these areas will also accelerate. Work is in progress and efforts have been made to minimize U-turns for the flow of traffic. The road cuts will be removed gradually on Busan Road. Discussing the restoration of parks and recreation centers in the city, Captain (Rtd) Rizwan Qadeer said that the PHA has issued clear instructions in this regard and the condition of the parks will improve soon. will be made. A proposal has been sent to the Chief Minister of Punjab that the District Jail Multan should be shifted outside the city and a race course Lahore-style park should be built at that place. In response to another question, he said that the work on the Nadarabad flyover project is going on rapidly. A NOC has been sent to the ministry level on behalf of the railway department and the remaining work will be completed soon. Work will soon begin on Multan Gymkhana at 124 Kanal Razi near South Punjab Secretariat, which will



be a gift to the people of Multan. Earlier, Mian Rashid Iqbal, president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, speaking said that the District Coordination Committee The meeting should be convened early so that decisions made earlier as well as current ones are reviewed It can also help to solve the problems. Supply of clean drinking

water in Multan is a major problem. There are many encroachment problems in the city which need to be solved so that roads can be made available. And the traffic should not be jammed on the highways and the trees in the bazaars and markets should be easy. He said that the complaint cell should be activated for security issues, sanitation and

other administrative matters in Multan. Many roads in Multan city are in a state of destruction. Due to sewage and other problems, the rehabilitation of roads has been stalled for a long time, especially on Water Works Road, Nawabpur Road, Vehari Road and Ring Road. DC Multan taking personal interest to build roads as soon as possible.





# FM Jilani inaugurates picture exhibition in Brussels to commemorate Kashmir Solidarity Day

Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Jilil Abbas Jilani, during his official visit to Brussels, Inaugurated "Photo Exhibition" depicting the plight of the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), at Embassy of Pakistan, Brussels, today.

On the occasion, Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani categorically stated that the brave sons and daughters of Jammu and Kashmir have valiantly resisted all Indian attempts of coercion and control. Today, we pay homage to the martyrs for the Kashmir Cause and victims of the Indian brutalities. India has failed to subjugate the will of the Kashmiri people in their sacrifices will be remembered in history.

He further said that Peace in South Asia will remain elusive until the just



resolution of Jammu and Kashmir Security Council Resolutions and dispute in accordance with the UN according to the aspirations of the

Kashmiri people. The international community must urge India to stop the ongoing human rights violations in IIOJK; reverse the unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019; and implement the UN Security Council Resolutions.

For its part, Pakistan stands in complete solidarity with the Kashmiri people in their struggle for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination. It will continue to extend its full political, moral, and diplomatic support to their just struggle, Foreign Minister added.

This initiative aims to raise awareness about the plight of the Kashmiri people and the importance of recognizing their right to self-determination. The Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels remains committed to fostering international understanding and garnering support for the just cause of the Kashmiri people.

## IMO's Obligations of Reducing Harmful Emissions at Sea Pakistan's Response and Challenges



PPA

ISLAMABAD: NIMA organized a seminar on 'IMO's Obligations of Reducing Harmful Emissions at Sea - Pakistan's Response and Challenges' on 31st Jan 24. V/Adm Abdul Aleem, former DG NIMA graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He emphasized that the roadmap ahead to achieve greener shipping in line with IMO GHG Strategy-23 is challenging but can be overcome by strategic planning and systemic capacity building.

President NIMA, in his welcome remarks, highlighted that in the era of "Climate Emergency", the responsibility of every sector has increased manifold. Mr. Camille Bourgeon, Tech. Officer from IMO, London highlighted the need for early ratification of MARPOL Annex VI by Pakistan as it has already ratified the earlier five annexes. He also assured that IMO will render full technical support in this regard. Ms. Alia Shahid, DG Ports & Shipping, MoMA clarified that a roadmap has been chalked out for its ratification in an early time frame. Cdre Irfan Taj from PNSC presented an elaborate plan as to how PNSC will replace its aging fleet in the next thirty years. He also mentioned that existing ships have already shifted to low-carbon fuel. Dr. M. Faheem from NUST introduced the latest technologies including remote sensing systems which can help in generating air pollutant patterns that can be essential tools to identify long-term effects on the environment. He also presented low-cost air monitoring systems developed by NUST with an accuracy factor of 90%. Representatives from various maritime communities including PMSA, KPT, GPA, and provincial EPAs also gave their valuable inputs. Towards the end, it was a unanimous concern that under the SDG 13 & 14, Pakistan needs to expedite its MARPOL VI ratification process to be able to meet 2030 and 2050 GHG targets.

# Minister for Commerce and Interior visits OICCI to address investor concerns

PPA

KARACHI: Dr Gohar Ejaz, minister for commerce and interior, along with Board of Investment (BoI) Secretary Sohail Rajput, visited the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) on Wednesday to engage with foreign investors and discuss critical issues affecting Pakistan's business landscape.

During the meeting, OICCI CE/Secretary General M Abdul Aleem delivered a comprehensive briefing to key officials on survival challenges faced by foreign investors in Pakistan. Recent survey conducted by the Chamber highlighted key concerns for existing investors part of the Chamber's membership, with rupee devaluation, inflation, the cost of doing business in Pakistan and increasing tax burden being identified as the top pain points.

Despite these challenges, the secretary general emphasized the significant achievements of OICCI members, who have collectively reinvested \$22 billion in Pakistan from fiscal year 2013 to 2022, surpassing the net FDI inflows



of \$19.9 billion during the same period.

In his remarks, Dr Ejaz said that the caretaker government worked day and night to identify the problem areas that were bleeding the economy, one of which was the leakages through the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade. He urged foreign investors to focus on the country's potential. "Pakistan is poised to be a one trillion-dollar economy," he added.

The meeting also addressed some

of the sector-specific challenges, with the Pharma sector facing issues related to pricing policy adherence and overlooked patents during registration by DRAP. The telecommunication sector highlighted concerns about spectrum pricing in US dollar and a regressive and highest taxation on telecom in the region. Moreover, the oil and gas sector raised issues such as delay in timely margin revisions and deregulation challenges. The Chamber also proposed specific areas where

the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) and BoI could collaborate to improve the ease of doing business.

The Chamber suggested measures to reduce the number of regulators and regulations, with a focus on a transparent policy framework and its consistent application, ensuring no surprises either on tariffs or other regulatory matters.

"To promote Pakistan as an investment hub, a proactive presence at key international forums and in international media, along with effective communication by Pakistani diplomats and trade officers abroad, is the need of the hour," said Abdul Aleem.

To attract FDI, the proposal also urged quarterly global press engagements by the prime minister to address negative perceptions and the establishment of help desks with designated relationship managers at BoI, both at the federal and provincial levels. The visit concluded with a focus on ongoing collaboration to implement reforms that would ensure a visible impact on investment promotion and ease of doing business in Pakistan.

## Mobilink Bank joins Champions of Change Coalition to support gender equality

PPA

KARACHI: Ghazanfar Azzam, President and CEO Mobilink Bank, has joined the Champions of Change Coalition, a globally recognised, innovative strategy for achieving gender equality, providing more leadership opportunities to women, and building respectful and inclusive workplaces.

Mobilink Bank is steadfast in its commitment to fostering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) as core principles of its organisational ethos. The Bank is committed to empowering women by offering tailored financial products and providing financial literacy training to female borrowers. Mobilink Bank's Women Inspirational Network (WIN) program, recognised by the International Labour Organization (ILO), is a testament to the Bank's dedication to fostering women's empowerment. This commitment is further strengthened by joining the Champions of Change Coalition, enhancing Mobilink Bank's continual focus on driving positive change.

Mobilink Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of the world's population.

The Champions of Change Coalition has gained recognition as a high-impact model for driving progress on gender equality. This visionary strategy engages influential industry leaders, forming a high-profile coalition committed to accelerating gender equality in the workplace. The Coalition includes CEOs, secretaries of government departments, non-executive directors and community leaders who believe gender equality is a major business, economic, societal and human rights issue.

Convenor Fiza Farhan welcomed Ghazanfar's becoming of member saying, "We welcome Mobilink Bank to the impactful and actionable coalition of private sector leaders in Pakistan, stepping up proudly for gender equality within their organizations and communities, creating the much needed bold and disruptive action we need to make empowering women a business case leading to tangible and progressive outcomes."

Reflecting on the Bank's ongoing efforts, Mr. Ghazanfar shared, "I take great pride in our efforts to promote DEI across the board. Becoming part of the Champions of Change Coalition emphasizes our dedication to creating a more inclusive environment. At Mobilink Bank, empowering women is not just a social responsibility but a core element of our strategic priorities. We aspire to instill diversity within our organization and radiate that influence into the communities we serve. Our initiatives for women's empowerment, diversity and inclusion are not symbolic; they embody our earnest dedication to fostering positive change."



# Engro Corporation announces transition in leadership

PPA

KARACHI: Engro Corporation, Pakistan's premier business conglomerate, has announced the appointment of Ahsan Zafar Syed as President & CEO Designate.

Ghias Khan will continue to serve as President & CEO of Engro Corporation until the end of his term in April 2024.

Ahsan, currently CEO of Engro Fertilizers, began his professional career with Engro (then Exxon Chemical Pakistan Limited) over 30 years ago. Ahsan played a pivotal engineering role in the construction of the EnVen plant for Engro Fertilizers, which is the second-largest single train urea plant in the world. To date, the EnVen plant has been Engro's largest project and investment, amounting to USD 1.1 billion at the time. As the CEO of Engro Ener-



gy, power and mining projects collectively amounting to USD 1.9 billion were established under Ahsan's leadership, enabling Engro's energy vertical to successfully unearth the country's

largest coal reserves in Thar.

In a PSX notification, "The Board has also expressed its deepest gratitude towards the existing President & CEO, Mr. Ghias Khan, whose leadership and

dedication has helped in the substantial growth of the Company."

Over the last 7 years, Engro has achieved historic performance milestones under Ghias's leadership. Its flagship business, Engro Fertilizers, recently became the most valuable fertilizer company on the PSX, the Thar project was completed successfully, VOPAK became a partner in its LNG Terminal, while Engro also started a new telecommunication infrastructure vertical through Engro Enfrashare and established Engro FZE in Dubai to enter regional trade. Ghias implemented Engro Corporation's current operating model, based on which the Engro enterprise received several awards—most recently four of its Group companies were in the top six of the PSX awards for 2023 and Engro was voted as a leading employer of choice.

# WYF held annual pride of Waziristan award show ceremony at Gomal varsity

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Waziristan Youth Forum's (WYF) 4th Annual Pride of Waziristan Award Show function was organized at AQ Khan Editorial Hall of Gomal University Dera.

Waziristan Youth Forum honored Gul Nisa Wazir with Pride of Waziristan Award for raising her voice for women's education.

The ceremony was attended by various political parties, university administration including students, poets, Ullamas and journalists.

Tribal Awami Party chief Azam Khan Mehsum was the

chief guest of the event.

On this occasion, Chief Guest of Tribal Awami Party Azam Khan Mehsum, President of Pronational Doctor Association Dr. Saddam Wazir and Alhaj Shafiq Kasouria addressed the ceremony and said, that God willing, we will continue to cooperate with Waziristan Youth Forum in terms of moral and financial.

On this occasion, the special guests announced 50,000 to Waziristan Youth Forum and one lac to Irfan Mehsum for his good performance in the field of sports.

The chief guest also announced to bear the cost of free

education to 8 poor students of all tribal districts.

Later, Dr. Saddam Wazir also announced to bear the educational expenses of 6 male and female students for the Waziristan Youth Forum.

The speakers said that Waziristan Youth Forum stands for education, development and prosperity and the day is not far when their hard work will pay off.

On the other hand, District Sports Officer Noor Ullah wazir said that the Department of Sports Directorate of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa not only appreciates such positive activities and rather, we have provided financial support to them in every

forum and will continue to do so in the future.

Speakers further said that students should understand the importance of pen and the power of pen and devote all your energies to intellectual creation.

President of Waziristan Youth Forum Bakht Amir Sulman Khel and General Secretary Gul Ahmed Mehsum said that in a backward district like Waziristan, we are trying to highlight the problems of women and youth especially female education in Waziristan Youth Forum.

Apart from this, solving the problems faced in the health sector, development and attracting the youth towards sports are



among our top priorities. cabinet members of Waziristan the participants and guests At the end of the ceremony, the Youth Forum thanked all wholeheartedly.





## Called on

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan to Sri Lanka, Major General (ret'd) Faheem Ul Aziz, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

## Civil Society Organizations unite to combat diseases by curbing iTFAs in all dietary sources

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister of Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan expressed that the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination is committed to taking all possible measures to regulate industrially produced trans-fatty acids in all foods and reduce consumption of unhealthy diets to save precious lives. He expressed his thoughts during his meeting with a coalition of organizations, including the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), Pakistan National Heart Association and the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA). The purpose of this meeting was to draw the Federal Minister's attention to the rising incidence of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) linked to the prevalence of industrially produced Trans fatty acids (iTFAs) in Pakistani dietary sources.

He further said "We are ready to call upon an



inter-ministerial meeting with Ministry of Science and Technology to help regulate industrially produced trans-fatty acids in all foods, and to adopt the best practice policy."

According to Muna-war Hussain, In-country Representative of GHA, "Non-communicable diseases are undermining Pakistan's economic welfare gains, and contributing to reduced productivity of the human resources. They also diminish the life expectancy of the population and render it

vulnerable to various forms of disabilities. Industrially produced trans fats, prevalent in a large number of food items in our markets, pose a major threat to public health."

Emphasizing the need for mandatory government-led regulation of iTFAs, Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Executive Director of CPDI, stated, "We urge the Ministry of National Health to lead the process and work with the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) to establish mandatory regu-

lations limiting iTFAs to less than 2% in all food items, as recommended by WHO guidelines."

The coalition also proposed to eliminate government subsidies through Utility Stores Corporation on harmful food products like banaspati ghee and sugar, and redirect subsidies toward healthier options like fruits, vegetables, lentils and whole grain wheat flour. Mr. Muna-war Hussain added, "It is essential to ensure that subsidies support nutritious foods

in the best interest of public health rather than those high in harmful ingredients such as iTFAs and sugar."

The Federal Minister of Health also indicated that the Ministry had decided to ban the serving of sugar-sweetened beverages in its official events and would be issuing an advisory to the other ministries to follow suit.

In 2023, PYCA launched the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign, aimed at raising public awareness and generating public demand and policy support for the elimination of iTFAs from all food sources. Afshar Iqbal, Director of Communications and Advocacy at PYCA, stated, "Our campaign is a call to action, advocating for mandatory policies that safeguard public health."

Mr. Sanaullah Ghaman, Secretary General, Pakistan National Heart Association was also present and apprised the Minister about the activities of PANAH regarding the harms of unhealthy food and sugary drinks.

## Pak HC-designate to Sri Lanka calls on President Alvi

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Sri Lanka Major General (Retd) Faheem Ul Aziz called on President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday. During the meeting, the president said that Pakistan attached great importance to its bilateral relations with Sri Lanka, which spanned over seven decades of the strong bonds, according to a President House news release. President Alvi stressed the need to further promote the people-to-people and cultural contracts between Pakistan

and Sri Lanka, besides consolidating the ties in the fields of economy and education. He said that bilateral trade volume with Sri Lanka must be increased to its full potential, adding the goodwill feelings of the two countries towards each other should be converted into strong economic ties. President Alvi said that Pakistan had Buddhist heritage sites which were of great importance for the promotion of tourism activities in the country. The president congratulated Major General (Retd) Faheem Ul Aziz on his appointment as Pakistan's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka.

## AJK PM says Kashmir issue first priority

## Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that highlighting Kashmir issue both at national and international level was his government's first and foremost priority.

The AJK premier made these assertions while talking to media men after visiting the office of the All Parties the Hurriyat Conference (APHC) here today. He said that in collaboration with the APHC coordinated efforts would be made to promote Kashmir cause at the global level.

"Besides meeting the foreign diplomats in Islamabad, special delegations would be dispatched abroad to sensitize the world about the early resolution of Kashmir dispute and highlight the plight of Kashmiris", he said. Urging India to shun its policy of intransigence and obduracy, the PM said that the Indian government must accept the ground reality and pave the way for early settlement of the dispute through peaceful means."

The resilient Kashmiri nation won't succumb to India's pressure tactics", he said, adding that the people of Kashmir would never give up their legitimate struggle for right to self-determination, which had been guaranteed to them by the international community. Lauding Pakistan's principled stand on the Kashmir issue, the PM said Paki-



stan's consistent support has been a source of great strength for the people of Kashmir.

He said that Kashmir solidarity day would be observed on 5 February in Pakistan and AJK with a renewed commitment to bring an end to India's illegal and forced occupation of Kashmir.

"Success is our destiny. Insha'Allah, the ongoing freedom struggle reach to its fruition", the PM said. In response to another question, the Prime Minister said that the success of the ongoing freedom movement in the Indian occupied Kashmir was that India has deployed 900,000 troops in a small area.

Referring to Kashmiris' unconditional love for the people and state of Pakistan, he said that Kashmiris had decided to accede to Pakistan on July 19, 1947. Speaking on the occasion, the APHC convener Mahmood Ahmed Saghar said that the Prime Minister's visit to Hurriyat Conference office was of great importance. Reiterating Kashmiris' pledge to carry forward the mission of martyrs, he said that the ongoing struggle continue at all fronts till the people of Kashmir achieve their cherished goal of freedom.

## Pakistan's education demand provides opportunity for UK higher education



## PPA

ISLAMABAD: The British Council launched its "Mapping International Student Mobility from Pakistan" report at an event in Islamabad. The report, aimed at unravelling the dynamics of student mobility to the UK, revealed crucial insights that will shape the future landscape of educational collaboration across Pakistan.

A gap between supply and demand in Pakistan's tertiary education proposition is driving its university-age population overseas. Other important findings of the report included: The launch event was attended by

the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott CME OBE, Country Director British Council Pakistan, James Hampson, representatives from UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and policymakers. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott said:

James Hampson, Country Director British Council Pakistan said: "This report is a significant step towards informed decision-making for all stakeholders and is a testament to the work the British Council is doing to improve access to international opportunities for students across Pakistan."

## Probationary Officers of 51st Common Training Program visit FBR

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The probationary officers of 51st Common Training Programme (CTP) visited the Federal Board of Revenue Headquarters today as part of their pre-service training activities. The batch comprised 236 officers including 92 female officers. Upon arrival, the probationers were received warmly by officers of FBR and escorted to the auditorium for a briefing.

Member Administration Syed Nadeem Hussain Rizvi chaired the session which was also attended by Member Inland Revenue-Operations Mir Badshah Khan Wazir, Member Customs-Operations Dr. Farid Iqbal Qureshi and other senior officers of the Revenue Division.

On the occasion, Member Administration briefed the visiting officers about the working, structure and functions of FBR. He apprised them about the revenue collection system and various



initiatives and interventions being undertaken to broaden the tax base to tap true

tax potential for betterment of the national economy. He also informed about reform

measures being introduced to transform FBR into a modern and dynamic organization. Mr. Rizvi also wished the probationers best of luck in their future endeavors.

The probationary officers also visited different Wings of FBR for first-hand experience of working of the Division. They evinced keen interest in the functioning of FBR and asked queries for understanding of the tax administration. Later, souvenirs were also distributed among the trainee officers.

## UN FAO conference to shape future of food security and reform regional food systems

## PPA

ISLAMABAD: A High-level delegation from Pakistan participated virtually at a major international conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in a multilateral effort to reform agrifood systems across the Asia-Pacific region after years of the pandemic, climate emergencies, volatile markets, and economies that have affected millions of producers and consumers.

The Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (#APRC37) is convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka.



The delegation from Pakistan comprised of Government of Pakistan's nominated Economic Consultant in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Dr Haroon Sarwar Awan, FAO Representative in Pakistan Florence Rolle, Deputy FAO Representative a.i. Emmanuel Monca-

da and Assistant FAO Representative (Programme) Aamer Irshad.

Highlighting the importance of APRC for Pakistan, FAO Representative in Pakistan Florence said that this country's high-level participation in this important conference will help guide FAO's work here in Pakistan and right across the Asia and Pacific region, as all FAO Member Nations share a common goal of achieving the SDGs by 2030, particularly those goals relating to hunger, poverty and inequality.

Dr Haroon, while speaking during the meeting, informed that Asia-Pacific LDCs, including Pakistan, grapple with looming debt distress, necessitating a departure from short-term crisis

responses to strategic investments. We emphasize that it's time for the global community to redirect its focus towards long-term solutions, with a spotlight on financing, gender empowerment in agriculture, and increased credit for smallholders, he emphasized.

There are 46 FAO Member Nations in Asia and the Pacific. Hundreds of high-level participants are registering for a senior official's meeting (31 January to 2 February-virtually), and a Ministerial Session from 19 to 22 February (in-person). The FAO Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu, is expected to travel from FAO headquarters in Rome to participate in the Ministerial Session.