



Dr. Arif Alvi urges equal opportunities for businesswomen to improve the economy

Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan urged that businesswomen should be provided equal opportunities to grow in the business field that would pave the way for better development of the economy and bring prosperity to the country. He said that enhanced participation of women in business... (Details on Page 8)



Xi Jinping, man of culture

Since the introduction of Xi Jinping Thought on Culture in October 2023, "culture" has become a buzzword throughout China. Ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year, the country has been busy organizing various cultural events to embrace this new trend. In the eastern province of Zhejiang, a museum has been captivating tourists with AR technology, reviving scenes of daily life and work from 8,000 years ago. In the northwestern Shaanxi Province, museum visitors have the chance to savor... (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Let's go...

PNS Saif participated in Passage Exercise with Sri Lankan Navy ship at Colombo in Sri Lanka.



PNS SAIF visits Sri Lanka during regional maritime security patrol

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Navy's PNS SAIF visited Colombo, Sri Lanka during its Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP) deployment on Friday. Upon arrival at the port, the ship was received by officials of Pakistan Embassy and Sri Lankan Navy, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

During the stay at the port, the Commanding Officer of PNS SAIF called on senior naval and military officials of Sri Lanka. During the interactions, matters of mutual interests were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was re-affirmed. The Commanding Officer also conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naved Ashraf for the people of Sri Lanka in general and the

Sri Lankan Navy in particular. During stay at the port, the ship's crew visited different Sri Lankan Navy training facilities, and the Sri Lankan Navy officers and men also visited the Pakistan Navy ship. At the end of the port call, PNS SAIF participated in the Passage Exercise with a Sri Lankan Navy ship out at sea. The Pakistan Navy ships are regularly deployed on RMSP to fulfill international obligations for maritime security while ensuring freedom of navigation on high seas. Sri Lanka and Pakistan enjoy friendly relations, which have strengthened over the period of time. The visit of PNS SAIF to Sri Lanka contributed significantly towards promoting naval collaboration between the two friendly countries that strengthened bilateral relations and the existing bond of their friendship.

Mind games important for fostering physical, mental growth in youth: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday emphasizing the importance of sports, particularly mind games, in fostering both physical and mental development of youth, said that the chess game helps to instill discipline in individuals' thought processes. Addressing the launch of the Prime Minister's National Mind Sports Initiative, the prime minister highlighted the positive impact of such mind games on mental well-being and said the youth engaged in such healthy activities would become successful professionals in the future.

He said these games promote cognitive activity and critical thinking among the players. The prime minister said he was happy

that he made a commitment to this special cause, and he will also continue to support and promote this cause in the future.

He said every school in the country should have access to this game. Acknowledging the contribution of the federal minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Fawad Hassan Fawad PM Kakar said that due to his personal efforts, the launch of this initiative became possible. Fawad Hassan Fawad, on the occasion, informed that, under the initiative, the facility of mind games would be provided at 10,000 public schools across the country. "We are going to take it across all the public schools in Pakistan, and we are also engaging the corporate sector and inviting the private schools to have this in every single school in the coun-



try," he added. The minister said that in the first month, some 100 schools in Islamabad would be given the facility.

The minister also recalled the tremendous performance of late Mir Sultan Khan, a native chess player from Sargodha, who won

the British Chess Championship in 1929, 1931, and 1932. To acknowledge the performance of Mir Sultan Khan, President Arkady Dvorkovich presented an award to Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, who received the award on behalf of

Mir Sultan Khan. The President of the International Chess Federation, speaking on the occasion, said that besides being a mind game, chess was a lot of fun too. He said this game was very important for a country like Pakistan, where millions of young people were growing up. He said, "Some 600,000 kids in 10,000 schools in Pakistan will have the chance to get access to this game. He said the federation will support and train the teachers, who will then train kids." The Managing Director (MD) of the International Chess Federation, Dana Reizniece-Ozola, President of the Asian Chess Federation, Sheikh Sultan bin Khaleefa Alnahyan, and President of the Pakistan Chess Federation, Muhammad Hanif Qureshi, were also present on the occasion.

Akbar S. Babar extends reconciliation offer to PTI founder

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: PTI founding member Akbar S. Babar on Friday extended a reconciliation offer to party founder Imran Khan, urging for collective action to salvage and reorganise the party.

Addressing a press conference, Babar said that the party is at critical juncture, highlighting the urgent need for reform. He clarified that his intentions were not adversarial but rooted in a genuine desire to see PTI thrive.

Akbar S. Babar underscored the importance of transparent intra-party elections, expressing concerns that PTI could face irreparable damage if crucial reforms were not implemented.

He proposed a collaborative effort, suggesting the nomination of representatives from both sides to spearhead neces-

sary changes.

In his reconciliation offer to Imran Khan, Babar outlined a framework for cooperation, urging the nomination of representatives and lawyers from both factions to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the party. He emphasised the need for reconciliation and unity, labeling it as the last opportunity to rescue PTI from further deterioration.

He also called for an investigation by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) into the intra-party election process, highlighting the impact of poor decisions and leadership deficiencies within PTI.

He reflected on PTI's journey, acknowledging its past successes but lamenting its deviation from its original path.

Earlier in the day, it was reported that PTI has postponed its intra-party elections - scheduled for Feb 5.

Court reserves verdict in PTI founder, Bushra Bibi marriage case

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A local court on Friday night reserved a verdict in 'un-Islamic' marriage case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and former first lady Bushra Bibi.

Judge Qudratullah will announce the verdict tomorrow at Adiala Jail, where deposed prime minister is currently incarcerated.

The case, filed by Bushra Bibi's first husband, Khawar Maneka, alleges that Bushra violated the Islamic practice of observing the mandatory pause, or Iddat, between two marriages.

During the hearing today, the lawyers filed two petitions on acquittal and jurisdiction of the court - which were disposed of following arguments.

The cross-examination of the four pros-

ecution witnesses, including Maneka, Aun Chaudhry, Nikah Khawan Mufti Saeed, and Maneka's employee Latif, has been completed. The defence was led by Advocate Salman Akram Raja for Khan and Advocate Osman Riaz Gul for Bushra.

Earlier in the day, it was reported that former first lady, Bushra Bibi and her ex-husband Khawar Maneka exchanged heated words during the hearing of the 'un-Islamic' marriage case in Adiala Jail.

The hearing of the 'un-Islamic' marriage case of PTI founder and Bushra Bibi was presided over by Judge Qudratullah. During the hearing, Khawar Maneka, PTI founder, and Bushra Bibi exchanged heated words.

At the outset of the hearing, Imran Khan said he saw Bushra Bibi on the day of their nikkah, at this juncture, Khawar Maneka interrupted him by saying "Fear Allah, you ruined my family."

Macch operation: Security forces kill 24 terrorists in three days

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Security forces on Friday killed 24 terrorists in a clearance operation in Mach and Kolpur Balochistan.

According to the Army's media wing, the terrorists attacked Mach and Kolpur Complexes in Balochistan on the night of 29/30 January 2024.

ISPR stated that the terrorists were then gunned down in the sanitisation and clearance operations which have been concluded after clearing and securing the area.

During the firefights and clearance operations, in the last three days, 24 terrorists have been killed including key terrorists Shehzad Baloch, Attaullah, Salah Uddin, Abdul Wadood and Zeeshan, ISPR added.

The Army's media wing further said that the identification process of remaining terrorists is in process.

However, during intense exchange of fire, four brave members of Law Enforcement Agencies, having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat along with two innocent civilians.

Effective response by Law Enforcement Agencies is a testament of their unrelenting resolve in fight against terrorism. Pakistan's Security Forces stand shoulder to shoulder with other Law Enforcement Agencies to ensure peace & stability in the country."

It may be noted that fifteen rockets were fired in the town of Machh, Bolan, earlier this week. The attack created panic in the area. The security forces responded promptly to the attacks.

The failed attack in Mach later revealed links between the proscribed Balochistan Liberation Front (BLA) and the Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).

Ethiopian delegation called on Caretaker Federal Minister



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: An Ethiopian delegation led by Minister of Fiscal Policy and Public Finance Dr Eyob Tekalign Tolina Friday called on Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar. The Finance Minister welcomed the delegation on their visit to Pakistan and said that Pakistan highly values its bilateral ties with Ethiopia including trade and economic relations.

Dr Shamshad Akhtar briefed the delegates on the latest economic developments, fiscal policy adjustments, and tax reforms undertaken by the Caretaker government.

The delegation was greatly impressed by Pakistan's effective resolution of economic challenges and expressed their keen interest in learning from the country's experiences. The admiration stemmed from Pakistan's successful emergence from economic difficulties, making it a source of valuable insights for others seeking to navigate similar issues. This interest underscored a global recognition of Pakistan's experience as a valuable lesson in economic recovery. The meeting was attended by Governor State Bank Jameel Ahmed, FBR Chairman Amjad Zubair Tiwana and Secretary Finance Imdad Bosal.

Elections 2024: 'Suspension' of internet, cellular services proposed on Feb 8

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: A proposal to suspend cellular and internet services in sensitive areas on February 8, the day when Pakistanis will vote to elect the new assembly, has come to light.

The proposal was put forward

during the ECP's meeting held to review the law and order situation in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The sources privy to the development said, the proposal to suspend internet and mobile services in sensitive areas of the country during the general elec-

tions 2024 was forward.

The meeting also discussed the security of the election candidates, while CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja expressed concerns over increasing attacks on political gatherings in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In a press statement after the

meeting, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja said that those who are trying to obstruct the polls by disturbing the peace would be dealt with strictly.

"There should be no confusion or misunderstanding as the General Elections 2024 will be held on time," the CEC made it

clear. He said that terrorism is the biggest enemy of the electoral process.

Sikandar Sultan Raja said that despite the security challenges, the ECP is fully prepared to hold the elections on February 8. The CEC also expressed full confidence in the law enforcement agencies

Pashtun hostilities are also based on equality: JUI chief Fazalur Rehman

Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: JUI chief Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman while addressing the general gathering on Friday said that we are doing Pashtun hostility on the basis of equality.

He said, if Imran was in the field, the competition would have been fun.

He said, if his hands were open, he would have been told how politics is done in Pakistan.

Maulana said that we do not do such politics that the opponent is in jail and my hands are open.

He said that he has always opposed the government makers under the external agenda, those who come from the agenda that I will recognize Israel.

He said, I will break the country and strengthen the Jewish lobby.

I will eliminate modesty from the hearts of the nation and the young generation, the dupatta of modesty is to be taken from the heads of sisters and daughters.



He said, the love of Islam and faith must be eradicated from the hearts of the youth.

If someone gives this theory to our young generation, it will be a temptation and it is the responsibility of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam to fight this temptation.

He said that he fought such a war

that the world will remember, protecting the rights of non-Muslims is our responsibility.

He expressed these views while addressing the election gathering of his son Mufti Asad Mahmood in Town Hall Tank.

Apart from other leaders, PK 108 candidates Mehmood Ahmad Bettani,

Maulana Jamal Uddin, Nisar Ahmad Bettani and Mufti Allah Noor Shams Mehsud were also present on this occasion.

He said that this is not an election, this jihad is not less than a jihad.

JUI has always struggled for the exaltation of the word and the enforcement of the Sharia system in the country and this struggle will continue.

He said that the building of the country was shaken, now they say that you cannot fix it, and how to fix this building will now fall down, it will now be rebuilt.

He said that the destroyers should hold themselves accountable, they themselves are the victims of abuse.

He said that he will always raise his voice against those who spread obscenity and nudity among the youth.

He further said in his address that the people of Tank have been loyal to the late Mufti Mahmood till now.

JUI will not compromise on your rights and Islamic values.



Prof. Dr. Muhammad Raffique appointed Dean of Sciences at UAJK.

Maulana Asamudin withdraw in favor of JUI rebel candidate



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Yesterday, a dignified ceremony was held in the tank located at the house of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Asam Uddin Mehsud.

In which tribal elders and youths participated in large numbers. During the ceremony, Maulana Asam Uddin announced the withdrawal of JUI rebel and independent candidate PK-109 in favor of Malik Saeed Anwar Mehsud and announced his full support and cooperation.

He said that now Mehsud tribes have decided that the group occupying the community will not be allowed to do more corruption under any circumstances.

He charged that 49 percent has been deducted from the development projects here, of which every pie has to be accounted for.

He stated to the Election Commission that Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam is buying identity cards from the people of South Waziristan Lower and Upper. He said, there have been contests in the election here before, which political leaders have reached their power through rigging.

He said that the Election Commission should take notice of this and take action against those responsible.

On this occasion, tribal elders Malik Rapa Khan, Malik Said Rehman, Malik Karamat, Malik Irfan Uddin Burki and many other tribal elders and youths were present.

Jamaat-e-Islami pledges to help PML-N, PPP in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Addressing the election meeting of candidate NA-101 Sheikh Muhammad Mushtaq, PP-112 Malik Ashfaq Awan at the residence of Prime Union chief organizer Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry, Jamaat-e-Islami District Amir Prof. Mahbub-ul-Zaman Butt said that PML-N, PTI, and PP There are different sides of the same coin. Those who were in power for 76 years did nothing for the people. At this time, the nation needs a leadership that can heal the sufferings of the people. In the meeting, the president of the political committee, Mian Tahir Ayub, Ameerzon Ghulam Abbas Khan, Sheikh Muhammad Imran, Umar Farooq, Sheikh Muhammad Ismail and a large number of local elders and youths, participated and assured the candidates of Jamaat-e-Islami of the promise of victory by stamping the scales on February 8. The speakers said that as the elections are approaching, old political artisans have come into the field and started trying to mislead the people. Slogans are being presented in a new way, the people are now awake, they have been tested for 76 years, the political parties that have been in power for many times have not been able to improve, they got another chance and Pakistan is further behind.

Two sentenced to death in Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Two sentenced to death in two different murder cases in Attock on Friday, Police spokesman said.

In the first incident, an additional session judge Qmmar Uz Zaman in Pindigheb town of Attock on Friday sentenced a convict to death for murdering a married woman over domestic feud in the limits of Pindigheb Police station on November 4, 2022. The judge also imposed fine over convict as damages.

According to the FIR registered under section 302 and 34 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) at Pindigheb Police station, the accused Iftikhar Ahmed had shot dead wife of Muhammad Ashraf in Akhlas area. The suspect went underground after committing the cold blood murder and subsequently he was declared a proclaimed offender (PO) by the court. Later Police arrested the suspect after raiding at his hideout. Later during the trial, the prosecution produced substantial evidence against the accused which established involvement of Mr Ahmed in the cold blood murder of the married woman and subsequently sent the convict to gallows. The convict was also ordered to pay Rs 0.4 million as damages.

Moreover, additional session judge Attock Muhammad Zaffar Iqbal sentenced a convict to death for killing a woman in Sarwala area in the City police area in the year 2017. The judge also imposed a fine over convicts as damages. According to the FIR registered against the accused Khalid Nawaz has shot dead his sister in law over honor and went underground. The court has declared him proclaimed offender (PO) due to his willful absence. Later in year 2023, Police arrested the accused and recovered the weapon utilized in the murder case. The prosecution produced substantial evidence against the accused which established involvement of the suspect in the cold blood murder of the woman and subsequently sent the convict to gallows. The convict was also ordered to pay Rs 0.5 million as damages.

Qadianis are open enemies of Islam and Pakistan

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: February was celebrated as Khatman-e-Nububat Day throughout Azad Kashmir. On February 2nd, 2018, the government of Azad Kashmir took the best step to protect Khatman-e-Nubuwat. Maulana Qazi Mahmudul Hasan Ashraf the Chief of Tehreek Khatman e Nabuwat has said that

Qadiani forces wanted create mistrust in Pakistan and the nation on the support of Israel and India. In order to protect the belief of the end of Prophethood and the Namos of Mustafa (SAWS), laws should be strictly followed in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. The ban on the use of Islamic slogans should be implemented.

Convocation

ISLAMABAD: Director General Federal Directorate of Education Tanveer Ahmed posing for a group photograph along with students after the 3rd convocation ceremony of FG Home Economics College, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Azad Kashmir to 'honor' Kashmiris in UK and Europe: PM AJK

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister of the Azad Government of Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Haq said that the Kashmiris living abroad are the true ambassadors of the Kashmir Freedom Movement. I will visit UK and Europe very soon to organize freedom of Occupied Kashmir, rights of its people and freedom movement of Kashmir. By organizing the Kashmiris living on both sides of the state and across the world, the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the Hurriyat Conference will not allow India's atrocities, India's tyranny and Modi's Hindutva agenda to come to fruition. All the resources of



Azad Kashmir will be utilized for the rights of the people of the state. Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq meeting with the founding chairman of Jammu Kashmir Movement for Self-Determination International Raja Najabat Hussain Satara Pakistan. Raja Najabat Hussain invited the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir to visit UK

and Europe and said that movement officials, other political, social and religious organizations, councilors, members of parliament and Kashmir-friendly organizations should join forces to highlight the Azadi Kashmir movement on the diplomatic front. From February 5th to February 11th, in addition to holding conferences, seminars and talks, the British

Parliament will organize events in Birmingham, Manchester, London, Bradford, Rochdale and Nelson to inform the international community, British politicians, the United Kingdom. The people's representatives can be made aware of the atrocities committed by India on the people of Occupied Kashmir and express solidarity with the people of Occupied Kashmir. The people of Occupied Kashmir are continuously striving for the freedom of their homeland and the accession to Pakistan, and the fulfillment of this, the Kashmiris living abroad and the government of Azad Kashmir inside the country; the leadership of the Hurriyat Conference and the people of Pakistan.

Secretary Higher Education, Punjab visited the Board of Education Rawalpindi

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Secretary Higher Education Government of the Punjab Khalid Saleem visited the Board of Education Rawalpindi, Secretary Higher Education Government of the Punjab Khalid Saleem visited the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Rawalpindi, Chairman Education Board Rawalpindi Muhammad Adnan Khan Secretary Board Prof. Asif Hussain, Controller of Examinations Prof. Sajid Mehmood Farooqui and Director Colleges Rawalpindi Division Prof. Sher Ahmed Sati welcomed the Secretary Higher Education on his arrival at the Education Board. Examined the facilities provided, appreciated the efforts of Chairman Education Board Rawalpindi Muhammad Adnan Khan on the arrangements.

PPP expecting clean sweep in Sujawal

Kamran Khamiso Khawaja

SUJAWAL: Sujawal the district located along the coastline of the Arabian Sea was given the status of a separate revenue district in 2013 after carving it out from historically rich district Thatta.

The district comprises one national assembly and two provincial assembly seats. The Pakistan People's Party in order to maintain its political dominance in the coastal region of the province has given preference to the Shirazi family over its stalwart leaders who stood by the party during hard times.

In the past the highly influential Shirazi family had made things strenuous for PPP especially during the general elections of 2002, 2008 and 2013 in Thatta and Sujawal districts.



During 2008 general elections when Sujawal was part of Thatta district and the areas of Sujawal comprising one national assembly and two provincial assembly seats PPP failed to secure even a single seat despite holding sincere public sympathy following

assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

The general elections of 2013 also could not change things for PPP in Sujawal district and all its candidates were defeated by Shirazis and their ally Muhammad Ali Malkani. Finding no other way PPP joined hands with both

Shirazi and Malkani clans for general elections of 2018 and that coalition still continues despite glitches on several occasions. As many as 35 candidates are gearing up for three seats of the district in the upcoming elections.

The constituency of PS-73 Sujawal-I encompasses Sujawal city, Belo, Darro, Mirpur Bathoro and Jhoke Sharif areas of the district.

While PS: 74 Sujawal-II include Jati, Chuhar Jamali, Latiyon, Chach and Shahbunder. Around 15 candidates are in the race for PS: 74 but Pakistan Peoples Party's candidate who was once its bitter rival is expected to take the better of his opponents on the polling day. Same goes with PS: 73 where Shah Hussain Shah Shirazi looks in a comfortable position.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:39 am
Zohr	12:21 pm
Asr	4:01 pm
Maghrib	5:39 pm
Isha	7:04 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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886

Punjab College forefront of educational institutions: Hafiz Qasim

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Chairman Education Board Hafiz Muhammad Qasim and Secretary Khurram Shahzad Qureshi have said that living nations remember their culture and Punjab College is at the forefront of educational institutions. It is only the hard work that the students and teachers have done here. It is the flagship of Punjab Group of Colleges. It is number one in education as well as in extra-curricular activities. Today's cultural show is the proof of this, in which apart from traditional food, Punjab, Sindh, PK, Balochistan, Kashmiri Saraiki models are made and the culture of Pakistan. On this occasion Director Admin Punjab College Professor Osama highlighted Bashir Qureshi has said that Pakistan is a land of cultures and civilizations. The aim of this activity is to provide students with awareness of their culture and global creative entertainment so that our students feel proud by participating in such events and the works of art made by students. After seeing the exhibition, the guests will know about it here. How much talent is there among the students. In today's era of modern technology and IT, we have to remember our culture. The students thanked the director and management of Punjab College for organizing the cultural show. Vice Principal Professor Subhan Khan provides opportunities in the event. Sherwani Prof. Saima Fayyaz, Prof. Nazia Faiz, Prof. Saima Zafar, and a large number of teachers and students participated.

Food System Dashboard a troubleshooter for policymakers, academia: experts

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a seminar termed the recently established Pakistan Subnational Food System Dashboard as a problem-solving advanced solution for the policymakers and academia working in the field of agriculture and food security.

The seminar titled, "Using Digital Platforms for Sustaining Food Systems", was organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) here.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ghulam Sadiq Afridi, Member of Social Sciences, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), said though the country has the world's one of the most diverse and beautiful agricultural landscape, it is ranked eighth globally in farm production.

The establishment of Pakistan's Subnational Food Systems Dashboard

by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research in partnership with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and housed in the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC), is the critical step towards the provision of easy access to the available data.

Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, SDPI Executive Director, said the dashboard will carry subnational data across a range of key food system indicators to support national and sub-national level stakeholders with better planning. While sharing lessons from SDPI's contribution to the Digital Transformation of the Food System in Pakistan, Dr Suleri said that the Food Security Dashboard aimed to monitor the supply and demand of essential food commodities and the resulting changes in prices, however, it is of no avail unless the data is fed into the system daily.

Earlier, Faiz Rasool, Senior Policy Advisor, GAIN, said "Pakistan is a country where nutrition emergency should be



imposed as 42% of its child population is malnourished and 82.8% Pakistanis are unable to have a healthy diet." He mentioned that the government of Paki-

stan has acknowledged GAIN's priority areas and added them to its plan of action. Nadeem Iqbal, CEO of The Network

for Consumer Protection, said the dashboard needs to provide data pertaining to the origin of the commodity, its seasons and availability.

Hats

ISLAMABAD: A vendor arranging and displaying caps to attract the customers outside Masjid at Aabpara, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Ayesha Omar takes a playful jab at trolling critic on Instagram

PPA



KARACHI: Ayesha Omar, the prominent star of Bulbulay fame and soon to be featured in Taxali Gate, recently shared a video showcasing her in an elegant ensemble on Instagram. While celebrities often find themselves subjected to comments on their fashion choices, occasionally bordering on moral scrutiny or religious judgments, Ayesha Omar exhibited remarkable composure in response to a critical comment.

In a social media landscape where individuals and fans can be quick to express unsolicited opinions, Ayesha Omar encountered a troll who commented on her outfit. Rather than succumbing to frustration or engaging in a heated exchange, the celebrity chose a light-hearted approach to diffuse the situation. Responding with a touch of humor, she retorted, "Bite Lo, Light Lo," dismissing the comment with a playful attitude and refusing to let it impact her demeanor.

Tamasha Brings HD Live Streaming of HBL-PSL 9 to Pakistani Cricket Fans

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Once again, Tamasha, Pakistan's largest homegrown OTT video streaming and entertainment platform, is bringing HD live streaming of the highly anticipated Pakistan Super League 2024 (HBL PSL 9). Cricket enthusiasts across Pakistan can now enjoy HD live streaming of all HBL PSL 9 matches on the Tamasha mobile app.



A signing ceremony between Tamasha and Walec Technologies leadership was recently held in Islamabad where Tamasha acquired digital broadcasting rights for the tournament, bringing HD live streaming of all HBL-PSL 9 matches straight to the smartphones of millions of Pakistanis, regardless of their network.

Sharing his thoughts on this exciting development, Aamer Ejaz, Chief Digital Officer at Jazz, said, "Catering to the undying love of millions of Pakistanis for the game of cricket, Tamasha is set to bring high-definition live streaming of yet another thrilling PSL season. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our users for choosing Tamasha as their go-to platform, not just for cricket but also for a diverse range of sports, news, movies, originals, and other digital entertainment. I hope the new PSL season shatters records and establishes new milestones in Pakistan's digital entertainment landscape."

The 9th edition of the HBL PSL is set to kick off on February 17, 2024, at the PCB's headquarters in Lahore. The opening match will feature Lahore Qalandars, two-time winners and defending champions, facing Islamabad United, the winners of the 2016 and 2018 editions. The tournament's main matches will be spread across four cities - Karachi, Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi. The culmination of the six-team event will be the final at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi on March 18.

Kashmir Solidarity Week celebrated



Correspondent

FAISALABAD: Government College Women University Department of Political Science, Humanities and Sociology, Kashmir Solidarity Week was celebrated in which poster display, documentary, seminar, Kashmiri Cultural Day, awareness walk and chain of human hands were made. Vice Chancellor Government College Women University Professor Dr. Zal Huma Nazli said that the people of Pakistan celebrate February 5 as an expression of solidarity with the oppressed Kashmiri brothers. And on this day express the determination that every Pakistani strongly condemns the Indian domination in occupied Kashmir Valley and demands that Kashmiris be given the right to vote according to the UNO resolution so that they can become Pakistan of their own accord. He further said that we are aware of the immense difficulties of Kashmir and are with them in this hour of difficulty.

Zahoor Dharija warns politicians to end killing of Saraikis

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Our patience should not be tested, if the killing of Saraikis in Balochistan and Waziristan is not stopped, they will block the roads. These views were expressed by the president of the Sirakistan National Council, Zahoor Dharija, while talking to the artists of Wasib, Haji Ghulam Farid Kanira, Maqbool Kharal and Thobia Malik, who came for the meeting. Zahoor Dharija said that Wasib's patience is running out, how long will we pick up the dead bodies of our people, arrest the murderers of the ruling terrorists and punish them severely. He said that if the genocide of Saraikis from Balochistan and Waziristan is not stopped, trucks from Waziristan and Balochistan will not be able to pass through Saraikistan. He said that the killers of 9 Syrian laborers who were killed in Iran are the same people who have been killing Syrian laborers for years in Balochistan. He said that when the dead bodies of

those who were killed in Iran and Balochistan reached DG Khan and Multan, there was a state of mourning in the entire Wasib. He said that the politicians are going door to door begging for votes, but they have not yet gone to the families of the victims to condole. Zahoor Dharija said that notice has been taken for cutting a tree in Karachi, but no one takes notice of our Saraiki youths being killed. He said that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan belongs to Balochistan, he also did not take notice of the killing of poor Saraiki workers, the nationalists of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa did not condemn or condole these incidents. Zahoor Dharija said that Saraiki Wasib is being treated worse than Bengalis, there is peace in Saraiki, but that does not mean that whoever wants to kill our people, our patience is exhausted by the killing of Saraiki. It is happening, if the ruling forces do not stop the genocide of Saraikis, protest. They will sit and block the roads.

Funeral prayer of 9 Pakistani laborers killed in Iran

Asim Tanveer

ALIPUR: Among the 9 Pakistanis who were martyred by terrorists in Iran on January 27, 2024, 5 people belong to different areas of Alipur.

Five of the 9 Pakistanis who were martyred by terrorists in Iran on January 27, 2024, belong to the areas of Ali, Ali Town, Fatehpur Road, Tabi Arain and Khairpur Sadat's Basti Mathanivali. The dead bodies of Alipur were brought to their native areas on February 2 at 11:30. 4 people in Government Boys High School of Alipore,

of Khairpur Sadat. Assistant Commissioner Alipur Mukram Sultan Sahu, DSP Alipur Chaudhry Fayazul Haque, Special Branch, Security branch, including government officials and employees, independent candidate of NA-178, Javed Saeed Kazmi, Professor Muhammad Shafi Khan of Tehreek-e-Labeek, PML-N candidate Syed Sabtain Raza Bukhari from PP-274, political and social personalities, journalists, businessmen. And ordinary citizens participated in hundreds, the funeral prayer of Javed Saeed Kazmi taught, on this occasion, prayers were also offered for the martyrs. They have demanded to bring them to their native areas, mourn the five martyrs. He was buried in the cemeteries of his native lands in Sikkim.

Jammu and Kashmir photo exhibition held in Faisalabad on Kashmir Solidarity Day

Abdul Majeed

FAISALABAD: Markazi President Cloth Board Etihad Group Pakistan Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra inaugurated a photo exhibition on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day. A photo exhibition was organized in Punjab Council of Arts, Faisalabad, in which the plight of the oppressed people of Jammu and Kashmir under Indian illegal occupation is reflected. Expressing on this occasion, Naseer Yousuf Vohra said that Jammu and Kashmir the brave sons and daughters of are bravely fighting the oppression of India. Today we pay homage to the martyrs of the Kashmir cause and the victims of Indian atrocities. India has failed to crush the spirit of Kashmiris and their sacrifices will be remembered in history. Director Punjab Arts Coun-



cil Faisalabad Muhammad Abrar Alam said that for lasting peace in South Asia, according to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, a fair solution to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir is indispensable.

The international community should urge India to stop human rights violations in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, withdraw the unilateral and illegal measures of August 5, 2019 and implement the UN Security Council resolutions to resolve the issue. Direc-

tor Press Information Khursheed Jilani said that Pakistan stands in full solidarity with Kashmiris in their struggle for their inalienable right to self-determination and will continue to extend full political, moral and diplomatic support to their just struggle. Khursheed Jilani further said that the aim of this initiative is to create awareness about the plight of the Kashmiri people and the importance of recognizing their right to self-determination. Students have shown great interest in this photo exhibition. Former Director Tariq Javed Chaudhry, Deputy Director Imran, Assistant Director Asad and Field Officer Lyallpur Museum Shahnaz Mehmood and others were present on this occasion. Finally, prayers were also offered for the martyrs of Kashmir, the forces of Pakistan and the integrity of Pakistan.

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Faisalabad - Old faces in a new political paradigm

Anjum Aala Rehman

Deeply entrenched in caste system, the industrial hub of Pakistan is once again witnessing the old faces contesting 2024 elections embracing more or less the same slogans of economic revival, jobs and ameliorating the lot of people.

Although social media has revolutionized the society in the awareness regime, yet the old doctrine of caste and incentives based politics still persists in most parts of the country and Faisalabad is not an exception.

Known as Manchester of Pakistan - Faisalabad district is generally dominated by Jutt, Rajpoot, Gujjar, Arain, Ansari, Baloch bradaris with some other clans settled here even prior to the Independence of Pakistan.

Besides having their strong caste base, these candidates also own the tickets of key national political parties like Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples Party with some candidates contesting as independents and claiming to be supported by PTI whose symbol of 'Bat' was suspended by the ECP due to faulty intra party elections.

Daily life interactions, participation in funerals and weddings, disputes resolution at courts and police stations as well as local development work once again surfaces as mainstay in keeping the vote bank intact.

Future promises and hopes like always

are also in the heart of election campaign with PML-N ensuring to putting the country on strong economic footing and PPP promising employments, salaries increase, BISP expansion and grassroots development.

Electioneering gained momentum in Faisalabad-the third biggest metropolis of the country with a recent public meeting by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. But, political pundits foresee a major impetus in the campaign after PML-N supremo Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's public gathering on February 02.

With the February 08 elections zeroing in, the candidates from main political parties and the independents are diligently wooing voters by arranging public meetings and serving voters at election camps (Deras) with food, tea and even providing them logistics for personal use.

Housing over eight million populace, 5,297,899 Faisalabad voters including 2,841,085 male and 2,456,814 female - would be voting to elect 10 MNAs and 21 MPAs out of 277 and 574 candidates contesting elections respectively for National and Provincial Assembly seats.

Political figures like Rana Sanaullah Khan, Abid Sher Ali, Haji Akram Ansari, Rana Farooq Saeed Khan, Hafiz Mumtaz Ahmad, Hamayun Akhtar Khan, Ali Afzal Sahi, Mina Irfan Mannan, Shahbaz Babar, Arif Gill, Saadullah Baloch and Ali Gohar Baloch from top known Bradaris of the district.

It is worth mentioning that two stalwart families of Arain and Rajput bradaris - the Chaudhary Nazir and Rana

Zahif Tauseef family are not participating in this election.

In the most important contest across the district, PML-N Punjab President, Former Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan will be facing his rival Dr Nisar Ahmed ex-MNA in NA-100. Rana Sana was elected from this constituency (then 106) during 2018 general elections. Sidra Saeed is contesting in this constituency as PPP candidate.

Another important contest is in NA-97 where former federal minister and IPP stalwart Hamayun Akhtar Khan would be facing PML-N's Ali Gohar of Baloch clan. Saadullah Baloch parental nephew of Ali Gohar and Aysha Rajab Ali, widow of former MNA Rajab Ali Baloch (sister-in-law of Ali Gohar) are also contesting from the same constituency.

The third important contest is expected in NA-102 where former federal minister Abid Sher Ali would be contesting against independent candidate Changaiz Khan Kakar and Rana Naem of PPP.

As former Opposition Leader in National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmad has retired from elections, his son Danyal Ahmad would now be contesting election on PML-N ticket from NA-104 against Jamat-e-Islami candidate former President FCCI Rana Sikandar Azam and an independent Hamid Raza.

In NA-103, PML-N candidate, former state minister Haji Akram Ansari is trying his luck against independent Ali Sarfaraz, the son of former federal minister Mian Zahid Sarfaraz. Former MNA Sheikh Khurram is also contesting as an inde-

pendent candidate from this constituency. PPP Central Punjab President, Former Federal Minister Rana Farooq Saeed would be facing former PML-N MNA Shahbaz Babar and former Punjab Minister and an independent candidate Hafiz Mumtaz in NA-98.

Former Speaker Punjab Assembly Muhammad Afzal Sahi has fielded his son Ali Afzal Sahi as independent candidate against PML-N's Azad Ali Tabasum from NA-95.

PML-N leader Talal Chaudhary has retired in favor of Malik Nawab Sher Waseer as PML-N candidate from NA-96. Independent candidate Rai Haider Khan Khari and Rai Shah Jehan of PPP are also contesting from this constituency.

In NA 99, former Punjab Minister Malik Umar Farooq is now contesting election as an independent candidate to face Muhammad Qasim Farooq of PML-N and Neha Javed of PPP.

Irfan Manan of PML-N, Muhammad Afzal of PPP and independents Rana Atif and Maj Gen * Akram Sahi are contesting from NA-101.

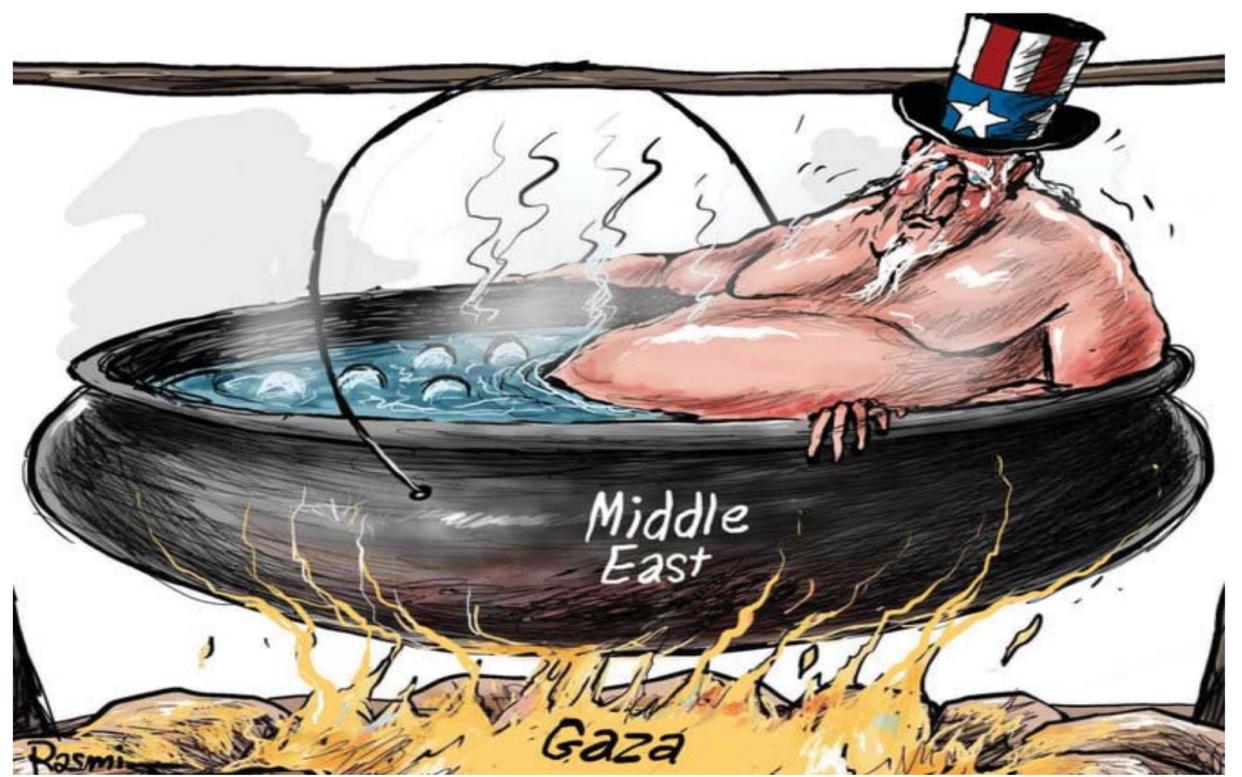
Former Punjab ministers Latif Nazar and Khayal Ahmad Castro are also contesting from different PP constituencies as independent candidates.

As PML-N and PPP have announced heavy manifestoes of masses welfare and independents expect sympathy vote from PTI voters, the political pundits await the February 02 visit of Mina Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to build a notion on expected election results.

'Deliberate' killing of journalists by Israel in Gaza

United Nations human rights experts voiced alarm Thursday at increasing numbers of journalists killed in Israel's war on Gaza, decrying an apparent "deliberate" Israeli strategy to silence critical reporting. "We are alarmed at the extraordinarily high numbers of journalists and media workers who have been killed, attacked, injured and detained in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in Gaza, in recent months blatantly disregarding international law," the experts said in a statement

"Rarely have journalists paid such a heavy price for just doing their job as those in Gaza now," the experts said. Expressing deep concern, the Human Rights Council-appointed experts highlighted the alarming toll on journalists and media workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The experts noted 'disturbing reports' of attacks against media workers despite being clearly identifiable in jackets, helmets and vehicles marked 'press', seemingly indicating a 'deliberate strategy' by Israeli forces to obstruct and silence critical reporting. Since 7 October, 122 journalists and media workers have lost their lives in the Gaza Strip, with many others sustaining injuries. "We condemn all killings, threats and attacks on journalists and call on all parties to the conflict to protect them," they aid. Dozens of Palestinian journalists have also been detained by Israeli forces in both Gaza and in the West Bank where harassment, intimidation and attacks on journalists have increased since October 7 attack. The experts paid tribute to the resilience and courage of media workers in Gaza, noting that rarely have journalists "paid such a heavy price for just doing their job" as those in Gaza now. "[They] continue to put their own lives on the line every day in the course of duty, while also enduring enormous hardship and tragic loss of colleagues, friends and families in one of the bloodiest, most ruthless conflicts of our times," the experts said. They highlighted the case of Al-Jazeera journalist, Wael al-Dahdouh, who lost his wife, two children and a grandson in an Israeli bombing on 25 October. He also survived a drone attack that killed his cameraman in late December. He lost another son, also an Al-Jazeera journalist, along with another colleague, were killed by an Israeli drone strike targeting their car on 7 January 2024. The experts stressed the critical importance of the right to information as a 'survival right' during times of conflict, on which the very lives of civilians depend, and that journalists play an 'indispensable role' as a vital source of information, and as human rights defenders and witnesses to atrocities. "Journalists are entitled to protection as civilians under international humanitarian law. Targeted attacks and killings of journalists are war crimes," the experts warned. The expert called on the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) to pay 'particular attention' to the dangerous pattern of attacks and impunity for crimes against journalists. They further urged Israeli authorities to permit journalists to enter Gaza and safeguard the safety of all journalists in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The experts called on all combatants to facilitate prompt, independent, and impartial investigations into every journalist's killing, in accordance with international standards. The experts were: Ms. Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the protection and promotion of freedom of opinion and expression; Ms. Francesca Albanese, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967; Ms. Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Morris Tidball-Binz, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; and Ben Saul, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.



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

The Fairest Elections - III

The concept of the "tyranny of the majority" has been eloquently articulated by thinkers such as Alexis de Tocqueville and John Stuart Mill. It underscores the potential for the majority to wield power oppressively, overlooking the rights and interests of minority groups. Cases of discriminatory legislation or policies driven by majority sentiment underscore the inherent dangers of unchecked democratic power. A robust democracy is not solely judged by the extent of majority rule but by its dedication to protecting the rights of all citizens, including those in the minority. Safeguarding minority rights ensures that the democratic process remains inclusive, just, and reflective of the diverse needs and perspectives within society.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Majority decisions are not inherently synonymous with moral or ethical correctness. Historical examples, such as the persistence of racial segregation or the denial of fundamental rights based on popular opinion, illustrate that the majority can sometimes be on the wrong side of justice. Upholding a moral compass requires vigilance against the potential pitfalls of majority rule. Recognizing the limitations of majority authority promotes empathy and understanding. Encouraging dialogue between majority and minority perspectives helps build bridges and reduces polarization, fostering a society where citizens are more attuned to the needs and concerns of others.

The conclusion drawn from this discussion is that a level playing field is an essential pillar of a democratic system; however, no one advocates for allowing rioters and terrorists to independently participate in elections and lead nations. In democratic cultures, the majority has the right to choose its leadership. Still, in countries like Pakistan, grappling with challenges such as terrorism, poverty, ignorance, and a lack of education, decisions cannot be solely entrusted to the majority. The principle of majority rule as authority doesn't seamlessly fit societies like Pakistan, which have much work to do in sectors like education, awareness, counter-terrorism, and poverty alleviation.

To speak candidly, the entire world witnessed the actions of rioters and anti-state elements on May 9, achiev-

ing what our rival countries failed to do. A small group of anti-state elements attacked military and civilian installations, backed by the leadership of a political party. Nothing is secret and is on record; the whole world saw how they attacked installations, including the GHQ and Corps Commander Residence, with sticks and iron rods. Granting a level playing field to this group and their leaders is inconceivable.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is gearing up to launch a new offensive against Pakistan on the international stage, particularly in the United States. Revelations have emerged regarding PTI's interference in general elections and orchestrated attacks on state institutions. In a bid to sway the 2024 elections, PTI has invested heavily both in America and Pakistan, with millions of dollars contributed by its overseas members and various individuals. The primary objective of this new strategy is to exert pressure on Pakistan through diplomatic channels and human rights institutions, aiming to secure favorable concessions for the founding members of PTI by leveraging international pressure on the government and establishment.

The leader of a specific political party, currently entangled in serious legal issues, seeks concessions. The main goal is to extricate the PTI founder and associates from legal troubles stemming from the events on May 9. This political leader, facing charges in five serious cases, intends to use foreign pressure to have the charges reduced, distorting facts and magnifying the legal issues to create a false impression of two hundred cases.

To be continued

Political parties blow horn for general election 2024

Fakhar Alam

As only six days left in general election, the leaders of all mainstream political parties blow whistle by addressing mammoth public rallies informing voters about their elections' manifestos whose fate would be decided by over 128.5 million voters on February 8, 2024. Despite cold weather conditions, the political heavyweights of Pakistan Muslim League (N), Pakistan People's Party, Jamiat Ulema Islam (F), Jumaat e Islami, Awami National Party, Mutahida Qumi Movement Pakistan, Pakistan Tahrik e Insaf, Balochistan National Party and Qumi Watan Party are among 175 political parties and independents have expedited elections campaign in all provinces of the country. Gripped by election fever, Pakistan's all four provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan's have witnessed overwhelming enthusiasm of voters of all age-groups being addressed by PML-N Supremo Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, PTI leader Gohar Khan, JUIF Central Ameer Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Jumaat e Islami Ameer Sirajul Haq, MQM Pakistan's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, ANP KP President Aimal Wali Khan, BNP's Akhtar Mangal whose fate are in the hands of 128.5 million voters including over 69.2 million male and 59.3 million female, showcasing a strong and active participation of registered electorates in the electoral process. As many as 1.083 million voters with 568,406 male and 514,623 female in Islamabad, 73.278 million voters includes 39.122 million male and 34.085 million female in Punjab, 26.994 million voters, with 14.4612 million male and 12.382 million female in Sindh, 21.928 million with 11.944 million male voters and 99.83,722 female voters in KP and 5.371 million registered voters including 2.355 million male and 3.16 million female voters in Balochistan would exercise their right of franchise on February 8, 2024. A unique phenomenon of 2024 general election is the participation of all family members of PTIP Chief, Pervaz Khattak including his son-in-law Dr Imran Khattak and his three sons who are contesting election on all the national and provincial assemblies' seats

in Nowshera. Pervaz Khattak is trying luck on PK-87 and PK-88 while his son-in-law and former MNA Dr Imran Khattak on NA-34 and PK-89 respectively. Khattak's sons Ibrahim Khattak and Ismail Khattak are flexing muscles on PK-85 and PK-86 and former KP information minister and Awami National Party leader, Mian Ifikhar Hussain on PK-89. Major-Gen (r) Saad Khattak of Aam Admi Party, Mian Babar Shah of ANP, Mian Khaliqur Rahman, Haji Akbar, Daud Khattak of PTI, Shaiq Amin of Tehreek-e-Labbaik, Hamza Pervaz of PMLN, Alhaj Pervaz Khan of JUIF, Idrees Khattak of PPP and others are contesting election on NA-34 Nowshera-II. Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) central chairman and former Federal Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao is contesting election on NA-24 Charsadda, and his son Sikandar Khan Sherpao who had been elected to the provincial assembly thrice but lost to a PTI candidate in 2018 polls - is contesting for KP assembly from Charsadda. Dr Saveera Parkah, who is representing Hindu community, is flexing muscles on PK-25 Buner district. Her father Om Parkash is associated with PPP for the last three decades whose daughter can surprise many. Dr. A. H. Hilali, former chairperson, Political Science Department, University of Peshawar told APP that young and female voters besides Punjab population would play crucial role in election 2024. "The 2024 election is unique in Pakistan's electoral history as over 45pc of the voters have aged between 18-35 i.e 57,095,197 and about 22 million new voters were added to electoral rolls since last general election which is 18 percent of the electorates," he added. Engineer Amir Muqam, PML-N KP President said controlling inflation, price hike and revival of economy would be top priority of his party if voted to power. He said that 10 years long sense of deprivation of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be removed and all halted projects of gas and communications would be restarted in the province. Najumuddin Khan, PPP KP President said that three million houses would be constructed for poor communities besides labourer cards would be issued. He said BISP assistance would be increased and skills enhancement programs would be launched for enabling the youth to explore employment opportunities at home and abroad.

Xinhua

BELJING: Since the introduction of Xi Jinping Thought on Culture in October 2023, "culture" has become a buzzword throughout China.

Ahead of the Chinese Lunar New Year, the country has been busy organizing various cultural events to embrace this new trend.

In the eastern province of Zhejiang, a museum has been captivating tourists with AR technology, reviving scenes of daily life and work from 8,000 years ago. In the northwestern Shaanxi Province, museum visitors have the chance to savor traditional culinary delights depicted in ancient Chinese poems.

Meanwhile, in Beijing, members of a newly established science-fiction film committee are making preparations for the next blockbuster, following the phenomenal success of "The Wandering Earth," to offer the audience an alternative to Hollywood sci-fi films.

In January, a key policy meeting on public communication hailed Xi's cultural thought, stating that it "provides solid ideological guarantees, powerful inspiration, and favorable cultural conditions to make China a stronger country and rejuvenate the Chinese nation on all fronts."

The Communist Party of China (CPC), born over a century ago following the New Culture Movement and the spread of Marxism in the country, has always been proud of its cultural essence. Now, under Xi's leadership, the Party is drawing on culture to enhance its governance and drive China's modernization.

Art Culture Enthusiast

Xi was born in 1953 into a family of revolutionaries. As a child, he was greatly inspired by China's traditional culture. He said he would never forget the story of Yue Fei, as told by his mother. Yue was a patriotic military commander from the 12th century whose mother tattooed "serve the country with the utmost devotion" on his back, a phrase that embodies "Zhong," or loyalty, in Confucian philosophy. Xi made it his life's goal to follow this motto.

Xi has mentioned that reading is his favorite hobby. His school teachers remember him as an exceptional student with a passion for reading classical literature, particularly as a fan of Du Fu, a renowned realist poet from the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

In the late 1960s, Xi was dispatched from Beijing to Liangjiahe, a small village in Shaanxi Province on the Loess Plateau, as an "educated youth" to engage in arduous farm labor. Hauling a whole box of books to the village, Xi immersed himself in a diverse reading journey, exploring works from Chinese literary masterpieces to those of Shakespeare and Tolstoy, and from Chairman Mao's "Serve the People" to Karl Marx's "Das Kapital."

Some 40 years later, the man who used to read late into the night under the dim glow of a kerosene lamp in a cave dwelling stood at a podium in the UNESCO headquarters as the president of China, sharing his views on culture and civilization. "He drew on famous poets and writers to highlight his country's long history and the importance of cultural diversity," according to media reports.

Xi refers to Liangjiahe as his "university" where he learned China's traditional virtues. Throughout his seven years in this village, Xi endured a challenging life, and shared work and meals with the poor locals. He vividly remembers the villagers' generosity, as they imparted valuable lessons about life and work and shared whatever little they had.

In return, Xi extended the same kindness. He shared his rations to help those in need, offered his spare shoes to a younger villager without any, gave his hat to someone lacking one in cold weather, and generously gifted books and notebooks to those who cherished reading and learning. The villagers used "Ren Yi," or benevolence and righteousness, the highest standards of traditional moral uprightness, to praise the young man.

Farmer Liang Yujin, now in his 70s, reminisced about making unannounced visits to Xi on four occasions after Xi had left Liangjiahe. Already a high-ranking official, Xi welcomed Liang into his home, and they ate meals prepared by his wife, Peng Liyuan. Liang brought millet, pumpkins, and sweet potatoes for Xi, and in return, Xi offered him tea and pastries. "He asked about every family in the village," Liang said.

In 1982, Xi started working in Zhending, a historical county in Hebei Province, first as deputy Party chief and then as Party chief. After discovering two ancient locust trees in his workplace, he had them verified for age and fenced off for protection. He also initiated a comprehensive survey of cultural relics throughout the county, and holistic conservation

efforts began.

Xi's profound passion for history and culture was so intense that, at one point, he considered pursuing archaeology; however, this interest extended beyond mere personal fascination.

He often shares an ancient Chinese proverb with officials and foreign friends, advocating the use of history as a compass for present and future endeavors. He believes that drawing lessons from tradition is instrumental in formulating policy decisions.

Situated in Zhejiang Province, the archaeological ruins of Liangzhu, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, were surrounded by mining fields in the early 2000s. The excessive industrial dust and noise pollution transformed the entire area into what Jiang Weidong, an official from the site's management committee, described as "something like a war zone."

Upon learning about this situation in July 2003, Xi, then Party chief of Zhejiang, promptly ordered the closure of the mines. His dedication toward Liangzhu endured throughout the subsequent decades. As archaeologists confirmed the significance of Liangzhu as a testament to 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, he gave meticulous instructions for its protection. In his congratulatory message to the inaugural Liangzhu Forum last year, Xi hailed the site as a treasure of world civilizations.

Since taking on the Party's leading role — general secretary of the CPC Central Committee — in 2012, Xi has issued over 170 significant instructions regarding cultural relics, archaeology, and intangible cultural heritage. He has also conducted over 100 on-site inspections of historical and cultural sites.

Xi also harbors a deep love for "Red Culture." Over the years, he has visited almost every significant historical site related to critical chapters of the revolutionary past. These locations include a lake in Zhejiang, where the first CPC National Congress was held in 1921, and Fragrant Hills in suburban Beijing, where elder Party leaders laid the foundation for the establishment of New China.

"While journeying toward success, remember where we came from," Xi said.

He is a fan of rich human cultures. Speaking about his extensive travels across the world, Xi said, "Delving into the diverse civilizations across the five continents brings me the utmost joy." Since assuming the presidency, Xi has visited over 70 countries. In Greece, he discussed an ancient Chinese phrase about stopping wars and Athena's contemplation of war and peace. He drew parallels between Chinese tea and Belgian beer in Belgium, highlighting the value of appreciating different cultures. In Mexico, he showed keen interest in the similarities between elements of the Maya civilization and Chinese elements like the dragon. In the Luxor Temple in Egypt, he spoke about the origins and development of ancient civilizations.

Xi also shared personal reflections on literature, such as his impressions of Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea" and his experiences visiting places associated with Hemingway in Cuba.

People familiar with Xi say that his cultural upbringing has profoundly influenced his strong sense of idealism and his pragmatic approach to work. He often refers to the philosophy of "Zhi Xing He Yi," or "unity of knowledge and action," advocated by the ancient Chinese philosopher Wang Yangming (1472-1529), and considers it an essence of traditional Chinese culture.

Art of Governance

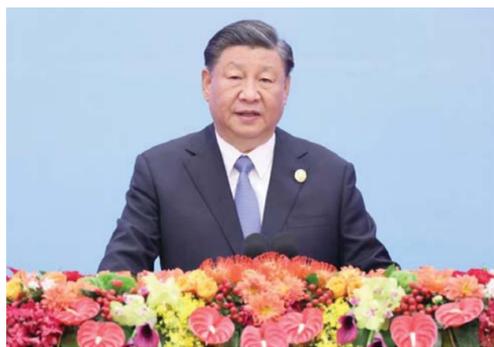
In 2012, Xi incorporated the concept of "cultural confidence" into the report to the 18th CPC National Congress. He later integrated this concept into the "Four Confidences" of socialism with Chinese characteristics, describing cultural confidence as a "more fundamental, deeper, and more enduring force."

"Without full confidence in our culture, without a rich and prosperous culture, the Chinese nation will not be able to rejuvenate itself," he said. While the world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, Xi has led China into a new era.

Theorists believe that the severe challenges the country faces in the 21st century demand a cultural renaissance to rebuild national identity in the post-Cold War world, where various civilizations and value systems compete and coexist. They even say that the rise and fall of major countries over the past 500 years is the result of the force of cultures.

Xi has cultivated confidence

Xi Jinping, man of culture



in the Chinese culture in service of the nation's rejuvenation, and established an impenetrable barrier against negative elements in Western culture, according to observers.

On July 1, 2021, when the Party celebrated its centenary, Xi proposed "two integrations," emphasizing the need to "integrate the basic tenets of Marxism with China's specific realities and fine traditional culture." The "second integration" — one with fine traditional culture — represents a profound "chemical reaction" and the emancipation of the mind, Xi said.

In June 2023, at a key meeting on cultural inheritance and development in Beijing, Xi summarized five distinctive features of Chinese civilization, emphasizing its outstanding continuity, innovation, unity, inclusiveness, and peaceful nature.

Over a month after the meeting, Xi visited the Sanxingdui archaeological site in Sichuan Province. During his visit, he took his time to examine details of the artifacts dating back thousands of years.

"Where do they come from?" he asked. "They originated from the cradle of the Yangtze River and Yellow River civilizations, and were born out of the innovative creations of the ancient local people," the docent replied.

At the end of 2023, when Xi delivered his New Year message from his office in central Beijing, a photograph of him observing the Sanxingdui artifacts with great attention was displayed on his bookshelf.

Xi Jinping Thought on Culture, formally put forward in October 2023, encompasses several key aspects, including strengthening the Party's leadership over public communication and culture and promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of China's fine traditional culture.

Theorists state that the establishment of the thought shows that the Party's historical and cultural confidence have reached new heights.

"If there were no 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, where would the 'Chinese characteristics' come from? And if it were not for these Chinese characteristics, how could



we have today's successful path of socialism with Chinese characteristics?" Xi once said.

Theorists say that Xi pioneers a new way of governing the country by leveraging culture.

Xi firmly believes in Marxist historical materialism, which views the masses as the creators of history. He elevates the ancient belief of "Min Wei Bang Ben" — meaning "the people are the foundation of the country; with a solid foundation, the country is at peace" — to the Party principle of "putting people first."

After leading China to eliminate absolute poverty, Xi strives for the next goal: common prosperity. "Common prosperity is a fundamental goal of Marxism and has also been a basic pursuit of the Chinese people since ancient times," Xi told Party officials, quoting ancient philosophers. Confucius said, "The trouble lies not in scarcity but in uneven distribution; not in poverty but insecurity," and Mencius called on people to "care for the elderly and the children of others as they care for their own."

"Our goal is both inspiring and simple. Ultimately, it is about delivering a better life for the people," Xi said.

He blends the Party's governing philosophy of "the country belongs to the people, and the people are the foundation of the country" with the traditional idea that "the rise or fall of a political power depends on whether it accommodates the people's will."

On his first day in office as the Party's top official, Xi cited a Chinese proverb to call for "iron-clad self-discipline" and launched the most extensive anti-corruption campaign in CPC history. Xi often shares stories about ancient figures known for their integrity with Party officials, demanding that they practice self-discipline. He uses a Chinese proverb to warn the entire Party, "Many worms will disintegrate wood, and a big enough crack will lead to the collapse of a wall."

In March 2018, Xi became the first Chinese president to take the oath of office in front of the Constitution. He mentioned the ancient saying, "When those who uphold the law are strong, the state is strong; when they are weak, the state is weak," emphasizing the need to advance reforms under the rule of law and enhance the rule of law in the process of reform.

"The issue of the rule of law versus the rule of man is a fundamental question in the history of politics and a significant problem that all countries must face and solve in the process of achieving modernization," he declared.

Xi has constructed and perfected the "spiritual lineage of the CPC," highlighting the tremendous mental strength the Party has demonstrated in key moments or chapters of its history. He is a staunch opponent of "historical nihilism." When some people online defamed revolutionary martyrs like Qiu Shaoyun, hundreds of thousands of Communist Youth League of China members posted rebuttals. Xi commended their response, "Righteousness has overwhelmed misconduct, well done!"

Xi introduced the concept of "profound changes unseen in a century," incorporating insights from a Marxist view of history and the ancient Chinese philosophy of "changes." In his report to the



Xi uses this example to emphasize that scientific and technological development must be integrated with social progress. He stresses the need to deepen reforms in the management of science and technology, allowing all sources of innovation to flow freely.

Infusing both the principles of Marxist development theory and traditional Chinese dialectics, Xi has introduced a new philosophy advocating innovative, coordinated, green, and open development accessible to all. He urges an approach of "consolidating stability through progress and establishing the new before abolishing the old," employing Chinese philosophical perspectives to guide the nation's economic endeavors.

As an ardent fan of literature and art, he has vigorously promoted the flourishing of Chinese culture. In 2014, 72 years after the first such event, Xi chaired the second seminar on literature and art in CPC history, proposing concepts like "using literature to convey morality" and "cultivating people through culture." Attendees recalled that Xi spoke "like talking among friends and family," and he shook hands with everyone after the three-hour-long seminar.

He is enthusiastic about folk culture and arts, such as myths, epics, storytelling, and local operas. He encourages contemporary young novelists, poets, and painters to innovate, and extends support to the domestic science fiction film industry. This reflects his deep commitment to nurturing and promoting diverse aspects of Chinese cultural heritage and contemporary artistic expressions.

He emphasized the treasures passed down in Chinese culture — the indivisibility of the territory, the order of the state, the unity of the nation, and the continuity of civilization — asserting, "Our country must be reunified, and will surely be reunified."

Xi has adopted the traditional philosophy of "Tian Ren He Yi," or "unity of nature and man," to initiate an unprecedented campaign for ecological restoration and protection. This included a 10-year fishing ban on the Yangtze River to protect aquatic life. He likened the protection of the Yangtze River to traditional Chinese medicine treatment, stressing efforts to treat existing

illnesses and prevent future ones. Under his leadership, China has witnessed historic changes in its environment, resulting in bluer skies, greener mountains, and clearer waters.

Xi tapped the ancient philosophy of favoring peace and harmonious coexistence in formulating foreign policy, proposing the concept of building a community with a shared future for humanity. He once told foreign leaders that China does not intend to only develop its backyard but rather a garden shared by all countries.

New Path of Civilization
A U.S.-based research institute observed that Xi is no longer considered merely an inheritor or protector of a great civilization but the creator of one, too.

China's cultural traditions and national conditions determine that Chinese modernization, a new form of human civilization led by Xi, will take a path distinct from the West.

Covering nearly 20 percent of the world's population, it aims to reduce the wealth gap, achieve

harmony between material and spiritual aspects, pursue development without sacrificing the environment, and never seek expansion or dominance abroad.

In his youth, Xi read "One-Dimensional Man" by Herbert Marcuse. Seeing the drawbacks of a "one-dimensional" human existence caused by the encroachment of capital in Western modernization, Xi has always hoped to address the imbalances between material and spiritual needs, and between humans and nature. China is committed to the coordinated development of material, political, spiritual, social, and ecological civilizations. Xi refers to this as the distinctive characteristic of the "modern civilization of the Chinese nation."

Xi metaphorically describes the uniqueness of Chinese modernization using physics terminology: Developed Western countries followed a "series" development process. China, seeking to recover the "lost 200 years," must take a development path comparable to a "parallel" process involving the simultaneous development of industrialization, informatization, urbanization, and agricultural modernization.

He designated Shenzhen as the Pilot Demonstration Area of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. Adjacent to Hong Kong, Shenzhen is a special economic zone established over 40 years ago by Deng Xiaoping. Often referred to as the "city of innovation," Shenzhen, with a population twice that of New York City, offers a glimpse into the future of China's modernization.

Upon arrival in the city, visitors are greeted at the airport by a welcoming quote from Jules Verne: "Anything one man can imagine, other men can make real." Another prominent slogan stands tall in the city's landmark area, Shekou, proclaiming the traditional Chinese wisdom, "Empty talk will do nothing for our country; only solid work will make it flourish."

From electric cars to cutting-edge drones, from low-carbon initiatives to smart-city projects, the city continues to nurture innovation. Parks and libraries can be found every few hundred meters. With a convenient public service system, various social organizations, and a people-serving and business-friendly official team, Shenzhen is a model of the future.

Far north, the Xiongan New Area near Beijing is a new city of socialist modernization planned by Xi. In May last year, Xi visited this "city of the future" under construction, paying particular attention to the ecological conditions of Baiyangdian Lake. Highlighting water source conservation and green development, its construction embodies the ancient ecological wisdom of "using what nature has to offer and taking it in moderation."

Xi designated Zhejiang as a demonstration area of common prosperity. During his visit to Lizu Village last year, he witnessed the transformation of this once dirty, chaotic, and impoverished village into a clean and beautiful demonstration village of common prosperity. The villagers' income has exceeded the national rural average, and the village is renowned for its rich cultural atmosphere. Xi has engaged in discussions with young entrepreneurs who returned from cities across the country and expressed satisfaction with the part they have played in rural development.

The new type of modern socialist country led by Xi has effectively debunked the linear historical view that all nations should converge toward a Western model.

On the world stage, Xi has proposed a series of new concepts regarding civilizational exchange and international relations, demonstrating China's commitment to being a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order.

Xi's proposition of building a community with a shared future for humanity reflects the country's commitment to peace and stability. Introduced in 2013, this idea resonates with the Chinese nation's time-honored vision that

"the whole world is one big family," envisioning a world where universal harmony prevails. It marks a fresh trajectory for advancing global civilizations, and paves the way for the ultimate realization of the full and free development of every individual, as envisioned by Karl Marx.

Nevertheless, concerns exist that an assertive China could challenge the existing world order. But Xi is optimistic that Chinese civilization's inclusive nature can foster coexistence with other nations marked by "harmony in diversity."

When speaking about "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu with foreign guests, Xi emphasizes that the fundamental message of this classic ancient Chinese military book is the importance of exerting all efforts to avoid war and exercising great caution if conflict becomes inevitable. In line with the Chinese nation's deep-rooted commitment to peace, Xi proposed the Global Security Initiative in a call for joint efforts to maintain world peace and stability.

Since last October, the escalation of the Palestine-Israel conflict has led to a humanitarian disaster. During his interaction with foreign leaders and participation in multilateral events, Xi has repeatedly called for a ceasefire, emphasizing that the fundamental solution to the conflict lies in implementing the two-state solution.

In efforts to de-escalate conflicts and restore peace in the region, China convened and chaired a high-level UN Security Council meeting on the Palestinian-Israeli issue, facilitating the adoption of the first UN Security Council resolution since the outbreak of the conflict. China has sent its special envoy to promote peace talks, increased humanitarian assistance, and extended a helping hand to the people in Gaza at a difficult time.

China also served as a mediator, successfully facilitating the restoration of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran last year. Daniel A. Bell, chair professor of political theory at the University of Hong Kong, commended China's efforts, describing it as "an inspiring example." Large and influential countries can play the role of peacemakers as they have more power and influence to bring warring sides to the table, he said.

One Chinese maxim that Xi frequently mentions during his overseas trips is, "Building people-to-people friendships is crucial for fostering positive state-to-state relations." Under his leadership, China has strengthened and broadened its global partnerships based on principles of equality, openness, and cooperation.

A champion of humanity's shared values, Xi launched the Global Civilization Initiative, urging collaborative efforts to respect the diversity of civilizations and tap into the profound significance of their histories and cultures in the contemporary world. This initiative stands as a robust response to concepts supporting the estrangement, clash, or superiority of civilizations.

Xi's Global Development Initiative emphasizes the importance of prioritizing development and adopting a people-centered philosophy to ensure that "no country is left behind in the process of global modernization."

To explain the values and sentiments that underpin the Chinese people's dedication to win-win cooperation, Xi draws on ancient Chinese sayings promoting actions for the greater good. The Belt and Road Initiative is a prime example. Sometimes referred to as the modern Silk Road, the initiative has garnered collaboration from more than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations, with nearly a trillion U.S. dollars in investment.

When he was young, Xi once expounded on the Confucian idea of "Ping Tian Xia," or bringing peace and order to the world, which represents the ultimate stage of one's four-level personal pursuit. The other three are cultivating the moral self, managing the family, and governing the state.

Xi said, "Ping Tian Xia" doesn't involve conquering or ruling the world. Instead, it aims to uplift ordinary people from poverty, enabling them to live peacefully with sufficient food and clothing. He said that if all countries pursue peaceful development and strive for unity and harmony, it will bring the world closer to the goal.

When leading his colleagues in paying respects to Mao Zedong's remains to mark the 130th anniversary of Mao's birth last December, Xi underscored that the best way to commemorate the late Chinese leader is to continue to advance the cause he pioneered. Xi cited Mao's words: "We must always strive! We must always forge ahead! Our golden world, bright and splendid, lies ahead!"

"The best inheritance of history is to create a new history, and the greatest tribute to human civilization is to create a new form of human civilization," Xi said.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
63,002.91	62,393.73
Day's High	Day's Low
63,075.30	62,448.72
Index Value	Change
8,117,414,186	+609.18
Percentage	Time
+0.98%	2 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,615.54	-6.62
Percentage	Time
-0.087%	2 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,630.80	+110.96
Percentage	Time
+0.29%	2 Feb, 1:18 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
36,158.02	+146.56
Percentage	Time
+0.41%	2 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	184.8
Bahrain Dinar	743.54	751.45
Canadian Dollar	206	208
China Yuan	39.21	39.61
Danish Krone	40.75	41.15
Euro	304	307
Hong Kong Dollar	35.45	35.8
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	909.3	918.3
Malaysian Ringgit	58.52	59.12
New Zealand \$	171.76	173.76
Norwegians Krone	26.76	27.06
Omani Riyal	726.14	734.14
Qatari Riyal	76.83	77.53
Saudi Riyal	74.45	75.2
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	26.74	27.04
Swiss Franc	325.92	328.42
Thai Bhat	7.85	8
U.A.E Dirham	76.6	77.5
UK Pound Sterling	356.5	360
US Dollar	280	281.7

A new IMF deal is imperative to settle the economic crisis: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that it would be challenging for the new government to give the people quick relief owing to the scarcity of resources and IMF's constraints.

He said that a new program with the lender and the existing IMF agreement is necessary to resolve the economic crisis.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the masses and the business community hope Nawaz Sharif can start a developmental path.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that it would take a lot of work for the political party coming to



power to implement even half of its promises. In order for the new government to recover from the economic crisis, it will be neces-

sary to obtain a long-term program from the IMF and create the resources to implement the manifesto.

To do this, the new government must sell loss-making public enterprises and discos and broaden the tax net. Otherwise, the country will go bankrupt.

The business leader said that various politicians are busy assuring people that they will solve all their problems and start dozens of development projects.

He observed that claims are being made about reducing the record inflation and massive unemployment, ending the new wave of terrorism, and changing the country's fate.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that former prime minister Mian Nawaz Sharif's popularity is increasing, and he will most likely become prime minister for the fourth time after the election. However, revolutionary change seems

impossible under present circumstances.

The country must submit to IMF discipline for long-term economic development. The IMF standby program is still pending, and the final loan installment is yet to be paid. In contrast, at least another three-year IMF program is necessary for the country's survival.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that almost all political leaders prioritize rural areas over urban areas in the upcoming elections as they believe that rural voters will play a key role in elections.

He further said that Nawaz Sharif rightly asked the people when he was removed from power in 2017 what the cost of a roti was, the tariff of electricity, the rate of the sugar, and the price of a bag of fertilizer.

He also asks the public about the cause of moves that have brought the country to this state.

Tea

FAISALABAD: A young vendor is preparing tea for customers at his roadside setup in the city.



Photo: Online

SECP amends Listed Companies' Takeovers Regulations, 2017

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has introduced amendments in Listed Companies (Substantial Acquisition of Voting Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2017 which are available at www.secp.gov.pk. These amendments have been made after consultation with key stakeholders and general public and are in line with international good practices.

The Regulations make it mandatory for the Acquirer of a company to make a Public Offer to the Minority Shareholders of the Target Company at a price determined in accordance with the prescribed criteria. The purpose of the mandatory Public Offer is to provide a fair opportunity to the Minority Shareholders to take an exit from the company in case they intend to do so.

Through an earlier amendment made in the year 2022, the Acquirer was allowed to offer either cash or securities as payment to the Minority Shareholders who accepted the Public Offer. While the amendment

provided flexibility to the Acquirer, the risk arose that an Acquirer might offer securities that were not as good as cash and were unacceptable to the Minority Shareholders who were otherwise inclined to accept the Public Offer. By offering inferior securities as payment, an Acquirer might defeat the purpose of Regulations i.e. to provide a fair exit opportunity to the Minority Shareholders of the target company.

This risk has been addressed by following the principle that the securities offered as payment to the Minority Shareholders must be as good as cash. Based on this principle, the amended Regulations allow the Acquirer to offer securities as an alternate to cash but leave the final decision, i.e. whether to accept cash or securities as payment, to the Minority Shareholders of the Target Company. The amendment makes it difficult for an Acquirer to game the mandatory Public Offer and deprive the Minority Shareholders of the Target Company of a fair exit opportunity by offering inferior securities as payment.

The Regulations also prescribe various

methods for determining the price to be offered by the Acquirer to the Minority Shareholders of the Target Company. The highest price determined through these methods becomes the Offer Price.

One of prescribed pricing methods is Net Asset Value of a company. In case of frequently traded companies, Net Asset Value may not be a suitable measure for price determination. It disregards the premise that market price is the best measure to value such companies and discourages takeovers of frequently traded companies whose shares are trading at a discount to the Net Asset Value. The amended regulations address this issue by excluding Net Asset Value from the prescribed methods for determining the Offer Price for frequently traded target companies.

The amended Regulations also contain improved definitions of various terms for clarity and consistency. These amendments are expected to help safeguard the interests of the Acquirers as well as the Minority Shareholders of Target Companies.

Tamasha Brings HD Live Streaming of HBL-PSL 9 to Pakistani Cricket Fans

PPA

KARACHI: Once again, Tamasha, Pakistan's largest home-grown OTT video streaming and entertainment platform, is bringing HD live streaming of the highly anticipated Pakistan Super League 2024 (HBL PSL 9). Cricket enthusiasts across Pakistan can now enjoy HD live streaming of all HBL PSL 9 matches on the Tamasha mobile app.

A signing ceremony between Tamasha and Walee Technologies leadership was recently held in Islamabad where Tamasha acquired digital broadcasting rights for the tournament, bringing HD live streaming of all HBL-PSL 9 matches straight to the smartphones of millions of Pakistanis, regardless of their network.

Sharing his thoughts on this



exciting development, Aamer Ejaz, Chief Digital Officer at Jazz, said, "Catering to the undying love of millions of Pakistanis for the game of cricket, Tamasha is set to bring high-definition live streaming of yet another thrilling PSL season. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our users for choosing Tamasha as their go-to platform, not just for

cricket but also for a diverse range of sports, news, movies, originals, and other digital entertainment. I hope the new PSL season shatters records and establishes new milestones in Pakistan's digital entertainment landscape."

Tamasha is the fan-favorite go-to platform when it comes to live streaming of top sports events. Previously, Pakistani

users enjoyed watching the T20 World Cup (2022), FIFA World Cup (2022), HBL PSL (2023), Asia Cup (2023), and the ICC World Cup 2023 on Tamasha. While over 26 million people streamed on Tamasha during Cricket World Cup 2023, the app also trended as the #1 app on the Apple App Store & Google Play Store and emerged as the second most searched tech term on Google right after ChatGPT in 2023.

Besides HD streaming, Tamasha users will be able to engage in exciting activities such as the Jazz Fanpulse quiz and Jazz Cricket Fantasy league for a shot at winning amazing prizes. HBL PSL-9 can be streamed live on Tamasha by downloading its Android and iOS apps via Google Play and App Store respectively, as well as through the Tamasha website.

LCCI awards Best Performance Certificates to Women Entrepreneurs



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Friday awarded Best Performance Certificate to Women Entrepreneurs for outstanding performance in their respective business sectors.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar distributed the certificates in a prestigious ceremony at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Executive Committee Member Fareeha Younas also spoke on the occasion.

It would be worth mentioning here that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry has also arranged a Best Performance Acknowledgement Ceremony for these women entrepreneurs at Aiwan e Sadar Islamabad where President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi was the chief guest who spoke high-

ly about the untiring efforts of LCCI for the promotion of women entrepreneurs.

President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kashif Anwar said that the society and economy cannot run without participation of women. He said that LCCI wants to set a perception that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry working hard for women entrepreneurs and making all out efforts to resolve their problems.

"I am thankful to my team and EC member Fareeha Younis who played a vital role for organizing this whole event", Kashif Anwar said and added that LCCI wants to enhance participation of women in business and economic activities.

The award holders said that participation in the event was a great experience for them and they got to know other women doing great work through the event.

Descon and IFC sign Strategic Partnership



PPA

ISLAMABAD: In a groundbreaking initiative aimed at addressing the significant postharvest losses of wheat, rice, and maize in Pakistan, Descon (under its Agri Business Line) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Descon has embarked on a diversification into the agricultural sector, reflecting the company's visionary approach. With a steadfast commitment to empowering small-scale farmers, Descon aims to play a pivotal role in transforming the agricultural landscape. The company envisions fostering sustainable practices and enhancing productivity within the agricultural commu-

nity. Through this diversification, Descon aspires to make meaningful contribution to the betterment of small-scale farmers, promoting economic growth, and ensuring food security in the country.

Faisal Dawood Vice Chairman of Descon stated, "We are excited about the potential impact of this collaboration. By modernizing infrastructure and optimizing supply chain processes, we believe we can make a substantial difference in reducing postharvest losses and enhancing the quality of staple grains for the people of Pakistan."

Descon, a leading player in the industry, brings its expertise and resources to the table, aligning with IFC's global reputation for fostering impactful initiatives.



Iftikhar Khan, Advisor to President FPCCI with SM Tanveer, Provincial Minister for Energy, Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skill Development.

Cargill becomes first global edible oils supplier

PPA

KARACHI / ISLAMABAD: As of Jan. 1, 2024, every Cargill food customer, no matter where they are in the world, can be confident that the company's fats and oils comply with the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended maximum tolerance level for industrially produced trans-fatty acids (iTFA) in fats and oils. Cargill has achieved this milestone by becoming the first global supplier whose entire worldwide edible oils portfolio meets the WHO's best practice standard on iTFAs, limiting iTFA content to no more than two grams per 100 grams of fats/oils, including in countries where there is currently no legislative mandate.

While Cargill announced its commitment to removing iTFAs from its fats and oils portfolio in December 2021, the achievement reflects decades of work. The company's iTFA journey spans more than a quarter century including early innovation, millions of dollars of investments in capital expenses and resources, and thousands of R&D hours. Along the way, Cargill has helped more than 400 customers create nutritious and tasty products that contribute to happier, healthier lives, removing more than 1.5 billion pounds of products containing iTFAs from the global food supply.

"We're pleased to see Cargill's continued commitment to reduce industrially produced trans fats in all their oils, recently achieving their goal to align with the World Health Organization's recommended standards," says René Lammers, PepsiCo's chief science officer.

Ali Zafar to sing HBL PSL 9 Anthem

A Sports

LAHORE: Renowned singer Ali Zafar will sing the official anthem of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 9, scheduled to commence on February 17.

Talking to X, formerly Twitter, the franchise league shared the video of the superstar playing the melody of one of his PSL anthems "Ab Khel Jamay Ga".

"Seeti Tou bajay ge. Countdown to [HBL PSL 9] Anthem Excitement! [Ali Zafar] is set to immerse his magic to the official HBL PSL anthem 2024," wrote PSL.

However, it is yet to be confirmed whether the PSL 9 Anthem will be a solo or duet.

Moreover, the release date of the PSL 9 Anthem, as of yet, is also unknown but with only 14 days left in the commencement of the extravaganza, it can be speculated that the highly-anticipated anthem is just around the corner.

Notably, Ali Zafar sang three HBL PSL anthems of the first three editions, namely "Ab Khel Ke Dikha", "Ab Khel Jamay Ga" and "Dil Se Jaan Laga De". The aforementioned anthems received immense appreciation from the fans.

But the singer was replaced by sever-



al other popular artists including Atif Aslam, Ali Azmat, Fawad Khan, Aima Baig, Asim Azhar, Naseebo Lal, Shae Gill and Young Stunners for the next five anthems.

Despite featuring the top voices of the country, those anthems failed to satisfy

PSL fans as they kept on demanding Ali Zafar's return.

It is worth mentioning here that the PSL 9 will be held from 17 February to 18 March 2024 in four cities - Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi.

Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host

the curtain-raiser of the tournament between defending champions Lahore Qalandars and two-time champions Islamabad United.

The final of the six-team tournament will be staged at the picturesque National Bank Stadium in Karachi on March 18.

Jordan end Tajikistan run to reach first Asian Cup semi-final

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Jordan set up a semi-final against South Korea or Australia after ending Tajikistan's fairytale Asian Cup run with a nervy 1-0 win on Friday.

In a cagey quarter-final, a deflected second-half own goal was just about enough to see Jordan reach the last four for the first time.

It was tough on charismatic Croatian coach Petar Segrt and his Tajikistan team, who were the lowest-ranked side left in Qatar and won plenty of new friends in their first Asian Cup.

But it was a piece of history for Jordan under their Moroccan coach Hussein Ammouta, the kingdom having been defeated in their previous quarter-finals in 2004 and 2011.

Jordan, ranked 87 to 106 of Tajikistan, scored twice in stoppage time to stun Iraq 3-2 in the previous round and they made the better start in front of 36,000 spectators at Ahmad bin Ali Stadium, a 2022 World Cup venue.

But Tajikistan carved out the first big chance, midfielder Elson Panjshanbe



haring into the box and clipping his first-time effort onto the top of Jordan's bar on 15 minutes.

VAR was called into action when Tajikistan's Zoir Dzhuraboev sliced down Yazan Al-Naimat in the box but VAR agreed with the referee and said no penalty.

Segrt was forced into a change midway

through the half when Shahrom Samiev was forced off with a hamstring injury, the striker departing in floods of tears.

Jordan fans dominated in the crowd and thought their team had scored on the half-hour mark, but danger man Naimat poked wide from a tight angle.

In front of Jordan's watching Crown

Prince Hussein, they had a double chance just afterwards, but Ali Olwan was denied by Rustam Yatimov and then the goalkeeper saved Rajaei Ayed's weak follow-up.

Tajikistan looked fatigued from their exertions in defeating the United Arab Emirates on penalties in the last 16 and were restricted to playing on the break.

Segrt's men stepped it up to start the second half.

Shervoni Mabatshoev was crowded out in the box with only Jordan goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila to beat but with an hour gone and the semi-finals on the line the game needed a spark.

On 66 minutes it got it when Jordan defender Abdullah Nasib rose at a corner and his header deflected off Tajikistan's Vahdat Hanonov and into his own goal.

Both sides had chances after that but Jordan held on to book their place in the last four.

Son Heung-min's South Korea face Australia later Friday.

In Saturday's remaining Asian Cup quarter-finals, holders Qatar face Uzbekistan while pre-tournament favourites Japan play Iran.

Bowlers-led MI Emirates crush Sharjah Warriors to extend dominance

A Sports

LAHORE: Waqar Salamkheil-led bowling attack powered leaders MI Emirates to a crushing eight-wicket victory over Sharjah Warriors in the 18th match of the ongoing ICLT20 here on Friday.

Put into bat first, the Warriors' batting unit unfolded on a measly 129 in 20 overs.

Sharjah Warriors had a relatively decent start to their innings, courtesy of their openers Niroshan Dickwella and Johnson Charles, who stitched a 34-run partnership.

The pair appeared in command until Dickwella was bamboozled by Trent Boult in the fifth over.

Coming out to bat at number three, Mark Deyal (7) put together a brief 21-run partnership for the second wicket before fall-



ing victim to Salamkheil in the seventh over.

The Warriors were then further reduced to 57/4 after Johnson Charles and Basil Hameed (0) fell in quick succession.

Charles remained a notable contributor for the Warriors

with a cautious 29. His 31-ball featured three boundaries and a six.

Following the slump, Sean Williams took the reigns of the Warriors' batting expedition and waged a lone battle but kept losing partners at the other end. He finally walked back to the

dugout in the 17th over after top-scoring for the Warriors with a gutsy 35 off 25 deliveries with the help of three boundaries and a six.

For MI Emirates, Salamkheil returned brilliant figures of 3/18 while Akeal Hosein and Trent Boult bagged two wickets each.

In pursuit of a modest 130-run target, MI Emirates comfortably amassed 133/2 with 53 balls to spare.

Openers Kusal Perera and Muhammad Waseem provided a flying start to the run chase.

The duo went after the Warriors' bowlers and notched up 80 runs inside the batting powerplay.

Waseem dominated the stand with belligerent hitting until Muhammad Jawadullah dismissed him in the sixth over. He smashed four boundaries and three sixes on his 13-ball 37.

Perera soon followed his partner's footsteps and departed in the ninth after top-scoring for MI Emirates with a 27-ball 47, featuring five boundaries and two sixes.

Skipper Nicholas Pooran then partnered strongly with Andre Fletcher for a match-winning stand and guided his side to a comfortable victory.

Pooran scored a quickfire 24 off just nine deliveries while Fletcher scored a cautious 22.

For the Warriors, Jawadullah and James Fuller could pick up a wicket.

The eight-wicket victory powered leaders MI Emirates to strengthen their grip at the top of the ICLT20 standings with 10 points in seven matches while Sharjah Warriors remained fourth with six points in six matches.

Naseem Shah bowls in "rhythm" at a local league

Syed Ahsan Ali Jaffri

Pakistan's star pacer Naseem Shah featured in a local league on Friday and bowled at full throttle after recovering from a shoulder injury.

In a video, making rounds on social media, the right-arm pacer can be seen bowling with ease and at a decent pace.

The young pacer was also making the ball swing ferociously which rewarded him with two wickets in an over.

Taking to Instagram, the speedster shared the footage of his bowling and offered gratitude to the Almighty Allah for coming back to the rhythm.

"Alhamdulillah, back in rhythm," wrote Shah.

Notably, Naseem Shah got injured during the Asia Cup 2023 match against India in September as he walked off the field during the 46th over of India's innings on the reserve day.



Later, the PCB confirmed that Naseem Shah had been ruled out of the Asia Cup 2023 and was replaced by Zaman Khan in the Pakistan squad.

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Consequently, he was ruled out of the ICC World Cup 2023 and Hasan Ali was

included in Pakistan's World Cup squad.

Later, Naseem Shah underwent surgery in the United Kingdom. Following the surgery, he remained in the UK for two months for rehabilitation and initial training as the PCB covered his medical costs and he received continuous care from a team of expert medical staff.

Naseem's rehabilitation was done at the National Cricket Academy (NCA), Lahore under the supervision of a strength and conditioning coach, a physiotherapist and a doctor.

After attaining complete fitness, the right-arm pacer is slated to represent two-time champions Islamabad United in the upcoming ninth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), which is scheduled to commence on February 17.

He was traded from Quetta Gladiators to Islamabad United for Mohammad Wasim Jr. and Abrar Ahmed ahead of the PSL 9 Players Draft.



KARACHI: On the occasion of Sports Day of Beacon House School System Gulshan Middle -1 Branch, Chief Guest Test Cricketer Touseef Ahmed, Head Mistress Maliha Noman along with Group Photo while distributing prizes to the successful players. RCAF Zone 1 Secretary Arif Waheed is also present.

Lahore's Kalsoom, Taimur clinch TT singles titles



Tahir Amin Malik

The exciting competitions of Rising Punjab Games 2024 came to an end at Nishtar Park Sports Complex (NPSC) Gymnasium Hall on Friday.

On the last day, the finals of Women's and Men's Singles Table Tennis Championship were organized. In Women's Singles Table Tennis final, Lahore's Kalsoom Khan edged out her compatriot Perniya Zaman Khan in a thrilling title clash by 4-3 with the set score of 12-10, 2-11, 7-11, 11-9, 5-11, 11-1 and 11-8. After winning the opening set by 12-10, Kalsoom lost the next two sets by 2-11 and 7-11 due to Perniya Khan's magnificent fightback.

Kalsoom regained her energies for a brief time and won the fourth set with 11-9 points. Then Perniya won the 5th set by 11-5 which gave her a 3-2 set lead. At this point of tense final, Kalsoom regrouped herself and won the next two sets by 11-1 and 11-8 to wrap up a splendid 4-3 victory.

In Men's Singles final match, Lahore's Taimur Khan dominated the proceedings right from the beginning and did not give any room to his experienced rival Faizan Zahoor of Faisalabad to settle down and won the title decider comfortably by 4-1 with the set score of 11-5, 11-6, 11-3, 8-11 and 11-7.

Overall, a cash prize money of Rs 12 lakh was distributed among the winners and runners of Women's and Men's Singles and Team Event categories.

President Pakistan Table Tennis Federation (PTTF) Ahmer Malik was the chief guest at the closing ceremony. Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum, President Punjab Table Tennis Association Irfanullah Khan were also present on this occasion.

Three-day derby starts at UAF



Sports Desk

FAISALABAD: A three-day derby championship started at Racecourse ground, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), on Friday.

Directorate of Farm, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, organised Rana Manzoor Khan and Raja Rustam Khan Derby Championship in which 80 imported and local greyhounds were taking part. UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan inaugurated the championship, while Director Farm Dr Shahid Ibne Zamir, Chief Hall Warden Dr Haroon Zaman, Principal Officer Estate Nadeem Akbar, Deputy Director Endowment Fund Rana Amir Saeed and others were also present.

All-round Jansen propels Sunrisers Eastern Cape to thump Paarl Royals

A Sports

PAARL: Marco Jansen backed his quickfire half-century with two wickets and powered Sunrisers Eastern Cape to a resounding 44-run victory over Paarl Royals in the 27th match of the ongoing SA20 here on Friday.

Opting to bat first, the Eastern Cape posted a mammoth total of 208/4 on the board, courtesy of a quickfire half-century by Marco Jansen.

The visitors had a contrasting start to their innings as they lost opener Dawid Malan (2) with just eight runs on the board in 2.4 overs.

But Tom Abell joined Jordan Hermann and launched an astounding recovery with a 78-run partnership.

Abell was the core aggressor of the anchoring partnership but failed to stretch his counterattacking knock as he fell victim to Tabraiz Shamsi just four short of his well-deserved fifty.

He scored 46 off 25 deliveries with the help of seven boundaries and a six.

Meanwhile, Hermann, who was struggling to score freely, followed Abell's footsteps just an over later. He scored a scratchy 36 off 37 deliveries, hitting three boundaries and a six.

Skipper Aiden Markram had a brief stay at the crease as he could score a mere nine off 10 deliveries before perishing in the 16th over.

His dismissal had Eastern Cape reduced to 121/4 in 15.3 overs but Marco Jansen turned the game on its head with a sensational knock.

The right-handed batter smashed four boundaries and six sixes on his way to an unbeaten 71 which came off just 31 deliveries.

Wicketkeeper batter Tristan Stubbs supported Jansen at the backend with a brisk 22-run cameo. His 10-ball knock featured one boundary and two sixes.

For the Royals, Evan Jones bagged two wickets while Shamsi and Wihan Lubbe made one scalp each.

In pursuit of a mammoth 209-run target, the Royals could accumulate 164/7 in the allotted overs despite a solid start.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs the 9th meeting of the Apex Committee of the Special Investment Facilitation Council on Friday.



Photo: PID

Dr. Arif Alvi urges equal opportunities for businesswomen to improve the economy

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan urged that businesswomen should be provided equal opportunities to grow in the business field that would pave the way for better development of the economy and bring prosperity to the country. He said that enhanced participation of women in business and other fields is so important to reduce poverty and ensure sustainable development of the country. He stressed that the government should create better opportunities for the economic empowerment of women and focus on providing them with a safe and conducive workplace environment. He said this while addressing the award ceremony for business-



women and young entrepreneurs organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

President Dr. Arif Alvi lauded the efforts of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce for organizing an award ceremony

to recognize the role of businesswomen and young entrepreneurs and said that other chambers of commerce should also work for the economic empowerment of women and youngsters. He urged the Chambers of Commerce to support businesswomen

in getting cheap loans from banks.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries said that to ensure the development and prosperity of the country, it is important to empower women in every sphere of life. ICCI is working hard to empower women and youth. He said that women are 50% of our population, but their participation in business is meager. Our women are very talented and the government should provide them with cheap loans to start their businesses. He said that IT should be given the status of industry to boost the IT sector and its exports, which are important for the country's development and prosperity.

Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader of ICCI, said that the government should take steps to increase the literacy rate, open more vocational training institutes for skill development, and privatize the loss-making government commercial enterprises. Female entrepreneur Zubia Zubair said women should be brought into the national mainstream by providing ample opportunities. She said that women should be given adequate representation in all sectors. Women should also get an education and learn modern skills.

Awards were given to 18 young entrepreneurs and 18 women entrepreneurs in the ceremony in recognition of their achievements in the business field.

Israeli war on Palestinians, 119th day in a row: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Israeli government bears full and direct responsibility for the lives of the child Hind, the Red Crescent staff, and thousands of detainees and missing persons.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns in the strongest terms the genocidal war committed by the Israeli government, which has been continuing for the 119th day in a row, leaving more martyrs, wounded and missing around the clock, as a result of the continuous Israeli bombing of homes, facilities and humanitarian centers, including hospitals and health centres, as happened recently in targeting

an association The Red Crescent, Al-Amal Hospital, Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, and others, which also continually deepen the humanitarian catastrophe among Palestinian civilians and push them all the time into a spiral of certain death as a result of continuous displacement, as is currently happening to citizens in Khan Yunis towards Rafah and the border. According to approved statistics, the occupation forces have committed 95 massacres since the issuance of the decision of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, leaving 936 martyrs and 1,652 wounded. This is in addition to the occupation forces recently blowing up an entire residential square in Khan Yunis and continuing to demolish thou-



sands of homes on the borders of the Gaza Strip under the name (The buffer zone), as well as what was documented regarding the occupation soldiers burning hundreds of homes under the pretext of

avenging their colleagues in the war, and the only constant is the deepening of the war of extermination and the expansion of the circle of displacement and death due to the policy of starvation, thirst, and

deprivation of the necessary medicines and treatments, especially after the occupation forces bombed the warehouse. Head of Pharmaceuticals of the Ministry of Health in Gaza.

In this context, the Ministry holds the Israeli government fully and directly responsible for the lives of thousands of kidnapped, detained and missing persons, including the child Hind and the Red Crescent crew who went to rescue her more than 85 hours ago and lost contact with him.

The Ministry calls on the international community to correct course and focus efforts above all on an immediate ceasefire, in order to preserve what remains of the credibility of human humanity.

FM for fostering economic cooperation, regional connectivity to ensure prosperity in South Asia

Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS, FEB 1 (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday called for promoting economic cooperation and regional connectivity to ensure peace and prosperity in the South Asian region. In his address to leading scholars and distinguished academicians from various international and European institutions at the Royal Institute for International Relations in Brussels, the foreign minister emphasized the pivotal role of economic cooperation in making a prosperous region.



Minister Jilani underscored the necessity of resolving the Jammu and Kashmir dispute for lasting peace in South Asia.

He also discouraged geopolitical contests and the formation of conflicting bloc structures and alliances in the region.

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Blast outside ECP office in Karachi; no casualties

City Desk

KARACHI: A blast occurred outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) office in Karachi;

In a statement, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) South Sajid Sadozai said that no casualties were reported in the incident.

He said that the bomb disposal squad had been summoned while the intensity and nature of the blast were being determined.

The SSP said that the explosives material was kept in a shopping bag along the ECP office's wall located in Karachi's red zone area. He noted ball bearings were not found in the explosive material.

Apex body lauds 'Whole of Government Approach' to realise SIFC's envisioned dividends

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Apex Committee of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) on Friday showed profound satisfaction over the overall progress of the SIFC and appreciated 'Whole of Government Approach' in realising the envisioned dividends.

The 9th meeting of the SIFC Apex Committee met under the chair of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar which reviewed various initiatives being steered through the forum.

The meeting was attended by the Chief of Army Staff, federal cabinet, provincial chief ministers and high-level government officials.

The ministries presented progress on the projects and policy initiatives, and gave plans for subsequent endeavours to attract the investment.

The Apex Committee reviewed progress on various measures and appreciated the contribution made for improving macro and micro-economic conditions of the country.

The body commended the steps taken to build a sustainable ecosystem for nurturing latent potential and attracting investments, with special emphasis on the cross sectoral policy

interventions, human resource development, infrastructural uplift and strengthening of domestic dispute resolution mechanism.

The Committee reviewed and appreciated the progress on the level of economic engagements with friendly countries and underscored the need to efficiently realise investment commitments into economic dividends.

The Apex body also accorded in-principle approval for Strategic Canals Vision 2030 and FBR Reforms. The Chief of the Army Staff assured firm resolve of the Pakistan Army to support the government's initiatives for the economic stability of the country and the socio-economic well-being of its people.

In the end, the prime minister appreciated the role of SIFC, ministries, departments and affiliated stakeholders in accomplishing the major economic milestones as part of the interim government and setting the pace for future endeavours.

He also urged the incoming government to ensure continuity of economic policies by capitalising on the positive momentum, established by SIFC, in the larger interest of the country.

Elections 2024: Armed forces to perform duties as Quick Reaction Force



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Armed Forces under Article 245 of the Constitution would assist in the conduct of the general elections 2024 and will perform duties as Quick Reaction Force, and the third tier in the respective areas.

According to details, the primary responsibility of maintaining law and order during the elections rests with the police, while civil armed forces such as Rangers and Frontier Corps (FC) will be responsible for security in the second tier.

Pakistan Army personnel will be deployed in the general polling areas in the third tier to deal with any security situation.

Civil Armed Forces and Pakistan Army personnel will cooperate to provide a safe environment so that the polling staff including District Returning Officers (DROs), Returning Officers (ROs) and Presiding Officers can perform their duties amicably, while only the Civil Armed

Forces will be responsible for security of the printing press during the process of printing ballot papers.

Similarly, foolproof security will be provided for the delivery of electoral materials from the offices of the Returning Officers to the polling stations, during the counting and transfer of the electoral materials back to the offices of the Returning Officers after the completion of the election process.

Police will be responsible for security as Tier One, while the Civil Armed Forces and the Pakistan Army will be responsible for Tier Two and Tier Three respectively to ensure a safe environment. Civil Armed Forces and Pakistan Army will not interfere in any way in the work of Presiding Officer, Assistant Presiding Officer or Polling Officer.

The Civil Armed Forces and the Pakistan Army will perform their duties outside the selected highly sensitive polling stations and will focus exclusively on maintaining peaceful environment.

ECP seeks explanation from PPP's Khursheed Shah over CoC 'violation'

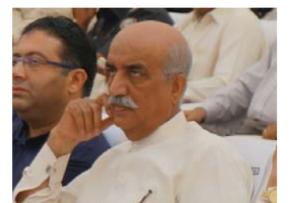
PPA

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has taken notice against the Code of Conduct (CoC) 'violation' by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) senior leader and former leader of opposition in the National Assembly Syed Khursheed Shah, ARY News reported.

As per reports, the ECP Sindh chapter issued show-notice to Syed Khursheed Shah who is contesting from NA-201 (Sukkur-II) and sought explanation from him over 'violation' of CoC.

The ECP Sindh has also taken serious notice of the CoC violations in different constituencies of the province and sought explanation from respective candidates.

The Show-cause notices have been issued to representatives of Mutta-hida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, Jamaat-e-Islami, Muhajir Qaumi Movement and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz over violations in PS-91 (Karachi-Korangi).



An independent candidate in PS-100 (Karachi-East), has also been issued show-cause notice. The explanation is also sought from Chairman District Council Thatta for participating in the election campaign.

Monitoring teams in Karachi's East, Keamari, Central, West and districts and Kashmir have removed flags, banners, billboards and other materials installed contrary to the CoC.

The Election Commissioner Sindh has directed District Monitoring Officers to ensure implementation of CoC.