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Barkat Rice Mills

Election results were made months before polling day: Pir Pagara

GDA Chief Pir Pagara Sibghatullah Shah Rashdi has claimed that the election results were made and were sold months before the polling day. "The election was sold three months before the polling day and the payment has also been made," he said while addressing a sit-in in Sindh's Jamshoro... (Details on Page 8)

Israeli's Netanyahu rejects UN, US recognition of Palestinian state

The Palestinian state is not a gift or favor from Netanyahu

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Sha'aban 6, Saturday, February 17, 2024

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 17, Issue: 309 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a review meeting regarding Karachi Electric on Friday.



B Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday said that the caretaker government had resolved major long-standing problems in a short span of time to move the country towards economic stability. He said the caretaker setup also provided all possible facilities on priority to the international

investors and business community to attract maximum foreign direct investment in the country.

He emphasized that the caretaker government was committed to continue its efforts to resolve the problems facing the country's economy till its last day of working.

Chairing a meeting to review various issues of Karachi Electric (K. E), the prime minister said

that the government was trying to solve all the remaining problems as soon as possible to remove all obstacles in the way of uninterrupted supply of electricity to the residents of Karachi.

The prime minister directed to find out solutions on priority basis to the issues faced by the Karachi Electric. The delegation of K. E thanked the prime minister and his team for resolving the

Electric. The prime minister also hailed the signing of the interconnection agreement between National Transmission and Distribution Company (NTDC) and Karachi Electric (K. E) held the other day. The CEO of Karachi Electric paid tribute to the caretaker PM and the government officials for solving the problems faced by the compa-

long awaited issues of Karachi ny on priority basis. The prime minister directed that NEPRA and Karachi Electric should jointly find a solution to these problems on a priority basis and submit a report in this regard as soon as possible.

Caretaker minister for energy Muhammad Ali, Chief Executive Officer of K. E and concerned high officials participated in the meeting.

PTI founder vows not to seek political vengeance upon return to power

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Friday asserted that his party will adopt a "Fatah-e-Makkah" approach, vowing not to seek political vengeance upon returning to

The remarks were conveyed by PTI leader Ali Muhammad Khan following a meeting with Imran Khan at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail.

Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Ali Muhammad Khan said the former prime minister stressed "honesty and forgiveness" to take the country forward.

PTI calls for nationwide protests today against 'election rigging'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) on Friday called for nationwide demonstrations today (Saturday) to protest what it calls 'brazen rigging" of February 8 general election.

ing Jamat-e-Islami (JI) leadership in invited different political parties that believed that there was "rigging" in the elections to join the protest.

"The meeting was held under one-point agenda; the nation's mandate was stolen in the elections 2024," he said, adding that it was agreed to unite the voice against the think we will welcome whichever "brazen rigging".

Qaiser further said that the PTI was in contacts with other political parties that believed "elections were rigged". "Now decisions will not be made in closed rooms; the voice of offer to form a coalition government

He regretted that the country was heading towards further political instability after general elections. "We have given call for nationwide protests tomorrow," he said, urging the people to participate in them.

The PTI leader claimed that Speaking to journalists after meethis party secured victory over 170 the last stage conveyed the message National Assembly seats, but "our Islamabad, PTI leader Asad Qaiser mandate was stolen". "We will continue the struggle to stabilise democracy and give basic rights to the people," he added.

For his part, JI Central Naib Ameer Liaqat Baloch said that his party's contact and talks with the PTI will continue in the future. "I party protests against this rigged

lection," he said. It is pertinent to mention here that the Jamat-e-Islami (JI) had declined Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) people of Pakistan will be heard," he in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The party said that it welcomes PTI-backed candidates who emerged victorious in the polls and offers them constitutional and parliamentary security and respect for the public's mandate at this difficult time for the party.

"The PTI welcomed this but in that they only wanted a coalition for the government in KP," the JI lead-

"JI has decided that coalition with PTI at the national level would be in the national interest, but if the PTI has changed its position, then they can settle their affairs with whoever they want in KP," Baloch

Uncertainty looms over Pakistan's olitical future as none of the major political parties - PML-N, PPP or the PTI-backed independent candidates – secured a simple majority in the National Assembly in the February 8 general elections.

ECP notifies 8 judges as appellate tribunals to dispose off election petitions

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has appointed 8 judges as appellate tribunals to dispose off election petitions for National and Provincial Assembly constituencies in both general and by-elections. "In accordance with Section 140 of the Elections Act, 2017, the Election Commission of Pakistan, upon the recommendation of the respective chief justices, has appointed judges from various high courts to serve as election tribunals, effective immediately," said ECP spokes-

Naming Faiz Hameed for orchestrating VONC a 'slip of tongue': Fazl

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulemai-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Friday backtracked from his statement regarding ex-spymaster Lt Gen Faiz Hameed's involvement in bringing no-confidence vote (VONC) against former prime minister Imran Khan, dubbing it a 'slip

"I believe Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and Lt Gen Faiz Hameed were responsible for rigging the 2018 general polls," the JUI-F chief had said in an interview with a private TV channel.

A day earlier, Maulana Fazlur Rehman held former army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ex-spymaster Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, who was the then-Peshawar corps commander, responsible for the no-confidence vote against former prime minister Imran Khan and the PTI government.

Maulana Fazl was among top opposition leaders who spearheaded the efforts to oust the PTI founder under the banner of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM).

Speaking to a private news channel, he clarified that he took Faiz Hameed's name by "mistake". However, he main-



tained Qamar Bajwa and Faiz were involved in rigging during the 2018 elections.

"This matter should be consigned to history instead of being discussed more," he

When asked Qamar Bajwa had asked him to swear on his words, Fazlur Rehman replied these generals had also taken oath no to interfere in politics. "It is wrong to demand an oath on things that happened in front of us", he added.

Talking about the elections and meeting with the PTI delegation, Fazl said that transparent elections did not take place anywhere including Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. "Despite our differences, PTI delegation came and held a positive meeting. But we emphasised [with them] that rigging did take place in KP," he

ECP forms tribunals to hear polls' results-related pleas

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) formed election tribunals in Balochistan and Sindh for hearing polls' results related

Justice Muhammad Karim Khan Agha and Justice Adnan Igbal Chaudhry of the Sindh High Court (SHC) would hear petitions for the Karachi Divi-

Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalhoro will be heading an election tribunal for the Sukkur and Shaheed Benazirabad divisions while Justice Amjad Ali Sahito will hold hearings in the Mirpurkhas and Hyderabad divisions.

Justice Muhammad Saleem Jessar has been appointed to the election tribunal for the Larkana division.

Similarly, Justice Abdullah Baloch, Justice Rozi Khan Barrech, and Justice Muhammad Aamir Nawaz Rana of the Balochistan High Court would hear elections-related pleas in the province. The ECP made these appointments on the recommendations of Chief Justices of the Balochistan and Sindh High Courts.

The tribunals would address the petitions about 'irregularities' and rigging accusations in the elections and subsequent bye-elections.

Launch of PTV newsletter, a major milestone: **Secretary Information**



跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shaheera Shahid on Friday said Pakistan Television (PTV) had achieved a major milestone by launching its newsletter, aimed at inculcating reading and writing habits among the youth. Addressing the launching ceremony, the Secretary congratulated the PTV management and team on the major achieve-

ment. "PTV team has worked hard in preparing the newsletter, titled PTV Times," she added.

On the occasion, PTV Managing Director Mubashar Touqeer said the newsletter was a reflection of the strong bond between PTV and its viewers, who would get valuable information through the newsletter. He congratulated the PTV management and staff who worked hard to produce the newsletter.

Nawaz Sharif advised against forming govt in Centre

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders advised party supremo Nawaz Sharif against forming the federal government..

According to details, former Finance Minister Ishaq Dar meetings held with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) they are willing to join the

federal government.

The sources privy to the development said that most of the PML-N leaders feared that the PPP would 'blackmail' them at every step in the hung

parliament. "PPP is shying away from briefed the party on the two taking responsibility and only wants to enjoy privileges. If

regarding the formation of the cabinet, then there is no harm consultation on whether or ment," sources said while quot- ment. ing the PML-N leaders.

On the occasion, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif kept listening to the suggestions put forwarded by the PML-N

The apprehensions of the leaders prompted the PML-N top leadership to expand the

in forming a coalition govern- not to form the federal govern-It is pertinent to mention

here that no party is in a position to form the federal government alone. Out of 266 general seats in the National Assembly, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed independent candidates lead with 93 seats while the PML-N has 75.

The PPP's candidates emerged victorious from 54 seats while Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has 17, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) bagged four and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) secured three seats. Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) won two seats while eight independent candidates have also won.

Mushaal Mullick blasts Indian authorities for inhumane treatment of JKLF chief

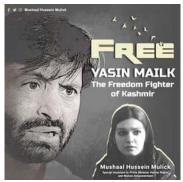
ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for human rights and women empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has vociferously condemned Indian authorities' inhumane behavior towards her husband, Chairman JKLF Mohammad Yasin Malik. She has said that Yasin Malik's health has deteriorated to an alarming level after he stopped taking medicines in protest to inhuman behavior of authorities for their delaying tactics to take him to the hospital for proper medical treatment, despite court

outdated pacemaker implanted in him had now gone ineffective, endangering his life. She said that In addition attention towards the deterioratto his heart problems, Yasin Malik was ing health condition of her son and



She further said that according to confirmed reports his body weight had also dropped to a great extent, which was a great cause of concern.

Mushaal said that as per reports, the health of Muhammad Yasin Malik, was deteriorating speedily due to lack of his proper medical treatment Mushaal said that the expired and in Tihar Jail. She said that just two weeks ago, his mother had approached a court in Delhi to draw the court's also suffering from kidney ailment. over concerns of the lack of interest



of the authorities towards his health. In her plea to court, his mother also expressed her readiness to bear the expenses of her son's treatment.

Mushaal said that her husband Yasin Malik worsening health condition and court orders demanded that Yasin Malik should have been immekept there under the supervision of doctors until his full recovery. She said that Yasin Malik was taken to a government hospital in Delhi on February 13 only after his condition deteriorated to alarming level. She said that despite the court orders to keep him under supervision in hospital, authorities brought him back to the jail after just a routine medical

She appealed International human rights institutions to intervene so that the precious life of the most popular pro-freedom political leader of the people of the Jammu Kashmir was

She further emphasized that the resilient people and leadership of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be intimidated or subdued through false and fabricated cases, nor by employing diately transferred to the hospital and heavy-handed and inhumane tactics.

Shortage of Sugar insulin vaccine in Wana DHQ Hospital

WANA: District Lower South Waziristan District Headquarter Hospital Wana and including other health centers, insulin injections, are facing severe problems due to lack of all kinds of first aid medicines.

The provincial caretaker government had also approved the grant of medicines for all major hospitals of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but the procurement of medicines could not be done till now

On this occasion, Gul Nawaz Wazir said while talking to the media that my five-year-young daughter is suffering from diabetes since childhood, for which doctors have recommended insulin injections

He said that without insulin injection, it has become difficult for the daughter to pass from moment to moment and she is in the struggle

of life and death. He said that for the last several weeks, all the government hospitals $\,$ have gone behind the insulin injection but no insulin injection was

found in any hospital. Gul Nawaz further said that the above mentioned injections are available in private hospitals, but the cause of poverty is beyond my control.

On the other hand, DMS Dr. Zain Ullah Wazir said that a demand has been made from the provincial government to provide insulin injections Insulin injection will be provided to diabetic patients soon after supply gets from the provincial government.

In this regard, all, the government BHUs and dispensaries in the outskirts of Lower South Waziristan district have become non-functional for the last several months due to lack of medicines.

Public circles say that due to non-availability of first aid medicines in remote hilly areas of Tehsil Birmal, Tehsil Toi Khullah and Shakai, due to non-availability of first aid medicines, children, girls, women and the elderly are facing severe difficulties.

WASA to take action against absent staff and officers: MD

👺 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Managing Director WASA Amir Aziz has directed to take departmental action against officers and employees who are absent and not joining their post, while he has also urged to make a comprehensive and efficient attendance mechanism. WASA Head Office While presiding over a meeting, he said that in order to restore the confidence of consumers, immediate redressal of their complaints is the top priority and no compromise will be tolerated in this regard. MD Vasa further said that such Officers and staff who delay joining after posting or are absent from their duty should be deducted from their salary for those days. This will improve the image of the department. The Managing Director directed the Administration Directorate to prepare the attendance mechanism from the Deputy Director to the Sub-Engineer and complete the attendance report at half past nine in the morning. He clarified that All resources should be used to provide quality water supply and drainage facilities to the public and any negligence in this regard will be considered unacceptable.

Faisalabad Arts Council announces steps for welfare of artists after third meeting

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The third meeting of the Board of Management Committee of the Punjab Council of Arts Faisalabad Division was held in which it was stated that the board is taking all possible measures for the welfare and cultural development of the artists of Faisalabad. Faisalabad Division. All energies will be used to present the historical heritage of Faisalabad to the whole world, medical fund for Faisalabad poets, writers, writers and people related to arts and crafts and registration of artists will also be started. Member Board of Management Committee Professor Dr Riaz Majeed chaired the third meeting of the Board of Management Committee Director Faisalahad Arts Council Abrar Alam gave a detailed briefing on the proposed cultural activities of the Arts Council and the decisions made in the previous meeting. Commitment was reiterated to make the art gallery fully functional and connect artists with it. A documentary based on the history, prominent personalities and cultural heritage of Faisalabad will be produced. Social media to further improve the ongoing art classes in Arts Council Public Relations Director Khurshid Jilani, Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak, wellknown travel writer, social personality Prof. Tehmina Afzal, Ahmed Niazi (well-known playwright) and Assistant Director Local Government were among the members. The committee strongly supported the organization of meetings and the actions taken by the Arts Council administration.

RCCI urge govt to withdraw gas price hike

№ PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has rejected the massive increase of 65% in gas tariffs and urged the Government to withdraw gas

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq in a statement said that the government has increased the gas prices for the second time in just four months and termed it disastrous for industries. He said that the ECC decision also put an unreasonable burden on a class of residential consumers using more than 2 cubic hectometers (Hm3) gas.



He urged the government to reconsider the decision, pointing out that in developed countries, utilities were not exploited for economic gains.

Protest

HYDERABAD: GDA Leader and spiritual leader of Hur Jamat Pir Sahib Pagara addressing to sit in protest against rigging in



CEO PPIF and DG Behbood Abadi Punjab visited Green Star Marketing Head Office

LAHORE: Chief Executive Officer PPIF and Director General Population Welfare Thaman Rai visited the Green Star Marketing Head Office to review the ongoing projects with the support of Green Star and Punjab Population Innovation Fund. The main Green Star Karachi Head Office team was also present on this occasion. The purpose of the visit of the Chief Executive Officer PPIF and Director General of Population Welfare is to increase the capacity of the employees of the Population Welfare Department through ongoing projects, satellite camps, technical assistance, and youth engagement. Green Star Punjab Population Innovation Fund. The cooperation is focused



on providing awareness and aware- and college level. The youth must have about SRH and family health issues and family health matters.

ness among the youth at the university information, awareness, and awareness

them on family health issues including family planning. Adopting a strategy is imperative, which is why Green Star Punjab and the Population Innovation Fund are working together to create $awareness\, and\, educate\, young\, people\, at$ the university and college levels so that they can enter the workforce when they get married. So that they have enough

after marriage. Thaman Rai said that

population Welfare is a common goal

supported by the concerted efforts of

the private and public sectors. Express-

ing his satisfaction with the pace of the projects, he further said that the

vouth has a significant place in Paki-

stan. Providing a better health envi-

ronment to these people in Pakistan

is the need of the hour and training

knowledge and awareness about SRH

CM Inaugurates the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Package-I Project

LAHORE,: Another mega project instead of being completed in 16 months has been completed in 100 days only. Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project Package-I today. CM visited the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project and inspected the ongoing construction activities at the Package-II. Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the hard work of the concerned officials and contractor on the timely completion of Package-I project in a record period of time. Commissioner Lahore that the 7.3 km long Controlled Division/DG LDA gave a brief-

ing to the CM about the project. CM while addressing the inaugural ceremony stated that owing to an excellent team work along with day and night hard work, the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project Package-I has been completed before the stipulated time. Thanks to Allah Almighty that the project from Niazi Chowk up to Saggian has been completed. Hopefully, the package-II from Saggian up to Babu Sabu will also be completed in coming few days. The LDA and Nespak team prepared a unique design of an international standard at a low cost. CM apprised

Access Corridor Bund Road

Project from Niazi Interchange up to Babu Sabu Interchange is the first high-rise project in Pakistan. LDA, Nespak and the contractor by continuously working for 24 hours completed the project in 100 days only. Nine subways have also been built for transportation at the service road in the Bund Road Project. More than2 lakh vehicles will pass from this project daily and saving of crores of rupees will be accrued in terms of time as well as fuel. Mohsin Naqvi acknowledged that the Provincial Minister for Housing Syed Azfar Ali Nasir, Secretary Housing Sajid Zafar, Commissioner / DG LDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chief Engineer LDA, Nespak team, Contractor Habib Construction, Project Director and his whole team deserve commendation on the completion of the said project in a record time frame. The Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project has been completed and it should be labelled as Ring

CM stated that the Provincial Minister Azfar Ali Nasir should now shift to his house as the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project has been completed. Provincial Minister for Housing, DG LDA and Chief Engineer continuously undertook supervision of this project. I undertook 40-50 visits of the Controlled Access Corridor Bund Road Project and the Secretaries along with the media team used to accompany myself. DG LDA worked with a brisk speed for the completion of this project. The projects being completed under the supervision of DG LDA during the last one year will be remembered for long. Many problems were being faced during the completion of this project but by the Grace of Allah Almighty, all such obstacles have been over-

This area will not be less than Gulberg with the completion of Shahdara Bridge, Imamia Colony and Bund Road Project. CM congratulated the the resi-

dents and the whole team on Almighty has bestowed upon the successful completion of this project. Had the team not worked project would never have been completed before time.

being faced during the complecarried out an excellent monitorshould all take pride that Allah were also present on the occasion.

us an opportunity to serve the people. Provincial Ministers Amir in a united manner then this Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Bilal Afzal, Chairman P&D Board, Secretaries of Housing, C&W, Finance, The difficulties of fog, rain Information, Commissioner/DG and drainage problems were LDA, CCPO, Deputy Commissioner, CTO, CEO LWMC, DG tion of this project. Nespak has PHA, DGPR, Chief Engineer LDA, Chief Engineer TEPA, GM ing of this project. As a team, we Nespak and concerned officials





Namaz Timings Maghrib

EMEDGENCY

LIMITION I
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

ENOUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	11!
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	11
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489

Read Pakistan successfully concludes the National Reader's Conference

₽NP

ISLAMABAD: Read Pakistan, a distinguished organisation committed to promoting literacy and fostering a passion for reading nationwide, held the National Reader's Conference on the 16th of February at Kehkashan Hall, Serena.

This year's conference featured distinguished speakers who had made substantial contributions to their respective fields. Among the honoured speakers were Miss Nigar Nazar, a renowned artist and female cartoonist, and Mr Rashidally Soobadar from the Mauritius High Commission in the most e. memorable way highlighted the importance of reading. Mr Zia Ur Rehman. a notable author who has received a Lifetime Achievement Award and served in civil services for 36 years, spoke passionately about the importance of inculcating reading habits among the youth. Senator Fauwzia Arshad appreciated the cause of Read Pakistan in a verv modest wa

In addition to the esteemed speakers, the conference hosted a compelling panel discussion with prominent participants, including Muhammad Rafique Tahir, Former Joint Educational Advisor, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Dr. Waqar Azeem, a multi-talented individual with expertise in playwriting, directing, and acting, discussed "The Joy of Reading Plays", Sumbhal Naveed, Founder and CEO of the Institute of Learning for a Better Tomorrow (ILFABET), delved into the "Pedagogy of Reading Habit in Pakistan", Munir Ahmed explored the theme of "Storytelling to Inculcate Reading Interest," while published author Madiha Arsalan discussed the "Role of Language in Literature SDGs 2030." Miss Sadaf Raza who is a poet, mystic, and healer and has authored three collections of poems, moderated the whole panel discussion.

Indigenisation and Technological Sovereignty: Key to Pakistan's Defence Evolution: urge CASS Seminar Speakers

₿ PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, successfully hosted a seminar titled 'Shifting Battlefields: Impact of Emerging

Technologies on the Character of Warfare in South Asia'. This event convened distinguished experts from the defence, technology, and academic sectors to discuss the transformative role of emerging technologies in modern warfare, with a particular focus on South Asia.

Air Marshal Farooq Habib (Retd), Senior Director at CASS, opened the seminar by stressing the complexity and unpredictability of technological evolution in military contexts. He emphasised the necessity for Pakistan's defence sector to adapt and evolve in response to these advancements to maintain strategic and tactical superiority.

Riaz (Retd), former President of the National

Defense University, in his Keynote Address, underscored the profound influence of technological advancements on the character of warfare. He predicted a technological upheaval, highlighting the need for strategic adaptation to innovations in space, cyber, AI, and more. General Riaz called for a revision of traditional warfare strategies to include emerging technologies that are redefining conflict dynamics.

Mr Fawad Zahir, a Defence and Strategic Studies Expert, focused on the importance of airpower, enhanced by big data analysis, quantum computing, and Machine Learning. He urged for robust civilian-military collaboration to harness technological advancements for defence purposes.

Lieutenant General Aamer man/CPD of the National Centre of Artificial Intelligence (NCAI), highlighted AI's potential to revolutionise warfare, marking it the third major evolution after gunpowder and nuclear power.

Mr Khawaja Mohammad Ali, a Cyber Security, Data Privacy, and Digital Forensics Expert, delineated the critical role of cyber operations in modern conflict, advocating for the establishment of a national cybersecurity authority; extensive training and awareness programmes; cyber diplomacy; and indigenous development in cybersecurity solutions.

Senior Journalist and Columnist, Mr Zarar Khurro, focused on the strategic importance of narrative building in the context of advanced technological warfare. He discussed the long-term process of narrative construction facilitated by technology, pointing to the need for authenticity Prof. Dr Yasar Ayaz, Chair- and the significant impact of social



media on public opinion.

President CASS-Islamabad, Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan (Retd), in his Concluding Remarks, reiterated the critical importance of first-shot capa-

by advancements in sensors and detection technologies.

The presentations from a diverse audience, includ-

bility in modern warfare, driven ing retired military officers, scholars, journalists, and students, who engaged in an interactive Question and Answer session, further followed by active participation enriching the discourse on this

National Readers Conference

ISLAMABAD: Local singer performing during a ceremony title National Readers Conference 2024 at a local hotel, in the Federal Capital

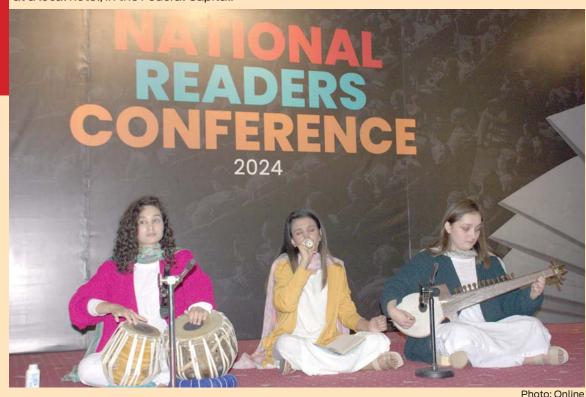


Photo: Online

Standard Chartered and Karachi United concludes sixth Football Youth League

KARACHI: Standard Chartered-Karachi United Football League concluded its sixth year in Karachi.

This league was launched in November 2023. Featuring 206 thrilling matches, among 74 teams, it comprised more than 1280 young male and female players, who showed great performances. Sponsorship of this tournament was a part of Standard Chartered Bank's resourceful social development initiative to promote healthy sporting activities in the country.

girls' competition was the Karachi United girls team, while the victorious squad in the under-



14 boys' competition was Karachi United Baldia Centre. Earlier, the under-10 team contest was won by Karachi United Mauripur Centre while the top team in the under-12 contest was Karachi United CEFA Centre Meanwhile, the crown The winning team in the in the school category championship headed to Dream of Youth. The tournament inspires dren, who have been support-

commenting on the sponsorship said, "We are very proud to be part of this wonderful initiative over the last 6 years and the impact it has created for thousands of children and their communities. The league continues to grow from children hailing from different strength to strength, bringing football clubs and academies together children from across different communities and Standard Chartered has been backgrounds through friendly sponsoring this league since and healthy competition. 2017. Initiated with engag-

productive citizens.

Rehan Shaikh, CEO, of

Standard Chartered Pakistan

Commenting on the league Mr. Imran Ali, Director Youth and Community, at Karachi tournament has exceeded the United said: "This Youth league continues to impress us in its ability to engage new players enthusiastic participation by ed through sports to become and communities every year.

Bazm Nadeem holds 90th mushaira for poets in Multan



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: The 90th Mushaira of Bazm Nadeem is a proof of efforts for the promotion of literature. The 90th Mushaira of Prof. Nadeem Bazm Nadeem was held in a local college. Tufail Baloch was present and Dr. Prof. Maqbool Gilani was responsible for the administration Among the accomplished poets are Munis Hashmi, Sadia Rabab, Maria Farhat, Afzal Munir Afzal, Abid Hussain Abid, Zahid Maloof Khakhi, Tafail Baloch, Abdul Hakeem Jahangiri, Muhammad Ali Bahoush, Khalid Awan, Mehboob Ahmed Kamal, Abid Namazal, Tania Abidi, Ishtiaq Ahmed Shahid, Saima Saimi. Shazia Kanwal Dr. Maqbool Geelani Abdul WahidNadeem and Ashraf Javed were present at the event while addressing the ceremony, Prof. Abdul Wahid Nadeem, patron of Bazm Nadeem, said that the 90th monthly mushaira of Bazm Nadeem is a proof that Bazm Nadeem is trying hard for the promotion of literature. And will continue to organize mushairas for poets.

Pakistan's Mohsin Naveed Ranjha to launch London studio

LAHORE: Coveted fashion label, Mohsin Naveed Ranjha, announces a major brand expansion, as the fashion house is set to launch a standalone design studio in the heart of London's luxury district, just off Regent Street. Mohsin is the first Pakistani couture fashion designer to do so, taking the nations fashion footprint to new frontiers.

The MNR studio will open its doors to London with a celebratory event on the 8th of March.

Led by Creative Director Mohsin Naveed Ranjha, Managing Director Abubakar Naveed Ranjha and managed by Pakistan's top digital ecosystem powerhouses Cresset Tech, the MNR London studio will feature regular Ready to Wear Collections, Luxury Capsule Collections as well as Bespoke Bridal services, across both Menswear and Womenswear.

"I feel an immense sense of pride with the launch of our studio in London. Being able to share the beauty of Pakistan through fashion, right in the heart of one of the worlds most coveted fashion capitals, is thrilling. I have both high and humble ambitions for the MNR brand and our arrival into the London fashion scene is an important step to the

fulfillment of some of these aspirations" said Mohsin Naveed Ranjha. MNR Design Studios sowed its roots in the city of Gujranwala with the opening of its first bridal boutique in 2014, the success of which led to an expansion into the major metropolises of Pakistan, Karachi and Lahore. MNR has amassed a significant international celebrity following and recognition, dressing multiple global stars including celebrity Tan France on multiple occasions, alongside Bollywood forces such as Ranveer Singh, Sara Ali Khan and Jhanvi Kapoor.

Bank Alfalah and Zindagi Trust unite to transform education through integrating digital arts and the financial literacy

ing 600 children from under-

served communities, today the

headcount to over 6500 chil-

KARACHI: Bank Alfalah, a leading professional opportunities in the digital commercial bank in Pakistan, and Zindagi Trust, a pioneering non-profit organisation committed to transforming the landscape of education in Pakistan, are pleased to announce the initiation of the Digital Arts and Financial Literacy Program at Zindagi Trust schools.

This initiative is pivotal in Bank Alfalah's dedication to fostering educational innovation and digitisation in Pakistan. Bank Alfalah will be funding PKR 14.84 million over a span of two years to facilitate the establishment of a digital art lab and enhance their curriculum empowering young girls on their path to financial independence at an

The program aims to evolve the educational landscape by integrating digitisation, as we believe in leverag-

digital arts and essential financial literacy into the curriculum, offering girls world. The collaboration is set to benefit around 2.000 female students at Zindagi Trust's adopted schools in one academic year. This will open doors for girls to develop valuable skills that are increasingly in demand increasing their access to professional opportunities in the long term. The girls will be better equipped to pursue rewarding careers and achieve financial independence in

Atif Bajwa, President and CEO of Bank Alfalah, emphasised, "We recognise the power of education in shaping futures, and through this collaboration, we aim to empower young girls with skills essential for success in the digital world. This initiative also aligns seamlessly with our ongoing commitment to

ing technology to enhance the learning experiences of the next generation."

Zindagi Trust remains steadfast in its commitment to effecting transformative change through education and persistently endeavours to redefine the parameters of educational innovation. The operationalization of the inaugural Digital Arts Lab at SMB Fatima Jinnah Government Girls School stands as a testament to this unwavering dedication to providing students with a superior educational experience. Additionally, plans are underway for the establishment of a second Digital Arts Lab at Khatoon-e-Pakistan Government Girls School, reaffirming the organisation's pledge to extend high-quality educational opportunities to a broader spectrum of students. Commencing from the academic year of 2024, the Digital Arts Program will be implement-



ed, marking a significant step forward in enriching the educational landscape and fostering the holistic development of our students.

Editorial/Opinion

Saturday, February 17, 2024

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Threat of Israel's ground invasion of Rafah looms as airstrikes escalate

mid relentless airstrikes targeting Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah and reports said that Israeli forces have conducted a military operation inside the Nasser Hospital Complex, concerns over a potential ground invasion of the densely populated border city have heightened, according to UN officials. The Israeli military confirmed on Thursday in a tweet that its special forces had conducted what they called a "precise and limited operation" inside Nasser Hospital in southern Gaza, the largest functioning health facility in the area.

In a tweet on Wednesday, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, head of the World Health Organization (WHO), expressed alarm over the increasingly dire situation at the hospital. "Access to the hospital remains obstructed — there is no safe corridor for those in need. Two WHO missions have been denied in the last four days, and we lost touch with the hospital's personnel," the WHO Director-General said. He called for humanitarian access and the safeguarding of hospitals by all combatants, stressing that they must remain safe for civilians. The latest situation update from OCHA, the UN's humanitarian aid agency, highlights "population movements" away from the southern border city towards Deir al Balah and the Nuseirat refugee camp. Earlier this week, the World Food Programme (WFP) expressed concern that further displacement from the densely packed city on the Egyptian border could exacerbate the plight of those seeking refuge there. Matthew Hollingworth, WFP Country Director for Palestine, describes Rafah's streets as "packed with throngs of people", noting that every available space in the city has become a makeshift shelter.

The city is now home to around 1.5 million Gazans displaced by conflict. Hollingworth, speaking in a video released on Thursday on the X platform, highlighted the despair pervading Rafah, where people struggle for support, fuel and sustenance amid "damp, cold and miserable" conditions. While WFP continues to provide aid to Gazans in Rafah, organizations such as Action Against Hunger that work side-by-side with UN's humanitarians warn of having to suspend activities if Israeli ground operations expand to Rafah. Meanwhile, intense Israeli bombardment persists across Gaza, resulting in further civilian casualties and infrastructure damage. The Ministry of Health in Gaza reports a death toll of at least 28,576 Palestinians and 68,291 injured since

Is Prisoner 804 a foremost leader?-I

Tahir Ul Qadri to launch a historic long march, supported by dedicated followers of Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT), culminating in a sit-in at Islamabad's red security zones. The alleged involvement of the Establishment in this alliance, despite stark ideological differences, aimed to unsettle and ultimately oust the PML(N)

Now by another turn of history, the PTI while remaining the same, is endeavoring to replace PAT with other religious far right parties, the JUI and JI. Unlike the PTI and PAT situation, which was orchestrated allegedly with the active, willing and strong support of the Establishment, now PTI, JUI and JI have lost the support of Establishment and are now at their own. Their marriage is on one point agenda; to protest against massive pre-poll and post poll rigging which was so blatant and uncreative that a few declared winners compelled by their conscience, forgo their seats in favor of actual winners. please refine with clarity

Since its ouster in April 2022, PTI is facing severe backlash. His fiery accusations against the armed forces institutions further fueled tensions, resulting in his arrest and imprisonment and a severe and harsh crackdown on PTI leaders, workers and supporters. The party was left fractured, with key leaders either departing politics or going underground. This tumultuous period underscores the intense power struggles within Pakistan's political landscape.

In the run-up to the 2024 elections, the state machinery, in tandem with the establishment, launched a relentless assault on PTI. Employing every tactic imaginable, they sought to decimate the party through rampant pre-poll rigging. PTI's chairman faced imprisonment in three cases, with his Nikah even deemed

guishing his political career. Stripped of its election symbol, PTI found itself fighting an uphill battle, to keep its supporters intact, and prevent them from confusion and disillusion due to scores of symbols.

Yet, in the face of adversity, Imran Khan remained resolute. Despite enduring harsh conditions behind bars, he

PTI's principles and vision. His unshakeable faith in the Pakistani people and trust in Allah served as a shield against the barrage of negative propaganda unleashed by traditional and social media channels. Remarkably, amidst the chaos, his

popularity only continued to surge, with each passing day strengthening the bond between him and the people.

This narrative underscores the indomitable spirit of PTI and its leader, refusing to yield in the face of systemic oppression. It speaks to the power of perseverance, conviction, and the enduring belief in a better future for Pakistan. In the face of adversity, IK's unwaver-

ing moral compass breathed new life into a truncated and weakened PTI. Despite over 200 cases against its chairman and leadership in hiding, PTI fought back vigorously, conducting social media campaigns amid internet slowdowns and physical campaign restrictions.

Although workers and supporters refrained from street protests, their frustration simmered until February 8th, 2024, when they unleashed their pent-up indignation at the ballot box. The unexpectedly high voter turnout surprised both the establishment and PTI itself.

As election results poured in from 7

try, securing decisive victories in Punjab, KP, and Islamabad. Even prominent PML(N) leaders faced heavy defeats in their own constituencies. PTI's unstoppain Pakistani politics.

In a pivotal moment, a commando action allegedly unfolded under the exemplified unwavering dedication to interim government's pretext of internet

issues, halting and altering election results in favor of PML(N), MQM, and even Jamaat-e-Islami through systemic

Despite this, PTI emerged as the largest single national party in KP, though falling short of a simple major-

ity in the Centre and Punjab, while PTI claimed a simple majority in both. These heavily manipulated elections couldn't stop Prisoner 804, isolated from the world for months and facing multiple incarcerations, from ascending as one of the nation's foremost leaders. Both PML(N) and PPP, scared of his formidable power, are shying away from taking power in the center and are more inclined to secure themselves in the province of Puniab and Sindh.

His resilience showcased the supremacy of ideology and character over brute state power. He's a rare prisoner whose presence commands court hearings to come to him, not the other way around. Agencies like FIA and NAB seek him out, highlighting his influence even while incarcerated. Despite victimization, he stands as a guardian of the nation's economic, financial, and law enforcement security.

He emerged as a leader unwavering in principle, even at the cost of his freepm onwards, a clear trend emerged by 11 dom and the government. Despite tempt-

MQM, he refused, prioritizing integrity over convenience, rejecting the easy path to power in exchange for his beliefs.

Instead, he blessed coalitions with JUI, ble momentum marked a turning point JI, PPP Aftab Sherpao, PK of Mehmood Achakzai, and possibly GDA, uniting on the singular agenda of reclaiming stolen seats. His call for nationwide protests on February 17th defied establishment threats, echoing Punjab's Interim Chief Minister's warnings of severe crackdowns akin to the 9th of May incident. Yet, this time, the potential participation of JUI,

> JI, PK, and GDA may deter such actions. PTI, having learned from past events, adopts a new strategic approach. Emphasizing peaceful protest, they refrain from challenging the establishment, instead advocating for ceasefires. Through constitutional and legal avenues, they seek to reclaim lost ground without resorting to violence, prepared to deny the establishment any pretext for repression.

In a significant shift, PTI's leadership is now predominantly from KP province, contrasting with the past dominance of Punjab leaders. The reason is clear: Punjab leaders proved themselves cowardly, abandoning the party, turning state witnesses against IK, or spewing venom on traditional and social media. Conversely, KP PTI workers, barring a few exceptions, remained steadfast, even enduring imprisonment, business losses, and torture.

Imran Khan's leadership shone brightly amid adversity. He transformed traitorous acts into opportunities, replacing cowardly leaders with loval, resilient workers who defied state oppression with unwavering loyalty. The strategic move to replace establishment-backed electables with educated, committed middle-class workers yielded unprecedented success in the 2024 elections

To be continued



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

Rigging Allegations and Anti-Establishment Narrative - III

know that many independent candidates, even if affiliated with a certain political party, do not hold anti-Army sentiments. This is evidenced by their decision to join other political parties despite their prior affiliation. It is crucial vote for PTI as inherently anti-Establishto acknowledge that these were among ment, as many factors influence voters' the most impartial and transparent elec-

tions in Pakistan's history, where individuals were afforded the freedom to vote for their chosen party in a secure This environment. security was ensured by our Army, which maintained neutrality throughout the electoral process. Had there been

any bias from the establishment, the election outcomes would have likely differed significantly.

Abdul Basit Alvi

The prevailing narrative, largely propagated by foreign entities and internally endorsed, suggests that the Establishment is out of touch with public sentiment, as evidenced by the outcomes of the February 8th events. This narrative poses significant risks as it aims to achieve two main objectives: first, to portray the leadership of the Establishment as isolated and detached, and second, to create a perception of discord between the Establishment and the general public. However, these supposed implications need to be scrutinized within the framework of reality and context.

Despite a voter turnout of 48%, it's abstained from participating. There-

support for PTI due to high voter turnout, the actual turnover was lower than that of the 2018 elections. Analysis of the votes cast reveals that, at best, PTI secured 30-35% of the seats in the National Assembly. It's erroneous to categorize a choices. Furthermore, even in constituen-

cies won by PTI, a significant portion of voters opposed them. Thus, the sentiment derived from the February 8th results suggests that a majority of voters did not support the anti-Establishment narrative.

Moreover, it's essen-

tial to recognize that the Establishment did not overtly favor any particular party in these elections. The losses experienced by prominent figures from PMLN, IPP, and others indicate a hands-off approach rather than direct interference. The decisive mandate in KPK, despite opportunities for manipulation, underscores a strategy of allowing the electorate to decide freely.

However, the Establishment's failure lies in underestimating the propaganda launched by PTI before the elections and failing to anticipate it. Lessons should have been learned from the media campaign targeting nomination papers, which saw PTI filing the highest number of nominations. Similarly, the manipulation of Form 45 and the initial dissemination of election results by certain media crucial to note that 52% of eligible voters outlets, influenced by paid sources and foreign entities, should have been fore-

urthermore, I personally fore, despite the perception of a surge in seen, particularly given the Establishment's focus on countering fifth-generation warfare. This oversight led to a mistaken belief that impartiality would naturally prevail once the results were announced.

Based on interactions with various stakeholders involved in the electoral process, including officials, politicians, and the public, several observations emerged. On February 8th, the election process commenced smoothly with the Police, Rangers, and Army deployed in the first, second, and third tiers of security. As the polling began, representatives of political parties began sharing results with both the media and their own social media networks. The PTI notably spearheaded this effort, leveraging its adeptness in social media advocacy. Political parties selectively shared results that favored them while concealing others from the media. Media outlets. driven by ratings and a rush to be the first to report, displayed results prematurely. Unfortunately, some overly partisan anchors on 24-hour election broadcasts began making predictions based on as little as 1 to 3% of the results, inflating expectations.

In reality, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had not begun compiling ballot box results in Returning Officer (RO) offices until 4 a.m., when, surprisingly, the ECP instructed ROs to announce results within 30 minutes, as reported on PTV News. ECP staff members, in some instances, lacked the necessary competence and training to compile results effectively.

IMF Country Report 2024: Implications for Pakistan Economy

Uzma Noreen

n its latest country report, IMF highlights Pakistan's notable efforts in stabilizing its economy following major shocks in the form of floods, tight external financing, and adverse domestic policies in FY2022-23. Though, report noted that macroeconomic conditions have generally improved, but the elevated inflation is still a significant challenge. However, downward pressure on inflation is expected and year-end inflation revised to 18.5% in 2024 due to easing in supply constraints, prudent fiscal measures and weak demand. Amid low demand and a gradual recovery in economic activity, the IMF has lowered its growth forecast for Pakistan, predicting 2% growth in FY24 (compared to an earlier estimate of 2.5%). The Fund acknowledged that Pakistan's fiscal performance has improved, with the general government registering a primary surplus of 0.4% of GDP in FY24Q1 primarily due to robust revenue and prudent spending. Notwithstanding these promising developments, the report underlines the ongoing challenges and exceptionally high downside risks. The report mentions Pakistan's difficult external environment and internal issues which includes resurgent commodities prices, geopolitical concerns, high inflation, slow economic growth, and fiscal imbalance create serious threats to Pakistan's ability to pay back the Fund. In order to reduce these risks, it is crucial to implement robust policies and secure external

The staff report for Pakistan stated that program performance is on track and overall the quantitative performance criteria (QPCs), Indicative Targets (ITs), and Structural Benchmarks (SBs) under the SBA was somehow satisfactory. Overall six QPCs were met (like zero new flow of SBP credit to the government, BISP spending etc.) except for the ceiling on government budget deficit and that too by small margin. Similarly indicative targets (IT) like net tax revenue, budgetary targets etc. were met. In addition, SBs on annual rebasing and quarterly accounts were also met. In general, the evaluation by IMF indicates a mixed performance against the QPCs, ITs, and SBs. Although To be continued | a number of the targets were achieved, there were sever-

al places where they weren't, requiring corrective actions and continued efforts to ensure program compliance and

The need for structural reforms in areas like the energy sector, governance frameworks, and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) is highlighted in the IMF country report on Pakistan. It notes that these reforms are essential to strengthening Pakistan's economy, encouraging long-term growth, and lowering vulnerabilities. The policy implications of these reforms may include prioritizing measures to improve energy sector efficiency, enhance governance and transparency, and promote private sector participation.

Though, it should also be noted that IMF assessment focuses on the whether the targets were met or not, rather than looking how these targets were achieved. It should be noted that certain policies, such as steep rise in energy prices, unproductive business taxes and high-interest rates etc. were helpful in achieving targets, but have significant socio-economic costs, particularly impacting low-income groups and businesses. These costs can include increased living expenses, reduced access to credit, and challenges for small and medium-sized enterprises. For instance, IMF highlights Pakistan's achievement in meeting tax revenue targets. However, it is important to consider the potential social and economic costs associated with tax compliance and administration, as well as the need for a balanced approach to revenue generation that does not unduly burden businesses.

IMF program's primary objective is to promote structural reforms to ensure macroeconomic stabilization. Although, the goals of the IMF-supported programs are desirable, however, socio-economic impact of the ad hoc policies cannot be ignored. Thus, it is essential for IMF-led programs to incorporate such policy measures that protect the vulnerable masses and businesses for inclusive growth and long term stability. However, ultimately it is the responsibility of government of Pakistan and policymakers to evaluate the socio-economic impact of these reforms on vulnerable population, businesses, and overall social well-being and then design such policies that mitigate the cost of

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Decent Technology is the Sales Partner and Distributor of Inverex Solar Energy

Exclusive Interview of Daniyal Rasheed CEO, Decent Solar & Decent Technology

for generating electricity and

replacing them with renewable

energy resources such as wind

Daniyal Rasheed said that

while electricity companies

can use wind and solar energy

on a large scale, this requires

constructing long and expen-

Unlike wind projects, solar

panels can be deployed on a

small scale on consumers' prop-

erties, thereby avoiding expen-

sive transmission expenses.

These panels can be mounted on

the roofs of homes and business-

es without large tracts of empty

land because solar panels can be

mounted on the roofs of homes

and businesses. When paired

with batteries, they can contin-

ue to provide electricity during

ies have made solar cost-com-

petitive compared to fossil fuels

and other renewable energy solu-

sive transmission lines.

and solar.

👺 Tahir Amin Malik

Rasheed, CEO of Decent Solar and Decent Technology Company in Lahore, said that according to the World Bank, Pakistan has a solar power potential of 40 GW and has set a goal to achieve 20% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

Pakistan has introduced incentives to promote the use of solar energy, but he said a lot more needs to be done.

He said that Pakistan is heavily dependent on fossil fuels for energy generation. However, due to the large population and current progress in industrialization, these sources are not fulfilling the existing energy needs.

Therefore, he said, alternate energy sources need to be sought, and solar energy is the best renewable energy option for Pakistan in terms of price, lifespan, operation, and maintenance cost.

In an interview with the

spokesman, he said the government should help the solar sector overcome barriers and utilize solar energy to the maximum extent possible in the country.

In informing the spokesman about his life, he said he is an electronic engineer. He started as a sales executive from 2012 to 2019 and was later promoted to sales manager. He served at Inverex Solar Energy to become the National Sales Manager and later started his business in 2020 with the names Decent Technology and Decent Solar.

Daniyal Rasheed said the company's first outlet was at Mall Road, Lahore, while the second was at Cavalry Ground, Lahore. Later, we expanded to Karachi.

He said Pakistan suffers from an electricity crisis, and bills are increasing rapidly. Therefore, solar power is the solution to this problem.

Considering the market conditions, we have decided to provide quality products to the people so that they can get value for their investment.

He said we provide good



domestic and commercial solutions to help people overcome the electricity crisis.

He said that through our solar systems, people can save money and get a dependable power supply. The return on investment in the solar market is better than in some other sectors, but it is the best investment for them.

With increasing climate change-related disasters occurring worldwide, every country has started focusing on climate change in its own way. Many developed countries have set

power outages. According to many experts, solar energy has the highest potential for contributing to meeting the net zero emissions goals because falling costs for solar panels and storage batter-

> Several international organizations have stated that solar power must become the world's largest global energy source by 2050 to meet the net zero emissions goal. They have estimated that the average annual solar investment must be doubled through 2030 for that to happen.

Pakistan receives a lot of sunlight, yet it relies heavily on fossil fuels to generate electricity. Fossil fuels lead to emissions, are expensive, and, since they are often imported, burden the balance of payments. In addition, electricity generated using fossil outages are common. This makes a compelling case for installing solar panels on customers' prem-

goals for reducing the share of ises. fossil fuels in their resource mix

Pakistan should prioritize reducing the share of fossil fuels in electricity generation and increasing the share of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar. Oddly enough, despite being located in a region severely affected by climate change, Pakistan continues to invest in environmentally unfriendly methods of power production.

Solar power can provide a lot of the electricity that Paki Tan needs. Much of the land is dry and hot for the better part of the year. Today, Pakistan only generates around one per cent of electricity through solar power. If fully utilized, solar and wind power could generate more than a third of the electricity required

In Sindh, rooftop solar panels of 20MW were installed in some 30 hospitals under a World Bank finance project. He said the project demonstrated that rooftop solar panels could be installed in Pakistan in less than a year and at a relatively low cost while avoiding the need for additional transmission and distribution infrastructure.

High electric city rates are major drivers of solar's potential success in Pakistan. The low labour cost is another factor that can make solar more beneficial in developing countries such as Pakistan. Labour costs come into play in two ways-the cost of installing the panels and the cost of manufacturing panels. Pakistan's labour installation costs are far lower than in Australia and the US.

It would make sense to produce solar panels in Pakistan. In the near term, it may make sense to import them from China, a world leader in the production of solar panels fuels is often unreliable. Power and a good friend of Pakistan. rate, which would be a setback. Once Pakistan sets up a domestic solar production industry, it could start exporting panels to needs to move in the opposite paired with solar panels.

countries in the Middle East.

Consumers who install solar power often have excess energy during the day. They import it at other times when the panels produce insufficient power to metering — a billing mechanism that credits solar system owners for the electricity they add to the grid — is necessary for encouraging solar installations. It has been in place in Pakistan since 2015. Unfortunately, the regulatory body is considering modifying the export compensation ers.

Instead of decreasing compen-

direction. It should subsidize the installation of solar panels through rebates. The key is ensuring that the customer's investment in solar panels can be returned in five to seven years. meet their needs or at night. Net In the US, those who install solar systems receive an income tax credit of 30.

To address the concern that only the rich can afford to install solar panels, additional incentives, such as higher rebates and low-interest financing, should be provided to low-income custom-

Additionally, Pakistan should take steps to encourage the sation rates, the government installation of batteries that are









PCFA-KP & KPEZDMC celebrate Chinese Spring Festival 2024 at the RSEZ

Friendship Association (PCFA) Khyber Development & Management Company (KPEZDMC) celebrates the Chinese Power Officer, Mr. Ashraf Hayat Direc-Special Economic Zone (RSEZ) the Joint Secretary PCFA-KP. flagship Economic Zone under CPEC.

Extending Greetings & Best Wish-Road & Bridge Corporation (CRBC) at Pakistan joining our Chinese Friends able time tested friendship. PCFA-KP since 1970, is doing their best to further strengthening Sino Pakistan Relations leadership & Peoples under the Prescloser. ident Xi Jinping are achieving new ity this is the high time that we should learn lesson from the success of China

The event was also attended by NOWSHERA: The Pakistan-China Mr. Adil Salahuddin Chief Commercial Officer KPEZDMC Mr. Gouhong Pakhtunkhwa Province Pakistan & Beng Deputy Project Head CRBC for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones RESZ, Mr. Ahsan Laiq Siddique Zonal Manager, Engr. Sardar Ali Energy & Spring Festival 2024 at Rashakhi tor Utilities CRBC, Mr. Bilal Durrani

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Adil Salahuddin CCO KPEZDMC congrates to the Chinese Community based in ulates the Chinese Friends on behalf RSEZ which is being leased to China of Mr. Javed Khattak Chief Executive Officer KPEZDMC & all team for 30 years, the PCFA-KP Secretary members and ensure all support in General Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani said we economic developmental activities and initiatives to be taken in best interest of on the Happy occasion and extending industrial & economic development of Greetings as we share our great & valuthe Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. He also thanks PCFA-KP fir this friendly gesture to celebrate Chinese Spring Festival 2024 mentioned that these in all fields of life. The visionary Chinese friendly initiatives bring both nation

Mr. Gouhong Beng, Deputy Project heights of economic & social prosper- Head CRBC at RSEZ appreciate the also thanks to KPEZDMC for extendgesture of PCFA-KP & said we are close friends and our friendship is named as and Understanding China is need of Iron brothers by Chinese leadership. He



ing all support in their activities and achievements in the RSEZ.

The Chinese Spring Festival 2024 & KPEZDMC officials.

cake cutting was jointly held by Participants & later on Souvenirs were presented by PCFA-KP to the Chinese



Amjad Jalil Chairman BOI AJK will participate in the Pakistan Investment Conference in Jeddah

of Pakistan Association of Exhibi-Director Small Industries. During real estate and food processing. the conversation, Chairman Khurs-Association of Exhibition Industry

in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

medical, civil aviation industry, dairy ISLAMABAD: Founder Chairman and agriculture, construction material, private developer, capital market tion Industry Khursheed Barlas and and stock exchange, education, infor-Fahad Barlas Convener Exhibition at mation technology and other sectors Azad Kashmir House, Azad Jammu will participate. The chairman said and Kashmir Board of Investment that there are attractive opportuni-Chairman Amjad Jalil, Madam ties for Pakistani investors in many Taqdees Gilani Minister of Small sectors of Saudi Arabia's economy, Industry and Travels and Tours, including tourism, pharmaceuticals, Sardar Abdul Khaliq. Abbasi met medical devices, chemical industry,

Chairman Azad Jammu and Kashhid Barlas briefed that the Pakistan mir Board of Investment Amjad Jalil appreciated the services of Chairman is organizing the Pakistan Invest- Khurshid Barlas and assured him ment Conference on May 11, 2024 that he will fully participate in the Jeddah Conference and the inves-In which a large number of differ- tors and industries associated with ent business community related to all sectors related to Azad Jammu

tourism, pharmaceutical, minerals, and Kashmir based in Saudi Arabia. Cars will also be invited. Meanwhile, Amjad Jalil said that Azad Jammu and Kashmir Board of Investment along with Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry will organize a conference in Islamabad and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

In which investors and industrialists associated with all sectors will be invited. Finally, Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas also presented the shield to Tagdees Gilani, Minister of Small Industry Travels and Tours. On this occasion Amjad Jalil, Chairman BOI Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Khaliq Abbasi Director Small Industries Fahad Barlas Convener Exhibition is also present.



Bull & Bears SX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation				
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index				
Current	Prev. Close			
59,872.96	-1147.09			
Day's High	Day's Low			
62,394.25	60,926.85			
Index Value	Change			
8,125,807,060	-1133.79			
Percentage	Time			
-1.88%	16 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm			
Europe: FTSE 100 Index				
	Change			
Index Value	Change			
7,711.71	Change +114.18			
7,711.71	+114.18			
7,711.71 Percentage +1.50%	+114.18 Time 16 Feb, 4:35 pm			
7,711.71 Percentage +1.50%	+114.18 Time 16 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT			
7,711.71 Percentage +1.50% USA: Dow Jones	+114.18 Time 16 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT Industrial Average			
7,711.71 Percentage +1.50% USA: Dow Jones Index Value	+114.18 Time 16 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT ndustrial Average Change			
7,711.71 Percentage +1.50% USA: Dow Jones Index Value 38,775.36	+114.18 Time 16 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT Industrial Average Change +2.24			

-0.0070	GMT+9
Open Market	Forex Rates

Change

+329.30**Time**

16 Feb, 3:15 pm

Index Value

38,487.24

Percentage

-0.86%

Open Market Forex Rates			
Currency	Buying	Selling	
Australian Dollar	180	182	
Bahrain Dinar	743.12	751.12	
Canadian Dollar	206.5	208.5	
China Yuan	38.84	39.24	
Danish Krone	40.24	40.64	
Euro	301	304	
Hong Kong Dollar	35.74	36.09	
Indian Rupee	3.48	3.59	
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18	
Kuwaiti Dinar	906.33	915.33	
Malaysian Ringgit	58.6	59.2	
NewZealand \$	170.1	172.1	
Norwegians Krone	26.43	26.73	
Omani Riyal	725.75	733.75	
Qatari Riyal	76.76	77.46	
Saudi Riyal	74.2	75	
Singapore Dollar	207	209	
Swedish Korona	26.85	27.15	
Swiss Franc	315.64	318.14	
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08	
U.A.E Dirham	76.55	77.25	
UK Pound Sterling	352.4	355.4	
US Dollar	279.15	281.95	

Friesland CampinaEngro Pakistan Announces Financial Results for FY 2023

KARACHI: FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL) announced its financial results for the year ended December 31, 2023. The Company continued its growth trajectory and delivered another record year with the highest-ever top line and operating profit. This was in the face of a challenging macro-economic environment and intense competition. The Company achieved a remarkable milestone, surpassing the PKR 100 billion topline mark with a 36% increase over last year.

The Company witnessed a gross profit growth of 18% while gross margin declined by 218 bps due to high inflation, global supply chain disruption, foreign exchange constraints and currency devaluation. However, operating margin declined by 115 bps over last year due to initiatives such as cost rationalization and efficiency building. Profit after tax declined from PKR. 2.5 billion to PKR 1.5billion in the same period last year due to a significant increase in finance cost, with interest rates almost doubling over the year. Brand health indicators had a positive trajectory, setting the stage for longterm sustainable growth.

Early cotton cultivation to give bumper production: DD Agriculture

FAISALABAD: Deputy Director (DD) Agriculture (Extension) Chaudhry Khalid Mehmood said that the early cultivation of cotton crops would give bumper yield and play a pivotal role to stabilize the national economy.

Addressing a farmers' day function in Tandlianwala here on Friday, he said that cotton was a precious cash crop which not only provided raw material to the local textile, ginning and ghee industries but also played its active role in enhancing national textile exports and fetching precious foreign exchange for stabilizing national economy.

Economic matters should be in capable hands: Mian Zahid Hussain

№ Tarig 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 the wrong decisions of economic managers have never allowed financial stability in merit.

He said that merit has always been ignored for the benefit of a small group, and the direction of the economy was deliberately kept wrong, which bankrupted the country.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan is currently surviving because of IMF loans and support from some countries that are fed up with providing continued help.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the new government should hand over the economy to seri-

ous people instead of illusionists to improve

The business leader said that Pakistan's economy can no longer bear the burden of power theft, line losses, and capacity charges

The only options for running the country are immediately selling failed government agencies, expanding the tax base, and observing

Mian Zahid Hussain said the economic steps taken for the short-lived benefits resulted in applause and headlines. Still, they also shake the foundations of the economy, which the masses must brave.

He said the incoming government should choose serious people to manage the economy instead of magicians seeking cheap popularity. Failed politicians consider it necessary to

cheat the masses. Sometimes, the public is told that people from the United States and other rich nations will come here for jobs, and occa-



sionally, such benefits are doled out, which many rich countries cannot afford.

We don't need rulers tackling circular debt and other problems through borrowing.

Instead of ensuring economic development, some rulers try to increase GDP to cheat the public by increasing imports.

A former prime minister set a record of \$72 billion in imports to boost GDP, shaking the country's foundations but managing to fool the people.

He questioned how someone could reduce the dollar's value and increase the value of the local currency without increasing exports when the economy is on the verge.

A performer recently jumped into the economic arena, damaged the economy by his policies, and ruined a deal with the IMG before leaving the country.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the new government should avoid such people, avoid quick actions to give an impression of development, and ensure merit in decision-making; otherwise, it will pay a cost in the shape of failure.

the Caretaker Prime Minis-

ter as to how economy of the country can be stabilized and

strengthened in the absence

of industrial and business

"Unfortunately, the care-

taker government has taken

no step to provide competi-

tive environment to indus-

tries, lower the cost of

production and reignite the

engine of national economy,

which has left the industrial

community in despair," Arbi

SITE President demanded

the caretaker Prime Minister

Anwarul Haq Kakar, Feder-

al Minister for Commerce.

review the decision of hike

in gas prices and reduce the

same taking into considera-

The utilities prices should

be fixed after thorough

consultation with stake-

holders, justifiable as well

as regionally competitive

so that industrial activities

continue without hurdle, which would ultimately have

positive impact on nation-

al economy and exports.

In case, the gas tariff is not

tion the ground realities.

activities?

remarked.

tricity tariff by the caretak- Industries & Production Dr.

er government. The assur- Gohar Ejaz and Minister for ance brought a sigh of relief Energy Muhammad Ali to

Industrialists reject gas tariff hike, warn closure of industries

KARACHI: The President,

SITE Association of Industry Muhammad Kamran Arbi, has condemned the recent increase in gas tariff as approved by the Economic Coordination Committee and the caretaker govt. He has demanded the caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul

Haq Kakar, Federal Minister for Commerce, Indus-

tries & Production Dr. Gohar Ejaz and Minister for Ener-

gy Muhammad Ali to take

back the decision of hike in

gas tariff in the larger inter-

est of national economy and

to save the industries from

He warned that in case,

the decision is not with-

drawn, the industries will

close down, resulting in

decline in exports and mass

In an appeal, Mr. Arbi said

that the business commu-

nity was given assurance

for 9 cents per KWh elec-

and hope for the business

community that the new

tariff will help in reduc-

tion of production cost, and

they will be able to contin-

ue production unabated

and deliver export orders

on time. However, contrary

to the assurance given, POL,

electricity and gas tariff are

being increased constantly

by the caretaker government. SITE President added

that currently, the national

economy is passing through

unemployment.

collapse.

Hardwork

ISLAMABAD: Labourers are busy in fixing cemented safety blocks along a road at Chak Shahzad area in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Ambassador assures cooperation for making ICCI BOC successful in Dubai

ISLAMABAD: H. E. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan Ambassador to UAE lauded ICCI for organizing the next edition of its Business Opportunities Conference (BOC) in Dubai in the first week of March 2024 and assured his cooperation in making it successful. He said this while talking to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry who met him in Dubai and discussed with him the matters for making ICCI BOC in Dubai a result-oriented event

The Ambassador said that Pakistan and UAE have great potential to strengthen business relations and set up joint ventures. He stressed that a series of BOC-like events should be organized by the Pakistani Chambers of Commerce in UAE to explore all untapped areas of bilateral cooperation and expand economic relations. He said that his Embassy would extend all possible cooperation to ICCI in making the BOC a landmark event.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar



ber of Commerce said that ICCI has already held successful BOCs in Turkey, Malaysia, and Azerbaijan and the Chamber has planned to organize the next edition of BOC in Dubai, which is a hub of business and investment activities.

He said that a 160-member delegation of ICCI representing real estate, construction, IT, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, food processing and packaging, light engineering, logistics, franchising, tourism, Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamand other sectors would attend the BOC

and Award Ceremony. He said that both countries have great potential to further enhance bilateral trade and economic rela-

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari also met with Ambassador Javed Malik, President, Dubai Diplomat Business Club, and took him on board to make the ICC BOC in Dubai a successful event for Pakistan. Javed Malik appreciated ICCI for organizing its BOC in Dubai and assured his cooperation to

industry is no more a profit- tive impact on the country's able business. He questioned exports. **Mian Rashid** demands to withdraw Gas & Oil

severe crisis. To run an lowered, it will have nega-

Asim Tanveer/ **Quratul Ain Asim**

tariff hike

MULTAN: Mian Rashid Iqbal, president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, while addressing the print and electronic media representatives in a meeting, said that the wrong actions of the current caretaker government, while increasing the gas prices for captive power plants against the people and

160 out of 400 units in the textile sector earlier have been closed and more than five lakh workers associated with this industry have

the commercial sector.

become unemployed. The gas tariff for captive ower plants offered by Ogra has been increased from 2400 to 2750 per mmbtu. The recent hike in gas prices is the third major increase in a year which is complete-

The increase in prices will put an additional burden of about one hundred billion increased compared to other rupees on the gas consumers.



Increasing gas prices for captive power plants will make us out of competition in the international market in terms of exports, foreign exchange and domestic exports will decrease greatly, which will have further negative effects on the econ-

Mian Rashid Iqbal said that compared to other countries in the region, taxes, gas, oil and electricity prices and interest rates are very high in Pakistan, due to which the cost of production of our products has already countries.

Engro Fertilizers achieves record urea production in 2023 to ensure food security for Pakistan

KARACHI: Engro Fertilizers, Pakistan's premier seed-to-harvest solutions provider, achieved record urea production of 2.3 million tons in 2023 to support the Government's efforts of ensuring affordable and abundant supplies for the farmers.

The Company was able to achieve this feat and continued to play a pivotal role towards enabling the food security of Pakistan, amidst the headwinds of tough macroeconomic conditions, imposition of a higher super tax and gas price hikes. Engro Fertilizers was additionally affected by steep Rupee devaluation as its 950,000 tons Base Plant is supplied gas under Petroleum Policy 2012 pricing, which is dollar-pegged due to its linkage with crude oil rate.

According to the latest annual results, Engro Fertilizers urea production surged by 18.3 percent compared to the year 2022 (1.95 million tons) due to improved operational performance of both EnVen and Base Plants. Consequently, the Company's urea



sales witnessed an uptick by 20.3 percent to reach 2.32 million tons, while its market share also increased to 35 percent.

"The local fertilizer industry has ensured that farmers continue to benefit from lower domestic urea prices. The Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of urea stood at PKR 3,596/ bag at year end, at a discount of 40 percent to international prices. This delta constitutes a contribution of approximately PKR 330 billion per annum towards farmer income in Pakistan," said a Company statement. The industry is also engaging dealers to support Government's initiatives to curb urea hoarding for market price manipulation, bolstering crop productivity, and farmer profita-

In 2023, the robust domestic urea manufacturing industry enabled import substitution to the tune of USD 2.3 billion, including Engro Fertilizers' share of USD 835 million. Further, in 2023, the Company contributed nearly PKR 34.7 billion towards the national exchequer by way of Government taxes, duties, and levies, compared to PKR 11.6 On a consolidated basis, Engro Ferti-

lizers posted a profit after tax of PKR 26.2

billion with earnings per share (EPS) of

PKR 19.61 in 2023, mainly on the back of increased production from long-term reliability projects, cost optimization, efficient working capital management and higher interest income. To sustain domestic urea production levels and safeguard the food security of Pakistan, Engro Fertilizers and other major fertiliz-

er manufacturers are investing heavily in ly unfair. Gas Pressure Enhancement Facilities (PEF) project. The expected share of Engro Fertilizers' capital expenditure in this project is over USD 100 million.

PCB joins Hands with TikTok for HBL PSL 9 Edition

S Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: TikTok and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) have announced a collaboration for HBL PSL 9, providing fans the opportunity to experience the excitement of the country's most loved sporting event like never before.

The collaboration heralds a new era of engaging content for cricket enthusiasts. Throughout the duration of HBL PSL 9, TikTok will play a pivotal role in delivering behind-the-scenes moments, player interviews, post-match analysis



and much more directly to fans world-

The HBL PSL account on TikTok the psl, has close to 2 million followers while there have been more than 2.47 million published content, using the popular hashtag HoJa Jazbaati in the last two seasons. The official hashtag for this season is KhulKeKhel.

Saif Mujahid, TikTok's Head of Pakistan: TikTok is excited to collab-9. We are committed to delivering an the tournament."

unparalleled experience for cricket fans, providing them with access to exciting content and immersive storytelling throughout the tournament."

Salman Naseer, Chief Operating Officer PCB: TikTok's collaboration with PCB reflects our shared commitment to engaging cricket fans through innovative and compelling content. As we gear up for another thrilling season Content Operations and Marketing in of HBL PSL, we look forward to leveraging TikTok's platform to bring fans orate with PCB for HBL PSL Season closer to the action and excitement of

Table tennis

Sun Yingsha of China serves against Ayhika Mukherjee of India during the women's teams group stage match between China and India at the 2024 ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships Finals in Busan, South Korea, Feb. 16, 2024.



Plan in works for PCB's direct communication with PM Office

ISLAMABAD: Instead of continuing its communication through the Ministry for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will work directly under the Prime Minister's Office, The News reported on Friday. A summary, according to the publication, has been finalised in this regard for the approval of the relevant authorities following which the board will no longer be answerable to the ministry.

"A summary is being forwarded for the competent authorities' approval after which the PCB would not be answerable to the ministry any more as it is the Prime Minister's Office that would directly deal with it," a ministry source told the publication.

Since the approval and restoration of the PCB Constitution 2014, the ministry has been the only link between the patron of the board — the prime minister — and the PCB. Any direct link or communication is billed as an unconstitutional act. In recent times, one of the former secretaries told the PCB officials in clear terms that any direct contact with the PM Office would be considered an act of constitutional violation.

HBL PSL 9 begins start on 17 February: Pakistan Cricket Board

S Asim Tanveer

LAHORE/ MULTAN: The ninth Qalandars take on Islamabad Uniting to build a core group of young play- and that is where we will look to bag the Usman Khan ed, also two-time champions (2016 & ers who can serve the franchise for the 2018), feature in the opening match at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

The first ball of the match is expected to be bowled at 8pm PKT. In the double-header, the afternoon match will begin at 2pm, while the first ball of the evening match will be bowled at 7pm. The matches taking place during

Ramadan will begin at 9pm. Lahore to host HBL PSL first opening ceremony

The PCB's headquarters Gaddafi Stadium will host its first opening ceremony of the HBL PSL. The ceremony will kick off at 630pm with an array of exciting performances from renowned artist Arif Lohar, Natasha Baig, pop band Noori and the singers of the HBL PSL 9 anthem song Ali Zafar and Aima Baig. Fans will also be treated to spectacular fireworks and a mesmerising laser show.

Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi

to host 34 matches The HBL PSL 9 will see four cities. Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi host 34 matches of the marquee event. Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host nine matches, which includes Lahore Qalandars playing five matches at their home turf. The picturesque Multan Cricket Stadium will host five matches - all Multan Sultans fixtures. Lahore and Multan will host the first leg of the league from 17 to 27 February before action moves to Karachi and Rawalpindi.

Pindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi will host nine matches from 2 to 10 March with Islamabad United featuring in five matches. Peshawar Zalmi will play four of their 10 matches in Rawalpindi, while Quetta Gladiators will play three matches at the Pindi Cricket Stadium.

Karachi's National Bank Stadium will host 11 matches including the grand finale on 18 March. The home side Karachi Kings will play a minimum of five matches at the venue, while Quetta Gladiators will get to play at least three matches at the National Bank Stadium.

Captains' thoughts on HBL PSL 9 Shadab Khan – Islamabad United

"I have been captain of Islamabad United for the last four seasons and I want to lift the trophy for my team this season. The additions of Imad Wasim and the Shah brothers are a huge boost for the franchise. Faheem Ashraf and Azam Khan are two vital cogs in our team. I want my team to stand tall in high-pressure games and get over the line. We have evaluated our mistakes from the last season and are looking forward to executing our plans aptly

this time around."

Shan Masood – Karachi Kings

"To represent and lead my hometown next five years. We have a great chance to do well given the last part of the tournament is set to take place in Karachi."

Shaheen Shah Afridi – Lahore Qalandars

"I am genuinely excited to be leading Lahore Qalandars for the third consecutive season in HBL PSL and the hunt for a hat-trick of titles makes me eager to do well. We are eying a third HBL PSL win this time and I can assure you that my team will show the same intensity as we have done in the past two seasons. Lahore Qalandars are proud of having a strong fan base and our games in Lahore are going to be jam-packed."

most points."

Teams beefed up their squads ahead of

The six participating teams have beefed up their 20-member squads ahead of the event starting tomorrow. **Islamabad United**

Shadab Khan (captain), Alex Hales, Ashraf, Haider Ali, Imad Wasim, Jordan Cox, Matthew Forde, Mohammad Waseem, Naseem Shah, Obed McCoy, Qasim Akram, Rumman Raees, Salman Ali Agha, Shahab Khan and Tymal Mills

Emerging: Hunain Shah, Shamyl



Mohammad Rizwan-Multan Sultans

"HBL PSL is a world-class league and we are all proud to be a part of this league. Multan's pacers and emerging players have dominated the previous two seasons and that is one of the reasons of Sultans doing well consistently. This season we have got a strong squad as well and will look to maintain

"Multan crowds have given us a lot of love over the last two seasons and hopefully, they will again support us with the same enthusiasm this year.'

Babar Azam – Peshawar Zalmi

"Peshawar Zalmi has been one of the most exciting sides in HBL PSL history and with our current squad we are well poised to emerge as champions in this season. Some of the players are highly talented and gifted in our bowling and batting departments which gives Zalmi an edge over other teams."

Rilee Rossouw – Quetta Gladiators

"The opportunity to lead a side in HBL PSL doesn't come around often

Hussain and Ubaid Shah Karachi Kings

Shan Masood (captain), Anwar Ali, Arafat Minhas, Blessing Muzarabani, Daniel Sams, Hassan Ali, James Vince, Kieron Pollard, Leus Du Plooy, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Akhlaq, Mohammad Amir Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Shoaib Malik and Tabraiz Shamsi

Emerging: Fawad Ali, Irfan Khan Niazi, Mohammad Rohid, Saad Baig & STARZPLAY (MENA), and Sports

and Siraiuddin **Lahore Qalandars**

Shaheen Shah Afridi (captain), Abdullah Shafique, Ahsan Hafeez Bhatti, Dan Lawrence, David Wiese, Ghulam, Lorcan Tucker, Mirza Tahir Baig, Mohammad Imran Jnr, Rassie ences but it has also been upgraded with van der Dussen, Sahibzada Farhan, a microphone and speaker enhance-Salman Fayyaz, Shai Hope, Sikandar Raza and Zaman Khan

Emerging: Jahandad Khan, Syed Faridoun Mahmood and Tayyab Abbas **Multan Sultans**

Mohammad Rizwan (captain), Abbas

and it is such an honour for me. My Afridi, Aftab Ibrahim, Chris Jordan, expectation this season is to obvious- David Willey, David Malan, Iftikhar ly win the HBL PSL 9. As a side, we Ahmad, Ihsanullah, Johnson Charles, edition of the HBL PSL is all set to team Karachi in the HBL PSL is such a will try to make it a high-performance Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Ali, Olly commence tomorrow, when two-time huge honour. It is a rebuilding process arena. I think conditions in Karachi Stone, Reeza Hendricks, Shahnawaz champions (2022 & 2023) Lahore for Karachi Kings, where we are look- and Lahore will suit Quetta Gladiators Dahani, Tayyab Tahir, Usama Mir and

> Emerging: Faisal Akram, Mohammad Shahzad and Yasir Khan

Peshawar Zalmi

Babar Azam (captain), Aamir Jamal, Arif Yaqoob, Arshad Iqbal, Asif Ali, Daniel Mousley, Luke Wood, Mohammad Haris, Paul Walter, Rovman Powell, Saim Ayub, Salman Irshad, Azam Khan, Colin Munro, Faheem Sufyan Muqeem, Tom Kohler-Cadmore, Umair Afridi and Waqar Salam-

> Emerging: Aimal Khan, Haseebullah Khan, Mehran Mumtaz and Moham-

mad Zeeshan **Quetta Gladiators**

Rilee Rossouw (captain), Abrar Ahmad, Bismillah Khan, Jason Roy, Laurie Evans, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Hasnain Mohammad Wasim Jr, Omair bin Yousuf, Sajjad Ali Jnr, Sarfaraz Ahmad, Saud Shakeel, Sherfane Rutherford, Sohail Khan, Umar Amin, Usman Qadir, Usman Tarig and Will Smeed

Emerging: Adil Naz and Khawaja

Mohammad Nafay **Broadcast details**

HBL PSL will be broadcast live on A Sports, as Pakistan's first HD sports channel continues its association with the marquee event. The matches will also be covered live on Ten Sports in Pakistan. For live-streaming, Walee Technologies, which has acquired live-streaming rights in the country, has sub-licensed Snack Video, Tapmad, Tamasha, Mayco, and Begin. Watch to livestream matches on their platforms in Pakistan.

TransGroup FZE, after winning the broadcast and live-streaming rights for all regions outside Pakistan, has sub-licensed to Fox Sports (Australia), Fancode (India) tapmad and T Sports (Bangladesh), Willow TV (North America), Flow Sports (Caribbean), Geo News UK (United Kingdom FTA), Sky Sports (Pay TV & Digital United Kingdom), Sky Sport NZ (New Zealand), Super Sport (sub-Saharan Africa), Cricbuzz and Cricbuzz TV on Evision Central-YouTube and Facebook (Rest of the World) to broadcast the matches.

A total of 30 high-definition cameras, including the buggy cam will stream high-quality action to HBL PSL fans Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Kamran around the world. Spidercam will not only bring dynamic angles to TV audiment for conducting on-field player interviews during the matches.

DRS technology will also be available throughout HBL PSL while drone cameras will be used to add to the quality of streaming.

A.S. Natural Stone U-19 Inter Zonal Cricket Tourney

KARACHI: Zone-II Whites and Zone-IV Whites moved into Semi Finals after thrilling victories against their opponents in the Quarter finals of A. S. Natural Stone Under-19 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi Sponsored by A. S. Natural Stone.

In the 3rd Quarter Final Zone-II Whites beat Zone-VII Blues by 2 runs at KCCA Stadium. Zone-II Whites 174 allout in 43.2 overs. Iftikhar 42 2x4 1x6 not out, Burair Ali 22, Abdullah Waheed 20. Arman Khan (mf) 6/30, Zaid Hasan 2/26.

Zone-VII Blues 172/9 in 45 overs. Qasim Khan 38, Muhammad Eijaz 27, Waqas Ahmed 26. Abdullah Waheed (rlb) 3/15, Waheed Khan 2/24.

In the last Quarter Final Zone-IV Whites beat Zone-V Whites by 1 wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Zone-V Whites 165 allout in 33.3 overs. Junaid Khan 60 10x4, Fawad Shah 23. Hazrat Bahadur (mf) 5/26, Muhammad Iqrar 2/18.

Zone-IV Whites 166/9 in 44.4 overs. Ayan Khan 63 8x4, Daniyal Niazi 38. Rizwan ullah (mf) 3/31, Saifullah 2/40.

Dutch hockey team to visit Lahore in February: Khawaja Junaid



跨 Tahir Amin Malik

After a hiatus of 22 years, European hockey players are poised to step on Pakistani soil as a renowned Dutch hockey club is scheduled to arrive in Lahore on Sunday.

This historic visit comes at the invitation of the Khawaja Junaid Hockey Academy, heralding a series of three matches between the 20-member Dutch club and a team selected from the Prime Minister's Youth Talent Hunt program.

The National Hockey Stadium in Lahore is set to host the first two matches on February 19th and 21st, with the third match slated for the Naseer Banda Hockey Stadium in Islamabad on February 23rd. This initiative, led by Khawaja Junaid, the Chief Organizer, aims to revive international activities in hockey and showcase the positive image of Pakistan.

Several key stakeholders have played crucial roles in making this friendly series a reality. The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Punjab Police, the Holland Embassy in Islamabad, Director General of Pakistan Sports Board Shoaib Khosa, and other sports officials have actively contributed to organizing this landmark series. Strict security arrangements have been assured by Punjab Police for the visiting Dutch club, with IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar taking a special interest in the matter.

Khawaja Junaid emphasized that the arrival of the Dutch hockey club is a breath of fresh air, bringing the opportunity to showcase the biggest hockey stadium in the world and foster interactions with legendary Pakistani players. He clarified that the initiative is part of the Prime Minister's Youth Talent Hunt program, designed to identify and promote new players on national and international platforms.

The Dutch Embassy in Islamabad has played a prominent role in persuading the club members and their families to visit Pakistan. This historic visit is expected to not only restore the profile of hockey at the international level but also contribute significantly to dispelling negative propaganda about Pakistan. The series represents a significant step in promoting sports diplomacy and building positive connections through the medium of hockey.

Lionel Messi mobbed for photos after emotional friendly with Newell's Old Boys



Following Inter Miami's pre-season finale against Newell's Old Boys, where the match ended in a 1-1 draw, the spotlight was once again on Lionel Messi, Goal reported.

The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner played for 60 minutes, continuing his journey towards full-match fitness. Despite Inter Miami's mixed pre-season results, the atmosphere at DRV PNK Stadium was filled with joy as Messi shared the field with his

The post-game scene turned into a scramble as fans eagerly sought photos with the Argentine icon. The emotional reunion marked the end of Inter Miami's historic international tour and set the stage for the upcoming MLS season.

Looking ahead, Messi remains committed to his contract with Inter Miami for the next two years, with a potential 12-month extension in 2026.

While there's speculation about a possible return to Newell's Old Boys in the future, for now, Messi continues to make an impact in Florida, leaving fans with cherished memories of sharing the field with a football legend.

Travis Kelce threatens to retire if Andy Reid leaves Chiefs

On the latest New Heights podcast, Travis Kelce, the Kansas City Chiefs tight end, made a bold statement, declaring his loyalty to head coach Andy Reid, The US Sun reported.

Kelce went as far as to threaten retirement from the NFL if Reid decides to call it quits. During a discussion with his brother Jason about his Super Bowl outburst against Reid, Kelce emphasised, "I'm not playing for anybody else but Big Red. If he calls it quits this year, I'm out of there with him, man."

Addressing the on-field altercation with Reid, Kelce explained the passion behind it, expressing his desire to play for Reid and take responsibility for the team's performance. Meanwhile, Jason dismissed the possibility of Reid retiring soon, to which Kelce responded confidently, "He's not."

Tve got a certain relationship with him," Travis explained during the podcast. "He's checked me a few times and I just wanted to let him know that I wanted this thing, and he can put it on me and

The Spokesman

Protest against rigging

HYDERABAD: Hundreds of Thousands supporters of Grand Democratic Alliance and Hur Jamat offering Jumma Prayer during a sit in protest against rigging in general election 2024, at M-9 Motorway near Jamshoro.



№ M-9 blocked

Election results were made months before polling day: Pir Pagara

跨 Dastagir Bhatti

Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) Chief Pir Pagara Sibghatullah Shah Rashdi has claimed that the election results were made and were sold months before the poll-

"The election was sold three months before the polling day and the payment has also been made," he said while addressing a sit-in in Sindh's Jamshoro against alleged rigging in the February 8 polls.

The GDA chief went on to add that he refused to hold rallies and corner meeting ahead of the election was rigged even before the voting process.

A large number of people gathered in Jamshoro for a sit-in against alleged rigging in poned due to the protest. the general elections on Friday.

other parties.

The traffic on the Karachi-Hyderabad motorway was blocked as the local administration asked travellers to opt for national highway route That-

It is being held at the M-9 motorway in Jamshoro that links to the Indus Highway and Super Highway.

The academic session at the University of Engineering and Technology, and Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences remained suspended and the point buses for the varsities could not run due to the roadblock.

Moreover, the exams in colleges affiliated with the University of Sindh were post-

"This sit-in is different League-Functional and some address.

Several political parties have protested against alleged rigging in elections. Nationalist parties in Balochistan have also been protesting for the same cause and observed shutter

There were reports of rigging in Larkana, Khairpur, Sanghar, Nawabshah, Dadu, Hyderabad, and Tando Muhammad Khan.

lown strike last week.

"Through this sit-in we want University of Sindh, Mehran to give a message to those institutions that Sindh was the province that founded Pakistan and there are many leaders here who played a role in founding Pakistan," Fehmida said and spoke about the state's "treatment" with such people.

She slammed general elections and described them as farce. "Sindh has been made a

colony," she said. The protest call was given by than other sit-ins," GDA lead-largest party in the province. that have concerns over elec-

"These elections, local bodies "We reject these elections and this election commission," she said and demanded that those who looted the votes should be tried Article 6—a law province. pertaining to treason.

She spoke about the 18th Amendment, saying that the law has been made a "joke and leading to state within a state."

"We won't rest until Sindh gets its rights," she said and praised women for turning up in large numbers to protest against alleged rigging.

The former National Assembly speaker warned of using a harsh tone for "institutions" if their demands were not met.

She expressed concerns over registration of FIRs against her party leaders. Fehmida expressed her intention to form The PPP has emerged as the an alliance of political parties he GDA, the Pakistan Muslim er Fehmida Mirza said in her But the rival parties, except tions. She alleged that Sindh MQM-P, have not accepted was given to the PPP on a platinces, but not in Sindh.

are unacceptable," she chanted. Fehmida demanded a provincial finance commission for the

GDA leader Saira Bano said that mere national songs were not enough to show solidarity with the national and called for practical measures. In an apparent reference to

the establishment, Bano said that a "corrupt party" cannot be given the mandate. This sit-in will not stop.

It will be continued in every district," she said and added that the party would not sit idle. Qomi Awami Tahreek Pres-

ident Ayaz Latif Palejo lamented the condition of Sindh province, saving that the province has been made a railway station where no locomotive arrives.

He wondered the governent changes in the three prov

ance claims of Rs 3 million and Rs husband obtained an insurance poli-460,000 to the legal heirs of the cy from EFU Life Assurance Ltd for deceased policyholders. the sum assured of Rs 460,000 The President gave these direcagainst an annual premium of Rs tions while deciding upon two sepa-23,000 in 2015. rate representations filed by Adam-Her husband died the same year jee Life Assurance Company Ltd and EFU Life Assurance Ltd against the decisions of the Federal Insurance Ombudsman (FIO) directing them to pay the death insurance claims to the respective claimants. As per details, Ms Zahid Nasreen's deceased sister had obtained an

President directs

policyholders

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi

has directed two private insurance

companies to pay the death insur-

insurance policy from Adamjee Life

Assurance Company for the sum

2021. After her sister died in 2022,

跨 City Desk

insurance companies to pay Rs 3.46 million to heirs of insurance

and when she filed the death insurance claim, it was repudiated on the ground that the deceased had not disclosed his pre-insurance ailment of Hypertension at the time of obtaining the policy. Feeling aggrieved, the complainants separately filed complaints with FIO to seek relief. The Ombudsman passed the orders in the complainants' favour and assured of Rs. 3 million against an directed the respective insurance annual premium of Rs. 300,000 in companies to honour their claims. Later, the companies filed separate the company refused to pay the death representations with the President insurance claim on the pretext that against the decisions of the Mohtasib.

the deceased had hidden her pre-insurance ailment of acute kidney

injury and chronic liver disease at

the time of obtaining the insurance

policy. Similarly, Memoona Naeem's

Mushtaq Janjua sworn in as AJK Accountability **Bureau Chief**



Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Accountability Bureau (AB)Mushtaq Ahmed Janjua called on President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister in 2001 when he was Prime Minis-Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry ter of the state. here today. Speaking on the occasion Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, while congratulating Mr. Assembly with the intent to eliminate Mustaq Ahmed Janjua on assuming corruption and make Azad Kashmir the charge of the bureau, said that a corruption free region. The AB chief people in Azad Kashmir have great thanked the President for appointexpectations from the Accounta- ing him as Chairman Accountabilbility Bureau and his appointment ity Bureau.

has further increased these expectations. The AJK president asked the AB chief to play his role effectively in implementing the accountability act, which he said was introduced back

The Accountability Act, he said, was passed from the Legislative

Mushahid Hussain participated in the constitutional meeting of the World Forum against Colonialism

Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed on the invitation of United Russia Party (Ruling and Largest political party in RF) paid a visit to Moscow to participate in the Constituent Meeting of the Forum of Supporters of the Struggle Against Modern Neocolonialism Practices for the Freedom of Nations.

As part of the visit program Senator MHS participated as a panelist in the Forum and held a tete-a-tete with Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of Russia/Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Global Forum Against NeoColonialism and for Freedom of Nations Mr. Dmit-



Russian Federation).

During the visit Senator MHS also delivered a lecture at the Russian Diplomatic Academy. The topic of the talk was Pakistan and the changing regional scenario. Senator Hussain during his talk also highlighted the growing relations between Pakistan and Russia especially in the field of energy, connectivity, regional security including Afghanistan and cooperation at multilateral for a including SCO and UN. He also appreciated President Putin's stance on Islamophobia. The lecture was followed by a question and answer session from the students of the diplomatic academy. Senator Chizhov

ry Medvedev (Former President of of the Russian Federation Council also graced the occasion.

Post the lecture the Senator held a meeting with the Rector of the Diplomatic academy to exchange views on the emerging trends in global politics as well as on bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Russia. The exchange of views proved to be constructive as both sides displayed congruence on a number of issues of mutual interest.

Overall Senator Mushahid Hussain had a very successful visit to Moscow and his engagements with the Russian leadership and intelligentsia were a great contribution towards strengthening Pakistan-Russia relations.

Pakistan's envoy in Brussels holds E-Khuli Kutchehri

Pakistan committed to

goods across Pak-Afghan

movement of people,

Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium and Luxembourg Amna Baloch on Friday held an E-Khuli Kutchehri to engage with the Pakistani community, living in both countries.

During the interaction, the ambassador addressed the community's concerns. She also reaffirmed the embassy's all-out support and being faced by the community, a facilitation to resolve the issues, press release said.

border: FO



Israeli's Netanyahu rejects UN, US recognition of Palestinian state

跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Palestinian state is not a gift or favor from Netanyahu, but rather an entitlement imposed by international law and international legitimacy resolutions

Netanyahu once again challenges the international and American consensus on the right to end the occupation and the embodiment of the Palestinian state. He declares his rejection of UN and international recognition of it, and presents his traditional conditions and dictates to the world and the Palestinian people with the aim of suppressing any efforts or ideas regarding a state for the Palestinian people, first and foremost, and as usual, his rejection of any international intervention, with what that means. Of international resolutions and references for peace in order to maintain the approach of negotiations for the sake of negotiations, and he also resorts to misleading countries by claiming that the path to the solution is direct negotiations between the two parties so that the Palestinian people and their rights international law and the resolutions of



remain hostage and captive to Netanyahu, who disposes of them according to his colonial and personal interests, and to take his long time negotiating with himself. To present to our people only what is consistent with their racist colonial projects, as a betrayal or moral generosity that has nothing to do with

international legitimacy. The Ministry believes that the positions of Netanyahu, who has thwarted all forms of negotiations, are political terrorism par excellence and confessions of his goals of genocidal war against our people and a clear explanation for those countries that want to understand the real goals of settlement and annexation of the West termination on land. His homeland.

Bank, including Jerusalem. Netanyahu wants the negotiations with the aim of thwarting them in preparation for successive waves of wars and violence.

While the Ministry welcomes the international initiatives and efforts made to stop the war on our people, protect Palestinian civilians, and open the political horizon to resolve the conflict on the basis of ending the occupation and embodying the Palestinian state, it stresses that Netanyahu's positions must continually strengthen the convictions and efforts of those countries and deepen this movement to force the occupying state to submit to the will of International Peace, and taking practical measures and steps in this direction, most notably supporting the Palestinian efforts made for the State of Palestine to obtain full membership in the United Nations, the initiative of America and Western countries to recognize the state, and taking a binding UN resolution in the Security Council to end the occupation and enable our people to exercise their right to self-de-

B City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan remained committed to facilitating fully regulated movement of people and goods across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border based on norms of interstate relations, the spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra continue to take steps to this end," Baloch said on Friday. In response to she added.

media queries regarding remarks of Deputy Interim Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, she said, "Any self-serving and fanciful claims regarding the legality and sanctity of the Pak-Afghan border cannot change the facts of geography, history and international law.

She said the Afghan side will be well advised to address Pakistan's genuine security concerns than try to divert public attention by such unfortunate public pronouncements. "Pakistan remains committed to facilitating fully regulated movement of people and goods across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border based on norms of interstate relations. We will

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi