

فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے ابویمان نے بیان کیا، انہوں نے کہا: جب نے خبری نے خبری کہ سعید بن مسیب نے بیان کیا کہ مجھے ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے خبری کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا: امت قائم ہوگی یہاں تک کہ سر زمین تاز سے ایک آگ نکلے گی اور خبری میں اونوں کی گردوں کو روشن کر دے گی۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7118)
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

US vetoes another UN Security Council resolution urging Gaza war ceasefire

Majority of members voted to call for an immediate ceasefire in Israel's war on Gaza that has killed more than 29,000 people. Arab nations, led by Algeria, put the draft resolution to a vote on Tuesday with the expectation that it would not pass after the US - Israel's key ally - had warned it would not back the text and proposed a rival draft instead.



Aneeq Ahmed stresses national harmony, positivity

Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed stressed the importance of reducing hate and delivering good news to foster trust and belief among the people. Talking to PTI, he urged individuals from all walks of life, including political leaders and bureaucrats, to contribute to the country's development and prosperity. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Witnesses

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar witnesses the signing ceremony between Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation and Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc. (USA) for joint venture agreement for the value addition and export of pink salt on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Utilisation of human, mineral resources will lead to a stable, rising Pakistan: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday reassuring the government's all-out support to the investors, said the effective utilisation of human as well as mineral resources would lead to a stable, prosperous and rising Pakistan.

"Our human resource is more important than our mineral resource. The human resource coupled with the mineral resource will lead to stable, prosperous and rising Pakistan," he said addressing the signing ceremony of a joint venture agreement between Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) and the US-based Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc for establishing a dedicated facility for crushing and packaging of pink salt for the export purposes.

Managing Director of the PMDC Asad Ahmed and President of Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc Ahmed Nadeem Khan signed the agreement that was witnessed by the Prime Minister Kakar, Energy Minister Muhammad Ali and relevant senior authorities.

The prime minister said the practice of exporting raw materials should come to an end as the export of the products after value addition was directly needed. "This is the path for Pakistan. This is the right step. We will be exporting the quality product in the coming days. Pakistan will get rightful branding for its product. This will pave the way for further opportunities," the prime minister remarked who also distributed awards among the individuals who played a key role in the joint venture agreement.

Calling the US a "most valued" trading partner of Pakistan, he said the agreement symbolized the investment climate in the country that would further strengthen the friendship between the two countries and the people. He said the decision of the US-based firm to invest \$200 million in Pakistan was a resounding vote of confidence in the government's economic policies.

Prime Minister Kakar said the investment was not just about the pink salt rather it was about trust, partnership and shared prosperity. He told the gathering that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was playing an important role in creating an enabling environment for foreign direct investment. It served as a one-window facility for the investors besides streamlining processes and removing the bureaucratic hurdles to attract investment in the fields mining, energy, IT, agriculture, livestock, industry and tourism, he added.

PTI demands CEC Raja to step down over 'rigging' in Feb 8 polls

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has demanded immediate resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, alleging a failure to conduct elections in a manner that is free, fair, and transparent. Speaking to the media outside Adiala Jail, PTI leader Barrister Gohar Khan stated, "Follow-

ing our meeting with the PTI founder today, PTI demands the resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner. He has forfeited his right to hold office even for a day." Barrister Gohar Khan criticised the Election Commission of Pakistan for what he described as a lapse in fulfilling its duties at every stage of the electoral process. He emphasised that the

responsibility for Form 45s lay with the ECP, and returning officers were obligated to declare results based on these documents. "However, this has not been the case under the current chief election commissioner," he added. He further called for impartial inquiries into any discrepancies in the polls, stressing the importance of aligning election outcomes with the public

mandate. Warning of potential damage to the International Monetary Fund program if the election results do not align with Form 45s, Barrister Gohar urged for the prevention of further political upheaval through the announcement of transparent election results. Additionally, Barrister Gohar labelled former Rawalpindi commissioner Liaqat Ali

Chattha as a "whistleblower" for disclosing details regarding alleged poll rigging. He demanded assurance of Chattha's safety and that of his family to facilitate his participation in any inquiry. The accusations made by Chattha against the Election Commission of Pakistan and Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa were denied by both the electoral watchdog and the top judge.

PMLN's Abbasi and Rafique get into altercation with female activists

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz's leaders Hanif Abbasi and Saad Rafique reportedly got into an altercation with female political activists in Islamabad on Tuesday. According to PMLN sources, Abbasi and Rafique were in Kohsar Market in Islamabad where slogans were raised by women regarding alleged rigging in elections. However, the women allegedly used inappropriate language after which Abbasi tried to film them on his phone. This led to a scuffle, which eventually led to both politicians being slapped by the women.

Bilawal accuses PML-N of 'non-seriousness' in govt formation talks

PPA

LAHORE: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has blamed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) for delays in reaching a consensus on the government formation in center. He also accused the PMLN's talks committee of showing non-seriousness and said that the PPP would not change its stance over its refusal to join the federal cabinet. "If I have to vote for PML-N, I will do it on my terms, and not on their terms. The delay [in government formation] is due to the non-seriousness of the [PML-N] dialogues committee,"



he told media outside the Supreme Court on Tuesday where he appeared in the Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto case. A day earlier, committees of both parties met for the fifth time, only to leave without significant agreement. The two sides had two separate sittings at Ishaq Dar's residence in Islamabad's minister's enclave on Tuesday. Details of the talks suggested that the PPP is

"The message in it is that a party cannot run the country. All parties will have to work together for legislation," he added. According to him, the parties will have to give and take if they decide to form a coalition government. "All political parties will have to make a consensus to protect democracy and parliament." On delays in government formation, the former foreign minister said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was "technically the single largest party." However, Zardari lamented that the former ruling party is not ready to talk with other political parties.

HC orders immediate arrest of DC Islamabad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court ordered the immediate arrest of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Memon on Tuesday in a case regarding issuance of arrest orders under MPO. Justice Babar Sattar presided over a contempt case in the IHC on Monday where Islamabad's SSP Operations and DC had been summoned in person. Although SSP Malik Jameel Zafar appeared in person, Memon filed an exemption request through his counsel, Rizwan Abbasi. The counsel argued that the DC was currently on leave in Khairpur and intends to leave for Umra soon.

IHC moved for medical examination of Bushra Bibi

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Uzma Khan, sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, has moved Islamabad High Court (IHC) seeking a medical examination of former first lady Bushra Bibi, who is incarcerated at Bani Gala, ARY News reported on

Tuesday. "Illegally incarcerated former first lady was given chemical laced food over a week ago, which has burnt her throat and stomach. She is unable to eat and is unwell, but has been denied medical treatment," the PTI said in a post on X.

'Pakistan's Constitution offers solution if parties fail to forge consensus'



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: With no breakthrough in talks between the PPP and PML-N over formation of government, Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday asserted that the Constitution is very comprehensive and offers solutions if political parties fail to forge consensus. Talking to journalists, the interim minister said that political parties are holding negotiations over the formation of new government, adding that there is "no deadlock" in this regard. "No party could secure a simple majority in the February 8 general elections and that is why political forces are engaging with one another," he added. He said, "Under the Constitution, the last date to summon a session of the National

Assembly is the 29th of this month and we still have some days to convene the sitting of the newly elected lower house of parliament." Uncertainty looms over Pakistan's political 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. Political stakeholders were making efforts to forge alliances and secure 169 seats in the 336-member lower house of parliament. PTI-backed Independent candidates consolidated their lead in the general elections 2024 over mainstream political parties, especially in the National and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assemblies, throughout the result announcement process. According to the results announced so far, PTI-backed independent candidates have managed to win 92 seats. PML-N is in the second position with 79 seats, while the PPP has won 54 seats.

Stray dogs bite 27 people in single day in Larkana

Mushtaq Chandio

LARKANA: In the past 24 hours, as many as 27 dog bite cases have been reported in Larkana. The medical reports revealed that the victims of dog bites in Larkana encompassed children, women, and elderly citizens.

Meanwhile, the citizens urged the administration to address the issue of stray dogs as dog bite incidents are rising in the city. Back in 2021, the Sindh High Court (SHC) Sukkur Bench suspended the membership of two of the Pakistan People's Party MPAs from Sindh, Faryal Talpur

and Malik Asad Sikandar over dog bite incidents reported in their respective constituencies. In the written judgment, the SHC said that the membership of the MPAs was suspended over no contact on dog bite cases that occurred in their constituencies. The court has directed the



Election Commission of Pakistan to release the suspension notification of Faryal Talpur and Malik Asad Sikandar. It is to be mentioned here that the Sindh High Court's Sukkur Bench had

earlier ruled that if any person is bitten by a dog, the membership of the respective Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) elected from that area would be suspended.

Prime Minister makes surprise visit to Jammu and Kashmir's Civil Secretariat

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq paid a surprise visit to the Civil Secretariat at 08:30 am on Tuesday. During his visit the PM checked the biometric attendance of all secretaries and secretariat staff. On this occasion, ninety percent of the secretaries were present in their offices. Prime Minister Haq expressed his satisfaction over the presence of secretaries and secretariat staff. Speaking on the



occasion, the Prime Minister said that good governance was the top priority of the coalition government. He said that good governance was imperative for proper utilization of resources, public welfare and providing basic amenities of life to people at their doorsteps. During the PM's unscheduled visit, some senior government secretaries reached the office late by 30 to 40 minutes. Expressing his displeasure over secretaries show up late, the PM directed them to observe office hours strictly.

Incredible

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at Srinagar Highway during sunny and cloudy weather in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Bakhtiar Memorial Center awards free computer course Certificates to MEPCO Employees

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Under the organization of Bakhtiar Memorial Computer Free Education Center, a certificate distribution ceremony was held for the children of MEPCO employees who succeeded in the six-month free computer course. Central Secretary General Khurshid Ahmad, General Manager Nasir Ayaz Garmani, Haji Yunus Kamboh was the chief guest. The ceremony began with recitation from the Holy Quran. Computer teacher Zeeshan performed the duties of the stage secretary. Addressing the ceremony, Khurshid Ahmad said that equipping the young generation with technical education is the urgent need of the hour for the development and success of any nation and individuals. In the 21st century, knowledge, hard work, good deeds and better performance development is possible. For which computer education



has become a basic need. Senior leader Khurshid Ahmad also congratulated the students on this occasion. General Manager Mapco Nasir Ayaz Garmani said that this initiative of Hydro Union is true sense. I am admirable. We give priority to the students who have graduated from here. Regional Chairman Chaudhry Ghulam

Rasool Gujjar speaking said that under the supervision of Khurshid Ahmad, Hydro Union is giving free computer education to the children of employees of WAPDA and distribution companies all over Pakistan. MAPCO HYDRO Union to provide educational facilities to their children. Encouraging the principles of knowledge

and skills among the employees, which is a commendable initiative. Regional Secretary Chaudhry Mahmood Amjad while congratulating the students said that they will have a higher role in life with education and national service. Do not take any effort to do it. On this occasion, Rana Shafiq, Shakeel Baloch, Sajjad Baloch,

Chaudhry Muhammad Khalid, Rana Muhammad Anwar also spoke. Ghulam Mustafa Kamboh, Rana Zahid Javed, Rashid Yameen, Chaudhry Muhammad Shabbir Gujjar, Syed Atif Zaidi, Ahmed Mohal, Malik Tanveer, Shahbaz Bhatti, Shahid Iqbal, Altaf Mahar also spoke in the ceremony. Chaudhry Naeem, Ilyas Jat, Murtaza Baloch, Rao Anwar, Nazir Awan, Rana Mazhar Latif, Muhammad Shahzad, Rao Aslam, Malik Babar, Ishrat Alvi, Sajjad Mastoi, Ansir Abbas, Ashiq Dogar, Fayyaz Ran, Umeer Baloch, Rao Amir Jameel, Khalid Jat, Rana Munir, Altaf Hussain, Anwar Gujjar, Tariq Naeem, Aqeel Zahid, Rana Burhan, Saeed Ashraf, Amjad Khan, Usman Ran, Chaudhry Azhar, Nazakat Gujjar, Salman Baloch, Masood Alvi, Ahsan Nandla, Rana Muhammad Imran, Imran Kazmi, Asif Rashid, Yusuf Mahni, Chaudhry Naeem Khalid and others were present

Training course on School Safety held in Muzaffarabad: Director General

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZZAFFARABAD: A 2-day training Capacity Building of Govt. employees training course was held in Muzaffarabad. Addressing the opening ceremony of Counterparts on EIE/DRR/School Safety, Secretary Education Elementary and Secondary Education Razak Ahmed Nadeem directed all the participants to the extent that the training was a useful and proactive approach. It is possible to learn from here and implement it in your institutions. During the training, people were given practical training related to Disaster Risk Reduction, Education in Emergency, School Safety, First Aid and Fire Emergency. In the closing ceremony, Director General State Disaster Management Authority Raja Tahir Mumtaz Khan, EPI Education, Director Operations SDMA, Director Admin SDMA, Donor Coordinator and Director Education Extension expressed their views. Director General SDMA welcomed the trainees and emphasized that this training should be made a part of daily life through repeated practice in schools. Because whoever saves one life saves the entire humanity and school children are our most valuable asset and it is our responsibility to ensure their safety. At the end of the training, certificates were given to the trained staff, and finally the Director Education Extension thanked the Trainers of SDMA.

Regal Automobiles has launched first electric vehicle Sirius 3 in Pakistan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Regal Automobiles has launched its first electric vehicle Sirius 3 in Pakistan. In this regard, a 3S dealership has been given to Sirius and Volt in Multan, which was inaugurated yesterday. Regal Auto Industry in the opening ceremony. Chief Executive Adeel Sheikh, General Manager Muazzam and Managing Director Chaudhry Mushtaq Ahmed, Khalid Hussain Chaudhry, and CEO Riyaz Chaudhry of Ceres Multan Motors were attended by prominent bankers, automobile dealers and many guests. And got a chance to witness the future of EV-friendly transportation. Appreciating the ground breaking Sears and Volt models, all the attendees highlighted the importance of this milestone for the automotive industry in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion Regal Auto Industries CEO Adeel Sheikh, GM Moazzam Chaudhry Mushtaq Ahmed, Managing Director, Serious Multan Motors, said that the launch will be a major milestone in Pakistan's automotive industry and an important step in tackling rising fuel costs and shifting focus towards electric cars in the country. Regal Auto Industry is a leading player in the automotive sector, dedicated to bringing innovative and sustainable mobility solutions to the Pakistani market. He said that Ceres Multan Motors is at the forefront of transforming the automotive landscape in Multan. Ahead, committed to providing exceptional service and innovative vehicles, the opening of the Multan Sirius and Volt dealership reflects the company's commitment to bring positive change in the region's automotive industry. On this occasion, Khalid Hussain, Riyadh Chaudhry and others also addressed.

VC Dr. Mohammad Ramzan visited the Multan Chamber



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Emerson University Vice Chancellor Dr. Mohammad Ramzan visited the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, met with the officials, discussed research and development entrepreneurship, and agreed on mutual cooperation. President of the House Mian Rashid Iqbal Accepted the invitation to visit the university. In this regard, Vice Chancellor of Emerson University Busan Road, Dr. Muhammad Ramzan, along with Chairman Business Department Project Director Aftab Khan Khakwani, visited the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan and met the President of the Chamber, Mian Rashid Iqbal. Senior Vice President Nadeem Ahmed on the occasion Sheikh, former president and convener Government Liaison Sub-Committee Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, former senior vice president Sohail Tufail, Ihtshamul Haque, Aurangzeb Alangir, Secretary General Muhammad Shafiq were present. He discussed the measures taken to improve the quality of education in the university according to the modern needs and said that the senior members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry should give time for the session to share their business experiences and successes and failures with the students of Emerson University.

So that the students get out of the academic world and into the practical world to be helpful in understanding and solving the world's challenges and to be inclined towards business in practical life. Emerson University in other fields including industry research and development. He said that by promoting freelancing and entrepreneurship, we can improve the economy and achieve economic stability. Academia and industry can work together on this and we can improve our foreign exchange. He said that the government can control the crisis. Provide facilities and protect investment in freelancing. Mian Rashid Iqbal also accepted the invitation to visit Emerson University and assured to visit soon with the delegation of the House and also presented the emblem of the House to the Vice Chancellor.

Protest demonstration held in Muzaffarabad on Moodi's visit at IOJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZZAFFARABAD: A protest demonstration was held in Muzaffarabad on the occasion of Indian Prime Minister's Narendra Modi's visit to Occupied Jammu and Kashmir organized by Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell. Minister Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell Ms. Intiaz Naseem, Secretary Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell Wajahat Rasheed Baig, Director Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell Raja Sajjad Latif, leader of APHC and Chairman Pasban Hurriyat Uzair Ahmed Ghazali District President of Muslim Conference Syed Yasir Naqvi Advocate, Leader of People's Party Shaikh Gilani, District Member Council Nadeem Mumtaz Mir along with civil society and a large number of people participated.



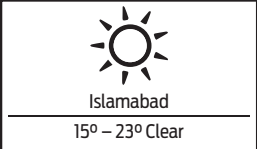
slogans against India and in favor of freedom. Addressing the protest demonstration, Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell Ms. Intiaz Naseem said that the Indian government is committing the worst atrocities in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. International human rights organizations should inform the world about the plight of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Modi's visit to Occupied Jammu

and Kashmir is strongly condemned. On the occasion of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, an unannounced curfew has been imposed in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said that he stands with the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir. They will definitely fight Modi's fascism. Hurriyat stands by the leadership. We want to make it clear to the

world that the biased actions of the Indian government will not be accepted under any circumstances. The Indian government has also started taking measures to change the demography including forced disappearances, killings and massacres in the occupied territory. The right to self-determination is the goal. Hurriyat will not let the sacrifices of the leadership go in vain. Addressing the protest demon-

stration, Director Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell Raja Sajjad Latif Khan said that during Modi's visit to Occupied Kashmir, he strongly condemned the unannounced worst curfews in the valley, is involved in heinous crimes such as conversion of The pro-Hindutva government of India is inflicting painful atrocities on the Hurriyat leadership to crush the freedom movement in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The world should take serious notice of Indian brutality. Modi's visit to Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is a failed attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the world. They completely reject the visit of the Indian Prime Minister in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and demand the United Nations to take strict notice of the biased and unilateral actions of the Indian government in Occupied Kashmir and reprimand India. He said that it is a sad matter that India is

openly violating the resolutions of the Security Council regarding the right to self-determination. He emphasized that the United Nations should take strict notice of the ongoing Indian atrocities in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and oust the Modi government and fulfill the promise of plebiscite in Kashmir. Speaking at the protest, Muslim Conference District President Syed Yasir Naqvi Advocate, People's Party Leader Shaq Gilani, District Council Member Nadeem Mumtaz Mir and other speakers also spoke highly of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. While condemning, I appealed to the United Nations and the world leadership to take strict notice of the ongoing atrocities in the occupied territory by the pro-Hindutva government of India and take strict action against India.



SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr5:24 am
Zohr12:22 pm
Asr4:17 pm
Maghrib5:56 pm
Isha7:19 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police92766044
Motorway Police9276601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9276601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo9280979
Railway Enquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ5556311-4
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

2nd 250MVA Auto Transformer Installed at 220 kV Grid Station NTDC Ghakkar

PPA

LAHORE: National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) has successfully replaced and augmented 2nd 160 MVA Auto Transformer (T-2) with 250 MVA, 220/132 kV rating unit at 220 kV grid station NTDC Ghakkar. The said 250 MVA, 220/132kV auto transformer was successfully energised today.

This work, as part of World Bank funded National Transmission Modernization Project (NTMP-1), has been completed under System Constraints Removal Program which will see an enhancement in the capacity of 220 kV grid station Ghakkar. It will help to meet the increasing load demand of the GEPCO region. The augmentation of a new 250 MVA auto transformer will benefit the industrial, rural and urban consumers of the GEPCO region, besides increasing the system reliability.

Managing Director NTDC, Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan appreciated the efforts of the Project Delivery (North) team for successful completion of the project.

On the other hand, a comprehensive maintenance program for NTDC transmission lines and grid stations also continues at full swing. Washing, cleaning, replacement of disc insulators and other necessary activities are being carried out by respective NTDC Asset Management formations.

MD NTDC has urged the Asset Management teams to complete the maintenance activities before Ramzan-ul-Mubarak for smooth power supply during the holy month.

Optimizing nutrient management key to boost crop productivity: Federal Minister

Tooba Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), and USDA Jointly Organize Two-Day Stakeholders Meeting on 'Fertilizer Right Pakistan Project' at NARC Islamabad. This project aims to enhance productivity through the efficient use of fertilizers and to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The session was inaugurated by Dr. Kauser Abdullah Malik, the Federal Minister for the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. The minister emphasized the importance of integrated nutrient management to increase crop productivity. Dr. Kauser highlighted that the 'Fertilizer Right Pakistan Project' can play a crucial role in promoting sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing crop productivity through the implementation

of scientifically-backed fertilizer management strategies.

Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, reiterated the significance of the Fertilize Right Pakistan Project in promoting sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing crop productivity in Pakistan. Dr. Ali appreciated the continuous support of USDA in grooming the agriculture sector of Pakistan through different projects.

The meeting was graced by the presence of a USDA delegation, comprising five visiting scientists from Washington D. C., who actively participated in the proceedings. Representatives from USAID, Agronomists from ICARDA Morocco, a large number of scientists from International Centers and Pakistan's National and Provincial institutes participated in the meeting. USDA lead scientist and team leader Dr. Abiola Adeyemi and ICARDA Country Manager Dr.



Abdul Majid briefed the participants about the Fertilize Right Project.

The two-day marathon of planning sessions witnessed stakeholders and collaborating insti-

tutions presenting their respective workplans, igniting profound discussions and deliberations aimed at devising an effective implementation strategy. This gathering for the 'Fertilizer Right

Pakistan Project' not only served as a platform for robust discussions but also fostered collaborations among key players in the agricultural sector. Emphasizing the twin goals of enhanc-

ing productivity and promoting sustainable practices, the event underscored the significance of coordinated efforts and partnerships in propelling Pakistan's agricultural landscape forward.

Attention

ISLAMABAD: A view of Miserable entry gate of Saidpur Village, as needs to attention for concern authority in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

National Conference on Mother-Tongue held at NUML

PPA

ISLAMABAD: One day National Conference on "Multilingual and Cultural Implications of Mother-Tongue in Context of Globalization" was organized by the Department of Urdu Language & Literature of National University of Modern Languages (NUML) here on Tuesday. Rector NUML Major General Shahid Mahmood Kayani (Retd) presided over the session while Dean Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities AIOU Professor Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir was the chief guest and Dr. Arshid Mahmood Nashaad associate professor AIOU was the keynote speaker of the inaugural session. Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments, guests, faculty members and a large number of students also attended the session.

Speaking on the occasion,



chief guest Dr. Abdul Aziz said that the ruling elite decide the language of the region, today in the era of globalization; the international establishment wants us to think that our languages are being vanished. Dr. Arshid Mahmood in his address said that there are

70 languages being spoken in Pakistan and it seems that the global world has started a campaign to eliminate our beautiful languages.

At the end, Rector NUML Major General Shahid Kayani in his concluding remarks said that language is the reflection

of the society, and we must give importance to all our languages. He thanked honourable guests and hoped that this conference would pave a way forward to further promote Urdu and other regional languages. He distributed shields among guests.

People's Party candidate says he was cheated in Lora Lai district through rigging

PPA



ISLAMABAD: People's Party candidate for Provincial Assembly from Lora Lai district of Balochistan Shamsuddin has said that he was cheated by the RO and given to the top ranked PML candidate through rigging, which we have full proof of in video and Form 45 is available, the Election Commission is requested to withhold the final result of PB05, conduct a recount of all the polling stations as per the Form 45 given to the polling agents, conduct transparent elections again at the rigged polling stations. Go and take strict departmental action against the reporting officers, presiding officers and staff involved in rigging so that the demands of justice can be fulfilled, people from Lora Lai district of Balochistan while holding a press conference with their other colleagues at the National Press Club Islamabad.

Shamsuddin appealed to the Prime Minister, Army Chief, Chief Election Commissioner and Chief Justice of Pakistan to stop the final result of PB05, according to the form 45 given to the polling agents, recounting of all the polling stations was done. Again, transparent elections should be held at rigged polling stations

Hexing to Showcase Innovative Solar Solutions at the Solar Pakistan Exhibition

PNP

LAHORE: Hexing Energy (Pvt) Ltd., a pioneering entity in sustainable energy solutions, is going to participate in the upcoming Solar Pakistan Exhibition, which will be organized from February 27th to 29th, 2024.

Commenting on the participation, Mr. Leo Xu, Director Global Marketing and Regional CEO of South Asia of Hexing Group expressed enthusiasm, stating, "We are excited to unveil our latest solar solutions at the Solar Pakistan Exhibition. Our mission is to make electricity green and easily accessible in Pakistan. By providing innovative products and energy management solutions, we aim to energize Pakistan and the world for a brighter tomorrow."

With a vision to emerge as a key leader in providing green energy products and energy management solutions in Pakistan, the company remains steadfast in its commitment of driving sustainable progress and ushering in a greener, more prosperous future for the nation and beyond.

FBR revenue for FY 2024 at Rs.5,150 billion: almost 30% growth

PPA

ISLAMABAD: FBR has collected revenue of Rs.5,150 billion since July 2023 to mid of February 2024 against Rs.3,973 billion over the same period last FY - almost 30% tax revenue growth. During the course of this period, tax refunds grew by more than 28%. The month wise revenue collection for July 2023 to January 2024 is as under:

2022-23	2023-24	%	
July	462	538	17
August	494	669	36
September	688	834	21
October	516	707	37
November	534	786	38
December	735	985	34
January	545	680	25

Overall growth in the domestic taxes has been around 40%, while import duty and related taxes grew by 16% over July 2023 to January 2024 period. Growth in revenues gained momentum as GDP has revived and FBR collection has come under tighter scrutiny. Notwithstanding, growth in import taxes fell largely because of (i) downward adjustments in import tariffs over the years, and (ii) more recently restrictions on import licenses imposed by SBP to contain balance of payments position in the wake of foreign exchange constraints. The revenue collection from imports do however incorporate the impact of the improvements in the valuation of imports that yielded Rs 151 billion collections as well as anti-smuggling drive (that witnessed almost 69% growth in FY vis-à-vis FY 22-23). There is scope to enhance anti-smuggling efforts by looking into increasing customs force in Baluchistan which is currently only 378 anti-smuggling staff (compared to 20,000 personnel in the province undermine the enforcement efforts).

The revenue mobilization from domestic taxes is a welcome shift. The domestic tax collection is now over 64% of the total revenues collected during the current financial year. Concurrently the import taxes shared has declined to 36% from more than 50% just 3 years ago. The tax wise collection reveals following trends:

Tax	Up to Jan-	Up to Jan-	%	Major
Income	1,751	2,447	40	Banks, POL, Textile, Power,
Sales Tax	1,480	1,766	19	POL,
Federal	190	307	61	Tobacco,
Cement,				
Customs	552	629	14	POL,
Grand	3,973	5,150	30	

Source: Federal Board of Revenue

Riphah Int'l University held a grand Poster Design Competition at Gulberg Greens Islamabad Campus

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Riphah International University organized a Poster Design Competition for school and college students of twin cities on 20th February 2024. More than 80 schools and colleges participated in this competition. The event aimed to highlight the dangers to life under the sea. The purpose of the poster design competition was to create awareness regarding the significance of ocean life and its influence on the planet at a grassroots level. Students from junior and senior classes enthusiastically participated in the competition, using vibrant colors to create paintings and drawings centered around the theme of 'protecting life under the sea.'

Oceans are our planet's life support, providing water, food, and helping regulate the weather. The importance of



the ocean and the resources it provides to all of us are emphasized, educating participants about actions they can take to keep our seas clean. It is the primary responsibility of the government, poli-

cymakers, and educational institutions to raise awareness about the protection of underwater life. Teaching our future generation to understand what problems affect the ocean's health must be

our first step towards addressing the challenges facing ocean health. For this purpose, Riphah International University organized this uplifting, energizing, and exciting event.

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Assessing Pakistan's Post-Election Landscape

The recent election in Pakistan held in Feb, 2024 has once again brought to light the challenges and controversies surrounding the country's electoral process. Allegations of rigging, irregularities, and mishaps have marred the credibility of the election, raising concerns about the democratic integrity of Pakistan's political system. The aftermath of the election has seen widespread protests and accusations of foul play from various political parties. Reports of voter intimidation, ballot stuffing, and discrepancies in the vote counting process have fueled distrust among the electorate and cast a shadow over the legitimacy of the results. One of the key issues that have plagued the electoral process in Pakistan is the lack of transparency and accountability. The absence of robust mechanisms for monitoring and oversight has allowed for manipulation and malpractice to occur unchecked. The politicization of state institutions and the influence of powerful vested interests have further compromised the fairness and impartiality of the electoral process.

The new government will face a multitude of threats and challenges in the aftermath of the controversial and unstable situation surrounding the recent election. Some of the key threats and challenges that the new government is likely to encounter include:

Legitimacy Crisis: The allegations of electoral fraud and irregularities have

cast doubt on the legitimacy of the new government, undermining public trust in the electoral process and the political system as a whole. This legitimacy crisis could lead to widespread protests, civil unrest, and a lack of confidence in the government's ability to govern effectively. **Political Instability:** The contentious election results and allegations of rigging have heightened political tensions and polarization in Pakistan. The new government will have to contend with a divided political landscape, with opposition parties challenging the legitimacy of the ruling party and potentially disrupting the functioning of the government. **Governance Challenges:** The new government will inherit a host of governance challenges, including economic instability, social unrest, and security threats. The ongoing economic downturn, and security issues pose significant obstacles to effective governance and could further exacerbate the country's already precarious situation. **International Scrutiny:** The controversial election and allegations of electoral malpractice have attracted international attention and scrutiny, with foreign governments and international organizations expressing concern over the state of democracy in Pakistan. The new government will need to navigate diplomatic challenges and restore

confidence in Pakistan's commitment to democratic principles and the rule of law. **Rebuilding Trust:** Restoring public trust in the government and the electoral process will be a critical task for the new administration. The government will need to demonstrate transparency, accountability, and a commitment to upholding democratic values to regain the confidence of the electorate and rebuild faith in the political system.

To address all these challenges and pave the way for a brighter future for Pakistan, several measures and suggestions can be considered: **Electoral Reforms:** There is an urgent need for comprehensive electoral reforms to enhance transparency, accountability, and fairness in the electoral process. This includes strengthening the role of the Election Commission, implementing stricter regulations on campaign financing, and introducing measures to prevent voter fraud and manipulation. **Independent Oversight:** Establishing independent oversight mechanisms to monitor elections and investigate allegations of misconduct is crucial to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process. This could involve empowering civil society organizations, international observers, and independent commissions to oversee elections and hold accountable those

responsible for malpractices. **Electoral Education:** Enhancing civic education and awareness among the electorate is essential to promoting informed and responsible voting behavior. By educating voters about their rights, the electoral process, and the importance of free and fair elections, Pakistan can empower its citizens to actively participate in the democratic process and hold their representatives accountable.

Political Dialogue: Encouraging constructive political dialogue and fostering a culture of inclusivity and cooperation among all political parties is vital to building consensus on electoral reforms and strengthening democratic institutions. By promoting dialogue and collaboration, Pakistan can move towards a more stable and inclusive political system that reflects the diverse interests of its population.

Fair Judiciary Commission: it is most important for relaxing the unrest and promoting the trust to establish a fair judicial commission in order to probe all the mishaps and frauds in the recent election. In conclusion, the challenges and controversies surrounding the recent election highlight the urgent need for reforms and renewal in the country's electoral system. By addressing issues of transparency, accountability, and fairness, Pakistan can strengthen its democratic institutions, restore public trust in the electoral process, and pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future for all its citizens.



Analysis

Sohail Ahmad Baber

Smart farm project

The first batch of equipment for the Million Acres of Green Pakistan Smart Farm Project participated by Chinese water-saving industry leader, Tianjin Dayu Irrigation Group, has been packed and delivered.

The batch of intelligent water and fertilizer integrated irrigation equipment covering a farmland area of 2,000 hectares will be used for the planting and irrigation of wheat, cotton, tomatoes, corn and other crops, providing vital technical support for the construction of smart farms in Pakistan.

On July 7, 2023, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan launched the LIMS (Land Information and Management System) initiative, which aims to promote modern agricultural development, improve agricultural productivity and meet the food needs of Pakistan's growing population through the application of advanced technology and modern irrigation system, among which the Million Acres of Green Pakistan Smart Farm Project as a response to and support for this initiative.

"Agriculture is Pakistan's pillar industry. The world's most advanced technology will help us increase production. It can not only be as self-use, but will also be of great help to our food exports in the future. At the same time, Dayu Group has also made considerable achievements in flood prevention, disaster early warning, rural sewage treatment, and so on.

We hope to cooperate closely with Dayu in multiple dimensions," said Ghulam Qadir, Pakistan's Commercial Counselor in Pakistan Embassy, Beijing. Cui Jing, senior vice president of Dayu Group, echoed that Pakistani partners are very interested in Dayu's rural sewage treatment project in Ningxia. "If this cooperation is successful, these two types of projects will also be introduced to Pakistan. Beyond doubt, our prospects for future cooperation are very broad."

Pakistan suffers from chronic water shortages. In addition to residential water, the country devotes almost three-quarters of its water supply to cultivating its water-intensive crops: approximately 23 percent for wheat, 21 percent for rice, 19 percent for sugar cane, and 14 percent for cotton especially, which supports Pakistan's pillar textile industry, requires a large amount of water to maintain its long growth cycle as a water-loving crop, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

In the meantime, northern metropolis Tianjin is a resource-based water-scarce city, where has focused on promoting green manufacturing and forming a water-saving model for the entire industry chain from water sources to processes to products in past few years.

This bilateral cooperation focuses on long-term development to gradually transfer the mature management experience of "tridimensional water management" of agricultural water conservation, safe drinking water for farmers, and rural sewage treatment to Belt and Road partners including Pakistan.



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

International Perspectives on Our Elections - III

Ignorance, characterized by a lack of knowledge, awareness, and critical thinking skills, presents a significant barrier to effective engagement in democratic elections. Access to quality education plays a pivotal role in empowering citizens with the knowledge and abilities necessary to make informed decisions, critically assess political candidates and platforms, and comprehend the consequences of their votes. By investing in education and advocating for lifelong learning opportunities, societies can equip individuals with the skills and confidence needed to actively engage in democratic processes.

In an increasingly digital era, access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) is fundamental for political participation and civic involvement. However, the digital gap, which disproportionately affects marginalized and disadvantaged communities, exacerbates existing disparities in information access and political engagement. Bridging the digital divide through initiatives like expanding broadband infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and ensuring affordable access to ICTs is vital for fostering inclusive and accessible electoral processes.

Poverty, often accompanied by social marginalization, economic instability, and limited access to basic services, undermines individuals' ability to exercise their democratic rights and participate meaningfully in electoral processes. Addressing poverty necessitates holistic strategies aimed at fostering economic empowerment, social inclusion, and access to essential services such as healthcare, housing, and sanitation. By addressing the root causes of poverty and socioeconomic disparities, societies can create an environment conducive to meaningful political participation and democratic governance.

Ignorance and poverty can exacerbate inequalities

in electoral participation and representation, resulting in skewed electoral outcomes and the disenfranchisement of marginalized groups. Ensuring inclusive electoral processes that prioritize the needs and voices of all citizens, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities, is essential for upholding democratic principles and values. Measures such as voter education and outreach programs, inclusive voter registration processes, and quotas for underrepresented groups can help mitigate disparities in political participation and representation.

Empowering citizens to actively engage in democratic processes entails more than just providing access to information and resources; it also involves nurturing a culture of civic empowerment and participation. Encouraging grassroots initiatives, community-led campaigns, and participatory decision-making processes can mobilize citizens to advocate for their rights, hold elected officials accountable, and contribute to the development of inclusive and responsive democratic institutions. By amplifying the voices of those most affected by ignorance and poverty, societies can strive towards building more equitable and democratic societies.

Addressing ignorance and poverty is essential for ensuring the integrity, inclusivity, and effectiveness of democratic elections. By investing in education, alleviating poverty, and promoting inclusive electoral processes, societies can empower citizens to actively participate in shaping their collective future and advance the principles of democracy, equality, and social justice. As we endeavor to build more inclusive and resilient democracies, combating ignorance and poverty must remain central to our efforts to strengthen democratic governance and promote human dignity and rights for all.

Amidst these challenges, Pakistan conducted its

general elections on February 8, witnessing a large turnout of registered voters. Notably, no instances of rigging or controversy were observed during the polling process but it was not good to see later some complaints voiced by certain elements within the country and from abroad without any valid evidence.

The United States has called for a thorough investigation into allegations of election rigging in Pakistan, emphasizing the need for adherence to the rule of law and respect for democratic principles. During a press briefing, US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller underscored the importance of respecting the constitution, promoting a free press, and condemning political violence and election-related disruptions. The US has urged that any claims of interference or irregularities in the electoral process be meticulously investigated within the framework of Pakistan's legal system.

Similarly, both Britain and the European Union have voiced concerns regarding the electoral process in Pakistan following the February 8 vote, urging a comprehensive probe into reported irregularities. Mentioning allegations of interference and arrests of activists, the US and EU emphasized the necessity of investigating claims of irregularities, interference, and fraud. The EU highlighted concerns about a perceived lack of a level playing field in the elections, attributing it to restrictions on political actors and limitations on freedoms of assembly, expression, and internet access.

The interference by foreign entities in Pakistan's internal affairs is, in my opinion, a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. Sovereignty constitutes the cornerstone of statehood, embodying the essence of an independent nation's existence. It encompasses the supreme authority and power wielded by a state within its borders, free from external interference or influence. Upholding sovereignty is a fundamental principle deeply embedded in international law and politics, serving as a vital tenet that underpins the contemporary nation-state system.

To be continued

Another Age of Darkness

My dearest reader, you all must have remembered the Age of Darkness, the era under British Raj. The same people who came in the disguise of humble traders and reveal their true intentions slowly with the passage of time. That age took almost a century to pass, however the after affects still linger in our lives.

In my opinion, we have never recovered from the sock, from the life of slavery. Moreover, the most alarming is that, in just 89 years we all have forgotten our legacy. Since, we belong to the empire that was not just one of the most powerful empires on earth, but arguable the most powerful of the Age, the times when the Mings in China and Safavids in Persia were on the decline, and the rise of European powers was still in future, we were on the lead.

In the past 76 years Pakistan started healing in some ways, but once again the storm clouds starting to darkening the skies. Recently, I came across a jingle on several websites, "Pakistan the Cheapest Country", however if someone can tell me, if there's another country who adopted our name?

Overall Pakistani are one of the most venerable people on earth, we have an alarming inflation rate, how

can an item of vegetable can cost 650 rupees/kg? when Pakistan is an agro-based country, and check the amount on your utility bills, plus the huge level of taxes of thing of everyday use.

"From Education you can change the situation", some people say, however I doubt, because those people forgot or done it purposefully not to mention "in an ideal society" not in a society where one can't even

have a right to vote. We are educated, what change that education brought to us, except for becoming a little more Anglo Indian.

Certainly, our generation is at loss, I don't question their abilities but direction of the energies. English is just a language not a criterion to judge, like this wearing revealing or western clothes doesn't make a difference. Similarly, there's less or no opportunities for the talent, sadly but there's no value of the Educational Degree in the real world, the meagre pay scale of such a devalued currency, am myself unemployed I live on my brother's and father's money, I fancy what if I have learned embroidery, at least I could own a business.

With all misfortune came the viscosity of corrupt and unjust, dear reader you know what is hidden in criticism, a lament and a heartbreak to witness our people descending in the dust of withdrawal and accepting the age of darkness.



Analysis

Munaza Kazmi



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

UK's Climate Finance Accelerator Roundtable Event Concludes Investor Roadshow, Announces CFA Phase III

PPA

KARACHI: The Climate Finance Accelerator Pakistan (CFA) concluded its two-day Investor Roadshow 2024 with a high-level roundtable discussion on February 20, 2024. The event, chaired by James Naughton, Head of Development Finance and Investment, DAI Global and co-chaired by Clementine Le Nagard, and Ellen Paton from UK Department for Energy Security and Net-Zero, brought together 20 influential leaders and experts from the banking, corporate, and development finance sectors to discuss the future of climate finance and low-carbon initiatives in Pakistan.

The roundtable discussion aimed to engage in a meaningful and result-oriented conversation about the challenges and opportunities in scaling climate finance in Pakistan. It also explored innovative strategies to make climate finance more accessible and viable, with a focus on transitioning the CFA into a sustaina-

ble, locally embedded institution within Pakistan by 2025.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Naughton highlighted the UK's interest in climate change and its commitment to supporting Pakistan in achieving a sustainable future.

"The UK is committed to working with Pakistan to address the challenges of climate change," said James. "A sustainable future is not only beneficial for Pakistan but also for the world. Through initiatives like the Climate Finance Accelerator, we can create innovative solutions that will benefit Pakistan and contribute to global efforts to combat climate change."

Khurram Lalani, Team Lead of the CFA Programme, emphasized the role of the CFA as a key platform for climate mitigation projects in Pakistan. He highlighted the importance of the programme in fostering innovation and creating bankable projects that contribute to Pakistan's sustainable future.



"The Climate Finance Accelerator Programme is at the forefront of creating innovative solutions for Pakistan's future," said Khurram Lalani. "Through our efforts, we aim to support climate mitigation projects that not only reduce carbon emissions but also create long-term financial viability for Pakistan."

The roundtable discussion concluded with the announcement of the launch of CFA Phase III in Pakistan in April 2024. The new phase of the programme aims to build on the success of the previous phases and further strengthen Paki-

stan's capacity to address climate change through innovative financing mechanisms. The Climate Finance Accelerator Roundtable event underscored the CFA's commitment to fostering practical solutions and long-term strategies for low-carbon, mitigation projects in Pakistan. It highlighted the importance of collaboration between the UK and Pakistan in addressing climate change and emphasized the role of innovative financing mechanisms in achieving a sustainable future.

Rector NUTECH Lt Gen Moazzam Ejaz unveils the achievements & Future Strategies

PPA

ISLAMABAD: In a highly anticipated media interaction, the Rector of the National University of Technology (NUTECH), Lt Gen Moazzam Ejaz, HI(M) (Retd), highlighted the institution's visionary approach towards quality education, skills development, and future expansion plans.

Leading journalists gathered to witness Rector NUTECH emphasize the paramount importance of quality education and skills development for students, ensuring they contribute high-quality products to the market.

Rector NUTECH expressed a keen interest in fostering strong industry-academia linkages, recognizing the pivotal role they play in shaping a dynamic educational environment.



During the session, Rector NUTECH adeptly addressed questions from journalists, demonstrating a commitment to transparency and open communication.

Highlighting the innovative spirit at NUTECH, the Rector showcased groundbreaking inventions from the NUTECH incubation center, including a low-cost ventilator and a 3D printer,

exemplifying the institution's dedication to cutting-edge technology and research.

In a significant announcement, Rector NUTECH revealed that the university has secured a license to send skilled labour to foreign countries, a testament to NUTECH global outlook and commitment to contributing skilled professionals on the international stage.

The media interaction provided valuable insights into NUTECH's future strategy, its dedication to quality education, and the exciting developments in the form of a new campus construction in the Smart City. NUTECH remains at the forefront of innovation, preparing students for success in an ever-evolving global landscape.

IOM organizes Govt of Pakistan's visit Kenya to explore Inter-Agency Coordination Frameworks

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Khushal Khan, Additional Secretary, Internal and Foreigners' Security at the Ministry of Interior (MOI) Pakistan, presents a token of appreciation to Mr. Raymond Omolo, Principal Secretary, Internal Security and National Administration at the Ministry of Interior, Kenya. [Photo Credits: Ministry of Interior Kenya/2024]

A high-level delegation from the Government of Pakistan (GOP), in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Pakistan and IOM Kenya, embarked on a comprehensive study visit to Kenya from 22 to 26 January 2024. The purpose of the visit was to exchange information and knowledge about border management, specifically on developing and operationalizing inter-agency coordination frameworks. The study visit drew upon Kenya's proven successes and best practices in migration and border management and provided GOP firsthand insights on effective national and regional coopera-



tion frameworks on border management.

Led by Mr. Khushal Khan, Additional Secretary Internal and Foreigners Security, Ministry of Interior (MOI) Pakistan, the delegation from Pakistan included participants from the MOI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).

The delegation gained valuable insights into Kenya's strategies for effective immigration and border governance through facilitated exchanges of knowledge and experiences during meetings with Kenya's Border Management Secretariat, responsible for managing border operations at a technical and operational level.

Furthermore, the delegation visited

three significant border crossing points of Kenya—the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi; Namanga One Stop Border Post, Namanga; and Kilindini Seaport, Mombasa. These site visits provided the delegation with firsthand insight into the operational aspects of border management and allowed them to observe the joint operations of all agencies involved in the respective border crossing points.

Reflecting on the visit, Mr. Khushal Khan outlined the importance of the study visit to Kenya and highlighted the valuable insights gained into Kenya's inter-agency coordination frameworks, such as the establishment of the Border Control Operations and Coordination Committee (BCOCC), which aims to bring stakeholders together in managing border operations for the country. "The learnings during this visit will inform Pakistan's efforts to strengthen immigration and border governance in Pakistan. We extend our sincere appreciation to IOM Pakistan and IOM Kenya for facilitating the experience," expressed Mr. Khushal Khan

Sarfraz Malik received excellence award

PNP

ISLAMABAD: British Council Pakistan, Amanda Ingram, Country Exams presented award and congratulated Managing Director of the Gold Partner's IELTS Institute SLS College Sarfraz Malik. MD SLS has received an award of Excellence and a certificate on highest volume in IELTS on IELTS Partners Meet 2023-24 held at Islamabad for consecutive 5 years.

Bank of Punjab announced financial results

PPA

LAHORE: The Board of Directors of The Bank of Punjab (BOP) convened on February 20, 2024, to review and approve the Bank's annual audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2023.

In reflecting on the Bank's financial performance, the Board commended the Management team for delivering remarkable results despite the challenging macroeconomic environment. The Bank's performance remained steadfastly in line with its strategic business plan, garnering recognition from stakeholders and market evaluators alike.

In the year 2023, The Bank of Punjab was honored with numerous local and international awards and accreditations, underscoring its commitment to excellence.

Despite economic challenges, BOP managed to enhance its risk profile and raise ADT-1 and Tier-1 capital aggregating to Rs. 15.5 billion in 2023, indicative of market confidence in its financial strength. The Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) significantly improved to 18.37%, with a Leverage Ratio of 3.38%. In line with its Strategic Business Plan, emphasizing aggressive growth and CAPEX commitments in Information Technology & Digitalization, the Board proposed Cash Dividend of 10% for the Shareholders for the year ended December 31, 2023.

Engro Fertilizers welcomes gas tariff revision as a step in the right direction

PPA

KARACHI: Engro Fertilizers welcomes the fact that the government has taken a bold first step by removing the subsidy for fertilizer manufacturers that get their gas from the SNGPL network, which represents 60% of all fertilizer manufacturing capacity.

They have done that by increasing the feed stock prices from PKR 580/mmbtu to PKR 1,597/mmbtu, almost a 300% increase in the cost of producing fertilizer.

While this is a step in the right direction, the battle is half won, as the remaining 40% of fertilizer manufacturing capacity that is on the Mari network, is still on the subsidized price of PKR 580/mmbtu.

Pakistan's current financial position is distressed, it is in a debt crisis, with the debt-to-GDP ratio already above 70 percent and more than USD 27 billion of foreign debt to be repaid by November 2024. The country cannot afford further fiscal pressures or half measures that do not go all the way in solving Pakistan's problems.

Israeli advance on Rafah City would have 'dire humanitarian consequences': UN

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: An extension of Israel's military operation in Rafah, where over a million internally displaced Palestinians have been forced to shelter, will have "dire humanitarian consequences," according to the UN Senior Humanitarian Coordinator for Gaza, Sigrid Kaag, the coordinator, reiterated Secretary-General António Guterres's concern that such an operation at present time would be potentially disastrous for innocent civilians.

"There are more than a million people crammed in Rafah. It's not intended for a million people in shelters, in random sort of plastic sheeted constructions. Health conditions are very worrisome," she told correspondents in Brussels after briefing European Union foreign ministers. She also voiced

deep concern over getting aid into the Gaza Strip and distributing it to those in need. "We have to acknowledge the fact that the security conditions, separate from military operations, due to what is called self-distribution by desperate civilians, but also looting and criminalization, is hampering efforts by the humanitarian community...to deliver assistance to the people that actually need it," she said. Also on Monday, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, visited the Gaza Strip, where he met with internally displaced families. He also met with NGO and UN personnel to see the challenges they face first hand, including the breakdown of law and order which is impacting the distribution of humanitarian supplies. "It's clear that more needs to be done," UN

Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told correspondents in New York at the regular press briefing. "The UN needs the tools to deliver on the ground, including the need for Israel to allow entry of items critical to UN operations and to improve deconfliction," he added. Intense Israeli bombardment from air, land and sea continues across much of the war-torn enclave, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Widespread ground operations and heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups also continue to be reported, especially in Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, OCHA said in a flash update on Monday. Between 17 and 19 February, dozens of rock-



ets were also reportedly fired by armed Palestinians toward Israel, it added. Furthermore, the Israeli military operation in the Nasser Hospital complex in Khan Younis have continued, OCHA said, noting that on Sunday, the UN and the Palestine Red Crescent Society evacuated 14 patients. Negotiations are ongoing for the evacuation of the remaining patients. According to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), over

180 patients and 15 doctors and nurses remain inside the hospital. "The hospital is still experiencing an acute shortage of food, basic medical supplies, and oxygen. There is no tap water and no electricity, except a backup generator maintaining some lifesaving machines," WHO said. UN agencies on Monday warned of a steep rise in malnutrition among children and pregnant and breastfeeding women, posing a grave threat to health. The situation is especially serious in north Gaza, which has been almost completely cut off from aid for weeks, and where one in six children under the age of two is acutely malnourished. The situation is not much better in the southern Gaza Strip the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO and the World Food Programme (WFP), said in a new report. In Rafah, where aid has been more

available, five per cent of children under two are acutely malnourished. "This is clear evidence that access to humanitarian aid is needed and can help prevent the worst outcomes," the agencies said, reiterating the call to protect Rafah from the threat of intensified military operations. OCHA also reported further violent incidents in the West Bank over the weekend, claiming both Israeli and Palestinian lives.

On 16 February, two Israeli men were shot and killed in southern Israel, and four others including a child were injured, by a Palestinian man from Shu'fat refugee camp in East Jerusalem. The Palestinian man was then shot and killed by an armed Israeli civilian. On Sunday, Israeli forces killed two Palestinian men in Tulkarm Refugee camp, during an exchange of fire with a Palestinian

man whose body was later withheld by Israeli forces from being handed over. The second fatality was an unarmed Palestinian who was reportedly killed by an Israeli army sniper while standing on the rooftop of his house, OCHA said. During the same period, 12 Israelis, including four members of Israeli forces, were killed and 80 injured in conflict-related incidents in the same areas, according to OCHA. Meanwhile, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is holding a hearing concerning an advisory opinion on the Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The advisory, non-binding, opinion on the occupation was requested by the General Assembly in December 2022.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
60,464.24	60,459.74
Day's High	Day's Low
61,237.51	60,420.83
Index Value	Change
7,683,199,468	+4.50
Percentage	Time
+0.01%	20 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,719.21	-9.29
Percentage	Time
-0.12%	20 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,535.73	-92.26
Percentage	Time
-0.24%	20 Feb, 1:06 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,363.61	-106.77
Percentage	Time
-0.28%	20 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181	183
Bahrain Dinar	743.32	751.32
Canadian Dollar	207	209
China Yuan	38.89	39.29
Danish Krone	40.38	40.78
Euro	300	303
Hong Kong Dollar	35.74	36.09
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	902.41	911.41
Malaysian Ringgit	58.6	59.2
New Zealand \$	171.68	173.68
Norwegians Krone	26.43	26.73
Omani Riyal	725.96	733.96
Qatari Riyal	76.76	77.46
Saudi Riyal	74.35	75.1
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	26.53	26.83
Swiss Franc	316.9	319.4
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08
U.A.E Dirham	76.15	76.9
UK Pound Sterling	350.5	354
US Dollar	279.7	282.25

Azerbaijani Ambassador advocates for expanded flights, affordable energy partnership at LCCI

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farha dov emphasized Azerbaijan's strong commitment to fostering bilateral trade relations with Pakistan during his speech at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI). He highlighted the commencement of direct flights between the two countries since last year by AZAL and PIA, outlined wishes to expand flight connectivity, ultimately aiming for daily flights from various cities. The Ambassador stressed the key role of the private sector in driving economic ties.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar extended a warm welcome to the Ambassador, and acknowledged the enduring diplomatic, historical, and cultural ties between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

Ambassador Khazar Farhadov expressed optimism regarding the significant increase in trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, attributed to the introduction of direct flights. He noted a substantial rise in the number



of Pakistani students studying in Azerbaijan, underscoring the importance of private sector engagement in fostering robust economic ties.

The Ambassador emphasized the need for

market exploration, partnerships, and reciprocal investments between Pakistan and Azerbaijan, citing successful trade relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey as a model. He high-

lighted Azerbaijan's position as a key international transport corridor and said that Azerbaijan's Socar Trading company provides LNG to Pakistan.

Ambassador stressed the importance of people-to-people contact and the accessibility of the Azerbaijani Embassy, expressing Azerbaijan's consideration in participating in possible joint projects also under Pakistan's SIFC.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar underscored Azerbaijan's strategic significance in the crossroad between Asia and Europe and emphasized on its prime location and abundant natural resources, which position it as a linchpin in regional trade and transportation networks.

Drawing attention to Pakistan's Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Kashif Anwar encouraged Azerbaijani investors to explore investment opportunities across sectors such as defense, agriculture, minerals, IT, and energy. He also lauded the Government of Punjab's initiatives to improve the business environment through streamlined processes at Business Facilitation Centers.

Lavish brunch

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Tariq Saeed hosted a lavish brunch in the honour of friends at Kitchen Cuisine Islamabad.



Spokesman photo by Raja Farid

CCP approves acquisition of Fauji Cereals Business by Fauji Foods Limited

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the acquisition of M/s Fauji Foundation's Fauji Cereals Business by M/s Fauji Foods Limited. The Fauji Foundation, established as a charitable trust for the welfare of ex-servicemen and their families, submitted a pre-merger application to the CCP under Section 11 of the Competition Act, 2010.

The proposed transaction involves the acquisition of the Fauji Cereals Business by M/s Fauji Foods Limited through a Business Transfer Agreement. M/s Fauji Foods Limited is a publicly listed company incorporated in Pakistan, primarily focused on the production and sale of dairy and allied products. CCP's assessment of the

pre-merger application indicated that there were no overlaps between the merging parties in the areas of business activities such as Breakfast Cereals and Wheat, Barley & Porridge. Therefore, the CCP concluded that market conditions will remain unchanged post-transaction, with no significant alteration to the competitive landscape in these product categories.

Following competition assessment, CCP concluded that the proposed transaction involves the acquisition of shares and does not suggest any substantial lessening of competition or the creation or strengthening of a dominant position in the relevant market. Restructuring will ensure the Breakfast Cereal business is consolidated under one arm and result in future profitability.

ICCI and RIUJ vow to work together to promote the economic interests of Pakistan

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) leading a delegation, visited the Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists (RIUJ) and congratulated the newly elected President Tariq Ali Virk, Secretary General Asif Bashir Chaudhry and other office bearers of the Union.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Bakhtawari, President ICCI said that the journalistic community has an important role in guiding the society and highlighting the economic potential of the country and added that ICCI would work with RIUJ to promote the business and economic interests of Pakistan.

Tariq Ali Virk, President, Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists said that the RIUJ and ICCI will continue to work together to resolve the key issues of the business community and create a conducive business environment in the country.

Afzal Butt, President, Federal Union of Journalists said that they enjoy very



friendly relations with ICCI which has always supported them in promoting the cause of their community.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that a hospital should be built in Islamabad for the business community and journalists to provide them free medical treatment. Anwar Raza, President, National Press Club Islamabad said that ICCI is maintaining close relations with the journalistic commu-

nity and hoped that journalists and the business community would work together to promote trade and exports of the country.

Asif Bashir Chaudhry, Secretary General of RIUJ said that his union's friendship with ICCI spans many decades and hoped that this good tradition will be continued in the future.

Secretary National Press Club Khalil Ahmed Raja and Secretary Finance Nayar Ali also spoke on the occasion.

NKATI Chief demands rollback of gas tariff hike, warns of SMEs Collapse

PPA

KARACHI: Faisal Moiz Khan, President of the North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI), has condemned the significant increase in gas tariffs by the caretaker government, deeming it disastrous for industries and a serious threat to the economy.

In a statement, Faisal Moiz demanded the government to immediately reverse the recent hike in gas rates and to establish gas rates through consultations with stakeholders, aiming to alleviate the burden on industrial produc-

tion costs. He warned that failure to do so would result in the destruction of industries, particularly SMEs, and adversely impact exports.

"The industrial sector is already grappling with substantial challenges stemming from the continuous escalation in electricity and gas tariffs. The exorbitant costs of electricity and gas have become increasingly unbearable for businesses. This has rendered exporters less competitive in global markets due to soaring production expenses, jeopardizing their market share," he emphasized.

Land Mafia is detrimental to investments & industrialization: Atif Ikram Sheikh

PPA

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that land mafia in Sindh has discouraged investments into industries of the province; and, damaged the image of Pakistan as an investment destination. Law & order is the lifeline of investment, industrial, trade, logistics, commercial and economic activities, he added.

It is pertinent to note that Mr. Riffat Mukhtar Raja, Inspector General of Sindh Police, visited FPCCI Head Office in Karachi along with top leadership of Sindh Police; including, Mr. Khadim Hussain Rind, Additional IG Karachi; Syed Pir Muhammad Shah, DIG Establishment; Mr. Iqbal Dara, DIG Traffic and Syed Asad Raza, DIG South and Syed Ali Asif, Additional IG Admin. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP



FPCCI, explained that we can unleash an industrial revolution in Sindh, if we can curb and eliminate land mafia from the province. He added that, due to criminal activities of the land mafia, new industrial areas are not attracting industries; and, instead, the industrial plots in established industrial areas in Karachi have become so expensive that they are now available at PKR. 400 million per acre.

No new industry can afford these expensive plots and expansion of the existing ones is also hampered, he added.

Mr. Zaki Aijaz, VP FPCCI, stressed that the business, industry and trade community is worried about the safety and security of goods transportation routes from Karachi to up country as there are widespread theft and security issues both ways; first, transporting imported raw materials from Karachi to other provinces and then transporting back the finished goods to Karachi for export.

Mr. Riffat Mukhtar Raja, IG Sindh Police, proposed that committees need to be formed under deputy commissioners to address the matters of land grabbing; and, representatives of all stakeholders from governmental institutions; law enforcement agencies and private-sector should be part of the committees.

PTA, NCRC, UNICEF and Telenor Pakistan join hands to safeguard children online

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), in collaboration with the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Telenor Pakistan, held a launching ceremony for the parental guide titled "Safeguarding your Child in the Digital Age-Guide for Caregivers & Policy Brief on Child Online Protection" at the Telenor 345 Headquarters. Representatives from the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom (MoIT&T), PTA, Telenor, NCRC, and UNICEF Pakistan also graced the ceremony with their presence.

Caretaker Minister for IT & Telecom, Dr. Umar Saif was the chief guest of this occasion. During his

address, Dr. Umar Saif emphasized the critical need to safeguard children online in today's digital age. He stressed that it is the collective responsibility of society to not only establish a secure online environment for children but also to proactively educate and support them in navigating the digital landscape safely.

While Chairman PTA, Major General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman reiterated PTA's dedication to promoting a secure online environment, with a particular emphasis on safeguarding the youth and children of the nation.

Speaking on the occasion, Khuram Ashfaq, CEO of Telenor Pakistan, said, "With a staggering statistic revealing that 1 in 3 internet users worldwide is a child, it's evident that safeguarding their online experience is paramount."

National Health Summit 2024-Dental Hygiene

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) organized the National Health Summit 2024-Dental Hygiene at Chamber House here on Tuesday. President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi was the chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Summit, Dr. Arif Alvi said that the entire nation had set a precedent in the world with their collective efforts during Covid-19 pandemic and stressed that such a display of unity was critical to address disconcerting issues in education, health and economic sectors.

The president said that during Covid-19 pandemic when the deadly wave was hitting the globe, Pakistan emerged as the third best performing country in the world to avert the damages in health and economic sectors.

He said it was all possible due to the collective efforts and cooperation of the people and all stakeholders who displayed unison in their efforts to ward off the spread of the pandemic.

"That precedent has carved a path for the future which can guide us in our endeavours to overcome the contemporary challenges," he opined.

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq in his keynote address said President Dr Arif Alvi was the first head of state who visited the chamber's building and encouraged the business community for their involvement in different initiatives taken for the health of the general public.

He said almost 90 per cent of people could not afford the expensive treatment of dentistry, adding the dental related diseases could be avoided with just due care and prevention.

He said the chamber was making all possible measures to extend better health facilities in every nook and cranny of the Rawalpindi division, under which it had arranged mobile dental units for diagnosing chronic disease caused by bad oral hygiene.

Besides, it was carrying out water testing and data collection in 74 union councils of the Rawalpindi division, he added.

RCCI Group leader Sohail Altaf said,

Hendricks and bowlers unite to hand Multan Sultans second win of HBL PSL 9

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Multan Sultans bagged their second consecutive win at the HBL PSL 9 after they defeated Islamabad United by five wickets at Multan Cricket Stadium on Tuesday night. After restricting Islamabad United to 144 in 20 overs, courtesy of impressive bowling by Mohammad Ali and Abbas Afridi, Sultans managed to chase the target in the final over on the back of a dogged half-century by Reeza Hendricks.

Multan Sultans' decision to field first paid dividends as Islamabad United lost two early wickets. Carrying on his form from the previous game, left-arm pacer David Willey once again provided the first breakthrough for Multan Sultans as he took out opening batter Alex Hales for just two runs in the third over.

Drama ensued in the following over as Colin Munro was caught on the first ball but the bowler overstepped, awarding the Islamabad opening batter a second chance. Only three deliveries later, Ali redeemed himself as he rattled Munro's (8, 13b, 1x4) stumps.

The fourth batter in, Jordan Cox, took charge from the get-go as he announced himself on the crease with a maximum against Willey on just the fourth ball he faced. In the next over, he produced a boundary against Olly Stone to help Islamabad United end

the powerplay at 32 for two.

Salman Ali Agha and Cox led the recovery for Islamabad. The two took on right-arm pacer Abbas Afridi, amassing 26 runs off his first two overs, as runs started to flow for the team after the powerplay. Khushdil Shah's misjudgment in the deep cost two catches – in the seventh and ninth overs – as the third-wicket partnership grew to mount pressure on the home team.

Leg-spinner Usama Mir struck in the 12th over to cut short the third-wicket stand after he trapped Cox leg-before. The English batter, who had reviewed the on-field umpire's decision, walked back for a 41 on 28 on the back of two boundaries and as many maximums after the DRS showed three reds.

Azam Khan could only manage to produce 13 from 10, including a four and a six, before he was caught by Willey at long-on, awarding Usama his second wicket of the night. Imad Wasim bagged a three-ball duck to bring Islamabad United down to 105-5 in 14.4 overs.

Skipper Shadab Khan joined Salman on the crease. The pair added 35 runs for the sixth-wicket stand before Shadab (11, 9b, 1x4) fell to Abbas. A ball later, Abbas got his third wicket of the night after Salman (52, 43b, 3x4s, 2x6s) was caught by Khushdil.

Ali dismissed Faheem Ashraf and Ubaid Shah cheaply and Naseem Shah



was run out in the final over as Islamabad United finished at 144 in 20 overs.

Ali, bagging three wickets at the expense of just 19 runs, was awarded player of the match for his crucial bowling effort. Abbas too picked up three wickets, while Usama had two to his name. Willey returned with one scalp as well.

Defending 145, Islamabad United got off to a strong start as Naseem shattered opening batter Dawid Malan's middle stumps, who had to return for a two-ball duck.

Reeza Hendricks joined Mohammad Rizwan in the center and the two successfully saw through Naseem's incredible new ball spell. They stitched a solid partnership yielding 71 runs to bring stability to the innings, until Rizwan (43, 33b, 6x4s, 2x6s) fell to his counterpart who had brought himself into the attack in the 11th over.

Yasir Khan made eight off 11 before he fell victim to Imad, courtesy of a magnificent relay catch by Cox and

Hales at deep midwicket.

Hendricks took on Shadab in the 17th over, smashing a six and two fours on three consecutive deliveries to complete his half-century whilst bringing his team closer to the target.

Shortly after, Tymal Mills struck to remove Hendricks (58, 46b, 6x4s, 1x6) and Naseem got Khushdil for just three runs in the penultimate over.

Iftikhar Ahmed (18 not out, 17b, 1x6) and Willey (7 not out, 6b, 1x4), facing Mills in the final over, completed the remaining four runs to finish the game for Multan Sultans, with one ball to spare.

Naseem was the best bowler for Islamabad United, picking up two wickets for 27 runs in four overs. Shadab, Imad and Mills had a wicket each.

Scores in brief

Multan Sultans beat Islamabad United by five wickets

Islamabad United 144 all out, 20 overs (Salman Ali Agha 52, Jordan Cox 41; Mohammad Ali 3-19, Abbas Afridi 3-33, Usama Mir 2-29)

Multan Sultans 145-5, 19.5 overs (Reeza Hendricks 58, Mohammad Rizwan 41; Naseem Shah 2-27)

Player of the match – Mohammad Ali (Multan Sultans)

Tomorrow's fixtures: Peshawar Zalmi v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore (2pm); Multan Sultans v Lahore Qalandars, Multan Cricket Stadium (7pm).



J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship gets underway on 23rd February

Tahir Amin Malik

The 10th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship presented by Zaman Family gets underway at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Club from the 23rd February to 3rd March 2024. This was stated by Hamid Zaman, Head of the Zaman Family in a press conference attended by Shaukat Javed, Convenor Golf of Lahore Gymkhana, Aayan Mumtaz, Bilal Zaman, Asim Zafar, Ayesha Hamid and Mrs Bela Azam.

This Championship is now in its 10th recurrence and Hamid Zaman stated that the J. A. Zaman Memorial Championship – a PGA and PGF-sanctioned tournament – has evolved to become one of the biggest golf tournaments nationwide with total prize money of Rs. 7.5 million. The tournament attracts the top golfing talent from across the country and is one of the most anticipated matchups of the golfing calendar in Pakistan. Shaukat Javed said that the salient features of this 2024 edition include:

- Top 100 ranked golf professionals of Pakistan will compete in the Main Draw from the 29th February to 3rd March making it one of the most competitive fields in golf across the country.
- The championship also includes



nationally recognized golf amateur players who compete for glory and honors in victory.

• Total Prize Money of Rs. 7.5 million and a chance to win a Haval on a Hole-in-One makes the Championship one of the top purses in Pakistan golf.

• Eight categories of players including juniors, ladies, professionals, senior professionals, Junior Professionals, amateurs, veteran golfers and ladies will compete in

the tournament.

• Competing golf players add upto 500 plus number.

The Championship is held in the memory of Mr. J. A. Zaman; an iconic symbol who was a man of infinite decorum and grace. He left behind an indelible impact of his entrepreneurial abilities and his passion for golf in particular. J. A. Zaman's family, which is the principal sponsor of this championship, is pleased

to make possible, with the gracious cooperation of the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Committee, such a prestigious event where, no doubt, only the best of the sport will be showcased.

Playing Arena & The Players: Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course is one of the oldest golf courses in Pakistan tracing its origin to the 19th Century. It is an 18 holes championship course, with a par 72 spread over 65 acres. It is a tree lined course demanding excellence and accuracy from start to finish.

The final round will take place on Sunday, 3rd March 2024 at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course, followed by the prize distribution which will be held at Golf Course Lawns at 3:30 pm. The Zaman Family will be hosts at the prize distribution ceremony.

Notable champions participating in the Championship are Professionals Ahmed Baig, Muhammed Matloob, Muhammed Shahzad, Hamza Amin, Muhammed Alam, Mihaj Maqsood and prominent amateurs Qasim Ali Khan, Salman Jehangir and Muhammed Shoaib. As for ladies, Parkha Ijaz and Rimsha Ijaz who enjoy a standing in World Golf Rankings will also be showing their skills in the ladies section.

Naseem qualifies for pre quarter round of Asian Men Snooker



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Muhammad Naseem Akhtar have qualified for the pre quarter round of the ACBS Asian Men Snooker Championship 2024 at Doha, Qatar. In the day 4th Matches, Pankaj Advani (India) beat Muhammad Naseem Akhtar (Pak) 4-3 (66-54, 71-64, 71-85, 28-74, 8-75, 69-21, 75-57) and Awais Ullah Munir (Pak) beat Ziyad Alqabbani (KSA) 4-0 (66-24(57), 79-0(75), 96-11(58), 72-10).

National U-16 One-Day Cup to Commence on Today

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The National U16 One Day Cup 2023-24 is set to kick off on 21 February across three cities, Karachi, Faisalabad and Lahore. The 16 regional teams are divided into three pools with Pool A and B comprising five teams each while Pool C has six teams. In the 50-over tournament, Pool A games will be played in Karachi. The Pool B teams are stationed in Faisalabad while the Pool C games will take place in Lahore. The Pool games will end on 29 February and will be followed by a Triangular stage, set to take place in Faisalabad from 3 March to 7 March. The final of the tournament will be played on 9 March at Bohranwali Ground in Faisalabad.

A total of PKR 0.93 million will be distributed at the end of the tournament with the winner of the tournament bagging a prize money of PKR 0.5 million, while the runners-up will be awarded PKR 250,000. Moreover, the player of the tournament, Bestseller batter, best bowler, best wicket-keeper, best fielder and player of the final match will get PKR 30,000 each.

ITF Pakistan Zainab Ali Naqvi Memorial World Jr Cship kicks off

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The ITF Pakistan Zainab Ali Naqvi Memorial World Junior Championship Leg-2 kicked off here at PTF-SDA Tennis Complex on Tuesday, in memory of the late Zainab Ali Naqvi, an upcoming junior tennis player, who tragically passed away last week in Islamabad. A total of 48 players boys and girls from Kazakhstan, Turkey, USA, Hongkong, China, Russia, Belarus, Uzbekistan, South Korea, Romania, Switzerland, Sri Lanka, Holland and Thailand were participating in the Championships. As many as 30 Pakistani boys and girls were also participating in the Championships.

A ceremony was held at PTF Complex today to dedicate Court No-1 'Zainab Ali Naqvi Court' of the Complex in memory of the late Zainab Ali Naqvi. The dedication ceremony was graced by Zainab's parents, who had especially flown in from Karachi. Also in attendance were Senator Salim Saifullah Khan, Ex-President-PTF, Aisam ul Haq Qureshi, President of PTF, and a large number of foreign and local players' parents, coaches and tennis lovers. Senator Salim Saifullah Khan and Aisam ul Haq paid rich tribute to the young and talented Zainab and expressed their condolences and deep sympathies to her parents. In Boys Singles 1st Round: Xiyuan Guo (CHN) beat Papangkorn (THA) 6-4, 6-2; Doruk Elbirlik (TUR) beat Haider Ali Rizwan (PAK) 6-2, 6-4; Jacob Shen (HKG) beat Salar Khan (PAK) 6-1, 6-0; Ahmed Nael Qureshi (PAK) beat Ye Chan Choi (KOR) 6-1, 6-1; Ahtesham Humayun (PAK) beat Howard Chan (HKG) 6-3, 6-1; Hamza Aasim (PAK) beat Jun An (KOR) 6-4, 6-2; Amir Mazari (PAK) bt Nuran Wikramasinge (SRI) 6-3, 2-6, 6-2; Kaigaoge Kang (CHN) beat Akmal Arabdjanov (UZB) 6-0, 6-1; Bilal Asim (PAK) beat Par Chandraghola (THA) 6-1, 6-3; Shijie Chen (CHN) beat Asad Zaman (PAK) 6-0, 6-1; Ilya Kryukov (RUS) beat Ju Hun Choo (KOR) 6-2, 6-1; Dong Hyeon Euom (KOR) beat Ege Avci (TUR) 6-1, 6-1.

Qadir Khan and Faaz Ullah Shine in Khansortium Karachi Region Senior Inter District Cricket Tournery

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches decided in the Khansortium Karachi Region Senior Inter District Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The highlights of the days play Brilliant Century by Qadir Khan 121 and deadly bowling by off spinner Faaz ullah 5/39.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi.

Scores in Brief:

In the first match of the day at East-

ern Star Ground Zone-VII Whites beat Zone-III Greens by 142 runs. Zone-VII Whites 287 allout in 43.3 overs. Qadir Khan 121 17x4 1x6, Aftab Khan 44, Majeed Khan 41, Najeeb ur Rehman 25. Khurram 2/47, Omar Zaman 2/56, Roman Ali 2/50.

Zone-III Greens 145 all-out in 33.3 overs. Haider Bangash 76 9x4, 3x6. Fawad Khan 3/29, Aftab Khan 3/42.

In the 2nd Match Zone-V Whites beat Zone-I Greens by 7 wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Zone-I Greens 164 all-out in 40.1 overs. Akbar Babar 51 5x4. 1x6, Hafiz Hasan 26,

Zain uddin 25. Muhammad Shadman (sla) 4/40, Rumail Ahmed 2/26.

Zone-V Whites 168/3 in 33.1 overs. Hasan Khan 44, Nabel Wahid 36, Shah Raza 33, Hassan Shah 24 not out.

In the 3rd Match Zone-II Blues beat Zone-I Greens by 51 runs at Young Fighter Ground. Zone-II Blues 218 all-out in 39 overs. Ubaid Khan 72 12x4 1x6. Muhammad Sabir 29, Syed Faaz ullah 20. Zohaib Masood Khan 4/39, Ikram Khan 3/42.

Zone-I Greens 167 all-out in 39.5 overs. Malik Zainul Abidin 66 11x4,

Hafiz Asad Baig 29. Syed Faaz ullah (ob) 5/38, Hasan Bin Shahab (ob) 3/41, Mehmood Jamshed 2/29.

In the fourth match Zone-IV Reds beat Zone-V Greens by 36 runs. Zone-IV Reds 236/9 in 45 overs. Uzaid Ali 49 6x4 1x6, Bilal Mirza 40, Rao Abdul Rehman 38, Ahsan 36, Israr ul Haq 30. Noman Ali 3/39, M. Altaf Khan 2/18, Faiz Ahmed 2/36.

Zone-V Greens 200 all out in 44.1 overs. Shahzaib Khan 49, Kashan Naqvi 41, Muhammad Zahid 34. Kareem ullah (mf) 4/33, Israrul Haq 2/34.

Girona La Liga title bid further dented in Athletic Bilbao defeat

Surprise La Liga title contenders Girona suffered another dent in a 3-2 defeat by Athletic Bilbao on Monday, with Alex Berenguer striking twice for the Basque side.

After leaders Real Madrid were held to a draw by Rayo Vallecano on Sunday, the Catalan minnows, second, hoped to cut the six-point gap but lost in a gripping clash at San Mames.

Michel Sanchez's side are now only two points ahead of champions Barcelona and seven in front of fifth-place Athletic, chasing a top-four spot.

Girona have failed to win any of their last three league matches.

After Berenguer sent Athletic ahead, Viktor Tsygankov levelled for Girona.

However, Berenguer and Inaki



Williams quickly netted for the hosts and although Eric Garcia pulled one back, Girona could not find the equaliser.

"We lacked a bit of determination in the final third ... I

think the second half was good," said Girona coach Michel, who watched from a box as he was banned from the touchline.

"We have to continue, we can't ask the team to always win and

we have to keep fighting to stay up there."

Athletic took the lead inside two minutes after Girona playmaker Alex Garcia played a dangerous ball across the face of his own area.

Berenguer intercepted and drilled home inside the near post, catching out Paulo Gazzaniga.

Girona lacked their usual zip, still chastened from last weekend's heavy 4-0 thrashing by Real Madrid.

The Catalans pulled level at the start of the second half when Tsygankov turned home Ivan Martin's cross.

Girona did not keep parity for long with Berenguer netting his second following another Girona mistake.

Miguel Gutierrez dallied on the ball and was robbed by Gorka Guruzeta, who crossed for Berenguer to finish.

Girona's defence was all at sea as Inaki Williams netted Athletic's third.

Eric Garcia headed home from Alex Garcia's cross to give Girona the chance to rescue a point.

They almost did deep in stoppage time but Athletic defender Dani Vivian brilliantly headed John Solis' shot off the line to safety.

"The reality has always been that our objective was to reach the Champions League, we're still there," Eric Garcia told DAZN.

"We have to continue, we can't fool ourselves – we've come from a tricky run of games."

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: A view of debris of the demolished Chambers of Lawyers at F-8 Football ground after the Supreme Court ultimatum, which was till 01-05-2021, as the Workers of Anti encroachments.



Photo: Online

President for preventive care to address health-related challenges

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday stressed the need for adopting preventive care to address health-related challenges, especially oral diseases, in Pakistan, adding that over 90 per cent of dental issues could be prevented by adopting healthy habits. The president said that a resource-constrained country like Pakistan could not afford to provide curative care to such a large population, however, creating awareness could help reduce the disease burden on the country's health sector.

The president expressed these views while addressing the National Health Summit organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). Pres-

ident for preventive care to address health-related challenges. Speaking on the occasion, the president highlighted the importance of physical hygiene, he said that from the Islamic teachings, it stood proved that personal hygiene was linked with spiritual purity. He said that poor dental health could lead to other problems, affecting the overall well-being of individuals. He said about 90 per cent dental cases could be cured if prevention habits were developed by the people including regular brushing of teeth, similar was the case with communicable diseases.

The president mentioned Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka where the literacy rate among the children was higher than Pakistan. He also cited

the precedent of China that lifted millions of its people out of poverty by focusing on health and education sectors. "The State can show the path but it is the responsibility of all stakeholders of the society to share the responsibility by addressing issues in the education and health sectors," he added. President Alvi further stressed upon focusing on priorities and continuity of policies which required public involvement. About 24 percent of the population in the country was suffering from the mental stress due to various reasons which should be addressed comprehensively, he said, adding that awareness about the child and drug abuse should be created through different mediums. The president also called for

morality-based principles in the world which was overwhelmed by the vested interests and reiterated the removal of disparity in distribution of wealth and accumulation of resources in fewer hands. Earlier, speaking on the occasion, RCCI President Saqib Rafique said President Dr Arif Alvi was the first head of state who visited the chamber's building and encouraged the business community for their involvement in different initiatives taken for the health of the general public. He said almost 90 per cent of people could not afford the expensive treatment of dentistry, adding the dental related diseases could be avoided with just due care and prevention. He said the chamber was making all possible measures to extend

better health facilities in every nook and cranny of the Rawalpindi division, under which it had arranged mobile dental units for diagnosing chronic disease caused by bad oral hygiene. Besides, it was carrying out water testing and data collection in 74 union councils of the Rawalpindi division, he added. Chairman RCCI Standing Committee on Health Dr Shimail Daud Arain stressed the need for creating awareness among the masses about oral health as around 90 percent of Pakistanis were suffering from dental-related diseases. RCCI Group leader Sohail Altaf said, "a strong economy guarantees the strong national defence that comes from political stability and consistency in policies."

GDA leaders demand judicial probe into alleged election rigging

Dastagir Bhatti

MORO(SINDH): Leaders of the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) have called for the establishment of a high-powered judicial commission to investigate alleged widespread rigging in the recent elections. The anti-PPP alliance, mobilizing against perceived irregularities in the polls, accused District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) of colluding to manipulate the outcome in favor of the PPP leadership, purportedly aiming to exploit the province's resources for personal gain.

Pir Sadderuddin Shah Rashidi, provincial chief of the Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) and central figure of the GDA, addressed a charged crowd in



Moro, demanding a judicial inquiry led by sitting Supreme Court justices to rectify the alleged electoral fraud. Rashidi appealed to Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Qazi Faez Essa, emphasizing the importance of restoring the stolen

mandate to ensure stability and democracy in Pakistan.

Calling for fresh elections nationwide, Rashidi stressed the need for transparency and accountability in the electoral process, advocating for a recount of votes in accord-

Sindh uncontested.

Ayaz Latif Palijo, chief of Qaumi Awami Tehreek and another GDA leader, accused Asif Ali Zardari and senior PPP figures of buying votes to secure power, condemning such tactics and advocating for the protection of Sindh's resources from further exploitation.

Palijo echoed the call for fresh elections overseen by judicial officers as a solution to the country's deepening crisis.

Dr. Safdar Abbasi, Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi, Liaquat Ali Jatoi, and other leaders reiterated their commitment to ongoing protests, announcing plans for a public gathering in Badin on February 26 under the supervision of Dr. Fehmi-da Mirza and Dr. Zulfikar Ali Mirza.

Here is the total number of Pakistanis imprisoned abroad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights that 23,456 Pakistanis are imprisoned across the world.

As per the details, a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights was presided over by Senator Waleed Iqbal, in which the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed the total number of Pakistani citizens behind bars at different prisons around the world. The officials briefed the sena-



tors that a total of 23,456 Pakistanis are imprisoned across the world out of which 15,587 have been convicted. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs added that there

are more than 7,000 under trial Pakistanis in different countries as their cases are being heard in courts of the respective countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials added that there are 12,156 Pakistani prisoners in Saudi Arabia, while the number of Pakistani prisoners in the United Arab Emirates is 5,292. They said that 706 Pakistanis are behind bars in India, 44 in the United States, and 330 in the United Kingdom.

The number of Pakistanis imprisoned in China's prisons is 400, while 811 Pakistani nationals are behind bars in Greece.

The officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also briefed the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights about Pakistan's

agreements with other countries for the exchange of prisoners.

They said that Pakistan have agreements with 11 countries including China, Azerbaijan, Iran, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates.

The Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights directed the officials to publish the details of prisoner transfer agreements on its website. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also been asked to formulate a uniform consular protection policy within 90 days.

Terrorist killed in DI Khan intelligence-based operation: ISPR

Adam Khan Wazir

DI KHAN: Security forces killed a terrorist in an exchange of fire during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dera Ismail (DI) Khan district on Tuesday, ARY News reported, quoting military's media wing.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces conducted the IBO in Dera Ismail Khan District based on the reported presence of terrorists.

"During the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists as a result of which terrorist Muhammad Sohail was killed," the ISPR said.

It added that he remained "actively involved in numerous terrorist activities, including target killing of innocent civilians". Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from him.

The ISPR further said that a sanitisation operation was under way to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. "Security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of



terrorism from the country," the ISPR said.

The operation comes amid a surge in terrorist activities across the country, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the outlawed militant group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022.

Aneeq Ahmed stresses national harmony, positivity

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed stressed the importance of reducing hate and delivering good news to foster trust and belief among the people.

Talking to PTV, he urged individuals from all walks of life, including political leaders and bureaucrats, to contribute to the country's development and prosperity.

He emphasized the need for a collective effort guided by ethical and religious values.

The minister said that the ministry made a significant reduction in the Hajj package for 2024, reducing the financial burden on pilgrims.

This reduction, from Rs 11,75,000 to Rs 10,75,000 marked the first time in the country's history that the upcoming Hajj had become cheaper than the previous year's Hajj, he



added. In addition to affordability, the minister highlighted improvements in Hajj facilities, including the introduction of short-duration Hajj, allowing pilgrims to return after completion in 22 days.

He also lauded the efforts of IT Minister Umar Saif in introducing an application providing comprehensive information for pilgrims, ensuring a seamless Hajj experience.

Ahmed mentioned initiatives to promote Pakistan's positive image, such as providing Pakistani women with white-colored 'Abayas' adorned with the flag of Pakistan.

ECP committee records statements of DROs, ROs

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) high-level committee formed to probe into allegations of former Rawalpindi Commissioner recorded statements of District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) of concerned constituencies, ARY News reported citing sources.

As per details, the committee led by a senior member of the ECP recorded statements of DROs and RO of 13 National Assembly constituencies and 26 provincial assembly constituencies of Rawalpindi division.

The sources privy to the development said that Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) also submitted the tran-



script of former Rawalpindi Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatha's presser, accusing ECP and Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa of involvement in the 'election rigging'.

The sources added that DROs and ROs have also submitted written statements to the committee.

The high-level committee has started the compilation of its report which would be submitted to the ECP on Wednesday.

Candidates for reserved seats asked to submit election expenses by tomorrow

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: All the candidates for reserved seats of female and minority in both national and provincial assemblies have been asked to submit their election expenses with concerned Returning Officer by February 21.

In a press statement issued on Tuesday, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has reminded all the candidates of reserved seats for women and minority whose names are included in Form 33 to submit their election expenses.

The last date for submission of election expense is February 21 and candidates are asked to submit Form C with concerned Returning Officer before expiry of last date.

In case of non-compliance

of election code of conduct, the notification regarding winner of the seats will not be issued, ECP warns.

According to Section 104 of the Election Act 2017, the list of reserved candidates has to be submitted by the contesting political parties before the elections.

"A candidate to a seat reserved for women or non-Muslims shall file the nomination papers on the Form on or before the last date fixed for filing of nomination papers for the election and the nomination papers shall, as nearly as possible, be scrutinized in the same manner as nomination papers of candidates on general seats are scrutinized under section 62," it stated.