



PTI demands 'constitutional right' to form govts in Centre, Punjab and KP

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Wednesday demanded its 'constitutional right' to form governments in Centre, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) due to public mandate given to Imran Khan-led party in general elections 2024. Taking to Twitter, PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that the country's future... (Details on Page 8)



Palestine Ministry condemns the Israeli attack on President Lula

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns the Israeli attack on the President of the Federal Republic of Brazil, Mr. Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, and considers it to fall within the framework of prejudices and positions. The Ministry expresses its deep support and appreciation for President Lula, as a friend of oppressed peoples and a supporter of international justice and peace and human values in the face of injustice... (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Called on

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Miracle Salt Collective Inc called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Mineral sector achieving new development goals under SIFC: PM

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said Pakistan's mineral sector, valued in billions of dollars, was achieving new heights of development under Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). He was talking to a delegation of Miracle Salt Collective Inc which called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here. During the meeting the prime minister hoped that the salt export from the country would increase after the signing of joint venture between Pakistan Mineral Development Cooperation (PMDC) and Miracle Salt. He said it will also further strengthen the trade ties with the U. S. "This joint venture is a manifestation of the fact that Pakistan has the most suitable destination for foreign investment," he added. He said Himalayan pink salt was the identity of Pakistan in all over the

world and its export in international markets will be a welcome sign. He said during its short tenure, the caretaker government took several steps to promote foreign direct investment and to facilitate the businesses in the country which yielded positive results. The delegation of Miracle Salt thanked the government, especially the Special Investment Facilitation Council for its cooperation with the company. They told the prime minister that after the formation of the company in Pakistan, it will be listed on major stock exchanges around the world, which will benefit the government of Pakistan and local investors. The delegation also apprised the prime minister about the plan of action prepared regarding economic improvement, education and health, and employment provision of the local population in the salt mining areas.

SJC proceedings against judges won't halt even after resignation, rules SC

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan on Wednesday ruled that the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) proceedings once initiated cannot be halted even after "resignation or retirement" of judges.

A five-member larger bench announced the verdict following the completion of hearings on the federal government's appeal against Supreme Court's judgment delivered in 2023 in Afia Sheharbano Zia's case.

The five-member bench, led by Justice Aminuddin Khan, presided over the case, which



saw a split decision with a ratio of 1-4, as Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi dissented from the majority judgment. The Supreme Court's decision

reinforces the autonomy of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) to pursue inquiries against judges, regardless of their resignation status.

In the short verdict today, the top court noted that it's the discretion of the SJC whether or not to proceed against a judge in a pending complaint. The SC said the detailed reasons for the verdict will be issued later.

During the hearings, Justice Musrat Hilali questioned the implications of a judge's resignation mid-proceedings. In response, Judicial Assistant Akram Sheikh underscored the council's independence from such resignations, citing the need for uninterrupted due process.

Meanwhile, Justice Hilali pointed out a similar scenario in India, where a judge's retirement during an inquiry did not

derail proceedings. Justice Irfan Saadat also questioned whether the absence of a notice from the council would terminate a reference against a judge.

Justice Jamal Khan Mandukhel stressed that addressing complaints against judges is not solely the responsibility of the council chairman but of the entire council, revealing a backlog of over 100 complaints awaiting resolution.

The top court in Afia Sheharbano Zia's case held that the judges who retire or resign do not fall within the ambit of Article 209 of the Constitution that determines misconduct of the superior court judges.

UNSC must take action to push for a ceasefire in Gaza: Chinese spokesperson



BEIJING: A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Wednesday that protracted Palestinian-Israeli conflict has resulted in a devastating humanitarian situation in Gaza and severely impacted regional peace and stability. The Security Council must take immediate action to push

for a ceasefire. This is a moral obligation that the Council cannot shy away from and a legal responsibility that the Council must assume, Mao Ning said during a regular briefing held here.

Even more so, this is a political requirement that the Council must fulfill in accordance with the Charter, she stressed.

The spokesperson said that Chinese side warned that the U. S. veto of a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) draft resolution pushes the situation in Gaza into a more dangerous one.

IHC disposes of pleas against elections results of Capital's 3 constituencies

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday sent the matter pertaining to the election results in three constituencies of Federal Capital to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and disposed of the petitions.

The court declared that the victory notifications of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) candidates in NA-46, 47 and 48 would remain suspended till the ECP's decision on the pending cases.

The IHC bench comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the intra court appeals (ICA) filed by independent candidates Barrister Shoab Shaheen, Aamer Mughal and Ali Bokhari Advocate.

During the course of proceedings, the ECP's counsel adopted the stance that the petitioners did not tell the facts to the bench. Forms 48 and 49 were also compiled from the Forms-47 and then the notifications were issued. He said that the returning officer had stated that he was not doing consolidation yet, and later, he summoned Shoab Shaheen but he did not appear.

Justice Miangul Hassan questioned that whether the Commission sought a clarification from the RO. The ECP lawyer said that the body had sought a report from RO till tomorrow. The court noted that the decisions were not taken on the applications pending with the ECP but the notifications were issued.

It said that it was conditioning the success notifications with the decisions of ECP on the pending applications. The court then disposed of the petitions with the above instructions. It said that the notifications for the victory of three candidates would remain suspended till the decisions of ECP.

SC dismisses plea against 2024 general elections

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Wednesday dismissed a petition seeking to annul the February 8, 2024 general elections and imposed a fine worth Rs 500,000 on petitioner for non-appearance.

A three-member bench presided over by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali, announced the verdict.

The order read, "The application for withdrawal of the petition is allowed and the case is dismissed as withdrawn with costs of five hundred thousand rupees which are directed to be paid equally to the Pakistan Bar Council and to the Supreme Court Bar Association within thirty days, failing which they be recovered from the petitioner as arrears of land revenue."

It said, "We trust that the government will be ensuring that the petitioner does not use the rank of a Brigadier or Ex or former Brigadier with his name."

The order said, "This petition has also consumed valuable court time, which is to be spent on deciding the cases of genuine litigants; not use the media for ulterior and nefarious purposes. The petitioner got prominent coverage and then the petition was abandoned and the petitioner left the country. Responsible media will undoubtedly want to disclose this order and the petitioner's conduct to redress the damage done."

It further stated, "The petitioner did not disclose the fact of being court martialled and mentions the rank which he held before being court martialled. He misused the rank which he had previously held in the Army which he could not do so. The petitioner must have used his rank to attract publicity and to ensure that the contents of his petition are widely broadcast in the media and published in the newspapers. And after having achieved such purpose, the petitioner immediately bought a ticket (on February 13, 2024) to catch a flight out of the country.

Maryam promises to uplift Punjab

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's nominated Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said the people of Punjab have given a clear mandate to the party and it would set record of people's service.

Talking to the media after the parliamentary party meeting, she said that the new government would have to work for women in Punjab besides giving loans to the youth.

She added there was no IT city in the whole country so the PML-N would make five IT centres where the youth of the country would be able to learn the modern technological use.

She also pledged to attract foreign investment besides working on the providing basic facilities to the people including clean water.

On the administration front, she vowed to work for the traffic system improvement, model police stations, police culture reforms, facilities for women and safe city projects. She said the death, marriage and car certificates would be available at the doorstep.

She said in 2015, Nawaz Sharif made the first health card in which there was never any complaint of corruption and the PTI's health card has given rise to a major story of corruption.

Maryam Nawaz said the new candidates are part of the PML-N family and it is an honour of being the first woman CM which I attribute to the women of Pakistan. Earlier, she presided over a session of the PML-N's parliamentary committee in which the members of the party expressed confidence in her leadership.



PML-N, MQM pledge continued federal level cooperation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) on Wednesday reaffirmed their commitment to continue support and cooperation with each other at the federal level. Senator Ishaq Dar in a statement said that the decision was reached during a coordination committee meeting between Pakistan Muslim League (N) and Muttahida

Qaumi Movement Pakistan.

The consultation between Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and MQM regarding government formation persisted. Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Senator Azam Nazir Tarar and Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan participated in the meeting on behalf of Muslim League (N). Kamran Tessori, Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal participated on behalf of MQM Pakistan.

Five dead, 17 others injured in van-tractor collision

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the incident occurred in Dunyapur, a tehsil of the Punjab's Lodhran District, where a passenger van returning after attending a marriage ceremony from Shujaat collided with a tractor trolley parked on the roadside.

Rescue sources confirmed that five individuals including two women, two men, and a child died on the spot, mean-

while, 17 others including 10 women, three children, and four men sustained injuries in the collision.

The rescue authorities swiftly shifted the injured individuals to the nearest hospital for medical assistance, where the condition of the seven women was said to be critical.

In a separate road accident, at least five passengers died when a speeding car ramed into a trailer parked alongside the road in Kot Addu, Punjab.

PM AJK demands UNSC action on Indian rule in Kashmir

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while urging the United Nations to take effective notice of India's expansionist designs in the region, has said that it was high time that the highest body should take tangible measures to help implement its resolutions on Kashmir so that the Kashmiri people could decide their political future.

Reacting to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to occupied Kashmir, the AJK premier said India cannot mislead the world community by peddling lies and baseless narratives. Referring to the disputed nature of the Kashmir issue, the PM said that, as per the international covenants, India cannot change the status of disputed territory unilaterally.

Terming the abolition of Article 370 and 35A by India as a flagrant violation of the UNSC resolutions, he said that



India's 5th August move was the worst example of fascism. Denouncing the Indian prime Minister's visit to IoK, he said that the Modi government was trying to mislead the world about the situation in Kashmir by faking normalcy and development.

Referring to the worsening political

and human rights situation in the restive region, prime minister Haq said that ground reality in Kashmir belie the Indian claims of so called normalcy in the held territory. "An unannounced curfew has been imposed in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir on Modi's visit", the PM said, adding that on the

one hand, Modi talks about normalcy and development, while on the other, enforced disappearances, bloodshed and violence continue unabated. "Innocent youth are being killed day in and day out by the military during cordon and search operations", he said.

"Along with a social and cultural onslaught, the Modi government has intensified its efforts to change the region's demography and its political landscape," the PM said. Terming Kashmiris' ongoing liberation struggle as a legitimate political movement, he said that the world should appreciate the Kashmiris' peaceful struggle for the right of self determination.

He said that it was incumbent upon the International human rights organizations to highlight the plight of Kashmiris. Lauding the Kashmiris' struggle and sacrifices, the PM said that the day was not far away when the people of Kashmir would achieve their cherished goal of freedom.

Lahore High Court Chief Justice addresses Multan Bar at swearing-in ceremony

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Chief Justice of Lahore High Court Mr. Justice Muhammad Amer Bhatti while addressing the swearing Association District Bar Association Multan, said that while being the Chief Justice, I have done my best for the upholding of law and justice, the welfare and development of bars and lawyers. I did what I could from what the soil of Multan owed me. To become a successful lawyer and judge, one needs to study as many legal books as possible and work hard for at least 5 years with a senior lawyer. President Imran Khan Khakwani and General Secretary Syed Arif Hassan will take note of the event. While speaking, Shah thanked Multan Bars for their patronage and special attention and said that Chief Justice Muhammad Amer Bhatti's valuable services in providing justice will always be remembered. Senior Judge Lahore High Court Multan Bench Mr. Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Ali Dogar, Mr. Justice Anwar-ul-Haq Pannu, Mr. Justice Mizmal Akhtar Shabbir, Mr. Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz, Mr. Justice Asim Hafeez, Mr. Justice Raheel Kamran, Mr. Justice Anwar Hussain, Justice (Retd) Sardar Ahmed Naeem, Sessions Judge Irfan Saeed, President High Court Bar Rana Asif Saeed, General Secretary Meher Haseeb Qadir, Sheikh Jamshed Hayat and Irfan Wayan and a large number of lawyers attended the newly elected officials Chief Justice Lahore High Court Mr. Justice Muhammad Amir Bhatti took oath on this occasion shields were also distributed to the bar.

53rd Syndicate meeting of AJK University held



Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The 53rd Syndicate meeting of Azad Jammu and Kashmir University was held here today with President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry in the chair. On this occasion, the VC Kashmir university, Professor Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi gave a detailed briefing to the members of the syndicate on the ongoing projects and administrative matters of the university. During the meeting, the budget of AJ&K University for the financial year 2023-24 was approved. The meeting unanimously decided to slash the unnecessary expenditure of the Jamia so that the financial problems faced by the university could be resolved as soon as possible. Speaking on the occasion, the President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, who is also Chancellor of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Universities, said that all possible efforts should be made to improve the quality of education in the University of Kashmir. The meeting was attended by VC Azad Jammu and Kashmir University Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, representative Chairman Higher Education Commission Prof. Dr. Mahmoodul Hasan Butt, former secretary to the government Sardar Muhammad Nawaz Khan, representative Vice-Chancellor University of Agriculture Faisalabad Dr. Jafar Jasparsi, Dean Faculty of Sciences Azad Jammu and Kashmir University Professor Dr. Muhammad Rafiq, Associate Dean Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences Dr. Bashir ur Rahman Kanth, Registrar University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Dr. Ghulam Murtaza and others.

Chaudhry Riaz says 'people's Party' will not play chair-chair

Abdul Majeed Malik

MUZAFFARABAD/ISLAM-ABAD: Pakistan People's Party Central Leader Chaudhry Riaz has said that instead of playing chair-chair, the People's Party and its leadership have foresight to strengthen the parliament and strengthen democracy in view of the wider country's dignity and national interests despite all reservations. Decisions have been made by the Asif Ali Zardari, the nation has high expectations after the President of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif was nominated as the Prime Minister. The People's Party is a democratic force with a public mandate. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has proved that by not accepting the post of Prime Minister for two years, he loves Pakistan and its people, not the positions. It does not mean that we will neglect our responsibilities and duties. The PML-N government has to be empowered in every forum because we respect the mandate of other parties. It is inevitable that the whole nation, including the military religious parties and their leadership, should include the philosophy of stability of Pakistan in their priorities. These views were expressed by the Central Deputy Secretary Information of Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir, nominated candidate for Assembly Constituency LA Thirty Lipa Valley Seven Shaikat Javed. Mir was talking to the ticket holder District Council Raffakat Awan at his residence. Ch Riaz said that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Painter of Pakistan, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Architect of Pakistan, Leader of the People, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Daughter of the East, Benazir Bhutto's eternal national and international struggle is a torch for the country and the nation. The People's Party has got a safe, neutral, non-controversial and dignified mandate. It has maintained the honor of the federal party in all the four provinces, which is a credit to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Asfa Bibi's Shabana Roz Jahdi Riazat and Asif Ali Zardari Political Affairs Chairperson Ms. Faryal Talpur. Chaudhry Riaz said that the Prime Minister of the Azad Kashmir government, Chaudhry Nawarul Haq, has promoted the improvement of institutions, the elimination of corruption, and the supremacy of merit.

Mother Language Day celebrated by Youth Office in Lower Chitral

Adam Khan Wazir

LOWER CHITRAL: District Youth Office Lower Chitral in collaboration with District Civil Administration organized a grand function to celebrate "World Mother Language Day" on Wednesday.

A large number of people from different walks of life participated in this event, writers, poets, professors, researchers, political leaders and especially youth and women participated in large numbers in this event.

On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral Muhammad Imran said that mother tongue has great importance in people's lives, because through mother tongue people express feelings, this can be a strong reflection of our cultural background, he said, for many people, their mother tongue is an important part of their identity and for them it is also a source of pride.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Imran Khan and Youth Officer Sardar Ali Wazir were the chief guests of the event.

At the end of the program, the participants also took a walk for the importance and promotion of the mother language.

Press Conference

ISLAMABAD: Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq addressing press conference at Al-Falah Hall Sector F-8, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Country is currently suffering from a serious economic crisis: Khawaja Mehboob

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: President of Pakistan Business Forum Khawaja Mehboobur Rehman, Chairman South Punjab Malik Sohail Talat, Secretary General South Punjab Saleha Hasan expressed concern over the country's economic situation and gave suggestions to deal with the economic crisis. Let the country come out of the economic crisis to a period of prosperity while giving suggestions, he said that the country is currently suffering from a serious economic crisis. This will increase their productivity. It is possible to do away with



subsidies, which have always been a tactic to reward the privileged class, instead of spending the same amount directly on reducing the cost of consumer equipment, such as reducing the cost of solar systems. All classes will prosper. At 3% markup to reward certain class. Instead of lending

billions of rupees, markup rates and energy tariffs should be reduced for the entire business community. Instead of selling loss-making national enterprises, they can be made profitable by partnering with the private sector. Instead of selling national assets, the government should

make a policy to reduce the burden on the exchequer by reducing its non-productive expenses. More revenue can be obtained from neighboring countries. Taking lessons from the government's patronage of the IT sector, the economy can be provided with strong foundations by harnessing the skills of the youth. Despite being an agricultural country, we import commodities for our food. Especially by settling the lands of Cholistan and Thal regions Green revolution can be progressed by giving special incentives to these settlers who have rich production capacity. Funds should be allocated separate-

26th Annual Convocation of Hamdard University will be held on Feb 24

PPA

The 26th convocation of Hamdard University (HU) will be held on Saturday on February 24, 2024 at 3.00 pm at the main campus of University, Madinat al Hikmah, Karachi.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, the Chairman of Higher Education Commission Pakistan, will attend the ceremony as chief guest. Ms. Sadia Rashid, the Chancellor of the University will preside over the Convocation. In the convocation medals, degrees and certificates will be distributed among hundreds of students who completed their courses in the academic year of 2023.

Besides, Prof. Dr. Shabibul Hasan, Vice Chancellor, members of Board of Governors (HU), diplomats, elite of the city, distinguished guests, Students and their parents will also attend the Convocation.

Pashto Mother Language Day celebrated with enthusiasm in SWL

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: A grand event was organized by the "Pashto Adabi Tollana" in Wana Bazar, Lower South Waziristan District on Wednesday, and Pashto Mother Language Day was celebrated with enthusiasm.

While a walk was also organized in this regard in Wana Bazar and various political and social personalities participated in the walk.

Wana Pashto Adabi Tollan" President Amin Jan says a poem in Pashto.

"Pakhtana ba da Pakhtu Pa Khawago Poi Shi, Ka Pakhtu Zhaba Pa Zhaba shawala amma.

"Urdu translation" Pashtun will enjoy Pashtu language when the Pashtu language becomes common in their language.



In this regard, poet and RJ Raheel said that like most parts of the country, we celebrated Pashto International

Day with enthusiasm.

He said, the purpose of its celebration is to promote our regional

language.

Baitullah Bait, founder member of Wana Pashto Adabi Karwan, said that this is the purpose of celebrating the mother tongue, how should we give priority to the mother language and the "Morani language"?

He said, the countries of the rest of the world have given priority to their own language, these countries have achieved peace, prosperity and development.

Remember that Wana Pashto Adabi tollana and Wana Pashto Adabi Karwan celebrate Pashto Mother Language day every year on February 21.

On the other hand, the poets participating in the program demanded the government to cooperate financially with us in this regard.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Table with 2 columns: Prayer Name and Time. Includes Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha.

EMERGENCY

Table with 2 columns: Service and Contact Number. Includes Police, Fire Services, Ambulance, etc.

Women Police Stations

Table with 2 columns: Station Name and Contact Number.

ENQUIRY

Table with 2 columns: Service and Contact Number. Includes Ambulance, Flight Info, etc.

HOSPITALS

Table with 2 columns: Hospital Name and Contact Number.

DEPARTMENTS

Table with 2 columns: Department Name and Contact Number.

COMPLAINTS

Table with 2 columns: Complaint Type and Contact Number.

COMSTECH and PEC Ink MoU to Upscale Engineering Capacity of OIC States

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) and Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Wednesday at COMSTECH Secretariat.

The MoU was signed by the Coordinator General COMSTECH Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and Secretary/Registrar of the Council, Engr. Dr. Nasir M. Khan. Chairman PEC, Engr. Muhammad Najeeb Haroon, and the senior officials of the both organizations were also present in the signing ceremony.

COMSTECH and PEC agreed to collaborate in organizing workshops and training programs to

enhance the knowledge and skills of professionals in science and technology with a focus on engineering, healthcare sectors and innovations.

They have agreed to transform information to knowledge and apply scientific and statistical principles in medical and engineering practices. They agreed to promote and develop policies with special emphasis on applied technology through OIC allied platforms to develop and transfer technology for industrial, medical and agricultural products and services, create linkages of OIC bodies to local competitiveness, promote the mutual trade of indigenously developed products, software and services, and encourage mobility & exchange of talent. Training of OIC engi-

neers at various PEC institutions and starting COMSTECH-PEC Africa program for promotion of engineering for socio-economic development is part of this MoU.

Both parties agreed to promote training, adoption, development and deployment of digital products, software, and services across OIC states with focus on applied artificial intelligence.

Conducting joint capacity building events, sharing expertise and resources, collaborating on R&D initiatives, supporting industrial R&D growth and mobility of qualified engineering resources, development of database of human resources, and facilitating in getting the membership of Federation of Engineering Institutions of Islamic Countries are the areas of collaboration.



Amazing

ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of pigeons sitting on a tree during pleasant weather in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Aga Khan University's National Health Sciences Research Symposium

PNP

KARACHI: The 25th National Health Sciences Research Symposium (NHSRS), AKU's flagship conference, brought together national and international experts to further the dialogue on evidence-based medical guidelines. Given the pressing need for contextually relevant treatment for diseases, this conference was both timely and relevant, building upon existing work done by AKU's Center for Clinical Best Practices (CCBP).

According to Dr Faisal Sultan, former special assistant to the prime minister on health, "it is a pleasure to be a part of this guideline development process that is being done in a structured and international validated manner with contextual appropriateness at its core. This is a great effort by AKU."

To address this challenge, CCBP collaborated with over 150 specialists over four years to review, adapt, and create transparent and robust guidelines tailored to the local



context, using an internationally derived 'GRADE-ADOLPMENT' process, and a diverse advisory board. This Manual of Therapeutics aims to standardize clinical practice across several healthcare sectors, offering tangible solutions for optimal patient care from primary to tertiary levels. The keynote speaker, Professor Mahmood Ayyaz, Vice Chancellor, King Edward Medical University, Lahore emphasized the importance of evidence-based guidelines in clinical

practice and the need to close the gap in global health disparities.

Professor Dr Javed Akram, President, Pakistan Society of Internal Medicine and Health Minister Punjab was also in attendance, providing crucial insights from his work as a medical professional as well as a government health official.

Prof Dr Khalid Masood Gondal, President, College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan; Professor Dr Rizwan Taj, President, Pakistan Medi-

cal and Dental Council; Dr Bushra Mirza, Member, Research, Development and Innovation, Higher Education Commission; Professor Dr Shabeen Naz Masood, Executive Member, Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Pakistan; and Major General Irfan Ali Mirza, Hilal e Imtiaz (Military), Dean AFPG-MI; and Professor Dr Shehla Naseem, Member, National Advisory Board were some of the distinguished speakers at the symposium.

29 universities student participated in PEC's 5th Engineering Capstone Expo



PNP

ISLAMABAD: Final-year engineering students from 29 universities and institutes participated in the 5th Engineering Capstone Expo competition (Punjab Region) organized by the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC).

The PEC's Pakistan Development Committee (PDC) conducted the Expo at its regional office in Lahore.

Some 170 final-year design projects of the engineering students were shortlisted for display at the Expo. The selected projects have relevance to the current requirements of the industry and market. Representatives from the industry and businesses were invited to review the projects.

The Expo is also aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, innovative skills of the would-be engineers and their ability to create social and civic impact for the countrymen. The participation is free for the students enabling them to connect with top-class producers of various varieties of engineering products.

PEC Chairman, Engineer Najeeb Haroon, was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony and also spoke on the occasion and urged the engineering students to excel in their practical lives after graduation to meaningfully contribute to the development of Pakistan. Other notable speakers include PEC Vice-Chairman (Punjab) Dr Niaz Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor of Dawood University of Engineering & Technology Dr Samreen Hussain, and PDC Convener, Engineer Mir Maood Rashid.

PEC Senior Vice-Chairman, Nayyar Saeed, was the chief guest at the closing ceremony who gave prizes to the winners of the competition.

Famous Newscaster Dr. Farhana Owais was honored with 'Itrafe Kamal'



PPA

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, organized an event titled "Itrafe Kamal" to honour renowned TV anchor Dr. Farhana Owais. Program was held at the Haseena Moin Hall. The event was specially attended by the Provincial Minister of Information, Minority Affairs, Social Protection, and President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, Muhammad Ahmed Shah. Professor Ahmed Qadri presided over the event; Meanwhile, Shahida Khurshid performed the duties of moderator.

During the ceremony, Rizwan Sadiqi, Iqbal Latif, Shahabuddin Shahab, Sabuha Khan, Professor Dr. Sajida Parveen, Owais, Naem Sultan, and others expressed their thoughts. Provincial Minister of Information, Minority Affairs, Social Protection, and President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, Muhammad Ahmed Shah stated that the Arts Council has adopted a family-like structure where each member is considered like a family member. He praised those who supported him during the Aalmi Urdu Conference and emphasized the importance of Farhana's contributions. He remarked that Farhana is an exemplary woman of this era who has not only maintained her status among men but has also excelled beyond it. He congratulated her on leading such a splendid life and highlighted the need to remember those who have worked tirelessly since 1954. Arts Council has never forgotten anyone's services, and it never will in the future. Muhammad Ahmed Shah also presented a bouquet to Dr. Farhana Owais. Professor Ahmed Qadri, in his presidential address, stated that Urdu is a language that touches the heart and diminishes enmity.

Security Paper's Profit surges 122% to Rs 746 Million during H1 FY23-24

PPA

ISLAMABAD -: Security Paper Limited (PSX: SEPL) released its financial statement for the first six months of the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, announcing a profit of Rs 746 million (EPS Rs 12.59) showing a significant increase of 122% compared to the profit of Rs 336 million (EPS Rs 5.67) reported in the Same Period Last year (SPLY).

Going by the results, the Security Papers Limited's (SPL) top line increased by 38% to Rs 3.49 billion as compared to Rs 2.53 billion in SPLY. The Company's cost of sales rose by 26% to Rs 2.51 billion vs SPLY. However, due to a higher increase in sales, the gross profit improved substantially by 82% to Rs 976 million.

The Royal College starts ophthalmology exams at Al-Shifa Trust

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists, London, as per its last year's decision, has started its oral examinations for ophthalmology and refraction certificates in Pakistan.

Last year, the college announced its partnership with Al-Shifa Eye Trust Rawalpindi, and now a team of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists has come to Pakistan to conduct tests.

Examiners include Dr. Daniel Nolan, Dr. Bernard Chang, Dr. Mohamed Elalfy, Dr. Simon Keightley, and Dr. Gwyn Williams, who will conduct the exams. Examinees include one applicant from Singapore and seventeen from Pakistan.



The president of Al-Shifa Eye Trust, Maj. Gen. (Retd) Rehmat Khan, stated in a statement that it is an important milestone that has given Pakistani ophthalmologists the chance to earn internationally recognised credentials, advance their expertise, and improve eye care services throughout the nation.

He claimed that a well-known institute from the UK was holding internationally recognised eye expert tests for the first time in Pakistan, which is an honour for us.

He stated, "It is a great honour for the nation, and credit goes to the dedication of all those serving in the Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital

for providing high-quality eye treatment to many patients with the help of state-of-the-art equipment."

"A team from the Royal College of Ophthalmologists visited Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital last year and found facilities appropriate for performing the exams, and they were satisfied with arrangements during the ongoing visit," he added.

He said that the team of foreign specialists is pleased with the variety of patients, treatment arrangements, the latest equipment, security and safety measures, and other measures that meet international standards.

Rehmat Khan said that,

now, with Al-Shifa Trust as the chosen venue, doctors pursuing the Fellowship Diploma can conveniently undergo the practical exams in Pakistan.

The Fellowship Diploma is internationally recognised, allowing ophthalmologists to practice anywhere in the world. This milestone not only brings great honour to Al-Shifa Trust but also showcases Pakistan's capability to host and support an institution of such calibre.

Dr. Wajid Ali Khan, Chief of Medical Services, anticipated that the number of doctors appearing in the tests would gradually increase as the first year's participation was encouraging.

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Economic cost of internet, social media shutdown - I

Pakistan, like any nation, faces challenges in balancing the interests of its people, businesses, and the state. Decisions made by authorities, including interim governments, can sometimes prioritize immediate or specific objectives over broader economic and social impacts. The act of slowing down or terminating internet services, including access to social media platforms, is a significant decision that can have far-reaching consequences. Such actions, while intended to serve particular goals, can inadvertently hinder the country's economic vitality by affecting business operations, trade, investment, and exports. They also pose risks to employment rates and GDP growth, potentially exacerbating poverty levels across the nation.

The internet and social media are modern-day lifelines for commerce, communication, and information exchange. Restricting access to these services can be likened to constricting the arteries of the nation's economy, impeding the flow of business and innovation. While security and regulatory concerns are valid, solutions should be sought that balance these needs with the preservation of open and free internet access to support the nation's socio-economic development.

According to international internet and social media watchdogs, during the 2024 elections in Pakistan, there were widespread disruptions to internet and mobile services on the orders of the Interior Ministry on the lame and excuse of "maintain law and order". Ironically, despite the assurance of the government and the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority multiple regions experienced internet blackouts and mobile network disruptions on the very election day. Independent watchdogs like NetBlocks confirmed these outages, indicating a significant impact on connectivity. Furthermore, the Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI) reported that specific websites, including those of the PTI political party and investigative news platforms, were blocked prior to the elections.

For instance, in specific cases like Algeria, internet restrictions impacted various sectors, including the tourism industry, where businesses faced material losses due to hindered communications with customers and missed reservation deadlines.

In India, the economic impact of internet shutdowns was quantified at \$1.9 billion for the first half of 2023 alone, highlighting the substantial direct economic losses incurred due to such disruptions. These shutdowns not only affect the immediate economic output but also have long-term consequences on investor confidence and the country's digital infrastructure. Such actions not only impose direct economic losses on an already strained economy but also lead to broader socio-economic instability. They not only infringe upon basic human rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights standards but also erode the country's democratic fabric by undermining the freedom of information and press. The irony is stark as these actions, meant to secure political gains or regulate the political narrative, result in billions of dollars in losses to the national economy, contributing to its vulnerability. This situation leaves political parties wary of assuming power in the aftermath of the 2024 elections, given the looming economic challenges compounded by such disruptive practices.



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

The direct losses incurred to the nations can easily be calculated by inserting vital information in simple formulas. For example, Given Pakistan's GDP of \$1.24 trillion in February 2023 and forecasted merchandise trade of \$95.96 billion in 2024, the daily GDP for 2024 is approximately \$15.85 billion. With per day merchandise roughly at \$1.23 billion and assuming a 50% impact on merchandise trade due to closures, the

daily loss from shutting down the internet is about \$615 million. For Twitter, the daily loss stands at approximately \$14.25 million.

The indirect costs of internet shutdowns on businesses, trade, and investment are significant and multifaceted. Internet shutdowns disrupt economic activities, leading to losses in e-commerce, delays in time-sensitive transactions, increased unemployment, and interruptions in business-customer communications. These disruptions result in financial and reputational risks for companies, affecting both local businesses and international trade and investment.

When a country's actions to block social media platforms, slow down the internet, and disrupt internet services lead to widespread condemnation by international bodies like the United Nations, Amnesty International, and Transparency International, as well as foreign leaders and institutions, the resulting costs can be multifaceted and significant. These costs extend beyond direct and indirect economic impacts to include the erosion of the country's soft image, which can lead to further financial, business, tourism, and soft capital losses.

To be continued

UN calls Gaza's humanitarian situation 'inhumane';

An "inhumane" health and humanitarian situation now prevails across besieged Gaza with conditions continuing to deteriorate, the head of the UN World Health Organization (WHO) warned Wednesday, amid escalating Israeli attacks against the enclave. "Gaza has become a death zone," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General told reporters at a press briefing in Geneva.

"Much of the territory has been destroyed. More than 29,000 people are dead; many more are missing, presumed dead; and many, many more are injured," he added. Across the war-ravaged Gaza Strip, severe malnutrition has shot up dramatically since October 7, from under one per cent of the population, to over 15 per cent in some areas. "This figure will rise the longer the war goes on and supplies [are] interrupted," Tedros said, expressing deep concern that agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP) were unable to access the north. The WFP suspended its aid deliveries there due to lack of security for both humanitarian personnel and those seeking assistance. "What type of world do we live when people cannot get food and water, and when people who cannot even walk are unable to receive care?" he lamented. "What type of world do we live in when health workers are at risk of being bombed as they carry out their life saving work [and] hospitals must close because there is no more power or medicines to help save patients?" He underscored the need for an immediate ceasefire, for hostages to be released, the guns to fall silent, and unfettered humanitarian access. Over the past three days the UN health agency and partners carried out several emergency missions to the Nasser medical complex in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, to evacuate critically ill patients, including children. "With the intensive care units no longer working, WHO helped move patients, many of whom cannot even walk," Tedros said. Around 130 sick and injured patients and at least 15 doctors and nurses remain in the hospital, amidst ongoing Israeli military operations, no electricity and running water and dwindling lifesaving medical supplies, it was pointed out. The WFP, in a statement, said, "The decision to pause deliveries to the north of the Gaza Strip has not been taken lightly, as we know it means the situation there will deteriorate further and more people risk dying of hunger." "WFP is deeply committed to urgently reaching desperate people across Gaza but the safety and security to deliver critical food aid — and for the people receiving it — must be ensured," the release continued. Another United Nations agency, UNICEF, published a study this week that found 1 in 6 children younger than 2 years old in northern Gaza are malnourished. Three percent of that group are experiencing wasting, which means being severely underweight for their age and height. The WFP said it resumed deliveries Sunday following a three-week suspension due to a strike on a UN relief truck and "the absence of a functioning humanitarian notification system". The agency said it was sending 10 trucks with food each day for a week in an attempt to "stem the tide of hunger and desperation and to begin building trust in communities that there would be enough food for all". But as it started on its route to Gaza City, "the convoy was surrounded by crowds of hungry people close to the Wadi Gaza checkpoint". "First fending off multiple attempts by people trying to climb aboard our trucks, then facing gunfire once we entered Gaza City, our team was able to distribute a small quantity of the food along the way," the WFP's release said. "On Monday, the second convoy's journey north faced complete chaos and violence due to the collapse of civil order." "Several trucks were looted between Khan Younes and Deir al Balah and a truck driver was beaten," it added. "The remaining flour was spontaneously distributed off the trucks in Gaza City, amidst high tension and explosive anger."



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

Collaborative Civil-Military Initiatives Promote Conditions to Deter Talent Migration - I

Many relatives and friends in my inner circle frequently advise me that, despite possessing significant qualifications and experience, I haven't achieved much in Pakistan. Given the increasing number of people leaving the country, they suggest that I should also consider relocating and exploring better opportunities abroad. Some close associates even forward various advertisements and links related to employment and immigration opportunities in foreign countries. Having lived in and visited several nations in the past, I am well aware that while there are advantages, there are also numerous drawbacks to living away from one's home country. This topic warrants a detailed exploration.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

For me, the paramount consideration is patriotism. The histories of prosperous nations reveal that a key factor behind their success lies in the citizens' deep-seated patriotism and love for their homeland. Patriotism, characterized by fervent love and devotion to one's country, has consistently proven to be a timeless and influential force shaping historical trajectories. Beyond mere displays of flags and anthems, patriotism functions as a unifying and motivating factor crucial to a nation's stability, growth, and overall well-being. It acts as the adhesive binding diverse groups into a cohesive national

identity, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose that transcends differences in race, religion, or ethnicity. A united populace is better equipped to confront challenges, surmount adversity, and collectively pursue common objectives.

A patriotic spirit often ignites a collective aspiration for progress and development. When individuals feel a profound connection to their country, they are more inclined to actively contribute to its advancement. This contribution may manifest in efforts to enhance education, infrastructure, and technological advancements, creating a positive feedback loop of national progress. Patriotism serves as the impetus for citizens to defend the core values that define their nation, be it democracy, freedom, or justice. A robust sense of patriotism acts as a bulwark against internal and external threats to these values, motivating citizens to stand against injustice and work toward positive societal change.

In times of crisis, a patriotic population exhibits greater resilience. Whether facing economic downturns, natural disasters, or other challenges, a strong national spirit fosters unity and a willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good. This collective resilience contributes significantly to a nation's ability to overcome adversity. Moreover, patriotism promotes the celebration of diversity within a nation, emphasizing that people from different backgrounds can

unite under a common flag. This inclusivity enhances social cohesion, fostering a harmonious and vibrant society.

Patriotism also extends to the preservation of a nation's history, culture, and traditions. Citizens who take pride in their heritage are more likely to support efforts aimed at protecting and promoting their unique identity. This, in turn, enriches and diversifies the global cultural landscape. Additionally, a nation with a patriotic citizenry tends to enjoy a more favorable position in the international arena. Strong diplomatic ties and international cooperation are facilitated when a country's people are dedicated to its success, enhancing its global standing and contributing to diplomatic initiatives that benefit its citizens.

The notion of a homeland holds profound significance in the identity and sense of belonging for individuals globally. Nevertheless, some individuals, for various reasons, find themselves without a country to claim as their own. The drawbacks of lacking a homeland go beyond the absence of a physical place, encompassing challenges that impact personal, social, and political aspects of life. The absence of a homeland often results in a significant loss of identity and a feeling of not belonging. Nationality closely intertwines with personal identity, and the lack of a country can leave individuals adrift, lacking the cultural and historical roots that offer a sense of continuity and connection.

The absence of a homeland can lead to various legal and political obstacles. Lack of citizenship restricts access to fundamental

Democracy needs sacrifices

After a prolonged war of nerve, on Feb 8, the masses went to the polls and voted for their favorite candidates. No sooner had Pakistan come out of pre-poll rigging, than it stuck in post-poll rigging. Due to the delayed and rigged results, there are countrywide protests and sit-ins. Internet and social media outlets have been shutdown; because it has become difficult for the powers that be to face public outrage, provoked in the aftermath of mass poll riggings. The country's economy, politics, judiciary and social norms are at stake than ever. Bat-snatching has culminated in vote-snatching. A shameful overturn was seen when Feb 8 election turned into selection in the small hours of the 9th Feb morning. The Economist, Time, The Guardian, Al Jazeera and such other well-known magazines and newspapers have termed the polls as rigged and worrying. The state has lost all credibility at the hands of a few generals, judges and bureaucrats. It will bode ill for a country when its public loses faith in politics, courts, executive and media.



Analysis

Prof. Fazal Tanha Gharshin

On Feb 8, the sympathy or emotional vote outnumbered pragmatic vote, and led the country to split mandate. No party bagged two-third majority to form a stable government. A coalition government or hung parliament means no civil supremacy, no national integration, no provincial autonomy and no good relations with neighboring countries. The Feb 8 exercise shows that once again the country will suffer from what it had been suffering for the last seven decades. The polls proved nothing but a prelude between the PDM 1.0 and the PDM 2.0 with a little change.

No party's leader seems satisfied with the polls. IPP's chief Jahangir Tareen retired from politics, Suraj Haq resigned as JI's chief, Pervez Khattak quit PTI-P's chairmanship, and Nawaz Sharif's expectations of bagging two-third majority and becoming forth-time premier ended in smoke. Some of the

PTI-backed independents are knocking at the doors of PML-N and PPP. Maulana Fazlur Rahman is up in arms—perhaps he has been put at the back burner by the powers that be. The polls have left Maulana hanging in the balance. Imran Khan's refusal to engage in dialogue with mainstream political parties, Nawaz Sharif's acceptance of a weak coalition government and Maulana Fazlur Rehman's sitting in the opposition—these three steps may prove political blunders.

Feb 8 polls have brought many irrefutable lessons to the fore. The polls have proved that the use of force is dangerous, every action has reaction, public opinion matters, vote is sacred, voters are mature, and only pure mandate has the authority to decide the fate of the country. The polls have denied dynastic political approach and have challenged the military's blatant interference in politics. Voters have realized that a vote is not merely a piece of paper; rather it is the education, health, economy, peace and identity of them. Pakistanis have fed up with the compromised judiciary, puppet parliament, sponsored media, dynastic politics, corrupt bureaucracy and exploitive establishment.

Pakistani political leaders behave like enemies with one another; they don't know the art of forgiveness, dialogue and unity. Before coming into power, they try their best to seek the help of the establishment; while, after coming into power, they forget their real status. The establishment is only a stakeholder: neither beyond nor less than a stakeholder. The only one weakness of our political leaders is their offsprings. The more dynastic politics, the greater military interference in politics.

At least, a nuclear country of 240m people can't be left at the mercy of minor and incompetent offsprings. First of all, politicians have to restore democracy within political parties, then expect the establishment not to interfere in political affairs. Only PTI and JI can't bring change. Restore democracy or prepare for the worst. Democracy needs sacrifices — the sacrifice of self-interests, ego and vengeance.

Writer is teaches at govt boys degree college Pishin.

ISSI hosts public talk on 'Stabilizing Pakistan's Economy'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), organized a Public Talk on "Stabilizing Pakistan's Economy." The Guest Speaker at the event was Mr. Mueen Afzal, Former Secretary General, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Pakistan.

In her introductory remarks, Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director CSP, emphasized the significance of today's talk, which delves into a crucial topic. The economy has faced severe macroeconomic imbalances, with the recurring balance of payments crises, shortages of foreign exchange, and above all a lot of fiscal indiscipline. The economy has not been able to take off even with the series of financial stimuli provided by international financial institutions. This underscores the necessity to comprehend the fundamental aspects of the economy, allowing us to pres-

ent practical policy recommendations.

In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the significant economic challenges that Pakistan is currently facing, fostered by both internal and external factors, including the impact of global economic slow-down, Covid-19 pandemic, and food and fuel crises in the wake of Russia-Ukraine conflict and situation in the Middle East. He noted that Pakistan is grappling with a dual deficit challenge, involving both fiscal and current accounts, ultimately leading to a debt trap.

Furthermore, the economy is confronted with rising inflation, food insecurity, energy crisis, and unemployment, adding to the already formidable set of challenges. These hurdles have hindered the nation's path to achieving sustainable growth. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood further emphasized that the implementation of necessary corrective measures, including redirection of resources toward social sectors,

has been hindered by fiscal constraints, also resulting in a sluggish GDP growth rate.

During his address, Mr. Mueen Afzal shed light on the recent challenges confronting the Pakistani economy. He attributed the country's economic woes to the misallocation of human resources.

Mr. Afzal emphasized that while economic crises are surmountable, they necessitate a rigorous reform process. He highlighted the potential benefits of investments like CPEC, stressing that they must be utilized prudently. Mr. Afzal argued that stabilizing the economy relies on attaining sustainable growth, necessitating a minimum GDP growth rate of around 5 percent. Specifically, he stressed combating poverty and inequality; fiscal discipline; increasing savings and revenues; responsible management of debt; trade diversification; conducive environment for FDI; structural reforms; and, above all, sensible decisions. He underscored



that the foremost concern presently is the escalating inflation, which impacts both exchange rates and interest rates.

Moreover, Mr. Mueen Afzal addressed the recurring challenge of the balance of payments, advocating

for a strategic focus on trade policies and diversification of exports as imperative solutions. A manageable current account balance, he noted, is vital for maintaining a stable rupee, a prerequisite for sustainable growth.

Following the presentation, participants engaged in an interactive discussion. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman of the Board of Governors at ISSI.

Gulf Food Exhibition

Muhammad Zubair Motiwala, Chief Executive, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan interacts with an exhibitor at the Pakistan Pavilion during his visit to the Gulf Food Exhibition, Dubai World Trade Centre on Wednesday.



Photo: Online

Palestine Ministry condemns the Israeli attack on President Lula

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates condemns the Israeli attack on the President of the Federal Republic of Brazil, Mr. Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, and considers it to fall within the framework of prejudices and positions.

The Ministry expresses its deep support and appreciation for President Lula, as a friend of oppressed peoples and a supporter of international justice and peace and human values in the face of injustice, tyranny and crimes against humanity. History has recorded his positions as honorable and unmistakable.

The Palestinian people have become accustomed to President Lula standing by their side with strength and steadfastness, defending their inalienable rights. He also stood with other peoples and humanitarian issues throughout his long struggle and humanitarian path, which made them vulnerable to attack by the enemies of humanity and



justice. History has proven the pivotal role of such solid positions adopted by President Lula in ending colonialism and dismantling and defeating apartheid regimes, similar to the friendly country of South Africa, which are positions that are widely needed today to end the last apartheid regime in the world and to stop the war committed

by Israeli colonialism. Genocide against all Palestinians, especially in the Gaza Strip.

The Ministry affirms its full support for President Lula and the friendly Brazilian people, and urges all free people and world leaders to support the rights of our people and stand on the right side of history.

EU Funding Empowers Pakistan's Flood-Affected Communities through Cash Assistance

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) supported over 180,000 vulnerable flood-affected people through multipurpose cash interventions in seven districts of the Sindh province in 2023. This critical support was made possible through a EUR 3 million contribution from the European Union's Humanitarian Aid Operations department.

WFP's cash support has been a lifeline for families in Jamshoro, Matiari, Mirpurkhas, Noushero Feroz, Sanghar, Shaheed Benazirabad, and Umerkot — those hardest hit by the catastrophic floods. The assistance has enabled them to secure food, healthcare, educa-

tion, and shelter. In addition, many households have not only used the cash for their immediate needs, but also to rebuild their businesses and other livelihoods that were interrupted or destroyed by the floods.

"Over one and half years later, many people still struggle to cope with the losses caused by the devastating 2022 floods. Together with partners like WFP, the EU supported the most vulnerable people with emergency assistance at a critical time. Pakistan is one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, and helping local communities after a disaster as well as preparing them to face future climate shocks has become a top priority for us," says Tahini Thammannagoda, Head of EU Humanitarian Aid in Pakistan.

"The 2022 floods left a lasting scar in the lives and livelihoods of the people of Pakistan. With support of humanitarian actors and donors like the EU, flood-affected communities were provided with vital lifesaving and sustaining cash and food assistance. Now is the time to invest in enhancing resilience ahead of future shocks. Building on the country's positive examples, WFP looks forward to enhanced partnerships towards our collective future of food security and nutrition for all" says WFP Pakistan's Representative and Country Director, Coco Ushiyama.

More than 1,700 lost their lives in the 2022 floods which affected over 33 million people nationwide. The Sindh province, at heart of the Indus River



basin, was the worst-affected province, accounting for nearly 70 percent of total losses and damage.

British Council announces International Collaboration Grants supporting artistic projects

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The British Council is thrilled to announce the opening of applications for its International Collaboration Grants, a £1 million grant program designed to foster innovative artistic and cultural collaborations between the UK and Pakistan.

Applicants in Pakistan can apply for grants of up to £75,000, for projects that enable genuine international collaboration between the UK and partner countries. Projects can address any theme, and each project supported by the International Collaboration Grants is required to include at least one UK-based organisation and one organisation based in Pakistan.



The International Collaboration Grants support new international partnerships, offering substantial support to organisations and artists in the development of creative projects.

"Culture is central to the UK-Pakistan relationship. That's why we're proud to be supporting new creative partnerships between artists from both countries through our International Collaboration Grant Programme",

said Country Director British Council Pakistan, James Hampson.

"We want to help artists from the UK and Pakistan to showcase their talents on the international stage by working together, transcending borders and enriching the world with new work."

The British Council is inviting applications that showcase genuine international collaboration between the UK and partner coun-

tries. The project must emphasise explicit benefits to individual artists and international partners alike. Projects can explore any theme, with a special emphasis on the applicant's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability in project delivery.

To support applicants, the British Council is offering a comprehensive set of resources to assist potential applicants, including an application toolkit with valuable tips and detailed insights into the program's context.

Potential applicants can find more information on the British Council website, including frequently asked questions, and a feedback video to guide you through the application process.

Ruby Franke, Jodi Hildebrandt get 30-year prison sentence in child abuse case

Popular parenting YouTuber Ruby Franke and her business partner Jodi Hildebrandt have been sentenced to 30 years in prison — the most severe penalty available under Utah law — for child abuse charges on Tuesday.

The charges stem from one of Franke's children escaping Hildebrandt's house in August to beg a neighbour for help.

According to CBS News affiliate KUTV, Franke has been sentenced to four consecutive prison terms which could range from one to 15 years each. The Utah Board of Pardons and Parole will determine prison time while Franke has 30 days to appeal the decision.



Hildebrandt received the same sentence as Franke.

Franke gave parenting advice on her now-defunct "8 Passengers" YouTube channel, and Hildebrandt operated a counselling business called ConneXions Classroom.

Both women were charged with six counts of aggravated child abuse, which is a second-degree felony and each carries a potential prison sentence of one to 15 years and a \$10,000 fine.

State prosecutor Eric Clarke compared Franke's children's environment to a "concentration camp-like setting" and said Franke "committed horrible acts of child abuse," while he deemed Hildebrandt a "significant threat" to the community.

Both women addressed the court before their sentences.

Hildebrandt said that she would "submit to what the state feels is an appropriate amount of time served."

Meanwhile, Franke admitted that she had "inflicted the injuries" on her children. She said that she had been "led to believe that this world is an evil place" and that Hildebrandt had never been her "business responsibility," but that she had paid the other woman to be her mentor.

Franke also thanked public safety officials who rescued her children, calling them "angels," according to KUTV.

"My charges are just," Franke said. "They offer safety to my family, accountability to the public."

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Current	Prev. Close
61,559.15	60,464.24
Day's High	Day's Low
61,620.85	60,906.97
Index Value	Change
8,596,877,498	+1094.91
Percentage	Time
+1.81%	21 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm

Index Value	Change
7,662.51	-56.70
Percentage	Time
-0.73%	21 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

Index Value	Change
38,508.44	-55.36
Percentage	Time
-0.14%	21 Feb, 1:17 pm GMT-5

Index Value	Change
38,262.16	-101.45
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	21 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181.15	183.15
Bahrain Dinar	743.32	751.32
Canadian Dollar	207.15	209.15
China Yuan	38.89	39.29
Danish Krone	40.38	40.78
Euro	300.2	303.2
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	74.45	75.2
Singapore Dollar	207.1	209.1
Swedish Korona	26.53	26.83
Swiss Franc	316.9	319.4
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08
U.A.E Dirham	76.2	76.95
UK Pound Sterling	350.6	354.1
US Dollar	279.75	282.3

Zardari and Sharif will solve the country's issues: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Wednesday that an agreement between major political parties to form a government is a good move that will reduce general anxiety and help bring the country out of the crisis.

It is believed that Mian Shahbaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari will bring the nation out of trouble and ensure political stability, he said.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that Mian Nawaz Sharif was the favourite for the slot of PM, but he has preferred Mian Shahbaz Sharif for the post which indicates his political maturity.

The PPP's dream of making Bilawal Bhut-



to a prime minister was not fulfilled, but it has agreed with the PML-N on important national issues, which is a sign of good leadership,

he added.

The business leader said that the business community is confident that nominated Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif and nominated President Asif Ali Zardari have the potential to improve the economy and manage repayments or rollovers that are due shortly.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the leadership of Mian Shahbaz Sharif and the PPP have a duty to improve the situation in the country, make effective measures against unemployment and terrorism, and give the public some relief.

The PML-N should convince the PPP to sell failed government companies, while both parties should strive to increase industrial and agricultural production and focus on the falling sectors of health and education.

He said that it is now the responsibility of these two parties to lead the country towards self-reliance and ensure rapid development

and prosperity.

It is impossible to achieve development and prosperity without privatising the sick companies, increasing exports, reducing imports, and boosting investment.

Mian Zahid Hussain expressed confidence that, on the one hand, the future government would face tremendous economic challenges, while on the other hand, the PTI should play a positive and constructive role in parliament rather than striving for instability in the country.

It is in the interest of the country to discourage efforts aimed at uncertainty and instability. Politics of chaos will not help the country or the masses, while political calm can boost the economy and reduce inflation.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that if the present president plays a positive role in the formation of a new government, he will be remembered.

Woodwork

ISLAMABAD: A street vendor is selling wooden handmade items on his cycle alongside a road, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Administrator MCI assures to address issues of the business community



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Rana Waqas Anwar, Administrator, Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI)/Acting Deputy Commissioner Islamabad along with his team visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and interacted with the business community to learn about their issues. Kamran Bakhtat Dy. DG MCI, Yasir Arafat DMA, Rana Waqas Mustaqeem Director Revenue, Dr. Mustafa Alam Director 1122, Dr. Irshad Ali Joki-io Director Health Services, Ch. Iftekhar Haidri Director Disaster Management, and others were in the delegation.

Speaking on the occasion, Rana Waqas Anwar said that MCI wants to move forward with the consensus of the business community to address their issues and facilitate them in business promotion. He said that he would visit markets to see the situation of encroachments and take measures to remove them in coordination with ICCI and concerned market associations. He said that MCI is making a uniform policy to remove all billboards in Islamabad as they are affecting the beauty of the city. He said that vending zones are being considered for shifting pushcarts

from markets.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry briefed the MCI delegation about the key issues of the business community. He said that encroachments should be removed in consultation with ICCI and concerned market associations. He said that notification of mutually agreed board tax and trade license should be issued.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that the business community is the major stakeholder in the development of Islamabad and MCI should take ICCI on board before making major policy decisions.

Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi Convener ICCI MCI Sub-Committee, Ajmal Baloch President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajirran, Khalid Chaudhry former Senior Vice President ICCI, Asad Aziz President Jinnah Super Market, Shehzad Shabbir Abbasi President Super Market, Ahmed Khan President F-10 Markaz, Zahid Qureshi I-8 Markaz, representatives of G-10 Markaz, G-11 Markaz, and various other markets also highlighted the issues of their respective markets and stressed for their urgent redressal.

Pearl-Continental Hotel, Bhurban Attains ISO-22000

PPA

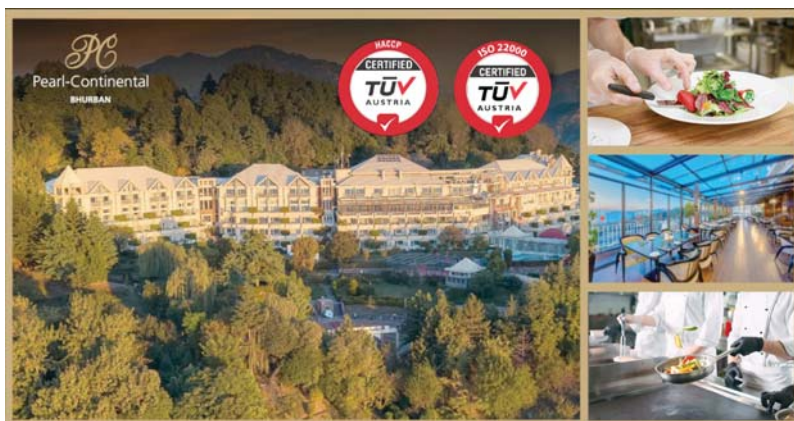
ISLAMABAD: Pearl-Continental Hotel, Bhurban has been recertified by ISO-22000:2018 and HACCP, an esteemed international standard for food safety management, with 100% compliance two years in a row.

ISO-22000 is an internationally accepted standard for food safety management systems, providing a comprehensive framework to ensure the safety of food products throughout the supply chain. It covers processes from primary production to consumption, emphasizing a holistic approach to food safety.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a systematic approach to food safety that identifies, evaluates, and controls potential hazards throughout food production. Developed in the 1960s by NASA in collaboration with the Pillsbury Company to ensure the safety of space food, HACCP has since become a global standard in the food industry.

The recertification audit, conducted by the globally renowned TÜV Austria, encompassed on-site evaluations and a meticulous examination of documentation, policies, and procedures. No major or minor non-conformity was identified during the comprehensive assessment, showcasing the team's unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest standards in food safety.

Addressing the positive audit results,



Chief Operating Officer, Hospitality and Education Division, Hashoo Group, Haseeb A. Gardezi remarked, "We have a longstanding reputation for exceptional service standards and commitment to excellence in all hospitality avenues. Our pledge will only grow stronger with such humbling accolades, spurring our motivation for the future."

General Manager, Pearl-Continental Hotel, Bhurban, Nadeem Chaudhary shared his thoughts on the achievement, "We strive to provide the best-in-class services for our valued guests and continue evolving our processes and procedures to maintain quality at par with global standards. Thank you for your continued trust; we are grateful to receive these recertifications and will continue enhancing our services to stay at the top of our

game."

The auditors commended the team for their dedication and also lauded the sustainability initiatives spearheaded by senior management. The Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) project at Pearl-Continental Bhurban, which utilizes live bacteria to treat and recycle wastewater while converting it into organic fertilizer, was also praised.

Hashoo Group is Pakistan's premium conglomerate with a diversified business portfolio spanning national and international markets. The Group owns and operates the Pearl-Continental Hotels & Resorts, PC Legacy, and Hotel One brands in Pakistan and has business interests encompassing the information technology, investment, travel & tourism, and real-estate sectors.

foodpanda announces strategic partnership with PSO DIGICASH

PPA

ISLAMABAD: foodpanda, Pakistan's leading delivery platform, is excited to announce its strategic partnership with PSO DIGICASH, a convenient and efficient fuel management solution from PSO (Pakistan State Oil). This collaboration aims to empower foodpanda's delivery riders by providing them with exclusive benefits and incentives through PSO's DIGICASH fuel management solution.

PSO's DIGICASH, introduced in 2019, offers complete fuel management solutions for consumers. Through this partnership, foodpanda riders



will avail exclusive discounts and benefits, including a 10% discount on purchase of lubricants and 1% cashback on Premier Euro 5 and Hi-Octane fuels, up to a limit of PKR

50,000 per month. Riders will receive these cashbacks directly into their DIGICASH wallets every month for utilization on Fuel & Lubricants.

"We are thrilled to part-

ner with PSO to enhance the experience and welfare of our delivery riders," said Muntaqqa Peracha, CEO of foodpanda Pakistan. "At foodpanda, we are committed to supporting our riders and ensuring they have access to the best possible resources. Through this partnership, we aim to provide our riders with greater convenience, savings, and incentives to fuel their success."

"Speaking about this collaboration, Mr. Mohsin Mangi, Chief Strategy and Technology Officer at PSO, stated, "We are delighted to collaborate with foodpanda, the leading food delivery service in Pakistan.

TECNO Mobile receives prestigious award from the President of Pakistan



PPA

ISLAMABAD: TECNO Mobile, a leading player in the mobile phone industry, was honored with an award for its outstanding contributions to technology transformation and financial inclusion of women by His Excellency, Mr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The prestigious event took place at Awan-e-Sadar, gathering distinguished industry leaders, policymakers, corporate executives, startups, and companies excelling in financial inclusion of women and technological advancements. The theme of the event was "Embracing Financial Inclusion & Business Transformation."

In a significant milestone, TECNO Mobile became the first mobile phone assem-

bler in Pakistan, a testament to its commitment to local manufacturing. President Alvi endorsed TECNO's dedication to local production during the ceremony.

Mr. Adeel Tahir, Sales Director of TECNO Pakistan, expressed pride in the company's achievements, stating, "It is an honor to receive recognition from the highest levels of the state. We take pride in being the first company to undertake mobile phone manufacturing in Pakistan and in having the highest ratio of women working in our manufacturing plants. The collaboration with Jazz and NUST for 5G research and academic purposes lays the groundwork for startups and a thriving 5G ecosystem in Pakistan. This is a moment of great pride for TECNO Pakistan."

Infinix X5 LED TV series, Prosper into a Fascinating World of Entertainment

PPA

LAHORE: The future of LED TV has now reached Pakistan, where an unmatched filmic experience coupled with an acoustic ecstasy will push the tech-savvy communities into a fascinating world of entertainment.

Infinix X5 TV series featuring a 55-inch display, surrounded by a fascinating bezel-less design and metal frame is what Infinix Pakistan is planning to launch in the Pakistani market, and that too in near future.

It would be an interesting scenario to watch, how this top smartphone brand might take over the LED TV market of Pakistan. The Infinix X5 has already been introduced in some countries and its ever-growing popularity in those markets have raised alarm-bells among its competitors.

Zong 4G & BaKhabar Kisan have partnered to promote Urban Farming

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecommunication organization Zong 4G, has collaborated with BaKhabar Kisan to facilitate seamless communication between the Farmers and Agri Experts to make informed and timely decisions, maximize yield and financial benefits to their livelihoods.

BaKhabar Kisan is a comprehensive agricultural knowledge platform for farmers throughout Pakistan offering expert guidance on weather, crop and livestock advisory, modern agricultural practices, and disaster management. It facilitates the connection between the farmers and Agri experts, promoting modern agricultural practices through personalized Agri content.

Zong 4G has announced this strategic collaboration with BaKhabar Kisan in a dedicated initiative to foster Agri-tech advancement in Pakistan.

19th Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally Colour Full Inauguration Ceremony Held in Bahawalpur

Asim Tanveer

BAHAWALPUR: Commissioner Bahawalpur Division Dr. Ehtesham Anwar has said that Cholistan Desert Rally is an excellent festival and the identity of Pakistan at national and international level. He expressed these views while addressing the opening ceremony of the 19th TDCP International Cholistan Desert Rally and Cultural Festival at Bahawal Gymkhana Bahawalpur. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa, Project Director D. HA Brigadier Naveed Iqbal, District Police Officer Bahawalpur Syed Muhammad Abbas, Mian Usman Abbasi, Mian Umar Daud Abbasi, Managing Director TDCP Humira Ikram, General Manager Operations TDCP Wahid Arjamand, racers participating in the Cholistan Desert Rally and officials of the departments were present. Bahawalpur Division said that it consists of more than 500 km Police and army troops of Pakistan are providing foolproof security on the track of Cholistan Desert Rally. He further said that Cholistan Desert Rally has become the biggest rally of South



East Asia due to its colorful and beautiful cultural and tourism events. Because of this every year in large numbers from Pakistan and all over the world Tourists go to Bahawalpur to see this rally. Commissioner Bahawalpur Division said that races will be held in 7 categories in Cholistan Desert Rally, while in view of the arrival and interest of international racers, the prize of Cholistan Desert Rally next year will be in dollars. Commissioner Bahawalpur Division said that Cholistan Desert Rally due to the registration on the website of the rally, international participants are also participating in the

rally, which is a welcome development for Pakistan and Bahawalpur in particular. Managing Director TDCP Humira Ikram while addressing the event said that Cholistan Desert Rally has played an important role in the social and economic development of the region. She said that this year in Cholistan Desert Rally Saudi Arabia, UK, Afghanistan, Iran and US drivers are also participating. MDT DCP Humira Ikram further said that not only the women's category has been made more active in the Cholistan Desert Rally but also the prizes of the Desert Rally have been increased. Meanwhile, the

winner's trophy of the Cholistan Desert Rally was unveiled and the TDCP The song and the documentary film were also shown to the participants of the event Cholistan desert rally, history and culture of Cholistan desert, historical palaces, historical buildings, historical background and tourism and culture of Bahawalpur were presented through light and sound show along with beautiful cultural dance. Earlier, commissioner Bahawalpur division organized the rally. Shields were also distributed among organizers and racers Bazi was also demonstrated.

Karachi Kings locked their first win of HBL PSL 9

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Karachi Kings locked their first win of HBL PSL 9 after they defeated Peshawar Zalmi by seven wickets at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore on Wednesday afternoon. Fast bowling duo of Hasan Ali and Mir Hamza accounted for three wickets each as Zalmi were restricted to 154 in the first innings. In return, an unbeaten knock by Kieron Pollard helped Kings complete the target with considerable ease.

The second match of the day is set to be played between Multan Sultans and Lahore Qalandars at Multan Cricket Stadium. The first ball is expected to be bowled at 7 pm.

At Gaddafi Stadium, after they opted to bowl first, Shoaib Malik provided an ideal start for the Kings, bagging a wicket at the expense of just three runs in the first over as opening batter Saim Ayub copped a golden duck on the first ball of the day.

In the second over, Babar Azam became the fastest and the youngest batter to complete 10,000 T20 runs; taking only 271 innings to do so. The right-handed batter reached the feat after hitting a four and then running two while

facing left-arm pacer Mir Hamza.

Mohammad Nawaz conceded 16 in the third over courtesy of three boundaries as Zalmi looked to charge after the early setback. On the first ball of the next over, Mohammad Harris (6, 7b, 1x4) miscued a shot which landed straight in Pollard's hand at long-off, bringing Zalmi down to 26-2 in 3.1 overs.

Trouble deepened for Peshawar Zalmi in the last over of the power play as Hasan Ali struck on the first ball to take out Tom Kohler-Cadmore for just two off three. On the first delivery of the 12th over, Babar smashed a magnificent six over long-on to bring up his second consecutive fifty.

In the next over, Nawaz broke the 68-run stand between Babar and Rovman Powell as the latter awarded an easy catch to Hamza. Powell walked back for a 39 on 25, including three boundaries and two maximums.

Asif Ali added a brisk 23 on 16 with a six and a four before falling to Daniel Sams. Shortly after, Aamir Jamal could only score a run before he was caught at cover by Shan off Hamza.

In the same over, Hamza got his third of the day as he claimed the prized scalp of Babar, who walked back for 72

off 51, including seven boundaries and one maximum. Then, Hasan picked up the last two wickets in the final over to dismiss Zalmi for just 154.

Hamza, who bagged three wickets at the expense of just 28 runs in his four over, was adjudged player of the match. He was supported by Hasan, who picked up three wickets as well. Sams had two while Shoaib and Nawaz also removed a batter each.

Shan and Muhammad Akhlaq, opening for Karachi Kings, amassed 20 in the first two overs to mount pressure on the opposition. Luke Wood countered their attack squarely as he dismissed Shan on the second ball of the third over.

In his subsequent over, Wood had Akhlaq caught behind for a quick fire 24 off 13 balls, on the back of three fours and two sixes.

James Vince and Shoaib built a gritty 51-run stand to bring stability to the innings. The partnership was eventually cut short by Waqar Salam Kheil who sent Shoaib walking back for run-a-ball 29, including a four and a six.

Pollard, the next batter in, announced himself on the crease with a stunning maximum over long-on. In the 15th over, he took Waqar for 27 overs on the back of

three maximums and two boundaries to completely clinch the game for his team.

From the other end, Vince chipped in with crucial runs, finishing at an unbeaten 38 from 30, including three fours and one maximum.

A boundary each by Vince and Pollard in the 17th over saw Karachi Kings complete the target with seven wickets in the bag and 19 deliveries remaining.

Wood accounted for two wickets while Waqar bagged one wicket.

Pollard, with his unbeaten knock of 49 from 21 which included four boundaries and as many maximums, finished as the top-scorer for Kings.

Scores in brief:

Karachi Kings beat Peshawar Zalmi by seven wickets

Peshawar Zalmi 154 all out, 19.5 overs (Babar Azam 72, Rovman Powell 39; Mir Hamza 3-28, Hasan Ali 3-30, Daniel Sams 2-28)

Karachi Kings 157-3, 16.5 overs (Kieron Pollard 49 not out, James Vince 38 not out)

Player of the match - Mir Hamza (Karachi Kings)

Tomorrow's fixtures: Quetta Gladiators v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore (7 pm)

Zone-VI Whites, Zone-VII Whites Qualify For Final of A. S. Natural Stone U-19 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Zone-VI Whites and Zone-VII Whites moved into Final after beating their opponents in the Semi Finals of the A. S. Natural Stone U-19 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi and Spon-



sored by A. S. Natural Stone.

Scores in Brief:

In the first Semi Final Zone-VI Whites beat Zone-II Whites by 9 Wickets at KCCA Stadium. Zone-II Whites 138 all out in 44.1 overs. Muhammad Danish 29, Aun M. Jaffri 27, Iftikhar Khan 26, Burhan Mehmood 19. Abdul Moiz (rlb) 4/19, Adam Essa (ob) 3/17. Zone-VI Whites 141/1 in 21

overs. Abdur Rehman Niazi 60 9x4 not out, Abdullah Alam 51 6x4, Shahwaiz 18 not out.

In the 2nd Semi Final Zone-VII Whites beat Zone-IV Whites by 7 Wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Zone-IV Whites 143 all out in 45 overs. Areeb Aftab 25, Daniyal Khan 24, Iqrar 20 not out. Rohail Nisar 2/20, Kashan Fahim 2/27, Jawad Musawar 2/31.

Netherland's OHC Bully hockey club beat HEC team by 4-3 in

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Netherland's OHC Bully hockey club team defeated Higher Education Commission (HEC) team by a thin margin of 4-3 in the second match to level the 3-match series at the National Hockey Stadium on Wednesday. The guest team will play their third and last match in Islamabad.

Former provincial sports minister Rana Mashhood and Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail were the guests of honour on this occasion. They also witnessed an exciting hockey match and appreciated the fighting game of both teams. The players and officials of both the teams were introduced with the guests of honour. They also had group photos on this occasion.

HEC DG Sports Javed Memon, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar,

Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum, DIG Mehboob Aslam Lillah, Chairperson Almarah Foundation Mrs Sofia Waraich, former Test captain M Yousaf, international kabaddi star Shafiq Chishti, Olympian Khawaja Junaid (chief organiser) and a large number of hockey lovers were also present on this occasion.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail, on this occasion said that the 3-match series between Netherland's OHC Bully hockey club team and Higher Education Commission (HEC) is definitely a great development for the revival of international hockey in Pakistan. "The presence of a large crowd reflected a true passion for hockey among Pakistan's peace loving people," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that Sports



Board Punjab has upgraded and renovated grand National Hockey Stadium and laid FIH-approved turf in a bid to revive hockey, which is the national game of Pakistan. "We are quite upbeat

that Pakistan will regain the lost hockey glory and rule the hockey world again."

After losing the first match by 2-1, Bully hockey club team improved their game a lot in the

second match. Nabeel Minhas, Mak Landerink, skipper Ruben Kattier and Leen Timmers struck one goal each for Netherland's OHC Bully hockey club team. HEC's boys also carved out several

goal scoring moves but they failed to produce enough goals to beat their opponents. HEC's Ammar netted two goals while the third goal was scored by Usman Ashraf. It is pertinent to mention here

that the 3-match series against Netherland's OHC Bully hockey club team is being organized under the auspices of SBP Kh Junaid Hockey Academy, Punjab Police and HEC.



Chiranjeev and Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi watching the PSL Match in Multan Cricket Stadium.

Pakistan Karting Team OMNI RACING all set to participate in Round 1 of the Dubai Endurance Championship 2024



Sports Desk

KARACHI: Pakistani motorsports takes a leap forward as the Omni Racing team, comprised of the top 4 racing drivers of the country, Syed Ovais Naqvi (c), Shahzeb Qureshi, Omer Khuhrro, and Sanaan Jamali, prepares to compete in the first round of the Dubai Endurance Championship 2024 on Feb 24.

"Motorsports in Pakistan has long lacked a dedicated facility to foster talent and nurture passion," says Syed Ovais Naqvi, CEO of Omni Karting Circuit (OKC) and captain of the Omni Racing team. "With the launch of OKC's international-standard track, we aim to invigorate the sport, holding local championships and providing comprehensive training and development programs."

Naqvi further emphasizes, "Our goal is to elevate Pakistani karting to an official sport, allowing individuals to hone their skills and compete internationally. Through initiatives like Omni Racing, we aim to empower our top drivers to showcase their talent on the global stage, raising the name of OKC and Pakistan with pride."

Muzamil clinches two titles in RLK Group Punjab Open Tennis Championship



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The RLK Group Punjab Open Tennis Championship 2024 concluded on a high note at the Punjab Tennis Academy, Bagh-e-Jinnah, with Muzamil Murtaza emerging as the stand-out performer, clinching two prestigious titles.

Muzamil Murtaza showcased his supremacy on the court by first securing victory in the men's singles final against M Abid with scores of 6-4, 7-6. He didn't stop there; teaming up with Abdullah Adnan, Muzamil also triumphed in the men's doubles final, overcoming the duo of M Abid and Waqas Malik with a 6-3, 7-5 victory. "Winning not just one, but two titles at this championship feels surreal. It's a testament to the hard work and dedication we have put in," Murtaza expressed post-victory.

The championship also saw Shimza Durab clinching the ladies' singles title by defeating Bismel Zia with a convincing 6-3, 6-1 in the final, showcasing her prowess on the court. The seniors' categories were equally competitive, with notable victories from Talha Waheed (GO Pakistan) and Arif Feroze in the doubles 45 plus category, and seniors champion Rashid Malik demonstrating his undiminished skill in the seniors 50 plus singles, outwitting Fayyaz Khan by 6-1, 6-1. The seniors 60 plus doubles title was claimed by Brig Ghazanfar/Waqar Nisar, who outshone Maj Saeed/Mubeen Malik 6-2, 6-1.

In the boys/girls U-14 final, Abdur Rehman beat Huzaima 6-0. In the boys/girls U-12 final, Muaz Shahbaz beat Ohad e Mustafa 6-2 while the boys/girls U-10 title was lifted by Ayan Shahbaz, who thrashed Ehsan Bari 6-1.

The concluding ceremony was graced by Dr. Rashid Latif Khan, Chairman of the RLK Group, as the chief guest, with Hasan Said, Director of RLSB, serving as the guest of honor. Hasan Said played a pivotal role in the tournament's successful organization. "Our commitment to tennis is unwavering. We aim not just to host tournaments but to nurture young talent, helping them bring glory to our nation," Dr. Khan remarked during the prize distribution ceremony.

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi in a group photo with a delegation of military officers from friendly countries undergoing training at Command and Staff College Quetta, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan desires JVs, partnerships with foreign firms for economic uplift: President

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that Pakistan desired to build mutually beneficial partnerships with foreign firms by building joint ventures and attracting foreign investment in multiple sectors. The president, in a meeting with a delegation of Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc, a USA-based

salt mining and processing company here, said Pakistan was fully focused on boosting its exports to improve its economic condition.

In the meeting, the president was briefed about the company's performance in salt mining, processing and marketing.

President Alvi said that Pakistan could make value addition to its salt products

through better processing, packaging and marketing. Reaffirming the government's commitment to facilitate the investors, the president appreciated Miracle Saltworks Collective Inc for its investment in Pakistan as well as its joint venture agreement with Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation.

The delegation members apprised the president of

the potential of Pakistan's salt mines to earn foreign exchange saying that Pakistan was the only country rich with quality and mineral salt that was also high in quality and low in price.

The delegation viewed that Pakistan could take advantage of the huge salt market across the world by ensuring value addition through responsible mining, process-

ing and marketing.

It was told that the company would invest in the salt mining sector of Pakistan and would utilise modern technology for mining and processing to ensure minimum wastage during the processes.

President Alvi also emphasised the promotion of environment-friendly and responsible mining in the country.

ECP committee misses deadline to submit report

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The high-level committee, constituted by Election Commission of Pakistan, seems to have missed the deadline to submit a report on allegations by former Rawalpindi Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatha, accusing ECP and Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa of involvement in the 'election rigging'.

Sources told ARY News that high-level committee - constituted to probe the claims made by the former commissioner - met today under the chairmanship of ECP member Sindh Nisar Durrani.

The committee review the progress made so far on the investigation into Liaquat Ali Chatha's allegations. Meanwhile, the committee has recorded statements of return-

ing officers (ROs) of 13 National Assembly (NA) constituencies and 26 provincial assembly constituencies.

The written statements of district returning officers and returning officers were included in the investigation report, sources claimed. The committee was directed to submit an investigation report within three days.

Sources added that the committee will devise recommendations, sought by the election commission, by tomorrow.

In a shocking 'revelation', Rawalpindi Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatha - who stepped down from his post - dropped a bombshell on Saturday, confessing to be involved in rigging the Pakistan general elections 2024, adding another layer of controversy to the already disputed polls.



Taking responsibility for what he termed a "heinous crime," Chatha implicated not only himself but also accused the Election Commission of Pakistan and Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa of involvement in the 'rigging' - a claim denied by the ECP and the CJP.

The presser came almost a week after the Feb 8 general elections as the ECP has

already been in the crosshairs of several rigging allegations amidst PTI and other political parties' nationwide protests, claiming they were deprived of their mandate.

Chattha revealed that on Saturday morning he thought of committing suicide but then he decided to 'expose' the entire rigging fiasco. "I want to die a peaceful death" he added.

Meanwhile, the ECP flatly rejected the rigging allegations put forth by Liaquat Ali Chatha against the Election Commission and the Chief Election Commissioner.

The spokesperson said in a statement that neither the ECP nor any of its officials instructed the Rawalpindi commissioner to change election results under his jurisdiction.

Commissioners of any division do not have a direct role in conducting elections; they are neither District Returning Officers (DROs), Returning Officers (ROs), nor Presiding Officers (POs), the spokesperson noted.

Following the presser, Liaquat Ali Chatha was transferred and Rawalpindi Development Authority DG Saif Anwar Jappa was given the additional charge.

PTI demands 'constitutional right' to form govts in Centre, Punjab and KP

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded its 'constitutional right' to form governments in Centre, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) due to public mandate given to Imran Khan-led party in general elections 2024.

Taking to Twitter, PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that the country's future was linked with 'complete supremacy' of the Constitution. "The country always engulfed in crisis whenever it derailed from Constitution," he added.

He pointed out Imran Khan-led party emerged single largest party in the elections despite the challenges it faced, which included the "snatching" of iconic symbol bat. "We weren't allowed to conduct an election campaign," he regretted.

"Daylight robbery of public mandate is a desecration of votes," he said, stressing the need for political stability and put Pakistan on the path of development.

Barrister Gohar also demanded the election commission issue election results in sync with Form-45. "The



seats that are robbed should be returned to PTI," he said, adding that his party would fulfill the responsibility of safeguarding the public mandate.

The presser came after PML-N and PPP reached an agreement on forming a government in Centre as both parties have agreed on a 'power-sharing formula' following days of negotiations.

"PPP and PML-N have achieved the required number and [now] we are in a position to form the government in Centre," PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said while addressing a joint press conference at Zardari House in Islamabad.

Bilawal Bhutto pointed out that

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed candidates and Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) failed to achieve a simple majority to form government in the Centre.

He said that that both parties are going to form the coalition government and PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif will once again be the country's prime minister, praying that they would succeed in solving the problems of Pakistan.

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 Pakistan

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.

The MQM-P won in 17 constituencies, JUI-F in four, and PML-Q in three, while IPP and BNP won two seats each.

Following the general elections, both the PML-N and PPP had formed committees to decide the terms and conditions for the next federal government.

Initially, PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto was eyeing the slot of the prime minister but later pull out himself of the race. He had unequivocally announced that his father, PPP co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari, should be given the coveted slot of the country's president.

Although the PML-N candidate for PM slot was Nawaz Sharif, the party later changed its mind. It later nominated its president and Nawaz's younger brother, Shehbaz Sharif, for the premier's position to lead a new alliance.

PTI, JI, and GDA announce joint movement against 'election rigging'



Dastagir Bhatti

KARACHI: The political parties including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), and Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) on Wednesday announced to initiate a protest against alleged rigging in the general election 2024.

The alliance's decision to join forces was announced following a meeting between PTI leader Haleem Adil Sheikh and JI representative Hafiz Naeem at the residence of GDA's Pir Sadaruddin Shah.

The coalition, formed in response to alleged rigging during recent elections, underscores the growing concerns within various political factions regarding the fairness and transparency of the electoral process.

Earlier, the members of the Upper House of the Parliament on Tues-

day demanded the Senate to hold a probe into alleged rigging during the February 8 general elections in a bid to "ensure free and fair polls and establish respect for a public mandate".

During the session, an adjournment motion was moved by Senators Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo, Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen, Mushtaq Ahmed, Syed Ali Zafar, and others regarding the situation arising out of the results of the general elections 2024 as a matter of national importance.

Several senators raised concerns regarding allegations of poll rigging and last week's press conference by former Rawalpindi commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatha wherein he had accused the Election Commission of Pakistan and Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa of involvement in the "rigging".

Employees stage protest against PIA's privatization



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a show of dissent, the Peoples Unity of PIA Employees CBA staged a protest against the privatization and outsourcing of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) concerning what they perceive as a systematic attempt to dismantle a national asset.

The CBA union, under the leadership of President Hidayatullah Khan, raised slogans against authorities over PIA privatization.

President Hidayatullah Khan asserted that there is an ongoing conspiracy to sell off the PIA in pennies, meanwhile related to the outsourcing of Islamabad flight kitchen, he added that the current expenditure of flight kitchen is standing at Rs 600 million and the management is seeking to outsource it at Rs 1.80 billion.

He accused influential individuals within PIA, including Fawad Hasan Fawad and CEO PIA officials, of orchestrating the privatization and outsourcing.

IHC forms committee in missing person's case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has constituted a three-member committee on the issue of missing persons, including Baloch students, and once again summoned the caretaker PM on February 28.

According to a written order of Feb 20's hearing, the three-member committee comprised directors general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Military Intelligence (MI) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB). IHC Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, in the written order, stated that regardless of political government, the committee would provide answers regarding the missing persons.

The court directed the committee to submit a report regarding the missing persons, including Baloch students, within three days. The committee has been asked to take information from the sector commander of the relevant district and division. The committee will put forward recommendations against the subordinates involved in enforced disappearance.

Expressing concern over the non-recovery of the missing Baloch students and the absence of the prime minister, the court once again summoned the caretaker premier for February 28. In the last hearing, IHC Justice Mohsin Kayani said that the caretaker prime minister should not go to Karachi for the next hearing, but appear before the court. "No one is above the law here," he said.

Solangi grieved over demise of senior journalist Nazir Naji

ISLAMABAD, FEB 21 (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the demise of renowned journalist, editor and columnist Nazir Naji. The minister, in a condolence message, prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with equanimity.

Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Shaheera Shahid on Wednesday expressed deep grief over the demise of senior journalist, columnist and analyst Nazir Naji.

The secretary, in a condolence message, prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace, and grant courage and fortitude to the bereaved family to bear the loss with equanimity.

She said she was saddened over hearing the news of the death of Nazir Naji who was a professional journalist and analyst. His passing away was a big loss for the field of journalism, she added.