



Night-long prayers to mark Shab-e-Barat tonight

The night is believed to be the occasion of determining fortunes Muslims throughout Pakistan will observe Shab-e-Barat Sunday night with religious devotion and reverence. The blessed night is observed between 14 and 15 Shaban in every lunar year.



Ahsan Iqbal criticises PTI founder over letter to IMF

PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday castigated former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan for writing a letter to International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding an audit of the general elections. Addressing a ceremony here, the former planning minister dubbed the PTI founder's move as "enmity with the country", saying that another attempt was made to obstruct loan programme by writing a letter to the IMF. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Addressed

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the 5th edition of HUM Women Leaders Awards-2024 ceremony held at the Jinnah Convention Center, on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Health, education facilities critical for women empowerment: President Alvi

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi said the provision of health and education facilities were critical factors for achieving the goal of women's empowerment.

Addressing a ceremony regarding women leaders, he underscored the need for the provision of a harassment-free environment to women so that they could become part of the workforce and contribute to economic growth.

"Today we celebrate women leaders for their endeavors and men who contributed to the economic empowerment of women," he said.

Talking about the rights of women, he cited the saying of the Holy Prophet Muham-

mad (PBUH) who said that a man who raised two daughters earned his place in paradise.

President Dr Arif Alvi stated that women in human societies, through the ages, were epitome of love and hope and they taught children love and kept the family system intact. He pointed out that women suffered the most in wars and acts of genocide, adding millions lost their lives in genocides in the previous centuries.

The President criticized the acts of genocide by Israeli forces in Gaza, saying that thousands of women and children were killed.

The President further said genocide was committed in Gaza for the vested interests and in negation of humanitarian values.

Maryam Nawaz poised to make history as Punjab to elect CM tomorrow

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Assembly is set to witness a one-to-one contest for the post of chief minister (CM) tomorrow (Monday) as nomination papers of PML-N nominee Maryam Nawaz and Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) Rana Aftab were declared valid after scrutiny.

Sunday noon was the deadline, announced by newly-elected Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmed Khan for submission of nomination papers for the post. Malik Ahmed Khan did the verification of nomination papers. He said that the election for the coveted slot will be held in tomorrow's assembly session.

Maryam Nawaz, the political scion of PML-N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif, was nominated as the party's candidate for



the coveted position of the chief minister of the country's most populous province, Punjab.

Meanwhile, PTI - at the eleventh hour - named Rana Aftab Ahmed Khan as its new candidate for the post following the provincial police's attempt to arrest its earlier nominee, Mian Aslam Iqbal.

PTI leader Hammad Azhar noted that party founder Imran Khan had earlier nominated Mian Aslam Iqbal for the post but heavy contingents of the police force were deployed outside the Punjab Assembly to arrest him.

Citing the situation, Hammad Azhar said that the party leadership decided to nominate Rana

Aftab after holding consultations with the former.

Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) candidate for the Punjab chief minister slot, Rana Aftab met Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan after the verification of his nomination papers.

Speaking to journalists, Rana Aftab condemned that the SIC members are not being allowed in the assemblies. "For us, the lives of our workers are more dear than the posts," he said, expressing confidence in winning the CM's seat in Monday's election.

He also urged the authorities concerned to let the SIC's elected MPAs to join the assembly for the election of leader of the House.

It's noteworthy that the PML-N has a substantial number of candidates, adding to the competitive nature of the elec-

tion. The oath-taking ceremony occurred on Friday, with 321 out of 371 members of the Punjab Assembly taking their oaths.

Since PML-N and its allies have a clear majority in the House there are no obstacles for Maryam Nawaz to secure the top position.

A day earlier, PML-N clinched victory in the Punjab Assembly speaker and deputy speaker elections in the house numerically dominated by the party.

PML-N's leader Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan was elected as PA Speaker, amassing a commanding 224 votes out of the total 327 cast in the house.

At the same time, Malik Zaheer Ahmed Channer, the PML-N candidate for the deputy speaker position, emerged victorious against Mohammad Moineddin from the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), garnering 220 votes.

PPP's Awais Qadir Shah elected as Sindh Assembly Speaker

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) candidate Awais Qadir Shah has been elected as the 12th Speaker of the Sindh Assembly.

As per details, as many as 147 members of the provincial assembly cast their votes during the polling for assembly speaker.

The outgoing speaker Agha Siraj Durrani announced the results after the conclusion of the voting process where PPP's Awais Qadir bagged victory after securing 111 votes meanwhile his opponent MQM's Advocate Sofia Shah secured 36 votes.

Whereas, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamat-e-Islami (JI) boycotted the polling for election of speaker and deputy speaker of Sindh Assembly.

The Outgoing speaker of the Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Durani also administered oath from newly elected speaker Awais Qadir Shah.

After the election of speaker, the PPP's Anthony Naveed was elected as deputy speaker of the Sindh Assembly and secured 111 votes out of the total 147 whereas, MQM-P's Rashid Khan managed to get 36 votes.

The newly elected speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah was declared winner on PS-23 Sukkur with 69266 votes defeating GDA's Inayatullah who secured 21137 votes.



Barrister Gohar among others in run for PTI's chairmanship

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Different candidates including Barrister Gohar Ali Khan submitted nomination papers for the chairman slot in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) intra-party elections.

As per details, Ashraf Qureshi, Mohammad Aslam, and Naveed Anjum have also submitted their nomination papers for the post of chairman. The deadline for filing nomination papers was 25 February at 3 pm.

The nomination papers of the 15-member panel headed by secretary general candidate Umar Ayub were also submitted.

Meanwhile, Yasmin Rashid submitted the nomination papers for a main position in the PTI Punjab chapter. Muhammad Khan Madani and Asad Hanif are also vying for party positions in the province.

The panels of Haleem Adil Sheikh and Khawand Bakhsh Ghulam Mohammad are in the run from Sindh. Ali Amin Gandapur-led panel is vying for the elections for the party positions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Munir Baloch and others have filed the nomination papers from Balochistan.

Different Returning Officers are appointed in the center and provinces to receive the nomination papers. The intra-party elections of the PTI will be held on March 3, as per the schedule announced by the party.



Probe completed into a delay in licenses issuance to new airlines

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A committee formed by the Ministry of Aviation completed the investigation over the non-issuance of licenses to new airlines in the country.

According to the details, a two-member committee interrogated civil aviation officers regarding the



delay in issuing licenses to new airlines. The officers of the Air Transport Department appeared before the committee and submitted replies to different queries.

According to the sources, questions were asked to Director Usman Gul on the two-year delay in the issuance of licenses to the airline while Deputy Director Licensing and Economic Oversight was also investigated.

The sources said that the investigation team will submit the fact-finding report to the aviation secretary on Monday. It is pertinent to mention here that the Ministry of Aviation had formed an inquiry committee against the CAA officers after deciding to investigate the non-issue of licenses to new airlines for many years.

Starvation threatens 700,000 Palestinians in northern Gaza: Civil defence official

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: The world is watching in silence as the Palestinians are dying of hunger amid escalating Israeli war against Gaza, a civil defence spokesperson in the besieged enclave said on Saturday. In a statement, Spokesman Mahmood Basal said that the Palestinian people were dying every day "under the light of a suspicious Arab and international silence."

"The suffering of citizens in Gaza and the north is worsening daily, as thousands of them are waiting to die either due to hunger or Israeli targeting." He said more than 700,000 people are facing starvation and death every moment if Israel continues to prevent the entry of basic food and medical supplies. "The Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip is entering its 140th day without anyone with a conscience acting to save the remaining lives in Gaza." The United Nations has also warned of the growing risk of famine in Gaza. The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) said it desperately needs resources as nearly all the 2.2 million inhabitants of the territory are



facing crisis or worse levels of hunger. People of Gaza are "in extreme peril while the world watches on," UNRWA said. "Without adequate food and water supplies, as well as health and nutrition services, the elevated risk of famine in Gaza is projected to increase." Since October 7, 2023, many humanitarian agencies, not least UNRWA, have had to halt operations in the Gaza Strip, meaning hundreds of thousands of people will not have access to aid. One in six children under age two — 15.6 per cent — are acutely malnourished in northern Gaza, according to nutrition screenings conducted at shelters and health centers in January. Of these, almost three per cent suffer from severe wasting — the most life-threatening form of malnutrition. That health condition puts children at the highest risk of medical complications and death unless they receive urgent treatment.

Over 45.8m children to be immunised in nationwide anti-polio drive

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: More than 45.8 million children under five years of age would be vaccinated during the second anti-polio campaign across the country starting from February 26.

Children would also be given vitamin A supplements to boost their immunity in the campaign which is kicking off from February 26 to March 3 in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and in 33 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from March 2 to March 6.

"Polio is a terrible disease that has no cure and can leave children paralyzed for life. Unfortunately, it continues to be a threat to our children as some people refuse to vaccinate children based on misconceptions and false information about the vaccine," the Federal Secretary for Health, Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, said after administering polio drops to children. Shallwani added that while the government remains strongly committed to ending polio in Pakistan and is making great progress, as decision-makers, parents and caregivers also have a huge responsibility to ensure their children well-being. In a special message directed to parents and caregivers, the health secretary emphasized, "Polio vaccinators will be delivering this vital vaccine to your doorsteps next week. I implore you to recognize the threat posed by the poliovirus to your children and ensure that you open your doors to facilitate their vaccination."

Anjuman Tajran Cantt protests against higher electricity, gas prices, cost of life-saving

✉ Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Under the auspices of Anjuman Tajran Quaid-e-Azam Shopping Center Multan Cantt addressing a protest against the increase in electricity and gas prices and tariffs and the increase in the cost of life-saving medicines, President Central Anjuman Tajran Cantt Malik Zahid awan, Secretary General Moazzam Waheed Khawaja, Chief Cadre Nether Ghazanfar Malik, Ijaz Karim, Club Abid Khan, Sajjad Ahmad Bhatti, Akhtar Hussain, Khawaja Dilshad Ahmed said that due to the increase in the prices of life-saving medicines and the increase in electricity and gas prices and tariffs, the nation is suffering from severe pain and trouble.

There is oppression from the business community and civil society government. It demands free electricity and ban on unbridled privileges



and the right to live should be given to the nation by controlling government expenditure.

Rashid Anwar awarded for his services by Multan Waste Management Company



✉ Arshad Raza Zaidi

MULTAN: Rashid Anwar Victor Assistant Sanitation Officer, Multan Waste Management Company, a ceremony was held at the Timber Market Fire Brigade Centre. Addressing the ceremony, Waste Management Company Secretary Kabir Khan said that Rashid Anwar has been honest throughout his life. to his departmental responsibility His services will always be remembered, on this occasion, General Secretary of Labor Union Bilal Ahmed Bhatta, General Secretary Samiullah Khan, Faheem Ahmed Khan Lodhi Director said that Rashid Anwar was a hardworking officer, he always served officers and workers. Behaved well with and worked day and night for the waste management company On the occasion, Labor Union President Malik Manzoor Hussain, Chairman Saeed Ahmed, Saeed Khan, Qaiser Khan Shah Siddiqui, Malik Ramzan, Asad Ali, Bilal Hussain Bhatta, Habibullah, Asif Bhatta, Akhtar Abbas Joya Waste Management Officers, employees, members, super The vizier, sentry workers, driver participated and fully appreciated Rasheed Anwar's job at the end of the ceremony. Rashid Anwar was presented a shield by Secretary Kabir Khan, Chief Superintendent Bilal Ahmed Bhatta, General Secretary Samiullah Khan, Faheem Ahmed Khan Lodhi Director for his services.

Vintage heavy motorcycles

LAHORE: Motorcyclists pass by spectators at an exhibition of vintage heavy motorcycles at the Polo Club in the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

Book on the history of Coastal Areas of Sindh Launched



✉ Kamran Khamiso Khawaja

SUJAWAL: Speakers feted contributions of seasoned journalist Zahid Ishaque Somro at the event organised to launch his book titled "Sariya Mathe Sach," containing a detailed history of the coastal areas of Sindh, water crisis and the social issues of the coastal areas of Sindh.

The event held in coastal town Jati of district Sujawal, organised under the aegis of Sindhi Adabi Sangat was attended by noted authors, poets and historians of Sindh.

Secretary General of Sindhi Adabi Sangat Taj Muhammad Joyo who presided over the book launch ceremony in his address said that the author of the book deserves accolades for rightly narrating the water issue of Sindh.

He further said that Jati is one of the historical cities of Sindh that had faced several challenges over the years and this book comprises a detailed anecdote of those challenges.

The author during his speech shared the aim behind writing the book and said that he wanted to preserve the history of the coastal areas of Sindh, mainly Jati. He further said that he had conducted a detailed study of the society of the coastal areas before penning down this book.

"As a journalist I always pursued truth and wrote truth"; he held and added that he had tried to sketch out the reasons behind the water crisis in Sindh.

Journalist Ramzan Memon said that the author has discussed several socio-political issues of the coastal region of Sindh. Iqbal Shaheen said that it was the first book of its kind that had given a thorough explanation regarding the issues of the deltaic region of Sindh. Poet Ataz Ammar Sheikh, Muhammad Baran among others also spoke on the occasion.

The author of the book is one of the noted journalists of Sindh who had been affiliated with different Sindh dailies including Kahwish, Awami Awaz and Barsat as correspondent as well as columnist. In 2003 he joined KTN news channel as a reporter.

Prior to this book he has authored various columns and research articles published in different newspapers of the country.

PSF invites applications from young Pakistani students to participate in IJSO-2024

✉ City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) has invited applications from young Pakistani science students to participate in the 21st International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO-2024).

According to an official of PSF, the International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) is going to be held from December 02-11 this year in Bucharest, Romania tentatively.

IJSO is a science competition for students under 16 years of age on December 31st of the competition year. IJSO was established to promote interest in science among school students, exposing them to problem-solving, critical thinking and experimentation.

Over the years, IJSO aims to positively impact science and mathematics education at the school level. IJSO is held in the first week of December every year, in any one of member countries.

About the eligibility, the official informed that interested students (boys and girls) under 16 years of age on December 31, 2024 may send their applications on prescribed proforma available through the weblink <https://psf.gov.pk/IjsO2024.aspx>.

The applicant must be a regular science student and passed minimum SSC-I (Class-IX) equivalent from a public or private sector (Govt. recognized) institution having proficiency in written and spoken English.

Only shortlisted candidates on the basis of educational credentials shall be called for test and interview for their final selection.

Six students will be selected for the said event while the decision of the panel of Scientists/ Experts will be final in this regard, the official said.

PSF will bear the expenditure including registration, visa fees and air travel of selected students. Accommodation and local hospitality will be provided by the organizers while no TA/DA will be provided to the students appearing for test/interview.

The last date for receipt of the application is March 11, 2024. Incomplete applications received after the closing date will not be entertained. The queries can be addressed at rehanabatool2005@yahoo.com.

NUST announces article writing competition on 'Women in Climate Action'

✉ City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) has called on all voices of Pakistan to become part of its efforts to amplify the importance of Women in Climate Action by participating in an 'Article Writing Competition'.

According to an official of NUST, the article writing competition, being arranged in collaboration with the Gender Intersectionality and Climate Change (GICC), is aimed at stimulating thoughtful discourse on the intersectionality of gender and climate resilience.

The last date for submission of the

articles is February 29. The details of the event can be accessed through the website: gicc.nust.edu.pk.

The article writing competition is part of the "Women in Climate Action - Celebrating Resilience" event being arranged by the NUST and GIZ Pakistan on the occasion of International Women's Day (March 8) in Islamabad.

This empowering event aims to recognize and applaud the significant contributions of women in climate action, emphasizing their leadership, innovation, and impact on creating sustainable and climate-resilient communities.

The researchers, climate heroes, academia, and individuals from the

development sector have been called to participate in the event featuring panel discussions, success stories, stalls showcasing women-led initiatives and art and photo exhibitions.

About the other activities under this mega event, the official informed that an insightful panel discussion, successful storytelling session, art and photo exhibition and project and product exhibits will also be part of the event.

The insightful panel discussion will be aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted challenges and opportunities women face within the realm of climate action.

The success storytelling session will

highlight the women doing notable work in climate action and give them a platform to narrate their stories and experiences and the hardships they have faced in their tremendous efforts.

The art and photo exhibition will feature captivating visuals of women from various backgrounds, cultures, and professions, the display will highlight the collective power they harness in addressing climate challenges.

The project and product exhibits will feature dedicated stalls of the projects and products by women-led initiatives, related to environmental sustainability and climate action giving women a platform to accentuate their efforts.

Former-Chairman of Attock Press Club hails journalists for doing their jobs despite limited resources

✉ Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Journalists of Attock did their important duty by reporting very impartially in the general election despite having less resources, which I am proud of them. I myself have been a registered member of the Attock Press Club, I came to Pakistan from America to exercise my right to vote in the recent elections with my family. Syed Muhammad Arif Naqvi, who resides in Pakistan, spoke on the occasion of the dinner given in honor of the journalists at Abbas Farm House, the chief guest of the event was the former chairman of the Attock Press Club and Senior journalist Sheikh Javed Iqbal, on this occasion, Chairman Attock Press Club Registered Sheikh Faisal Javed, Sarprast Ala Syed Raza Haider Naqvi, Vice-Chairman Sheikh Asad, Finance secretary Sheikh Zahoor Elahi, secretary information and Broadcaster Waheed Khattak, Sheikh Babar Qayyum, Razi Khan, Rana Shaukat Ali Khan, Dr.

Sohail Ahmed Khan, Qamar Abbas Jafri and other seven friends were also present, Syed Arif Naqvi said that see It is extremely sad that three years ago Chairman Attock Press Club registered Sheikh Javed Iqbal and I discussed with the then Deputy Commissioner regarding the return of the building allotted to the journalists, on which the Deputy Commissioner The Deputy Director of Information Attock instructed that journalists should be given back their constitutional right to press club building, but the district administration did not give the building till date and put all the cases in cold storage. District administration could not perform well and the journalists were deprived of their fundamental rights from the building of Press Club which is condemnable and momentary, on this occasion Sheikh Javed Iqbal said that Abbas Farm House is an excellent platform for entertainment and a visible place for the people of the city and surrounding areas where they can get a

break from the polluted environment, he said. They should provide facilities on a priority basis for the development of agriculture in the country and for the citizens of Pakistan, including electricity, gas, road construction, by investing their capital in this country. can play the role of backbone in the economy; he said that the press club has been under the illegal custody of the district administration for almost 12 years due to which journalists are facing a lot of difficulties in performing their duties. Yes, if any person does not have a press conference or his voice in the upper houses of power, then he is forced to organize a press conference in a private hotel and the public cannot afford it, for which there is no other platform due to lack of press club, Sheikh Javed Iqba He has strongly demanded from the Chief Minister, Director DGPR that keeping in mind the need of the journalists to carry out their journalistic activities in an efficient manner, the building of the Press Club which has been there for 37 years.

Everywhere, but not in Lahore angers Lahorites

✉ Bureau Report

LAHORE:--Basant is used to be attributed to Lahorites. It was purely the festival of Lahore. Revelers inside and outside the country would travel to Lahore to celebrate the fare, mainly with flying kites day and night.

Now, it is celebrated everywhere except Lahore, the city which nourished it. Kite flying is banned in Punjab.

But the ban seems to be strictly implemented in Lahore and in other cities police look flexible with the imposition of the ban, creating a sense of anger among the Lahorites, who believe their right to kite flying and Basant celebrations is snatched.

On Friday, people of Islamabad, Quetta and Pindi celebrated Basant and they shared on social media their pictures and videos flying kites.

These clips invited comments from the Lahorites. Some of them were of the view that the festival belonged to Lahore.

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES
Namaz Timings
Fajr 5:19 am
Zohr 12:21 pm
Asr 4:21 pm
Maghrib 6:00 pm
Isha 7:23 pm

EMERGENCY
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 & 9266044
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations
Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

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

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

DEPARTMENTS

CM inaugurates a new lab & collection centre

PPA

LAHORE: A New Lab & Collection Centre by the Services Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS) has been completed in only 10 days. The 42nd Health department's project during the last 12 months of CM Mohsin Naqvi's tenure has been turned operational. Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated the New Lab & Collection Centre late at night. CM inspected the New Lab & Collection Centre. Mohsin Naqvi commended Commissioner Lahore division, Secretary Health, Secretary C&W and their entire team on the successful completion of the New Lab & Collection Centre project in a short span of time and appreciated its high quality as well. He inspected the reception of the New Lab & Collection Centre and conversed with the staff members. CM maintained that the establishment of an excellent lab in a highly short span of time is worth acknowledging adding that the institution will obtain revenue as well with the establishment of the New Lab & Collection Centre. CM also cut a cake on the eve of the inauguration of the 42nd project of the Health department. Secretary Health gave a briefing about the project. Provincial Ministers Doctor Javed Akram, Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Adviser Wahab Riaz, Chief Secretary, IG Police, Secretary C&W, Commissioner Lahore, CCPO, Special Secretary Health, Deputy Commissioner, Principal SIMS, MS Services Hospital and concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

26th convocation

HU confers degrees on 1,200 students and scholars

PPA

KARACHI: The Hamdard University (HU) conferred PhD, MPhil, Master's, Bachelor's and associate degrees on over 1,200 students and scholars at its 26th convocation held on Saturday.

The joyous ceremony was presided over by Ms Sadia Rashid, the chancellor of the university and president of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. Prof Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, the chairman of Higher Education Commission Pakistan, was the chief guest.

On the occasion, PhDs were conferred on nine scholars and MPhils on 12. Thirty-five of the students were awarded MS degrees, 45 BEd, 11 BCA, 86 BS, 42 MBA, 52 BBA, 156 BE, 141 BCS, 47 BA-LLB, 186 MBBS, 37 BDS, 27 BEMS, and 293 students were given PharmD degrees. Seventy-five students were awarded asso-

ciate degrees.

In recognition of their hard work during various courses of studies, three students were awarded the Shaheed Hakim Said Gold Medals and five the Shaheed Hakim Said Certificates. The names of the students who were awarded gold medals were M. Hassan Fazil, Sumayya Arshad and Sadganj Mubarak. The students who were given the certificates were Hamda Tanzeem, Bisma Saleem, Khalid Mehmood, Sahibzada Kazim Mehmood and Rehma Aqil.

Nineteen students from different faculties were awarded other medals. The names of these students were Sadia Khan, Syeda Tehreem Hussain, M. Kashan Malik, Syeda Laiba Khalid, Muhammad Faisal, Iftikhar, Zain Khalid, Ali Hyder, Erum Samejo, Amani, Durdana Lariab, M. Hassan Fazil, Maryam Sultana, M.



Wasil Javed, Fahma Minhaj Uddin, Yusra Zahid, Omaira Khalid, Touseef Ahmed

and Azar Frederick Wilson.

In her speech, Chancellor Sadia Rashid exhorted the students to become good citizens, not just great professionals. She advised the graduates to forge ahead in life with confidence because the qualifications they had acquired would surely open numerous doors for them in their chosen fields.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Syed Shabibul-Hasan pointed out that with each passing year, the Hamdard University is enrolling more and more students. "This year alone we have enrolled more than 3,000 students. Our university is currently imparting education and training to a total of 9,000 students," he said.

He thanked Prof Dr Ahmad for always facilitating the university and for helping solve its problems in the best possible manner.

Price hike

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is displaying fresh vegetables at his stall in Weekly Sunday Bazaar Sector G-10, for attracting customers, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

PANAH Conducts Training Session in Murree

PNP

MURREE: Pakistan holds the top position globally in terms of the highest prevalence ratio of the diabetes with 33 million people living with diabetes. Approximately 1100 deaths in Pakistan are linked to diabetes and its complications daily. Without swift and decisive action, the number of individuals with diabetes is projected to reach 62 million by 2045. Ultra-processed foods are often very high in sugary, salt or trans-fats. Sweet beverages stand out as the primary source of sugar intake in our diet. Implementing evidence-based policies, such as increasing taxes on sweet drinks and mandatory FOPWL on UPPs can effectively reduce consumption and mitigate associated chronic diseases. In response to the alarming rise of obesity and non-communicable diseases in Pakistan, the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) hosted a capacity-building training session for social media influencers on the 25th of February 2024 at a local hotel in Murree. The training aimed to equip influencers with the knowledge and tools to advocate for healthier dietary practices and combat the growing threat posed by ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks.



The social media influencers were engaged in a robust discussion on the role they can play in raising awareness about the health hazards of ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks. They were capacitated to influence policymakers to prioritize mandatory FOPL and warning signs regulations, as well as advocating for increase taxes on sugary drinks. The event was not only an informative session but also served as a platform for fostering a collaborative effort among social media influencers and PANAH to collectively address the press-

ing public health challenges. By providing influencers with the tools to enhance positive change, the training session played a pivotal role in advancing the collective mission of public health in Pakistan.

Country coordinator Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) Mr. Munawar Hussain conducted the training session of the social media influencers. General Secretary PANAH, Mr. Sanaulah Ghuman hosted the event. Certificates were disbursed among the participants of the event.

Provincial Stakeholders Alliance spearheads empowerment for women

PPA

KARACHI: The formation of the platform of Provincial Stakeholders Alliance (PSA) was a momentous milestone for the rights and empowerment of Women Agricultural Workers in Sindh. The event in this regard was held in Karachi which proved to be a significant step in addressing the issues raised in the research report titled 'The Hands that Feed Us: Struggles of Women Agricultural Workers in Pakistan' produced by Awaz Foundation Pakistan: Centre for Development Services, NARI Foundation and the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA). The Provincial Stakeholders Alliance is a platform of representatives from various relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, bar council, and representatives from the media.

Mr. Detho articulated, "This meeting aims to conduct a gap analysis, addressing the challenges hindering the implementation of the Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, 2019, and to provide actionable recommendations to governmental bodies and civil society. Integration among relevant departments such as Social Protection, Social Welfare, Labour, and Minority Affairs is imperative. While Sindh boasts progressive legislation supporting women's rights, inadequate awareness and operational inefficiencies impede effective implementation."

Zia ur Rehman, Chief Executive of AwazCDS-Pakistan, introduced the project and the purpose of the PSA, emphasizing, "This platform aims to be a catalyst for positive change, ensuring the rights and empowerment of women agricultural workers are prioritized and protected by ensuring the passage of rules of business and implementation of The Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act 2019."

Mr. Omar Dawoodjee, Director (Operations and Resource Mobilization FORUM-ASIA) gave the concluding remarks for the meeting. He shared that with the help of their partners, they are working on capacity building of government officials, marginalized communities, and civil society. He emphasized the improvement of working environment for women and the need for implementation of The Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, 2019.

International Baccalaureate Celebrates Educational Excellence in Pakistan



PNP

LAHORE: The International Baccalaureate (IB), in collaboration with the Association of IB World Schools in Pakistan (IBPAK), hosted the IB Day Pakistan, an event that marked a significant leap towards advancing high-quality global education in the region.

IB's regional gathering on 24 February 2024 at Avari Hotel, Lahore, introduced Dr Shehzad Jeeva who joined the IB as the Chief Education Officer this January. He delivered an inspiring vision for the future of education to IB schools, educators, government officials, universities and education enthusiasts, emphasizing the pivotal role IB programmes play in shaping global citizens equipped to navigate the complexities of today's world.

"Today, we stand at the cusp of a new era in education in Pakistan, where the IB's mission aligns seamlessly with our national educational goals, fostering learners who are knowledgeable, principled, and open-minded," said Dr Jeeva.

Mr Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, Secretary Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, highlighted the government's support for IB programmes, underscoring their importance in elevating the standard of education in Pakistan. "Our collaboration with the IB is a testament to our commitment to providing world-class education to our youth, preparing them for global challenges," Chaudhry remarked.

CM Inaugurates the New Museum for Placing the Holy Relics In The Badshahi Mosque

PPA

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi along with the Provincial Ministers visited the Badshahi Mosque and the Mazar-i-Iqbal. CM inaugurated the new museum for placing the holy relics in the Badshahi Mosque and the upgradation project of the Mazar-i-Iqbal. Mohsin Naqvi also inaugurated the Lahore Fort Cafe being built at the exterior wall of the Lahore Fort. CM appreciated high quality of the new museum being built for placing the holy relics. He inspected the new and beautiful showcase for placing the holy relics. CM directed early completion of the transfer work of the holy relics in the new museum. Mohsin Naqvi maintained that safely keeping the holy relics attributed to the great personalities at an appropriate place is our foremost responsibility. The holy relics will be kept separately and safely in an excellent manner in the new museum. The installation work of new tiles, marbles in the exterior corridor of Mazar-i-Iqbal and renovation work of its interior part has been completed.

Enterprise Challenge Pakistan announces winners for young entrepreneurs

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Enterprise Challenge Pakistan Announces Winners in National Final for Young Entrepreneurs. Team From Abbottabad wins National Final Award with their business idea of making printed materials accessible to the visually impaired.

Prince's Trust International's global research into the future of work showed that a quarter of young people in Pakistan are interested in entrepreneurship for their career.

The awards were hosted by the British High Commissioner, H. E. Jane Marriott in Islamabad on 24 February.

Each year Prince's Trust International, in partnership with SEED Ventures, celebrates the achievements of young people in Pakistan. The event featured seven promising start-up ideas selected from regional competitions held throughout the country. Prizes were handed out celebrat-



ing innovation, climate friendliness, financial viability and impact.

The overall winning team, Roshni pitched the idea of making printed materials for the visually impaired including education book and a braille

transcription service. The team were also awarded the category of Most Impactful (Social-Inclusion).

Enterprise Challenge Pakistan is the premier platform for aspiring entrepreneurs in the country and has been

described by Forbes as one of the 'five leading global programmes supporting the next generation'. During the events, Sara from Karachi was presented with the award for Global Young Achiever - Asia 2023 for her ingenious business idea of plantable pencils.

Global Young Achiever Award Winner Sara says:

"Enterprise Challenge Pakistan really opened up my mind and allowed me to realise that I can contribute to society and become self-sufficient."

British High Commissioner to Pakistan, H. E. Jane Marriott, CMG OBE says:

"These extraordinary individuals should be proud of their efforts to drive entrepreneurship and increase their sense of social and environmental responsibility. It's exactly why we must empower more young people to do so, and I commend Enterprise Challenge Pakistan for pushing that forward."

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Magical Bonding - A tale of love towards Pakistan and Pak Army - I

In a rapidly globalizing and interconnected world, the importance of patriotism, or loving one's own country, cannot be overstated. While interpretations of patriotism vary, it fundamentally signifies a profound affection, loyalty, and dedication to one's homeland. Beyond mere symbolism, patriotism plays a crucial role in fostering unity, driving positive change, and nurturing a sense of belonging among citizens. Cultivating love for one's country is not just desirable but essential for societal well-being.

One key reason for embracing patriotism is its ability to promote unity amid diversity. Nations are diverse, comprising various cultures, languages, and traditions that reflect humanity's rich tapestry. Patriotism celebrates this diversity, recognizing the unique contributions of each citizen without implying superiority. By fostering national pride and a sense of belonging, patriotism bridges social divides and fosters solidarity among people from different backgrounds.

Moreover, patriotism involves preserving a nation's identity and heritage. Each nation has a distinct history, culture, and values that shape its identity and future. Patriotism entails honoring this heritage, acknowledging past sacrifices, and cherishing national symbols and traditions. By safeguarding cultural legacy, patriotism provides continuity and belonging for future generations.

Active civic engagement is also a hallmark of patriotism. It goes beyond sentimentality, involving citizens actively contributing to their nation's welfare

and progress. Patriotism motivates civic participation, upholding democratic values, and promoting volunteerism, activism, and public service. By instilling a sense of civic responsibility, patriotism strengthens society and empowers individuals to shape their nation's destiny.

In times of adversity, patriotism fosters resilience and solidarity. It instills a collective purpose, inspiring citizens to come together, overcome challenges, and rebuild communities. Whether facing natural disasters, economic crises, or external threats, patriotism fosters unity and resilience, enabling societies to emerge stronger.

Ultimately, patriotism drives positive change and progress. It motivates individuals to strive for excellence, innovate for the common good, and work towards a brighter future. By translating love for their country into meaningful action, citizens can address pressing issues like poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation, fostering sustainable development and prosperity for all.

The emergence of Pakistan in 1947 marked a significant turning point in history, embodying the culmination of years of struggle, sacrifice, and determination. From the impassioned calls for independence to the challenging battles for sovereignty, the journey toward nationhood was fraught with obstacles and sacrifices. The narrative of Pakistan's formation stands as a testament

to the unyielding courage, resilience, and selflessness of countless individuals who dared to envision a homeland where they could live with dignity, liberty, and self-governance.

The aspiration for a separate homeland for Muslims in South Asia traces its roots back to the early 20th century when visionary leaders like Allama Iqbal and Muhammad Ali Jinnah articulated

the demand for Muslim rights within the Indian subcontinent. As the British Raj tightened its grip on the region, the movement for independence gained momentum, fueled by the injustices of colonial rule and the yearning for self-rule. The sacrifices of numerous freedom fighters, activists, and intellectuals, enduring imprisonment, persecution, and even martyrdom, paved the way for the eventual partition of British India and the birth of Pakistan.

The partition of British India in 1947 brought about widespread violence, displacement, and unprecedented human suffering. Thousands of Muslims were displaced from their homes, compelled to abandon their ancestral lands, and undertake perilous journeys in search of safety and refuge amidst the turmoil of partition. The partition riots, communal clashes, and mass migrations left an enduring mark on the collective memory of the subcontinent, underscoring the immense human toll of political upheaval and territorial division.

In the aftermath of partition, Pakistan confronted formidable challenges as it endeavored to consolidate its newfound independence and establish itself as a sovereign nation. The fledgling state grappled with internal strife, external aggression, and economic instability, posing threats to its survival and security.

Despite the monumental challenges and sacrifices endured during its formative years, Pakistan emerged as a resilient nation, determined to carve out its own destiny and fulfill the aspirations of its people. The process of nation-building necessitated overcoming obstacles, fostering unity amid diversity, and charting a path toward progress and prosperity. From the development of infrastructure and institutions to the promotion of education and social welfare, Pakistan's journey toward nationhood has been characterized by perseverance, resilience, and collective endeavor.

As Pakistan commemorates its accomplishments and grapples with contemporary challenges in the 21st century, it is imperative to honor the sacrifices of those who laid the groundwork for the nation and uphold their legacy by striving for a brighter future. The sacrifices made in the founding of Pakistan serve as a poignant reminder of the enduring values of courage, sacrifice, and resilience, inspiring successive generations of Pakistanis to pursue the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah for a democratic, progressive, and inclusive Pakistan.

To be continued



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awdat)

Projecting Mughal-era artifacts through digital media to bolster tourism

Fakhar-e-Alam

Known as architectural wonder with rare wood craftsmanship like many other Mughal-era artifacts, Sethi House is a unique building of Peshawar needs proper projection on digital media to attract foreign tourists and architectural lovers.

Constructed by Sethi family in 1886, Sethi House is a historical building of the British era carrying a unique architectural value and eye-catching wood designs in an amalgamation of Muslims and Vernacular Uzbekistan's architecture could attract foreign tourists in droves if properly showcased on digital media through short videos and pictures to gain maximum capital. Located in a small alleyway Sethi Mohallah near a historic Ghanta Ghar Peshawar, Sethi House is about 10 minutes drive from the bustling Qissa Khawani bazaar.

"Inspired by Muslims and vernacular architecture of Bokhara Uzbekistan, the Sethi family associated with international trade had constructed the masterpiece after migrating from Jehlum Punjab to Peshawar in early 19th century at Mohallah Sethian where about seven havelis were built in almost the same style, signifying an affluent Sethis estheticism passion," said Bakhtzada Muhammad, senior research officer of Archeology Department KP while talking to APP.

"It was my second visit to Sethi House. I was very pleased to see rehabilitation and repair works of the architectural masterpiece of Peshawar," said Manzoorul Haq, former Ambassador while talking to the news agency. "I had visited many countries but could not see such an impres-

sive building with red and greens' window glasses and ventilators structure anywhere in world," he said. "The mehrabs' inside its rooms are filled with small pieces of glass shelves intended to place candles at night, shining just like stars in sky, has impressed me a lot," he said.

The ceiling is designed with pure Islamic architecture and the visitors could look at ceiling for hours at a stretch, which enhances its elegance. "Buildings like Sethi House are built in centuries. It is the identity of Peshawar and its projection was required to attract foreign tourists," he said.

The visitors' soon after entering Mohallah Sethian see its main wooden gate constructed on around five-feet height, leading him to a vast open courtyard with a water fountain in middle, which reminds them of its glorious days when this stunning architectural masterpiece welcomed scores of people through its doors.

Four spacious rooms in surrounding of its courtyard are connected through passageways attracted visitors' attention. The windows of the rooms face the courtyard, each from the same angle, having a colorful glasswork looking great aesthetic beauty. The visitors could not remain unimpressed while seeing red and greens in window glasses, which are reminiscent of post-renaissance art in European churches. The glass cut-pieces were imported especially from Belgium to concoct mélange of architecture.

Bakhtzada said the intricate web of floral designs on its doors, windows and arches stands as a testament to the artistry of the era's artisans. These embellishments add to accolades one has for the workers, who put unsurpassed effort into intricacies of the unique design, making Sethi House architectural wonder.

Upon entering its first floor and balconies, a visitor came across with cold breeze and see birds eyes view of the surrounding areas of Peshawar being the home of over 3,000 years old civilization. Its basement has spacious living rooms for accommodation of visitors and holes in wooden ventilators are angled at a unique angle, ensuring an ample lighting throughout the day.

"Sethi house is a model for modern-day green architecture because of its perfectly built ventilating structures and unique architectural airy designs," said Shahryar Khan, Chief Architect at the Communication and Works Department while talking to APP. Despite passage of over one century of its construction, he said its architecture was intact reflecting its durability and quality design.

Bakhtzada said Sethi House was purchased by the KP Government in 2006 and later was converted into museum by Archeology and Museums Department in 2010 after renovation, attracting tourists and architecture lovers.

Sethi House's conservation was achieved under the Cultural Heritage Trail Project (CHTP) Peshawar. Under the CHTP, about 500 meters long trail from ancient Ghanta Ghar to Gor Gathri had been renovated including centuries-old buildings and houses to restore original grandeur of Peshawar being the oldest city of South Asia.

The trail starts from historical Ghanta Ghar and passes through ancient Bazaar-e-Kalaan and primordial Mohallah Sethian famous for scores of beautifully designed architectural houses constructed by Sethi Family in 1880s. He said the trail had significantly improved the outer appearances of about 85 heritage buildings of Mughal, British and Sikh era.

The policeman became an executioner

Two days ago, a video surfaced showing a policeman assaulting a civilian. Initial investigations revealed that Shahzad ASI, appointed at Waris Khan Police Station in Rawalpindi district, brutally attacked a citizen and bit his arm, grabbed his beard, and ruthlessly twisted his neck while repeatedly slapping him in a savage manner. This violence was done on a kite flyer.

Everyone know that the use of torture by police at thana (police station) levels to coerce citizens into compliance is a grave violation of human rights and the principles of justice. Sadly, this practice persists in many regions, driven by corrupt motives and a disregard for the rule of law.

Thana police often resort to torture as a means of instilling fear in citizens, knowing that the threat of violence can compel individuals to submit to their demands. This coercive tactic is not only morally reprehensible but also undermines the very foundations of a fair and just society.

At the heart of this issue lies the pursuit of personal gain by some members of the police force. By subjecting citizens to torture and abuse, these officers seek to extract bribes or other forms of illicit payments. This exploitation of power for personal enrichment not only perpetuates corruption but also erodes public trust in law enforcement institutions.

The prevalence of bribery within the police force further exacerbates the problem. Officers who engage in torture often do so with the expectation of financial gain, viewing bribes as a means of supplementing their income. This cycle of corruption perpetuates a culture of impunity, where officers believe they can act with impunity and without fear of consequences.

To address this issue, concerted efforts are needed to combat corruption within the police force and ensure accountability for those responsible for torture and abuse. This requires strengthening oversight mechanisms, promoting transparency and accountability, and fostering a culture of respect for human rights within law

enforcement agencies.

Moreover, efforts to raise awareness about the illegality and immorality of torture must be intensified, both within the police force and among the general public. By holding perpetrators accountable and promoting a culture of integrity and professionalism within law enforcement, we can work towards eradicating this deplorable practice and upholding the principles of justice and human dignity.

The Punjab police, like any law enforcement agency, is tasked with maintaining public order, enforcing laws, and ensuring the safety of citizens. However,

there have been numerous reports and incidents highlighting excessive use of force, torture, and other forms of brutality by some members of the Punjab police force. One of the key issues contributing to police brutality in Punjab is the lack of accountability and oversight mechanisms. Despite legal safeguards and regulations in place, such as the Police Order 2002 and various human rights laws, enforcement and implementation often fall short. This failure to hold accountable those responsible for misconduct or abuse of power perpetuates a culture of impunity within the police force.

Today it has come to know through the media that ASI Shehzad, who was involved in torture, has been suspended by CPO Rawalpindi while conducting legal proceedings. The law-breaking cruel policeman has also been arrested by filing an FIR.

When a policeman tortures an unsuspecting citizen or an accused by himself, it becomes clear that our guards are become our enemies. And spreading terror is the work of goons. It is not the role of the police force to create this kind of fear and panic. Due to this illegal act of ASI, the morale of the police department has been severely damaged. The gulf in the police will increase. Keeping such people out of the police department is better for the people and the police force. It is clear that the mentally disordered, vile and corrupt police officers torture the citizens unnecessarily. Such police officers suffer from inferiority complex, they have no humanity and honours in them.

Analysis



Abdul Basit Alvi

Analysis

Analysis

Pak exports have great potential in Kyrgyzstan: KTH chief



PPA

LAHORE: Kyrgyzstan Trade House (KTH) Chairman Meher Kashif Younis said on Sunday that exporting pharmaceuticals, agricultural products, dry fruit and leather goods to Kyrgyzstan offers a promising opportunity for economic growth and international trade relations.

Talking to a delegation of exporters and Importers led by Faran Shahid here, he said Pak exported pharmaceutical, agricultural, dry fruit and leather products of USD 15.95 million during the first ten months of 2023 which is not up to existing potential.

Meher added that in 2023, Kyrgyzstan's foreign trade turnover increased by 29.9 percent (USD 15.7 billion) compared to the previous year. Kyrgyz exports reached up to USD 3.3 billion, a 46.8 percent increase, compared to 2022, while the imports grew by 26 percent to USD 12.4 billion.

The KTH Chairman said that China was Kyrgyzstan's top trading partner in 2023, accounting for 34.7 percent of Kyrgyzstan's foreign trade but Pakistan's share is negligible. He mentioned that trade with the member states of Eurasian Economic Union accounted for 27.8 percent of the country's total trade volume.

He said Kyrgyzstan, located in Central Asia, is a country with a developing economy and a growing demand for various goods and commodities. Pharmaceuticals constitute a vital component of any nation's healthcare system, and Kyrgyzstan is no exception. Exporting pharmaceutical products to Kyrgyzstan can contribute to improving access to essential medications, enhancing healthcare infrastructure, and ultimately, fostering better public health outcomes.

He said pharmaceutical companies can tap into Kyrgyzstan's healthcare market and establish long-term partnerships with local distributors and healthcare institutions. He said Ulanbek Totuaev Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan is playing key role in promoting and strengthening the bilateral trade, besides patronizing the Kyrgyzstan Trade Houses in Pakistan.

PFC board for industry status to furniture sector



PPA

LAHORE: Pakistan Furniture Council's Board of Directors (PFC-BoD) has demanded the government to grant furniture sector the status of an industry in order to increase country's overall exports.

Chairing the board meeting here Sunday, PFC Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq said the furniture sector in Pakistan was a vital component of its economy, employing millions and showcasing the craftsmanship and skill of its people. However, it had long been overlooked and undervalued, he said, adding that granting industry status to the furniture sector was crucial for several reasons as it provide access to various incentives, subsidies, and support mechanisms tailored for industrial sectors, thus fostering growth and innovation within the furniture industry.

He said, it would enhance the sector's credibility and attract much-needed investment, both domestic and foreign, leading to modernization and expansion. "It will facilitate easier access to finance and credit facilities, enabling furniture manufacturers to upgrade technology and improve productivity," he added. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that industry status would bolster exports by enhancing competitiveness in the global market.

With proper recognition and support, he remarked, Pakistani furniture can establish itself as a sought-after commodity worldwide, contributing significantly to the country's export revenue and economic prosperity, he added.

The CEO urged the government to take swift and decisive action in recognizing the furniture sector as an industry as it would not only improve the growth potential of this vital sector but also provide

Pakistan of a lucrative opportunity to excel in the global market.

Islamic banking system is growing rapidly in Pakistan: Dr Rehana Kausar

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Bahauddin Zakaria University Department of Commerce Chairperson Professor Dr. Rehana Kausar has said that the Islamic banking system is growing rapidly in Pakistan and the Meezan Center for Islamic Finance (MCIIF) established within the Department of Commerce has a lot of support. There is more effort and now a new director in this field. The arrival of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Sadiq Shahid will bring more improvement. He has extensive experience in Islamic banking and will equip students with Islamic banking education through modern research.

The new director of CIF) Professor Dr. Muhammad Sadiq Shahid KSpeaking at the reception given by PhD scholar Syed Naem Gilani, Amir Ashraf Muhammad Younis and other students, Professor Dr. Shahid said that



the efforts of Vice Chancellor Dr. Muhammad Ali Gilani and Chairperson of the Department of Commerce Professor Dr. Rehana Kausar. The aim of this department established by Islamic Banking education should be promoted, it will improve our economic conditions and the scourge of usury will also end. It is good that the students are growing rapidly in this direction.

We have hundreds of PhD and MPhil students from Pakistan. There are those who are playing their role in the development of Pakistan by getting Islamic education in commerce. In the reception, Prof. Asif Yasin, Prof. Dr. Khawar Naheed, Prof. Dr. Umar Qudus, Assistant Director of Budget and Accounts, Cardiology Hospital, Dr. Amir Ashraf Muhammad Younis, Syed Naem Gilani and other Ph. D. Scholars and professors participated.

Convention and Exhibition

Visitors shop at the pavilion for Vietnamese commodities at Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center in Nanning, capital of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.



Photo: Xinhua/Zhou Hua

PAAPAM concerned over hike in GST on locally manufactured automobiles

PPA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts and Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) has shown concerns on the proposed hike in sales tax from 18% to 25% on automobiles having ex-factory price of 40 lakh and above. In a unified stance, PAAPAM's leadership, comprising of Chairman Abdul Rahman Aizaz, SVC Mumsahd Ali, and VC Taufique Sherwani are of the opinion that previous move to increase ST to 25% on 1400 cc cars along with other taxation measures and devaluation of Rupee have already resulted in drop of automobile sales to just 30% of 2021-22 levels. This sharp decline has not only resulted in duress to the part making sector and employment thus generated but also resulted in lesser absolute tax collection from the sector.

Highlighting the current challenges like



souring energy prices, currency devaluation

of over 160% in just 6 years, exceptionally high financing rates, and over 40% taxation on every car sold have already curtailed sale to just 100,000 Cars/SUVs against the installed capacity of 500,000 vehicles.

PAAPAM's leadership emphasized that increasing GST to 25% for small size sedans will push the prices beyond purchasing power of country's middle class. Such a move will not only hurt the customer but will also yield lesser collection of tax due to anticipated lesser sale.

It is to be noted that automobile production and sales have been on a downward trajectory for the last five years. Automobiles are demand-elastic items whose sales would further go down with a jump in prices and the GST rise would prove counterproductive.

PAAPAM requested for dialogues with government before taking any decision on imposing further taxes on automobiles.

PSX surges 4.92pc WoW on political clarity, IMF statement

TLTP

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) bounced back amid clarity on the political horizon after closing the preceding three weeks in the red, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 2,942.86 points (+4.92 percent) to close the week at 62,815.82 points.

The main factors behind this turnaround of the market included agreement between Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples Party to form the government at the federal level, and the statement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) where it said it looks forward to working with the new government of Pakistan.

Another significant factor contributing to the favorable market conditions is the attractive valuations at which various stocks are currently trading. This allure is expected to attract investors, further propelling the market momentum in an upward direction. Moreover, robust earnings of most of the companies and strong fundamentals are also lending support to the market.

The market demonstrated a buoyant momentum during the week despite mixed indicators on the economic front. The current account shifted to a deficit of \$269 million in January 2024 from a surplus of \$404 million

in December 2023. However, remittances reported a commendable growth of 26 percent year-on-year in January 2024.

The recent Treasury bills auction revealed an increase in cut-off yields by 126 basis points, affecting both 3-month and 12-month tenors. On the other hand, National Saving Schemes interest rates experienced a decrease across various certificates, ranging from 40 to 160 basis points.

Power generation climbed by 7.6 percent month-on-month in January 2024, indicating positive trends in the energy sector. The Roshan Digital Account recorded an inflow of \$142 million in January 2024, reaching a total of \$7.3 billion. However, foreign reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) declined by \$44 million on a weekly basis, settling at \$8 billion on February 16.

During the week under review, sector-wise contributions to the positive momentum were led by oil and gas exploration companies (623 points), followed by commercial banks (513 points), technology and communication (355 points), fertilizer (255 points), and power generation and distribution (254 points). On the other hand, miscellaneous (26 points) and chemical (16 points) were the major sectors making negative contributions.

Major companies adding points to the index remained OGDC (340 points), PPL

(221 points), HUBC (216 points), SYS (201 points), and MEBL (195 points). Major companies depriving the index of points remained PSEL (57 points), NESTLE (20 points), COLG (15 points), FATIMA (11 points), and AKBL (10 points).

Foreign buying decreased during the week to \$2.9 million from \$5.2 million observed in the previous week. On the local front, selling activities were reported by individuals (\$6.2 million), followed by insurance companies (\$1.6 million). Average traded volumes witnessed a slight decrease of 3.3 percent during the week, while average value traded settled 6.3 percent lower WoW at \$45 million.

As the anticipation builds for the formation of a new government in Pakistan next week, financial analysts predict a positive impact on the stock market. According to experts at Arif Habib Limited, the upcoming government formation is likely to reinforce the current positive sentiments prevailing in the market. The analysts forecast that the new government, expected to be established in the coming week, will contribute to an already optimistic market atmosphere. Additionally, the ongoing results season is anticipated to keep certain stocks in the spotlight, driven by expectations of robust financial performances. TLTP

Energy prices must be rationalized for trade & industry to survive



PPA

KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has echoed the collective concerns of the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan that electricity and gas prices must be rationalized with immediate effect in accordance with ground realities in a way that businesses can continue to operate profitably and sustainably.

Mr. Magoon emphasized that food authority should be federal to avoid contradictions, anomalies and discrepancies in interprovincial food trade & regulations.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon explained that inflationary pressures have adversely affected both households and businesses. Traditional meth-

ods like raising interest rates prove counterproductive.

Mr. Abdul Rauf Mukhtar demanded that the limit in the definition of Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) should be enhanced to 800 million in Pakistan from the current 250 million in order to enable SMEs flourish.

Muhammad Iqbal, President of Rahim Yar Khan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RYK-CCL), criticized the high-handed approach of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP).

Mr. Zaki Aijaz, VP FPCCI, maintained that a tectonic shift is taking place the world over in the energy mix; and clean & green alternative energy sources will take over the world sooner than what we can imagine.

BMP wants speedy work on long-awaited Pak-Iran gas line to ease energy issues

PPA

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has welcomed the Cabinet Committee's approval of work on 80-kilometer first phase of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project within its borders after a long delay and hoped that it would proceed expeditiously, as the project is bound to bring an industrial revolution in Pakistan.

Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman and FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar said the businessmen had already been pressing the govern-

ment hard for procuring the required energy resource from whatever source suits to it to relieve the country of the mounting shortage of gas.

The Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project began in 2013, and several deadlines have already been missed due to long-standing US sanctions against Tehran. According to reports, Pakistan was trying to negotiate with Tehran to avoid a whopping \$20 billion in liabilities as the long-stalled project's deadline approaches this year. Last year, government also approached Washington, requesting a solution to the lingering imbroglio, but received no response.

PIAF wants effective policy for promotion of demand-driven technical education

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial & Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Chairman Fahimur Rahman Saigol has said that educated and skilled people can play a better role in national and economic development, calling for formulating an effective policy for the promotion of demand-driven technical education, as the present setup of technical training is not addressing the requirements of modern industrialization.

These views were expressed



by the PIAF Chairman, who attended the annual meeting of Defense Welfare Society as a special guest and addressed the audience. He appreciated the work and passion of the organizers of Defense Welfare Society who are providing technical education to students in this era of inflation, which is valuable and praiseworthy.

Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII)

Indonesian varsity offers scholarship schemes to Pakistani students

Amjad Mehmood

ISLAMABAD: Indonesia and Pakistan have decades-long brotherly diplomatic ties and share vital religious and cultural commonalities. To strengthen the relationships at the gross root level, the Indonesian government encouraged higher education institutions to offer scholarship schemes for young talented Pakistanis. In a similar context, an orientation session on scholarship schemes was held at the Aims Education System Head Office here in Islamabad from Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII), one of the top-ranked universities in Indonesia.

Dr. Bambang Suratno, Domestic Partnership Division Head, and Mr. Ahmad Priyansyah, Staff of International Mobility Division from the Directorate of Partnership/International Office, Universitas Islam Indonesia briefed the participants and 12 standard students by giving a brief presentation about scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students. Introducing the audience about UII, Dr. Bambang Suratno said Universitas Islam Indonesia was established in 1945 as a pioneer national university in Indonesia with long-standing contributions to education, research, and community engagement. He informed that UII ranked as one of the leading national universities in Indonesia and was named among Asia's top 500 universities based on QS Asia University ranking in 2019, 2020, 2022 and in 2023. He shared that UII provided a unique multicultural experience to local and international students by emphasizing unity and respect to improve inclusive education. He said UII offers 26 Bachelor, 4 applied sciences programs, 16 Master and 5 Doctoral programs from engineering, computing, social science, textile, religion, and pharmacy domains. He said Pakistani



students can find a degree program at the University's website <https://www.uui.ac.id/en/find-a-course/>.

Briefing about scholarship schemes, he said, the majority of scholarships are available for Master's programs at UII while limited offers are also available for BS and Ph. D. programs. He said UII offers two different scholarship programs titles as KNB Scholarships at Universitas Islam Indonesia and Future Global Leaders Scholarships. Briefing further about the first

scheme he said, the Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB) Scholarship is a program to support overseas prospective students from developing countries. This program is offered by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology with funding from the Indonesia Endowment Fund (LPDP). KNB provides the experience of studying in top universities in Indonesia and, at the same time, living in one of the world's most diverse and vibrant societies. By getting



the scholarship, students will experience quality bachelor and postgraduate programs managed by 31 prominent universities in Indonesia, including Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII). He further said UII is committed to educating students to become future global leaders by providing opportunities for international students to learn along with UII. Every year UII offers Future Global Leaders Scholarships (FGLS) to high school graduates and bachelor's degree holders from overseas with a quota of 50 international students to study in Applied Studies, Undergraduate, and Postgraduate Programs. The interested students can find further details on the University's website at <https://www.uui.ac.id/en/scholarships/>. As a prerequisite,

to remain eligible for the scholarship, students must have a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale during their studies at UII.

Dr. Bambang Suratno while sharing the application schedule for scholarships in 2024 said for Bachelor degree programs only one intake applications will be received from 22 January - 28 April 2024 and two slots are available to apply for postgrad application from 22 January - 28 April 2024 and then from 1 October - 2 December 2024 respectively. He said these scholarships cover registration, tuition, and language fees other than health insurance, living, accommodation, book and thesis allowances. However, these scholarships do not cover, air ticket and visa costs.

A foreign student looking forward to studying in the Republic of Indonesia is essentially required to apply for a visa upon receipt of an Admission Letter from Universitas Islam Indonesia or any other university. Before applying for a visa, a student should obtain a study permit issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia.

The orientation session was attended by the Chairman Institute of Southern Punjab/ Aim Education System, Mr. Almass Ayub Sabir, Executive Directive Aims Education System, Mr. Muzzam Ahmed, Special Guest, Chairman Iqra University, Islamabad Campus Mr. Khurshed Alam, Editor, Daily The Spokesman, Mr. Naveed Ahmed Khan, and large number of students.

Japanese envoy to Pakistan to celebrate Emperor Naruhito's 64th birthday

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The bilateral relations between Pakistan and Japan are marked by visible and invisible partnership spanning over decades of close cooperation and engagement.

These views were expressed by Ambassador of Japan Wada Mitsuhiro on Thursday while addressing a reception to celebrate the 64th Birthday of the Emperor of Japan, Naruhito (Feb 23).

Emperor Naruhito since his accession to the throne on 1st May 2019 as the 126th Emperor of Japan is seen as the symbol of Japan and the unity of its people.

The reception hosted at Serena Hotel was attended by a large number of representatives from various ministries and departments as well as the Japanese nationals and the Pakistani students.

Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah was the chief guest on the occasion while Interim Federal Education Minister Madad Ali Sindhvi, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Dr. Shehzad Waseem, spokesperson for the Balochistan interim government, Jan Achakzai, diplomats, parliamentarians and a large number of the Pakistanis who are either doing business in Japan or have been there attended the reception to refresh their memories with the



delights of Japan.

Jamal Shah in his brief address paid rich compliments to the leadership and people of Japan for their commitment to better their lives and the planet. I very well remember my visit to Japan where I witnessed the best living practices and the Japanese people's resilience in the face of natural disasters and other challenges. Today, Japan stands as the role model nation for the rest of the world and the relations between Pakistan and Japan have a long history of friendship and cooperation, he said.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Japan ambassador noted, "Feb 23 was a day to celebrate the good health of the Emperor as well as to



wish for the health and prosperity of Japanese people. He said not only at the government-to-government level Pak-Japan relations are strengthening, but the

individuals are also supporting the friendship between Japan and Pakistan.

"Among around 1,000 Japanese people living in Pakistan, in



fact quite many are married to Pakistanis or the children of such international couples. They've formed families who love both Japan and Pakistan, and many of such families have made good contributions to Pak-Japan relations," said the ambassador.

When I visited Sialkot a few months ago, I was surprised and pleased to know that the famous Pakistani businesses that produce soccer balls and surgical instruments were using high-quality Japan-made materials, he further said.



766 industrial zones have been created in Uzbekistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade: In 2023, enterprises located in industrial zones manufactured products totaling 53.4 trillion soums and exported \$972 million.

In 2024, 841 projects are planned to be launched in industrial zones in Uzbekistan.

In recent years, the country has been implementing a number of consistent, irreversible reforms aimed at creating an open, competitive economy, investment and industrial development, expanding foreign trade relations, and creating an attractive business environment for domestic and foreign investors.

According to experts, the effectiveness of the ongoing reforms provides a symbiosis of the best practices in developed countries, the capabilities of the national economy and the political will of the country's leadership to radically

upgrade and improve the living standards of the population.

One of the world's best practices for accelerated development of production and export potential, as well as attracting investments, is the creation of special economic and industrial zones.

As of January 1, 2024, 766 industrial zones have been created in the country, including 24 special economic zones, 532 small industrial and 210 youth industrial and entrepreneurial zones.

According to the master plans of these facilities, a total of 11,952.1 hectares are allocated for investment projects. Thanks to the work carried out under the coordination of the MIIT, today 6,382.3 hectares of industrial zones are occupied for investment projects. 4,123.5 hectares of land were put up for sale through auctions, including 3,304.8 hectares in special economic zones, 666 hectares in small industrial zones and 152.7 hectares in youth industrial and entrepreneurial

zones. In January this year alone, more than 100 hectares of land were put up for auction.

The scale of work in industrial zones is increasing every year. In 2024, 841 projects are planned to be launched in industrial zones. This figure is 124 units fewer than in 2023 (965 projects), which is due to the consolidation of newly created production facilities and the organization of a much larger number of jobs. So, if the total cost of projects implemented in industrial zones in 2023 amounted to 9.7 trillion soums, then in 2024 13.3 trillion soums will be attracted for these purposes. The situation is similar with jobs created - 20.7 thousand in 2023 against 27.7 thousand this year.

The "bull by the horns" was taken from the very first days of this year. Despite the usual "winter lull", already in January 2024, 14 projects worth 56.6 billion soums were commissioned, as a result of which 300 new jobs were created. Of these, 12

projects worth 54.1 billion soums were launched in small industrial zones and 2 projects worth 2.5 billion soums in youth industrial and entrepreneurial zones.

As always, the results are important. In addition to the jobs being created, which make it possible to provide employment for residents of settlements nearby industrial zones, there has been an increase in production and exports. In 2023, enterprises located in industrial zones manufactured products totaling 53.4 trillion soums and exported \$972 million. In January this year alone, 4.4 trillion soums worth of goods were produced, and \$61.3 million worth of goods were exported.

Uzbekistan is confidently and gradually developing industrial zones. Thus, all other things being equal, the results of this work will exceed expectations and make a worthy contribution to achieving the strategic goals set by the Head of State for the phased economic development of the country.



Pakistan High Commission Dhaka holds 1st Mian Sultan Khan Chess Tournament

Sports Desk

DHAKA: The High Commission for Pakistan in Dhaka, in collaboration with the Bangladesh Chess Federation, organized the 1st Mian Sultan Khan Chess Tournament today at the Pakistan High Commission. The event was arranged to celebrate the skill, strategy and legacy of one of the greatest players of the game of Chess Mian Sultan Khan. Pakistani lone Grandmaster Mian Sultan Khan (Late), a three-time British Chess Championship winner, was revered as one of the greatest natural players of modern times, leaving an indelible mark on the global chess community.

With an impressive turnout of 180 chess players from diverse backgrounds including the diplomatic community, public and private organizations, educational institutions, and the general public, the tournament showcased the fervor and passion for the game across Bangladesh.

President of Bangladesh Chess Federation, Dr. Benazir Ahmed who is also President of South Asian Chess Council graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. General Secretary of Bangladesh Chess Federation, Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim, Grandmaster Niaz Murshed and

Rani Hamid, Bangladesh's 1st International master player were present as Special Guests.

Ambassadors of various countries based in Dhaka including Ambassador of China H. E. Mr. Yao Wen, Ambassador of the Philippines, H. E. Mr. Tito L. Ausan Jr., Ambassador of Italy H. E. Antonio ALESSANDRO, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, H. E. Mr. Dharmapala Weerakkody, Egyptian Ambassador H. E. Mr. Omar Mohie Eldin Ahmed Fahmy, were also present as special guests.

Mohammad Minhaz Uddin emerged as Champion of the tournament and Mr. Zia Tahsin Tajwar as runner-up while Mr. Manon Reja Neer and Md Abu Hanif clinched 3rd and 4th place respectively.

Dr. Benazir Ahmed, President Bangladesh Chess Federation and Pakistan High Commissioner Syed Ahmed Maroof awarded trophies and cash prizes to the top performers of the tournament expressing their admiration for the participants' dedication and skill.

Speaking at the Awards Distribution Ceremony, Dr. Benazir Ahmed appreciated the great initiative of Pakistan High Commission for providing the excellent opportunity to chess players in Bangladesh and the diplomatic community to

connect with each other. "The event will create positive vibes in the chess community of Bangladesh and Pakistan and also the diplomatic community in Bangladesh", Benazir Ahmed said and assured continuous support of Bangladesh Chess Federation to any such future endeavours of the Mission.

Speaking at the concluding ceremony, Pakistan High Commissioner Syed Ahmed Maroof expressed his gratitude to the Bangladesh Chess Federation for the invaluable support in successfully organizing the tournament. He emphasized the significance of sports events in strengthening people to people contacts, transcending borders through the spirit of sportsmanship. He said that the tournament was aimed at celebrating the rich legacy of Mian Sultan Khan and bringing together the chess enthusiasts in Bangladesh and the diplomatic community for a healthy activity.

Highlighting the impressive turnout of participants from diverse background, High Commissioner Maroof said that the event served as a powerful symbol of mutual respect and collaboration, fostering a spirit of camaraderie that transcends the boundaries of the chessboard. "Sports has the power in bringing people together, promoting understanding, and nurturing lasting friendships



across communities and borders", Mr. Maroof said and expressed hope that it will be a very good step forward in bilateral relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The High Commissioner congratulated the winner and best performers of the tournament while wishing all other

participants the best for the 2nd Mian Sultan Khan tournament next year.

He also thanked the ambassadors and diplomats of various countries, the Grandmaster, International masters and media persons for their presence at the event.

Caption: Dr. Benazir Ahmed, Presi-

dent Bangladesh Chess Federation and Syed Ahmed Maroof, Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh with the Winner and top performers of the 1st Mian Sultan Khan Chess Tournament organized by Pakistan High Commission to celebrate the legacy of the Pakistani chess legend Mian Sultan Khan.

Cholistan Jeep rally

BAHAWALPUR: A driver takes part during 19th Cholistan Jeep rally on Sunday.



Photo: Online

Khansortium Karachi Region Senior Inter District Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

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

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Yasir Mushtaq 127, Moazzam Hussain 113, Zohaib Abid 106, M. Abiss 102, Imran Shah 102 and Rao. Waqar 100.

Summarized Scores:
Zone-III Blues beat Zone-I Reds by 7

Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Zone-I Reds 128 all out in 31 overs. Saad Alam 37. Aliyan Mehmood (ob) 5/42, Zohaib 2/22, Hassan Asim 2/30.

Zone-III Blues 129/3 in 19.5 overs. Karar Ali 77 11x4 3x6, Noman Ali 25 not out.

In the 2nd Match IV Blues beat Zone-V Whites by 108 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Zone-IV Blues 333/2 in 45 overs. Yasir Mushtaq 127 11x4 4x6 not out, Imran Shah 102 14x4 2x6, Faisal Nasir 60 5x4 5x6.

Zone-V Whites 225/8 in 45 overs. M. Abiss 102 13x4 2x6, Waseem Ahmed 83 8x4, Taha Siddique 3/39, Akbar Khan 2/17. Zone-II Blues beat Zone-V Reds by 91 runs at Eastern Star Ground. Zone-II Blues 338/9 in 45 overs. Moazzam Hussain 113 18x4, Rao Waqar 100 11x4 1x6, Arif Shah 4/65, Haris Bin Siddique 2/66.

Zone-V Reds 247 all out in 40 overs. Nasir Hussain 90 10x4 5x6, Chand Ahmed 40, Shabih Haider 33, Arif Shah 32. Hasan Bin Shahab (rlb) 4/31,

Mehmood Jamshed 3/58, Asad Akhtar 2/37. In the Fourth Match Zone-V Blues beat Zone-II Greens by 3 Wickets at Annu Bhai Park Ground. Zone-II Greens 258/9 in 45 overs. Syed Nawab 66 9x4 4x6, Touheed Mustafa 46, Wajeeh Fawad 28, Ali Shinwari 27, Munir ur Rehman 24. Syed Izzanuddin 3/43, Junaid Ilyas 2/30, Ali Butt 2/34, Ebadur Rehman 2/56.

Zone-V Blues 259/7 in 43.2 overs. Zohaib Abid 106 9x4 3x6, Ali Butt 59 5x4 3x6, M. Asif 22. Munir ur Rehman 2/50, Sufyan 2/63.

Second Rumanza Open Golf Championship 2024

Tahir Amin Malik

The Second Rumanza Open Golf Championship 2024 contested at the most engaging Rumanza Golf Course DHA, Multan brought forth wholesome cash rewards and gratifying delight for the wonder of Pakistan's Professional Golf Scene, Ahmed Baig.



This young proponent of the golfing arena succeeded in proving that he is now an unstoppable force in professional golf and whether his adversaries like it or not, his expertise and underterred display of golfing skills represents an intenses that has become unmatched. In the course of the final round on Sunday at the captivating Rumanza Golf Course and pitched against international golfers of standing from UK and Austria, and top Pakistani Golf Professionals, Ahmed Baig came up with a spectacular all round commanding game to emerge as the winner leaving behind rivals like Timon Baltl from Austria and Luke Joy from UK. His final days score card of gross 66 provided the required excellence to unshackle the efforts of international players Timon, Luke and national top professionals Matloob Ahmed, Hamza Taimur and even our best of the best Muhammad Shabbir Iqbal. Overall Ahmed ended the championship with three rounds scores of 69,71 and 66 and an aggregate of 206, ten under par and that fetched him the 2nd Rumanza Open Golf Title. During this championship he has been gloriously first rate.

International golfer Timon Baltl of Austria ended up as runners up with scores of 68,72 and 70, a championship aggregate of 210, six under par and he lost the title to Ahmed Baig by a margin of six strokes.

Another international golfer Luke Joy of UK came third. His effort yielded him three rounds scores of 70,71 and 70 and a championship aggregate of 211, five under par. Other Pakistani stalwarts who did well are Matloob Ahmed of Lahore Garrison Greens. His score for three rounds was 213, three under par which is certainly an impressive effort. Hamza Taimur Amin of Rumanza finished at 215, followed by M. Waqas of Margalla Greens at 216, M. Shabbir of Islamabad at 216, Abdul Zahoor of Multan Golf Club at 218, Munir (Rawalpindi) at 219 and Wisal Khan (Peshawar) at 220.

In his post victory comments, Ahmed Baig stated that the playing arena, the Rumanza Golf Course with course length extended to 7553 yards was an exacting examination for competing golf professionals that required meticulous shot placing accuracy due to the demanding fairways. The infrastructure was certainly world class.

At the conclusion of the 2nd Rumanza Open Golf Championship the prizes were awarded to the leading performers by Project Director, DHA, Multan Brig Ahmed Rizwan Ghum-

HBL PSL 9th Edition

Multsn Sultans Comfortable Win in Home Ground Against Quetta Gladiators

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Multan Sultans finished their home leg on a high after defeating Quetta Gladiators by 13 runs at Multan Cricket Stadium on Sunday evening. After posting 180-4 in the first innings, the Mohammad Rizwan-led side restricted Quetta Gladiators to 167-9, courtesy of three-wicket hauls by Mohammad Ali and David Willey. Gaddafi Stadium Lahore will host the second fixture of the day, scheduled to take place between Lahore Qalandars and Peshawar Zalmi at 7 pm.

Quetta Gladiators won the toss and elected to field first. Usman Khan, playing his first game of HBL PSL 9, started the innings with three boundaries in the first over. Abrar Ahmed provided the first breakthrough as Usman (14, 7b, 3x4s) was stumped in the third over. Reeza Hendricks joined Mohammad Rizwan in the middle and the two stitched a 79-run second-wicket

partnership to bring momentum to Multan's innings.

Akeal Hosein broke the partnership in the 14th over as Rizwan holed one out to Saud Shakeel at deep midwicket. The Multan skipper had to walk back after scoring his 18th HBL PSL half-century that showcased two boundaries and four maximums.

Subsequently, Tayyab Tahir - also playing his first game of HBL PSL 9 - partnered with Hendricks for a quickfire 77-run stand that helped Multan get to a satisfactory total. In the last five overs, Multan amassed 68 runs, with the 18th and 19th overs going for 17 runs each.

By the time Hendricks was dismissed in the final over, the damage had been done as Multan ended at 180-4. With his knock that yielded 72 from 47, which included seven boundaries and four maximums, Hendricks overtook Lahore's Sahibzada Farhan to become the tournament's current leading



run-scorer.

Tayyab finished with an unbeaten 35 from 22, including four boundaries and a six. Mohammad Amir bagged two wickets while Abrar and Akeal picked up one each.

In pursuit of 181, Quetta Gladiators lost both their opening batters inside the powerplay with Jason Roy falling on an exceptional delivery

bowled by Mohammad Ali in the third over and Saud Shakeel getting caught at mid-on by Usama Mir off David Willey.

Khawaja Nafay and captain Rilee Rossouw batted together to add 62 runs for the third-wicket partnership until debutant Aftab Ibrahim got hold of the latter on the last ball of the 12th over. Rossouw walked

back for 30 off 18, on the back of a four and two sixes.

Sajjad Ali, coming to bat as a concussion substitute for Sarfaraz Ahmed, could only make two off two before Rizwan stumped him off Usama Mir's bowling.

Trouble deepened for Quetta as Nafay (36, 31b, 2x4s, 2x6s) found Usama behind point, awarding Ali his second wicket of the day.

Sherfane Rutherford contributed 21 from 14, including two maximums, before he was caught and bowled by Willey. In the same over, Mohammad Wasim Jnr also fell for just a run.

Amir chipped in with 12 off eight, including two fours, before Ali rattled his stumps in the penultimate over. Aftab, bowling the final over, removed Abrar on the final ball to award Multan the game by 13 runs.

Willey and Ali bagged three wickets while Aftab returned with two. Usama also dismissed one batter.

WAPDA TENDER NOTICE
MANGLA POWER STATION
INVITATION TO BID

1. Resident Engineer Power Station WAPDA, Mangla invites sealed bids on single stage one envelop basis from original manufacturer / authorized distributors / suppliers / contractors registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments who are on active Tax payer list of FBR for supply of following items for Mangla Power Station.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Completion Period	Opening date	Amount of Bid Security
1	ITR / 1047	Purchase of Toners / Cartridges for Power Station Mangla	30 Days	18.03.2024	68,000/-
2	ITR / 1048	Purchase of T&P Items and other Protective Equipment for Vehicles of Mangla Power Station.	30 days	19.03.2024	75,000/-

2. Bidding documents, containing detailed terms and conditions, etc. are available for the interested bidders from following office during working days / hours on payment of non-refundable cost of Rs. 1,000/- for each Tender Document before the opening date of tender:
Resident Engineer Power Station WAPDA, Mangla.
Ph. No. +92-544-639005 | Fax No. +92-544-639261
Pay-order / Bank draft in favour of Resident Engineer Power Station Mangla payable at M/s. H.B.L. Mangla Cantt. Branch (A/c No. 12297900272803). Bidding documents issued from authorized office of WAPDA will only be accepted.

3. The bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the bidding documents, alongwith Bid Security mentioned against each, must reach at the office of Resident Engineer Power Station WAPDA, Mangla on or before 11:00 Hrs on the dates mentioned against each. Bids will be opened on the same days at 11:30 Hrs. This advertisement is also available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk.

Resident Engineer
Power Station Mangla
Ph. No. 0544-639005 | Fax No. 0544-639261 | E-mail. rehpsmangla@gmail.com
This notice is also available at PPRA Website: www.ppra.org.pk
PID(L) Website: www.wapda.gov.pk PRD(L)WAPDA/309(2023-24)
Donate for Diamer Basha & Mohmand Dams

Spirit Exercise-2024

Int'l Pakistan Army Team Spirit Exercise-2024 begins at Pabbi. A total of 20 friendly countries including military observers are participating in the event.



Photo: ISPR

Ahsan Iqbal criticises PTI founder over letter to IMF

Bureau Report

NAROWAL: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday castigated former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan for writing a letter to International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding an audit of the general elections.

Addressing a ceremony here, the former planning minister dubbed the PTI founder's move as "enmity with the country", saying that another attempt was made to obstruct loan programme by

writing a letter to the IMF.

On Friday, PTI founder Imran Khan confirmed that he had penned a letter to the global lender, urging the global lender to give the poll results a thorough once-over before cutting any new cheques for Islamabad.

Speaking to journalists at the Adiala Jail, Imran Khan raised alarms about the potential consequences of obtaining a loan under the current circumstances.

"If the country gets a loan in such a situation, then who will return it?" he questioned, expressing concerns that such



a loan could lead to increase in poverty.

The PTI has faced a strong backlash over the letter's timing as the country is embroiled in a severe economic crisis, and the upcoming

government is already eyeing a new IMF programme.

Speaking of the recently held elections, Ahsan Iqbal said that the three provinces of the country denounced the politics of PTI in the polls.

"The PML-N had bagged a majority in Punjab. However, we got to form the coalition government in the centre," he added.

He expressed optimism that Punjab will witness a revolution following the appointment of PML-N Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz as the next chief minister. "The PTI elected lawmakers should play a positive role in the National Assembly."

Admitting the economic crunch faced by the country, Iqbal said, "It is up to everyone to steer the country out of the crisis."

Pakistan Railways plans to procure 230 passenger coaches

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways is finalising a plan to procure 230 passenger coaches and 820 High Capacity Wagons under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) aiming help to improve the speed of the trains and ensure adherence to fixed timings.

"Out of the total, around 46 Completely-Built-Up (CBU) passenger coaches have been procured up till now while the remaining 184 would be manufactured in the country and the coaches would be able to travel at the speed of 160km/h," said an official in

the Ministry of Railways.

He said Pakistan Railways is putting maximum efforts to complete rehabilitation and reconstruction work on the railway track along with improving the speed of the locomotives to carry passengers to their respective destinations on time.

The infrastructure, including the track and signaling system from Karachi to Peshawar, Main Line-I (ML-I), and doubling of track from Lahore to Peshawar (462.20 Km) was also being revamped, he added.

The official noted that the length of the track was 1,726 kilometers and the depart-

ment has planned to improve speed up to 160 kilometers per hour in the project of up-gradation of ML-I under the China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He said the rolling stock being procured under this project would be capable of running at a speed of 160 km/h whereas the department had a dedicated fleet of 55 diesel-electric locomotives of 4000-4500 HP for freight operation to cater maximum haulage at higher speed.

"The Computer Based Interlocking (CBI) system is installed on 48 stations of ML-I, to improve signaling and interlocking for higher

speed and safety of train operation," the official added.

To a question, he said Pakistan Railways was a big organization comprising around 63,000 employees, and its network was spread throughout the country.

The official said the employees were well cared for owing to having several welfare activities, including healthcare facilities through an intensive network of hospitals, dispensaries, and child healthcare units.

He said the provision of government accommodation according to entitlement and priority list, staff benevolent funds, benefits, and incentives provided through the Prime

Minister's Family Assistance Package policy for deceased employees' families were part of these facilities.

He said the other facilities included benefits and incentives provided through policy for disabled employees' families, monthly grants to widows scale-wise, the establishment of primary and high schools, industrial schools to teach handicrafts, sports activities, pick and drop facility for schools/offices, installation of water filters plants, a special provision of five medical seats in Riphah Islamic Universities with the reduction of 50 percent in admission and tuition fees.

Newly elected Balochistan MPAs to take oath on Wednesday



Bureau Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has convened an assembly session on February 28 (Wednesday) at the Balochistan Assembly Building, during which newly elected members of the Provincial Assembly will take the oath.

The outgoing Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, will preside over the session and take the oath from the elected MPAs.

After taking oaths by the newly elected members of the provincial legislature, the schedule for the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker will be announced.

Ambassador Tirmizi assures all possible assistance to injured Pakistanis

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Sunday assured all possible assistance to the fellow Pakistanis who were injured in a fire eruption incident at sanitizers and perfumes related chemical products depot in Ajman. The ambassador also expressed his best wishes and prayers for the early recovery of the injured.

A sad accident of fire eruption occurred at a sanitizers and perfumes related chemical products facility in Ajman, UAE late on February 24. A total of nine Pakistanis got injured in the ill-fated incident who were immediately rushed to different hospitals, Consulate General of Pakistan in Dubai said in a press release.

"We are ensuring all possible assistance to the injured Pakistanis. The Welfare Wing of Pakistan's Consulate General, Dubai visited the hospitals immediately after the unfortunate occurrence and is constantly in touch with the relevant authorities", the press release quoted Consul General Hussain Muhammad, as saying. Four of these injured were initially taken to Khalifa bin Zayed Hospital,



Ajman who included Gul Dad s/o Shah Nawaz Dahri, Nawab s/o Shah Nawaz and Imam Bux s/o Khuda Bux Solangi all belonging to Shaheed Benazirabad District (Nawabshah), Sindh) and Akram s/o Dawood Khan a resident of District Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab.

They were later shifted to Sheikh Shakhboub Medical City Abu Dhabi. Ijaz s/o Abdul Aziz is admitted to Zayed Hospital Sharjah, Shahid s/o Mumtaz

and Zahoor s/o Hayat to Kuwait Hospital Sharjah while Sikandar s/o Abdul Rahim is admitted to Al Qassimi Hospital Sharjah. All four were from Shaheed Benazirabad District (Nawabshah), Sindh. The Welfare Wing's team is in coordination with Al Jurf Police Station, Ajman to technically assist in checking the incident site for tracing Akbar s/o Khamisa Khan, a resident of Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab who is the ninth victim of the accident.

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Int'l Pakistan Army Team Spirit Exercise-2024 begins at Pabbi

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: The 7th International Pakistan Army Team Spirit Exercise-2024 has begun at the National Counter Terrorism Centre at Pabbi, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Sunday.

Director General Military Training opened the 60 hours long Patrolling Exercise, which aims to enhance military-to-military cooperation under complex international security environment.

According to the military's media wing, a total of 20 friendly countries including military observers are participating in the event.

Major participants include Pakistan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkiye, United States of America

and Uzbekistan while Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Myanmar, Germany, Indonesia, Japan and Oman will witness the exercise as military observers.

Pakistan Army Team Spirit is a mission-specific and task-oriented professional military exercise organized annually in Pakistan. The exercise calls for highest standard of physical fitness, mental agility, robustness and professional military expertise for quick decision-making in varied situations during the conduct of challenging missions in near real environment.

The aim and objectives of this exercise revolve around perseverance acclaimed through team spirit. The exercise would help hone basic soldierly attributes besides interoperability through sharing of innovative ideas and mutual best practices.

MQM-P not ready to 'soften' stance on power-sharing

PPA

KARACHI: The Rabta Committee of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has denied engaging in any power-sharing negotiations and suggested to sit on opposition benches if its demands are not met, citing sources.

Sources told that a meeting of MQM-P's Rabta Committee was held, wherein matters related to negotiations with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) regarding formation of government in Centre were discussed.

The committee's opinion was sought on whether the party should join the government or sit on the opposition benches. The Rabta committee suggested joining opposition if MQM-P's 'principled stand' is not accepted, sources claimed.

MQM had sought Kamran Tessori's continuation as the governor of Sindh as part of the proposed power-sharing arrangement. The meeting was also briefed about constitutional amendment the party had sought for formation of government.

The committee also asked to

resolve matters with the PML-N before the swearing-in ceremony of the National Assembly. A final decision would be taken after negotiations with PML-N in the coming days.

Two days earlier, MQM-P and PML-N 'reaffirmed' their commitment to putting the interests of the country ahead of political expediency.

The affirmation came during a meeting between MQM-P delegation which called on PML-N President and prime minister-designate Shehbaz Sharif.

The conversation focused on the current state of affairs in the country and potential paths for political collaboration. In praising the MQM-P for their positive strategy, Shehbaz Sharif said, "Respecting the vote means respecting the mandate of all parties." It is our collective responsibility to guide the nation through its economic difficulties."

The MQM-P delegation praised Shehbaz Sharif's inclusive leadership during his 16-month term in the PM office. "It is hoped that under his stewardship, Pakistan and its citizens will overcome their challenges," they said.

President Alvi violating constitution by not summoning NA session: Tarar

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Atta Tarar demanded the formation of a committee against President Dr Arif Alvi for 'violating' the constitution and his oath.

Addressing a presser, Atta Tarar said that the National Assembly session has to be summoned within 21 days of the general elections. "President Dr Arif Alvi is violating the constitution and his oath by not calling the assembly session," he added. Atta Tarar alleged that the Presi-

dent's House has become a 'hub of conspiracies'. The PML-N leader and MNA-elect from NA-127 Lahore said a committee should be formed against the President for 'misusing' his powers.

"If the President does not summon the National Assembly session within 21 days of the elections, the speaker can do the same," he added while quoting the constitution.

It is pertinent to mention here that despite receiving a summary from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, President Alvi has not yet called a meeting of the National Assembly.

Sindh Assembly elects chief minister today

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Incoming Speaker of the Sindh Assembly Awais Qadir Shah has announced the schedule for the election of the Leader of the House.

The election for the coveted position of Sindh chief minister will take place on Monday (today).

The nomination papers from the candidates of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) have been submitted. Scrutiny of the nomination papers will be completed by six o'clock this evening.

The PPP has nominated Murad Ali Shah for the position of chief minister. PPP leaders Ghulam Qadir Chandio, Saleh Shah and Naeem Khara submitted the nomination papers on behalf of Murad Ali Shah.

On the other hand, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan-P (MQM-P) is fielding Ali Khurshidi, who has submitted his nomination for the position of chief minister.

New govt to take 'difficult decisions', says PML-N leader

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Senator Afnanullah hinted that the upcoming federal government led by his party would take difficult decisions.

Speaking at ARY News Programme Aitraz Hai, Senator Afnanullah said that difficult decisions have to be taken for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) program.

"In the coming days, we (the new government) will have to make difficult decisions," he added.

Senator Afnanullah said that his party would once again appoint Ishaq Dar as the Finance Minister. He said that a 'great' economic team would be formed in the next government. "Ishaq Dar is likely to be the next finance minister," he added.

Senator Afnanullah said that keeping in view the current economic situation, Pakistan will have to approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF).