



Pakistan needs another IMF loan programme for stability, says PM Sharif

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday said that Pakistan needed another loan programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to stabilize its fragile economy. PM Sharif said this while addressing a ceremony to encourage taxpayers in the country in Islamabad. (Details on Page 8)



Pakistan has no intention of talks with banned TTP, says FO spokesperson

Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson has described the presence of different terrorist groups in Afghanistan as an 'alarming development' for bilateral ties as the country has no intention to have talks with banned outfits. "Afghanistan has assured us all time of taking action against such groups. We hope that it keeps up to its promises." (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Condolence

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, and met with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong to offer condolence over the death of Chinese nationals in a suicide attack in district Shangla on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

PM visits embassy to condole five Chinese nationals' killing; assures high-level probe

Spokesman Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday visited the Chinese embassy here to convey condolence over the killing of five Chinese nationals in a terrorist attack in Bisham, and assured a swift and high-level probe into the incident.
The prime minister, in an interaction with the Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong sympathised with the bereaved families of the slain Chinese nationals, a PM Office press release said.
He assured the Chinese side that the government would hold a high-level and swift probe into the attack and take the culprits and facilitators to the task.
The prime minister also conveyed his condolence message to the Chinese president and premier.
PM visits embassy to condole five Chinese nationals' killing; assures high-level probe "We will not let such nefarious attempts to undermine the Pak-China friendship succeed. The enemies of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor have again tried to interrupt it through such cowardly attempt but the enemy will never succeed in its evil designs," the prime minister remarked.
He also reiterated the country's resolve to continue fighting against terrorism till its complete eradication. The Chinese ambassador thanked the prime minister for visiting the embassy and showing personal interest in the investigation of the incident. He also appreciated the prime minister's determination to maintain Pak-China friendly ties. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi accompanied the prime minister.

Five Chinese nationals, one Pakistani killed in terrorist attack in NW Pakistan

Xinhua
ISLAMABAD: Five Chinese nationals and one Pakistani were killed in a terrorist attack in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province on Tuesday, the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan confirmed.
The attack happened at about 1:00 p.m. local time (0800 GMT) when a vehicle from the Dasu Hydropower Project, being constructed by a Chinese company in the province, was attacked by terrorists, the embassy said in a statement.
"The Chinese embassy and consulates in Pakistan strongly condemn this terrorist act, express deep condolences for the victims in both countries and extend sincere condolences to the relatives of the victims," the statement said, adding that the Chinese side has been working with the Pakistani side to make every effort to deal with the aftermath of the incident.
The incident happened in the Shangla area of the province,

where the attacker rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into a convoy escorted by five vehicles of security forces, sources from KP's police told Xinhua.
One of the vehicles of the 13-vehicle convoy caught fire and fell into a ravine, following the attack, the sources added.
The area was cordoned off for investigations and the injured are being shifted to hospital.
The Chinese missions in Pakistan have initiated emergency response work as soon as possible, requiring Pakistan to conduct a thorough investigation of the attack, and severely punish the perpetrators, the statement said.
The embassy stressed that practical and effective measures to protect the safety of Chinese citizens, institutions and projects in Pakistan should be taken by the Pakistani side to ensure that similar incidents will not happen again.
"The Chinese embassy and consulates in Pakistan remind Chinese citizens and companies in Pakistan to pay close attention to the local security situation, improve security levels, strengthen security measures, and make every effort to take safety precautions," said the statement.
No group has claimed the attack yet.
The incident has also been condemned by the country's President Asif Ali Zardari who expressed his condolence to the bereaved families and vowed that his country will never let enemies of Pakistan-China friendship succeed in their mission.

The federal government had earlier decided to outsource the country's major three airports including Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) briefed the meeting about updates on the matter.
Khawaja Muhammad Asif directed to convene an online meeting with Pakistani ambassadors in these countries and to ask them for actively engaging with interested groups.
He also suggested linking local investors with international investors so that awareness of local investors can be increased and they can participate in the bidding process.
Privatisation Commission Secretary Usman Akhtar Bajwa informed the minister

Investors from seven countries show interest in outsourcing of airports

Commerce Desk
ISLAMABAD: Investors from Germany, France, Netherlands, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, and Turkiye as well as local groups have shown their interest in outsourcing of three airports of Pakistan.
As per details, Minister for Defence and Aviation Khawaja Muhammad Asif chaired a meeting regarding the outsourcing of airports and privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).
The federal government had earlier decided to outsource the country's major three airports including Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) briefed the meeting about updates on the matter.
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He also suggested linking local investors with international investors so that awareness of local investors can be increased and they can participate in the bidding process.
Privatisation Commission Secretary Usman Akhtar Bajwa informed the minister



about the marketing plan and initial engagements with international investors.
The federal minister directed to visit these countries to establish active links with potential investors and bring groups interested in privatisation to Pakistan.
The minister also pledged support for both transactions at the federal level.
Secretary aviation, additional secretary ministry of foreign affairs, and other senior officers were also present on the occasion.
Earlier on March 21, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on Thursday extended the bid submission date for outsourcing of Islamabad International Airport.
As per details, the decision to extend the tender date came in the wake of a lack of interest from the bidders in the outsourcing of the Airport.
Hereby, the CAA extended the bid submission date for two months to May 15 and applications were sought from the investors who are interested in outsourcing the airports.

US advises Pakistan against doing business with Iran

News Desk
WASHINGTON: US Department of State Spokesperson Matthew Miller on Tuesday said that any country doing business with Iran risks facing US sanctions.
"We always advise everyone that doing business with Iran runs the risk of touching upon and coming in contact with our sanctions and would advise everyone to consider that very carefully," he said while responding to a question regarding the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project.
"As the assistant secretary made clear last week we do not support this pipeline going forward," Matthew Miller added. The statement comes a day after Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik said that Pakistan would seek a US waiver of the sanctions over the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline project.
Speaking to media representatives, the petroleum minister said that Pakistan cannot afford the project to be halted, adding that the United States government would be asked to waive off the sanctions from the project.
"We have prepared an exemption petition draft against the US sanctions," Musadik Malik added. He said that Pakistan will fully present its case on the matter.

IHC judges seek SJC meeting over 'interference' in judicial affairs

Naveed Ahmad Khan
ISLAMABAD: Six serving judges of Islamabad High Court (IHC) penned a letter to Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), urging it to summon a judicial convention to review matter of "interference of intelligence agencies with judicial functions".
Six IHC top judges - including Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Baqir Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, and Justice Salman Rafat Imtiaz - penned the letter to SJC in the aftermath of Supreme Court's March 22 judgement on Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui's dismissal case.
In the letter, the top judges sought guidance from the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) with regard to the duty of a "judge to report and respond to actions on part of members of the executive, including operatives of intelligence agencies, that seek to interfere

with discharge of his/her official functions and qualify as intimidation".
It pointed out the Supreme Court's March 22 judgement on Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui's dismissal case, in which it has been declared that Justice Siddiqui was wrongfully removed on the basis of a SJC report dated 11.10.2018, and would be deemed to have retired as a judge of the IHC.
"Justice Siddiqui had been removed after he had publicly alleged that operatives of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), led by Major General Faiz Hameed (DG-C of ISI), were determining the constitution of benches at IHC and interfering with proceedings of the Accountability Court Islamabad," the letter noted.
The verdict noted that the SJC proceeded against Justice Siddiqui on the "assumption that the truth or falseness of the allegations levelled" by the former judge was "irrelevant".
It also noted that the SJC opined that Justice Siddiqui had failed to substantiate, independently corroborate, substantiate or prove the allegations levelled by him.
The IHC judges, in their letter, noted that the code of conduct for judges prescribed by SJC provides no guidance on how they "must react to and or report incidents that are tantamount to intimidation and interfere with judicial independence".
The judges said that they "believe it is imperative to inquire into and determine whether there exists a continuing policy on the part of the executive branch of the state" to meddle in judicial affairs.
"Such institutional consultation might then assist the Supreme Court to consider how best to protect independence of the judiciary, put in place a mechanism to affix liability for those who undermine such independence, and clarify for the benefit of individual judges the course of action they must take when they find themselves at the receiving end of interference and/or intimidation by members of the executive," it added.

'PTI founder nominated Sher Afzal Marwat for PAC chairman slot'

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Ali Muhammad Khan has claimed that party founder Imran Khan has nominated Sher Afzal Marwat as the candidate for the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman's role.
Speaking at ARY News programme 'Off the Record', the former federal minister said that the PAC chairman slot was the prerogative of the opposition and there is currently only one opposition party in Parliament - PTI.
Responding to a question, Ali Muhammad Khan denied knowledge of reports suggesting that National Assembly (NA) Speaker has refused to make Sher Afzal Marwat the Chairman PAC.
Earlier, PTI leader Barrister Gohar also said that Sher Afzal Marwat will be the party's nominee for the Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC).
Today, Ali Muhammad also rejected reports of any forward bloc in PTI, saying that party's founder Imran Khan is incarcerated and difference of opinion cannot be ruled out. "Our focus is on inflation, economy, release of Imran Khan and party workers," he added.



FM Dar, Uzbek counterpart discuss bilateral ties

Spokesman Report
ISLAMABAD: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov had a phone conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar. It was underscored that Strategic Partnership Agenda between Uzbekistan and Pakistan is getting wider and covering many spheres of fruitful bilateral relations.
The parties noted the upward trajectory in every dimension of cooperation. The sides expressed readiness of Ministries of Foreign Affairs of two nations to further facilitate the close ties.



President and PM AK paid eulogizing tributes to Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Moulana Muhammad Yousuf Shah

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: In his message, Barrister Chaudhry said that the deceased leader was a man of honesty and integrity. "Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir will be remembered for a long time in the annals of Kashmir history as a leader who served his people selflessly", he said.

"His political, social and religious services for the people of Kashmir and more importantly his role in the Kashmir's freedom struggle cannot be forgotten", the president said, adding that the prudence and steadfastness with which he guided the Muslims of the state during a critical period in the history of Jammu and Kashmir will be written in history in the golden words.

He said that Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir was a true sympathizer of Kashmiri people. Terming Kashmiris' ongoing struggle



as a legitimate political struggle, he said that it was high time that India should give up its stubbornness and allow the people of Kashmir to determine their fate peacefully in accordance with the UNSC resolutions.

He also urged the Indian government to stop human rights violations in Occupied Kashmir and pave the way for an early and amicable settlement of the lingering Kashmir dispute.

Barrister Chaudhry said that all

available resources would be utilized to accomplish the mission of former president and Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Moulana Muhammad Yousuf Shah.

In his separate message Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while highlighting the unprecedented services and indomitable role of the former president said that Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah was a great leader and thinker who devoted his entire life to serve the people of the state.

Referring to his lifelong struggle, he said, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir valiantly fought and exposed the nexus between Congress and Sheikh Abdullah besides foiling their conspiracies.

He said that besides highlighting the issue of Kashmir at the global level Mirwaiz took keen interest in the development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

"Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir also visited several Islamic countries to sensitize the Muslim world about the early resolution of Kashmir dispute", he said, adding that

Mirwaiz was held with high esteem in political and religious circles within and outside the state.

"The translation and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an in Kashmiri language was the greatest achievement of his life", the PM said.

Along with religious, social and spiritual services, the PM said, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir rendered valuable services for freedom and accession to Pakistan movement.

The PM said that the best way to pay homage to the deceased scholar was to follow his teachings and uphold his sacred mission for which he devoted his entire life.

Maye Organization Distributed Eid Gift to the Children's in Multan: Maye



Kiran Asim /Arshad Raza Zaidi

MULTAN: Members Of Mayo National Solidarity Council of Pakistan visited various welfare organizations in Multan and distributed Eid clothes, toys and other Eid gifts to children. Founder and Chief Organizer Of Maye Organization Saleem Ur Rehman Maye, Chaudhry Azam Mayo, Central Acting Chairman Haji Noor Deen Mayo, along with President of South Punjab Wasim Akram Mayo, Nadeem Mayo and Khalid Mayo visited various welfare institutions on the occasion of their visit to Multan and distributed Eid gifts there. People living there who are addicted to drugs and suffering from psychological diseases He distributed Eid clothes along with the in-charge organization Muhammad Umar, while he went to Muhammad Bin Qasim Blind Complex located on Chowk Kumharanwala and met the blind children along with the in-charge organization Sadia Kirmani and talked to them. Similarly Qasim Bela Orphanage established in Multan Destitute children's organization went to Baytul Jumelah and donated toys and other items to the orphans and donated chairs etc. to the organization and spent time with the same children and also had Ifar. Mayo, speaking to the official channel, said that the Mayo National Solidarity Council The purpose of this is to reduce the sufferings of the society by performing social welfare services. May Allah accept our efforts. He also paid tribute to the services of those who established these institutions for the presence of such institutions in Multan and said We continue to provide all possible support to these institutions from our platform He paid great tribute to the wealthy personality Mahmoodul Hasan Shahid who established Baytul Jamila for orphans and helpless children.

Women University Multan Participated in All Pakistan Universities Debating Championship under HEC



Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan organized the regional round of Pakistan Universities Debating Competition at Khorana Auditorium of Punjab University. On this occasion, Punjab University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood, HEC's Regional Director Ghafoor Ahmed, faculty members and a large number of students were present. Students from 48 universities participated in the competitions. Vice Chancellor, The Women University Multan Prof Dr. Kalsoom Pracha and Prof Dr. Mamoona Khan, Registrar The Women University Multan encouraged their students to participate in this competition and further develop their skills. Both English and Urdu debating teams of The Women University Multan participated in the said competition and showcased their debating skills accompanied by Ms. Munazza Javed, Lecturer Department of English. The English team included Ayesha Atta, Manahil Imran and Iqra Yaseen from Department of English while for urdu team Asifa Danish, Barceera Mustafa and Khadija Batool participated from Department of Political Science and IR and Department of Pharmacy, respectively. The English and Urdu both teams actively participated and defended themselves against their opposition teams University of Punjab, Lahore and University of Sahiwal. This competition proved to be a beam of learning under the guidelines of worthy judges; Dr. Nadia Anwar (Institute of Liberal Arts, UMT Lahore), Dr. Taimur Kayani (Dean ODL and Director G.L.C.), Dr Shahida Dilawar Shah (FC College Lahore) and Syeda Rozy Rizvi (NCBA&E). HEC Director Ghafoor Ahmed while congratulating the successful students said that to take the country forward, constructive and critical thinking must be highlighted among the students. He said that HEC would continue to organize such events to polish skills of the university students.

Making the Environment Healthy and Clean is the Top Priority of the Cantonment Board Multan

Quratul Ain Asim /Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Flowers are a priceless gift of nature. Making the environment healthy and clean is the top priority of the Cantonment Board Multan. In connection with the celebration of Spring Festival, a flower exhibition has been organized in the cantonment garden in an effort to provide a healthy environment to the citizens. Attend to the charming scenes of bouquets decorated with colorful flowers saved by the eye of the camera. Children were also smelling and laughing with the flowers in the exhibition. Flowers spread the color of happiness in life and their fragrance gives a different comfort. The participants took great interest in the flower exhibition and made it an annual spring event. Expressed the desire to create an event. The participants said that in the exhibition Many types of flowers have been seen together, earlier there was a desire to see these beautiful flowers up close but there was no information about them. These views were expressed by Cantonment Executive Officer Farast Ali Shah under the leadership of Member Cantonment Board Muhammad Yaqub Shera. He was talking during the meeting with the citizens' delegation. He added that providing maximum facilities to citizens despite limited resources is the aim of Cantonment Board Multan. Meanwhile, Member Cantonment Board Muhammad Yaqub Shera presented a bouquet to Cantonment Executive Officer Farast Ali Shah and congratulated him on holding a successful flower exhibition. Residents of said Cantonment Citizens welcome the positive initiatives of the Cantonment Board President Cantonment Board and Executive Officer Cantonment Board led by Secretary Wasim Amir, Garden Branch and other team members pay tribute to their day-to-day efforts and people-friendly policies.

Beautiful

ISLAMABAD: A stunning view of beautification of green belt along with a road in Sector I-8 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Federal Ombudsman addresses more than 70 cases

Khalid Chaudhry

MULTAN: Senior Investigation Officer of the Federal Ombudsman, Dr. Zahid Malik, visited Shujaabad and organized an open court against the mismanagement of the federal institutions in the office of the Town Municipal Corporation and listened to the complaints of the public and received written requests. He disposed of more than 70 cases on the spot and issued orders to refund more than 8 lakhs to the applicants in various bills. He issued orders to SDOs Mapco present on the spot to immediately restore more than 10 electricity connections. On this occasion, the relevant officers said that on the instructions of the Federal Ombudsman

More than 20 defective electricity meters have also been replaced.



He gave orders to the focal persons of all federal agencies, WAPDA, Sui Gas, Postal Life Insurance, NADRA, Pakistan Railways, Agricultural Development Bank, Pakistan Baitul Mal etc.

to immediately process the pending complaints, he said. That all the decisions of the Federal Ombudsman should be implemented as soon as possible and no laxity will be tolerated

in this, he further said that the public can submit their complaints on a plain paper on the spot.

It is the responsibility of the Federal Ombudsman to resolve all public issues in accordance with the rules and regulations, which will continue without compensation and without delay.

Giving further details, he said that the Federal Ombudsman processed a record 194,099 complaints against the mismanagement of government departments in 2023. According to the report of the Federal Ombudsman, there has been an increase of 18% in the handling of complaints in the year 2023 compared to the previous year, 193028 of the total complaints have been resolved, compared to the year 2022, there has been a 22% increase in the resolution of complaints.

Sardar Attique says lights of Mirwaiz family are being held by Kashmiri youth

Abdul Majeed Tahir

JEDDAH / MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that the candles lit by national celebrities and leaders like Mirwaiz Kashmir Maulvi Muhammad Yusuf Shah are being held today by the Kashmiri youth and they are keeping this candle lit at the cost of their lives. In one of his messages issued from Saudi Arabia on the occasion of the death anniversary of Mirwaiz Maulvi Muhammad Yusuf Shah, he said that the Mirwaiz family has played a historic role for the promotion of Islamic values in Kashmir and the pres-



ervation of the Islamic identity of the state. Social services also cannot be ignored. Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that Maulvi Muhammad Yusuf Shah challenged the usurping forces from the platform of the Muslim Conference in the Dogra era and accomplished the historic feat of linking Islamic Kashmir with the ideology of Pakistan. In this strug-

gle, they also had to migrate. He said that even today Mirwaiz family is taking the leadership of freedom movement in Srinagar. India has failed to suppress the voice of the right to self-determination despite the use of full force. The voices raised from the Jamia Masjid have been challenging India.. Who guided Kashmiris politically and religiously. As the Presi-

dent of Azad Kashmir, the late Mirwaiz also played his role in the initial construction and formation of the Azad region. Earlier President Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan while addressing the dinner hosted in his honor by Jammu and Kashmir Overseas Forum.

He said that the role of over-

seas Kashmiris regarding the issue of Kashmir is eternal. The violence has made Occupied Kashmir a killing ground. The people of Occupied Kashmir have been fighting with the Indian Army for 75 years. The situation is getting worse and worse. The international community should play its role for the right of self-determination of Kashmiris. President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique. Ahmad Khan said that the international community and the world of Islam should try to solve the issue of Occupied Kashmir as the first priority. The unity and consensus of the Muslim world is indispensable and this is also the solution to their current problems and difficulties.

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:39 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	4:38 pm
Maghrib	6:24 pm
Isha	7:48 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224

All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association demands direct payments to old-age pensioners

PNP

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association demanded that like all other federal departments, pension payments to railway pensioners should be made directly through the AGPR office. Retired employees should be paid commutation. Payment of marriage grant, farewell grants and benevolent funds should be ensured. So that the restlessness found in the railway pensioners can be remedied.

An important meeting of All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association was held under the chairmanship of Muhammad Aslam Adil Butt Chairman. In which all Union Cabinet officials participated through video link. On this occasion, Aurangzeb Tanuli, Secretary General All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association said that retired old-age pensioners from the railways played an active role in advancing the path of development and prosperity by giving their youth to a great institution like the railways. Some of these pensioners are under treatment in hospitals suffering from various diseases in this age group. Some are in wheelchairs due to illness and old age and some are forced to live a life of destitution lying in bed at home.

PTDC showcases Pakistan's Tourism Potential at MATTA, Malaysia Tourism Fair 2024

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), in collaboration with five private tour operator companies, proudly represented Pakistan and showcased its tourism potential at the MATTA, Malaysia Tourism Fair 2024. The Pakistan pavilion at MATTA was inaugurated by the High

Commissioner of Pakistan in Malaysia, His Excellency Syed Ahsan Raza Shah.

The national MATTA Fair takes place twice a year from 22-24th March in Kuala Lumpur and draws more than 180,000 visitors each time.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of PTDC in his message stated that, "We are thrilled to represent Pakistan at

the MATTA, Malaysia Tourism Fair 2024.

This platform provides an excellent opportunity to showcase the diverse and rich tourism offerings of Pakistan to the international community. We are committed to promoting Pakistan as a preferred tourist destination and are confident that our participation will enhance bilateral tourism ties between Pakistan and Malaysia."



The Pakistan pavilion at the fair attracted a significant number of visitors, including travel agents, tour operators, and travel enthusiasts, who expressed keen interest in exploring the

various tourist attractions and cultural heritage sites that Pakistan has to offer.

Pakistan's participation in the MATTA, Malaysia Tourism Fair 2024, highlights the country's ongoing efforts to revitalize and

promote its tourism sector on the international stage, aiming to attract a growing number of international tourists to experience the natural beauty, cultural diversity, and hospitality of Pakistan.

Memorable

ISLAMABAD: A gardener watering the flowers on greenbelt alongside Express Highway in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Inaugural 1st NuTech Student Council Oath Taking Ceremony & scholarship awards to Brilliant students

PPA

ISLAMABAD: National University of Technology (NUTECH) celebrated a momentous occasion with the inaugural Student Council Oath Taking Ceremony held on March 26, 2024, at its esteemed campus in Islamabad. The event marked a significant milestone in the university's commitment to fostering student leadership and engagement.

Distinguished guests, faculty members, and students gathered to witness this historic event, graced by the esteemed presence of Dr. Faisal Mushtaq TI, Founder & CEO of Millennium Education Group, who was the Chief Guest of the ceremony. His inspiring leadership and dedication to education have set a remarkable example for the youth of Pakistan. Rector NUTECH, Lieutenant



General Moazzam Ejaz Rtd, delivered a stirring address to the students, welcoming them to this new chapter of responsibility and opportunity. He emphasized the importance of youth empowerment and the integral role of students in driving positive change and progress in society. Rector NUTECH Lt Gen Moazzam Ejaz Rtd extended a warm welcome to Dr. Faisal Mushtaq and expressed gratitude for his invaluable support and guidance in nurturing future leaders.

Dr. Faisal Mushtaq TI, Founder & CEO of Millennium Education extended his gratitude to the 1st NUTECH student council, scholarship award winners and Ushers. He said that all the people who achieve success in life, have a story behind it and success

comes with hard work, pain and devotion in every walk of life.

NUTECH extends heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Faisal Mushtaq for gracing the occasion with his presence and inspiring words of wisdom. The university remains committed to nurturing student leadership and providing a supportive environment for holistic development and success.

AIOU inks MoU with Takmil

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Takmil-Teach A Kid Make Individual Life, regarding cooperation and facilitation to bring out-of-school children into the education network. Dean, Faculty of Education, Prof. Dr. Fazal ur Rahman and Director, Coordination and Follow-up, Prof. Dr. Syed Amir Shah represented the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood in the ceremony. Chairman, Department of Distance, Non-Formal and Continuing Education, Dr. Muhammad Ajmal Chaudhry from AIOU and a board member from Takmil, Dr. Sania signed the MoU.



According to MoU, Allama Iqbal Open University will provide educational and technical support to bring out-of-school children into the educational network. This includes support for teachers' training, conducting training sessions for master trainers, and assistance in organizing educational activities. Dr. Fazal ur Rehman, addressing the ceremony, mentioned that both public and private sector organizations, as well as various NGOs, are working on out-of-school children, but they are still encountering some challenges. He emphasized that our Vice Chancellor believes that MoUs should not be mere paperwork; they should bring tangible benefits to the community.

Dr. Syed Amir Shah said that enrolling out-of-school children is an excellent community service and a noble cause, and Allama Iqbal Open University is playing an exemplary role in solving this problem. He said that Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, wished that not a single child should be left out of school. Dr. Sania said that Takmil Foundation uses technology to provide free basic education to out-of-school children in far-flung areas of Pakistan. Takmil has established 160 schools in which almost 5000 students have been admitted. Dr. Sania said that with the support of Allama Iqbal Open University, we will be able to serve in a better way. Dr. Ajmal said that AIOU will provide technical, capacity building support and training for teachers in 160 schools of Takmil. Dr. Tahira Bibi provided the background of this MoU.

Quiz on Korea Competition Held at NUML

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Quiz on Korea competition organized by the Korean embassy Islamabad was held in the sports gymnasium of the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) on Tuesday. Ambassador of the Republic of Korea His Excellency Mr. Park Ki Jun, Dean faculty of Languages Dr. Jamil Asghar Jami, Registrar NUML & Director Islamabad King Sejong Institute Dr. Atif Faraz, HoD Korean Ahtisham Hussain, faculty members, and a large number of students also attended the event.



Around 100 candidates participated in the competition from all over the country. The event was held to enhance awareness and knowledge of Korean culture and language in Pakistan. Ms. Shumail Fatima BS Korean language & culture 8th semester won the competition, and she will represent Pakistan in the grand finale scheduled in Korea. All expenditures of the visit will be borne by the Korean government.

Speaking on the occasion, the ambassador Republic of Korea His Excellency Mr. Park Ki Jun highlighted the benefits of knowing Korean language and culture, especially the scholarship and employment opportunities that may come one's way. Dean Languages highlighted the role of NUML in promotion of Korean language and culture in Pakistan.

Sonny Khan after receiving his Legacy Award from Prince William

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Pakistani-American Sikander 'Sonny' Khan is one of just twenty people across the world presented with The Legacy Award by Prince William at special award ceremony in London on 14 March 2024. The Legacy Award marks The Diana Award's 25th Anniversary—a charity set up in memory of Diana, the late Princess of Wales and her belief in the power of young people to change the world. Sikander 'Sonny' Khan, 25, from the USA has been recognized with the highest accolade a young person can achieve for social action or humanitarian efforts. Established in memory of Diana, the late Princess of Wales, the Award has the support of both her sons, HRH the Prince of Wales and Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex. The 20



Legacy Award recipients have been chosen by a prestigious independent judging panel, chaired by Baroness Doreen Lawrence, who had the difficult task of selecting just 20 from pool of exceptional individuals, already recognized for their impact on society with The Diana Award in 2022 or 2023. Sikander 'Sonny' Khan received the award for his efforts in founding Paani Project, a 501(c)3 nonprofit that has raised over \$6 million from over 20,000 donors. To date, they have built over 15,300 water wells that serve more than 1,000,000 villagers.

'Journalism at the heart of making a climate impact' says the British High Commission

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Over 100 journalists from 35 media outlets and research organizations participated in a practical training from the British High Commission on climate journalism.

Journalists gained in-depth knowledge on complex climate change and nature protection issues, discussed how journalism is at the frontlines of climate change, explored how to find real climate stories on the ground and practised telling climate stories. They discussed challenges that can exist around climate journalism, how to centre women and girls in climate stories,



and made commitments to tell climate stories in future. The journalists reflected on the importance of finding and telling stories of community action related to climate

change going out to the field in search of climate stories. They discussed how climate journalism can both help people to understand the impact climate change has on them, and

inspire them to take action. Speaking on the occasion, British High Commission Development Director Jo Moir said We're delighted to bring together jour-

nalists to discuss the critical issue of climate change and biodiversity loss. Journalists play a pivotal role in helping Pakistani people understand how climate change affects them. They can single handedly change perceptions and inspire change.

Chief Guest at the event, Seemi Ezdi former Chairperson of the upper house committee on climate change said Climate change is the defining issue of our time. We can either be the generation that let it happen, or the one that took bold steps to stop it. Climate change is not just a distant threat, but a present reality demanding urgent action.

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Unlocking the Doors to Peace Innovative Approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most prolonged and engrained conflicts in the world with roots dating back to the late 19th century. The conflict is characterized by deep historical, religious and territorial disputes that have resulted in decades of violence, bloodshed or suffering for both Israelis and Palestinians. The search for a peaceful resolution to the conflict has been elusive, with many attempts at negotiation and mediation failing to produce a lasting and sustainable peace agreement. However, despite the seemingly insurmountable obstacles to peace, there are innovative approaches that could potentially unlock the doors to peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These approaches involve thinking outside of the box, seeking alternative pathways to peace, and engaging in new ways of dialogue or cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians. One innovative approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the concept of two independent states. Rather than maintaining the current single-nation solution, which predicts a separate Palestinian state alongside Israel, will involve the creation of a single democratic state that would

involve both Israeli and Palestinian territories. Peacemaking in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the concept of "Track II diplomacy." This involves engaging with non-governmental actors, such as civil society organizations, religious leaders, and academics to resolve the conflict. These people working outside of the traditional diplomatic channels track II diplomacy will create new opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, helping to generate creative solutions to the deep-rooted issues that have plagued the peace process. Track II diplomacy, and technological tools, it possible to break down the barriers of fear and mistrust that have long divided Israelis and Palestinians, paving the way for a more peaceful environment for both peoples.

This approach would emphasize equality, mutual recognition, and integration between Israelis and Palestinians, rather than maintaining one-nation identities and boundaries. These initiatives like people-to-people programs have shown promise in building bridges between Israelis and Palestinians and fostering understanding and cooperation. These individuals are involved with civil society organizations working together on projects that promote dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual understanding between Israelis and Palestinians. People engaging in both states Israelis and Palestinians will build personal relationships, break down stere-



otypes and create opportunities for collaboration or peace building.

The conflict (Israeli-Palestinian) has been a longstanding issue that has plagued the Middle East for decades. The hostility and violence between the two sides have resulted in countless deaths, destroyed homes, and hindered any prospects for peace in the region. Innovative approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also involve addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, including issues of inequality, discrimination, and injustice. By promoting social and economic equality, and addressing the grievances of both Israelis and Palestinians, a more just and sustainable peace will be achieved. These innovative approaches will involve addressing issues such as land rights, water rights and refugee rights, working towards a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for both Israelis and Palestinians. Social media platforms and online communication tools will be used to facilitate dialogue between Israelis and

Palestinians, allowing for the exchange of ideas and perspectives in a safe and controlled environment. Virtual reality technology will be used to create immersive experiences that foster empathy and understanding between the two sides.

By leveraging international support, grassroots movements and a commitment to dialogue and cooperation, it is possible to overcome these challenges and pave the way for lasting peace in the region. Unlocking the doors to peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will require innovative thinking, bold initiatives, and a willingness to explore new pathways to reconciliation and cooperation. Embracing sovereignty, economic interdependence, cultural exchange, and technology, there is a real opportunity to break the cycle of violence and build a future based on peace and coexistence. This conflict requires bold and innovative approaches that challenge the status quo to promote cooperation and understanding. While the road to peace may be long and difficult, both sides must continue to seek innovative solutions and build a brighter future for generations to come. It is time for all stakeholders to come together and embrace these innovative approaches which will finally put an end to this long-standing conflict.

Writer is Postdoctoral Fellow in International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

World urged to intervene for peace in Kashmir

Chairman Jammu Kashmir Peace and Justice Organization (JKPO), Tanveer-ul-Islam emphasized that Kashmiri Muslims were being subjected to systemic human rights violations, including arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial killings, torture, and enforced disappearances for decades.

He vehemently condemned draconian measures such as arbitrary detentions and violent repression, along with the revocation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution, affecting the special autonomous status of the Jammu and Kashmir region.

Tracing the history of the Kashmir conflict, he highlighted that the denial of Kashmiris' right to decide their future with free will gave birth to this dispute since the partition of British India in 1947.

Tanveer highlighted the importance of creating awareness among international community and civil society of influential nations about the gross human rights violations in IIOJK.

He called upon the international community to take resolute action to redress the ongoing crisis and safeguard the fundamental rights of Kashmiri Muslims, asserting that finding a just solution to the Kashmir conflict was moral obligation of world nations to bring regional stability.

Speaking on the occasion, President Pak-Kashmir Solidarity Council, Syed Arif Bahar, underscored the need of untangling the intricacies surrounding Kashmir, prioritizing the voices and narratives of Kashmiri masses in any discourse. Professor Shahid Hassan Mir highlighted the need for international intervention in stopping human rights abuses in Kashmir, advocating for global accountability and solidarity.

Muhammad Tahir Tabasum, President Institute of Peace and Development, voiced apprehension regarding the political situation in Kashmir and the travails of political detainees, calling for their immediate release.

"The plight of political detainees in Kashmir serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing human rights debacle. The release of political detainees is not only an issue of justice but also a pivotal stride towards reinstating peace and stability in the region," he added.

Other distinguished participants of the webinar underscored the significance of inclusivity in the peace process, advocating for the empowerment of Kashmiri stakeholders and redressing underlying grievances of the Kashmiri population.

They implored the international community to demonstrate solidarity with the oppressed people of IIOJK, championing their rights, justice, and dignity.

Moreover, the participants of the seminar adopted a resolution appealing the international community for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue based on the right to self-determination in the broader interest of peace and development of the region.



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

Pak Army's notable role in Sports and fostering a healthier society - II

Moreover, sports serve as a unique platform for character development and the acquisition of essential life skills. Involvement in team sports cultivates attributes like teamwork, discipline, perseverance, and leadership. Athletes learn the value of dedication, sacrifice, and diligence as they strive to refine their abilities and attain their objectives. Furthermore, sports instill the capacity to handle triumphs and setbacks with grace, resilience, and sportsmanship, traits transferable to various facets of life, including education, profession, and personal relationships.

Beyond physical advantages, sports exert a profound influence on mental health and emotional well-being. Regular exercise associated with sports triggers the release of endorphins, the "feel-good" hormones, which aid in stress reduction, anxiety alleviation, and depression mitigation. Participation in sports also instills a sense of purpose, enhances self-esteem, and fosters a positive body image. Particularly in team sports, social connections, camaraderie, and support networks flourish, combating loneliness and enhancing overall mental well-being.

Sports possess the remarkable ability to unite people, dismantling barriers and fostering social cohesion. Irrespective of age, gender, or cultural background, sports provide a common platform

for individuals to connect, communicate, and collaborate. Sporting events and competitions nurture a sense of belonging and solidarity, fostering a robust community spirit. From grassroots initiatives to global sporting spectacles, sports bridge divides, celebrate diversity, and promote mutual respect and understanding.

Furthermore, sports offer individual role models and wellsprings of inspiration. Athletes who excel in their respective disciplines inspire others to pursue excellence, set ambitious goals, and surpass limitations. These role models epitomize qualities such as commitment, perseverance, and determination, serving as sources of motivation and encouragement. Sports also champion values like fair play, integrity, and respect, imparting invaluable life lessons to individuals across generations.

Undoubtedly, sports play a pivotal role in society, extending far beyond the confines of the playing field. They contribute to physical fitness, character development, mental well-being, and societal integration. Through sports, individuals acquire essential life skills, nurture resilience, and forge a strong sense of identity and belonging.

The interconnection between the military and sports runs deep, serving as a dynamic force that not only enhances the physical preparedness of soldiers but also enriches societal fabric. Throughout nations, armed forces play a pivotal

role in fostering and cultivating sports, leveraging their influence to ignite athleticism, camaraderie, and national pride. At the core of the military's engagement in sports lies the necessity of physical fitness and preparedness. Service members must maintain peak physical condition to effectively carry out their duties. Consequently, the military invests in comprehensive sports programs aimed at elevating the fitness levels of its personnel. These programs encompass a diverse range of activities, spanning from conventional sports like athletics, swimming, and martial arts to specialized training regimens tailored to the requirements of military service. By prioritizing physical fitness, the military not only ensures the readiness of its personnel but also establishes a benchmark of health and well-being for the nation.

The military serves as a fertile ground for the identification and cultivation of talent in sports. Many soldiers demonstrate innate athleticism and potential across various disciplines, from combat sports to endurance events. Acknowledging this reservoir of talent, the military provides avenues for personnel to pursue sports at competitive levels. Specialized training facilities, coaching resources, and financial backing enable promising athletes to refine their skills and represent the armed forces in national and international competitions. Furthermore, the military's emphasis on discipline, commitment, and resilience instills the values essential for athletic excellence, grooming individuals who excel both on the field of play and in their military obligations.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Diminishing animal's suffering

Haleema Sadia

Animals are suffering all over the world. The biggest reason for this is the overpopulation of humans. The human domination of the world has destroyed the habitats of most animals. Industrial farming, to feed more humans, has also increased the animal's plight. The space available for animals to live a happy life has diminished drastically. Human overpopulation is not only damaging the earth but also other sentient beings which in the end is also damaging to humans themselves. According to the latest studies, over 1 quarter of the world's mammals and over 40 per cent of amphibians are currently on the brink of extinction.

Another reason is the rise of speciesism in humans. Speciesism is the human-held belief that all other species are inferior and therefore they shouldn't be given any moral consideration. The result is that some people are harming animals without any reason and just for the sake of pleasure. Most parents don't admonish their kids for throwing stones at hapless stray dogs. The speciesism was propagated by many thinkers. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, said that animals are just 'brute beasts' who exist 'for the sake of man'. Religions like Christianity and most others also awarded unique dignity to men. Descartes said animals are automata and have no souls thus they don't suffer. All of them couldn't provide irrefutable evidence in favour of the views they propounded.

The question is whether animals should be given moral consideration or not. There are two arguments. One is the 'Rationality argument' which says that since homo sapiens is the only specie that is rational, autonomous and self-conscious, hence only their interest should be considered of prime importance. But modern science has given credible evidence of animals evincing many of the qualities that give humans legal rights. The physiological and mental capacities of animals, though rudimentary, are quite similar to humans. Capacities that were once touted as unique to humans, such as developing family ties, solving social problems, expressing a diverse range of emotions, using language etcetera, are no longer uncontroversially unique to homo sapiens.

Another is the 'argument from marginal cases'. Animals are being denied rights and legal standing on the pretext that they are not intelligent enough. But then many humans, who are cognitively impaired and even infants, are far less intelli-

gent than many animals. Do we withhold justice and equality of rights from them? No. Thinkers, who favour this school of thought, say that justice and equality have nothing to do with the ability to reason but by the ability to suffer. Peter Singer, an Australian moral philosopher, regards speciesism as akin to racism and sexism. Weaker and different human groups are also declared as inferior beings by the dominant group. Animal activists are not unlike feminists of today who are resisting the commodification and violence perpetrated by the dominant group, who prefers the status quo.

Animals especially stray dogs are suffering immensely. Humans, who have taken most of the earth's space, throw stones at them and call them menace. Some don't slow their car when a stray is on the road. Unethical and inessential practices for human well-being such as factory farming and cosmetics testing on animals are also harming animals. The incidents of violence against hapless and innocent strays are increasing because there are no consequences for violence against animals.

That the stray dog population and suffering is rising is also our government's fault. It should promulgate laws that protect animals. Moreover, the government have the wherewithal to vaccinate and sterilize stray dogs and cats. In addition, it can also make such changes in the curriculum which teach compassion and raise awareness about the rightness or wrongness of a particular action. Currently, the curriculum is such that religious bigotry, apathetic and misogynists are being produced. Humans are also the cause of degradation in the earth's environment. Men call themselves superior to animals yet it is man who defiles the earth wherever he appears and does immoral acts while animals are without sin and are not damaging our planet.

Some people have become desensitized and accustomed to the cruelty and abnormal things that are happening around them. This has normalised what should be abnormal and sustained the status quo. Some say that they do nothing to challenge the status quo because it seems impossible to change. People will keep abusing animals, eating more meat, using more plastic etcetera. But then there were plenty of horrible situations, from the global slave trade to the violation of women's right to vote, that once seemed impossible to change too and had been normalised but they did change. Current horrible situations will change too if most of us try to change them. Our actions, however small they may be, will make a difference. Those humans, who want to do nothing to diminish animals' suffering, should at least not be unkind to them. It will not cost them anything.

Some 2,000 delegates to attend Boao Forum for Asia

Xinhua

BOAO, HAINAN: Some 2,000 participants will attend the 2024 Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) annual conference, scheduled for March 26 to 29 in Boao, a coastal town on China's island province of Hainan, BFA secretary general Li Baodong said on Tuesday.

This year's conference will draw about

2,000 delegates from over 60 countries and regions and more than 1,100 journalists from about 40 countries and regions. Themed "Asia and the World: Common Challenges, Shared Responsibilities," the event will center around five main topics, namely "World Economy," "Scientific and Technological Innovation," "Social Development," "International Cooperation," and "Jointly Meet-

ing Challenges".

The challenges facing the world today are complex, and only by jointly meeting them, shouldering the responsibilities and strengthening cooperation can the world continue to move on the track of peace and prosperity, said Li at the first press conference for the event on Tuesday.

He noted that through discussions at

the conference, BFA hopes to pool the wisdom of all parties, unite the strength of Asia and the world, and overcome difficulties and create a better future.

Founded in 2001, the BFA is a non-governmental and non-profit international organization committed to promoting regional economic integration and bringing Asian countries closer to their development goals.

Israeli war on hospitals in Gaza Strip 'like a genocide': Palestine Ministry

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Israeli occupation army continues its devastating war on hospitals in the Gaza Strip with the aim of annihilating them and putting them completely out of service as an integral part of its comprehensive destruction of the Gaza Strip and all components of human life in it, especially since hospitals are what remains of the centers of life, even if they are at their lowest and weakest level. After its second brutal attack on Al-Shifa Medical Complex and beginning to destroy it, burning large parts of it, completely evacuating it, destroying the entire area surrounding it, imposing displacement on those in it, and killing dozens of them, including patients, Israel is continuing to repeat this disaster through its war on Al-Amal Hospital and Nasser Medical Complex. It besieges the medical teams in them, demands their evacuation, and continues to target them with a heavy barrage of fire, including tank shells, which exposes all those present there, including displaced persons, medical teams, wounded and sick, to the danger of certain death or displacement under false pretexts and pretexts. This is in addition to the arrest of dozens of citizens and medical teams and the perpetration of the most horri-



fic forms. Mocking them, if not executing a number of them.

The Ministry affirms that the occupation's war on hospitals is the strongest proof and evidence of the war of annihilation against our people in the Gaza Strip and the imposition of more frequent displacement on them towards completely displacing them

and emptying the Gaza Strip of its population, as a recurring and daily goal of the occupation forces and the Israeli Prime Minister.

The Ministry warns against Israel exploiting the international concern over the Rafah issue to commit more mass massacres and complete plans to exterminate civilians and displace them

from the north and center of the Gaza Strip, including destroying hospitals in those areas and putting them out of service, which requires urgent international intervention to protect civilians, secure their basic humanitarian needs, and provide International protection for hospitals and centers concerned with their humanitarian affairs.

Israel challenges the Security Council's resolution and its objectives by escalating incitement to invade Rafah

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: In blatant and blatant defiance of the UN Security Council's ceasefire resolution, and completely contrary to its purposes and goals, Israeli leaders are escalating their threats and public incitement to invade Rafah and expand the war of genocide to include it, including its displaced persons and population, whose number exceeds 1.2 million citizens, without any concern for their fate. Their lives and without any clear plan to evacuate and protect them, as agreed upon by the international community and demanded by the American administration. Israel continues to create the appropriate climate to deepen its ground war in Rafah, whether through biased state-



ments, the most prominent of which was what Smotrich and Ben Gvir said and their calls to invade Rafah now and without delay, and Netanyahu's insistence on linking the achievement of his goals. With this invasion.

At the same time, Israel began its war on Rafah a few days ago through its warplanes and missiles bombing homes over the heads of civilians, the most recent of which was the massacres in the areas of Musabab and Hay al-Nasr

and the numbers of martyrs and wounded they left behind, including children. It has become clear that Netanyahu is trying to get rid of international pressure regarding not invading Rafah by gradually bombing homes and entire

residential blocks, and thus forcing civilians to either die by bombing, or gradually flee from Rafah.

The Ministry condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing crimes of the occupation against our people and depriving them of the most basic things. Their civil rights and basic needs, it warns of the consequences and dangers of the gradual invasion of Rafah on the lives of civilians, committing major massacres against them and forcing them to migrate out of the Gaza Strip, and confirms that replacing the comprehensive ground invasion of Rafah with a gradual land and air invasion does not provide protection for civilians, does not provide for their needs, and does not protect them from Risk of displacement.

ATM 2024 to host more than 100 Travel Tech exhibitors from 6-9 May at DWTC

PPA

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: More than 100 of the world's leading travel technology companies will be exhibiting at Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, which will take place at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) in the UAE from Monday 6 to Thursday 9 May.

ATM 2024's sold-out Travel Tech space will be 56% bigger than last year with 33% more exhibitors participating this year, thanks to unprecedented demand from companies looking to showcase their innovations in front of a global audience.

Sponsored by Sabre, the ATM Future Stage - formerly known as the Travel Tech Stage - will host over a hundred expert speakers from across the global travel and tourism industry, plus a diverse selection of cutting-edge innovations designed to improve efficiency and profitability within the sector. Delegates will explore how advanced tech can be leveraged

to drive improvements across a range of segments, including payment, professional development, accessibility, sustainability and more.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: "My colleagues and I are delighted to introduce the ATM Future Stage, which will harness the ever-increasing levels of innovation our industry is witnessing while building on the long-standing success of our Travel Tech offering."

The global travel technology market was valued at \$9.4 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach \$21 billion by 2032, according to Allied Market Research. The ATM Future Stage will host a selection of presentations and sessions designed to highlight opportunities within this space.

These include: Navigating the Future: A Futurist's Prediction, Strategic Capabilities and Implications of AI within Business, Putting the Traveller First

with AI and Unlocking the Value of Travel: Harnessing Technology for Enhanced Traveler Journeys, which will be held in association with Amadeus.

This year's show will see the return of the ATM Start-up Pitch Battle, which will be held in association with Intelak. The third edition of the competition will see a number of the region's most promising startups take to the Future Stage to showcase a range of innovative and potentially industry-changing solutions in front of expert judges.

Several Travel Tech exhibitors also plan to get involved in other areas of ATM 2024. Tech giant Huawei, for instance, will sponsor this year's Capitalising on China's Predicted Tourism Surge summit on the ATM Global Stage.

Confirmed tech exhibitors include Hotelbeds, TBO.com, WebBeds, Moonline Travel and Trade, Trip.com, HeyTrip and Vertel Technologies, plus returning brands such as Travelport, The Travelbook Group, Hotel-

Runner, gtbeds, iTrip, Techno Heaven, QuadLabs, Cover Genius, Fly Today, Traveazy, Multireisen, City Travel DMCC and Illusions.

First-time exhibitors include ExploreTECH, iClick bedsopia.com, OneVasco, GP Solutions, WegoPro, Mondee, Triple-A, Typsy, Nativex, Tour Review and SophiOutsourcing.

"With an exciting combination of ambitious startups and well-established brands, this year's Travel Tech space is perfectly aligned with ATM 2024's theme, 'Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship,'" added Curtis.

ATM 2024 will also feature a 'Best Use of Technology' award at its annual exhibitor awards for the first time. Exhibitors will be evaluated on how and to what extent they have embraced and deployed technology on their stands.

In line with its theme, 'Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneur-



ship', the 31st edition of ATM will once again host policymakers, industry leaders and travel professionals from across the Middle East and beyond, encouraging them to forge new relationships, exchange knowledge and identify innovations that can reshape the future of global travel and tourism. From startups to established brands, the upcoming show will highlight how innova-

tors enhance customer experiences, drive efficiencies, and accelerate progress towards a net-zero future for the industry.

More than 40,000 travel trade professionals, including 30,000 visitors, attended the 30th edition of ATM in May 2023, setting a new show record. The exhibition attracted more than 2,100 exhibitors and representatives from over 155 countries, providing a

global platform for the unveiling of ATM's net-zero pledge.

Held in conjunction with Dubai World Trade Centre, ATM 2024's strategic partners include the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) as Destination Partner, Emirates as Official Airline Partner, IHG Hotels & Resorts as Official Hotel Partner, and Al Rais Travel as Official DMC Partner.

Meeting



Russian Ambassador, Albert Khorev met FM Ishaq Dar today at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They discussed bilateral areas of cooperation and global and regional issues of mutual concern.

Pakistan-China Business Council Delegation Visits CBD Punjab



PPA

LAHORE: Tuesday, March 26, 2024. A delegation from the Pakistan-China Business Council led by Loi Lei Kristien visited the Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA) also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab) to explore investment opportunities and exchange ideas on bilateral investment.

The delegation comprised Mr. Nazir Hussain, Advisor at Pakistan-China Business Council, and Shafiq Ur Rahman, Secretary-General of Pakistan-China Business Council. They were welcomed by Mr. Riaz Hussain, Executive Director Technical, Ali Waqar Shah, Director Business Development, Waseem Sadiq, Director Marketing, and Sameer Aftab Sial, Director Architecture and Planning of CBD Punjab. The delegation received detailed briefings on various projects undertaken by CBD Punjab.

Expressing keen interest in investment opportunities in CBD Punjab, the Pakistan-China Business Council delegation highlighted the pivotal role of the authority in Pakistan's overall development, particularly in Punjab. They emphasized that the projects proposed will significantly transform the economic landscape of Punjab. The delegation stated their commitment to encourage business community and investors in China to consider CBD Punjab as an attractive destination for investment.

Loi Lei Kristien, leading the delegation, remarked, "CBD Punjab, stands as a game-changer in Pakistan's development. The projects presented will reshape the economic outlook of the province. We aim to attract Chinese business communities and investors to participate in investment ventures within CBD Punjab."

The visit concluded on a positive note, with both parties expressing eagerness to further strengthen bilateral ties and explore avenues for collaboration in various sectors.

Pakistan Cables wins the Gold Award for the Women Empowerment & Gender Equality

PPA

KARACHI: Pakistan Cables won the Gold Award at the Women Empowerment & Gender Equality recognition Awards 2024 ceremony organized by the Employers' Federation of Pakistan. The award was presented by the Federal Secretary of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Department, Dr. Arshad Mahmood to Mr. Aadil Riaz, Director Human Resources, Pakistan Cables Ltd.



Pakistan Cables is committed to champion gender equality and female empowerment in the industry. As part of a focus DEI strategy, the Company actively fosters a diverse organizational culture through various internal and external initiatives. "Pakistan Cables is playing a pioneering role to promote female empowerment in the engineering sector. We are an equal opportunity employer that challenges stereotypes in the industry and we continually invest in a diverse workforce. Our internal policies and practices are aligned to promote inclusion in all aspects of business. We have also made social investments through external partnerships to promote women in STEM based subjects and aim to inspire others to follow in Pakistan," said Fahd K. Chinoy, CEO Pakistan Cables Ltd.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
65,906.27	65,525.64
Day's High	Day's Low
65,989.54	65,492.70
Index Value	Change
7,940,370,074	+380.63
Percentage	Time
+0.58%	26 Mar, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,930.96	+13.39
Percentage	Time
+0.17%	26 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,389.21	+75.57
Percentage	Time
+0.19%	26 Mar, 2:52 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
40,398.03	-16.09
Percentage	Time
0.040%	26 Mar, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.9	184.7
Bahrain Dinar	739.61	747.61
Canadian Dollar	204.25	206.45
China Yuan	38.74	39.14
Danish Krone	40.3	40.7
Euro	299.75	302.75
Hong Kong Dollar	35.55	35.9
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	901.14	910.14
Malaysian Ringgit	59.25	59.85
New Zealand \$	168.56	170.56
Norwegians Krone	26.19	26.49
Omani Riyal	724.36	732.36
Qatari Riyal	76.57	77.27
Saudi Riyal	73.7	74.4
Singapore Dollar	206.25	208.25
Swedish Korona	26.89	27.19
Swiss Franc	313.78	316.28
Thai Bhat	7.76	7.91
U.A.E Dirham	75.55	76.3
UK Pound Sterling	353.75	357.25
US Dollar	278.5	281.25

Ambassador of Japan meets Minister for Finance & Revenue

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H. E. Mitsuhiro Wada called on Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb, the Minister for Finance and Revenue, today. The Japanese Ambassador congratulated the Finance Minister on assuming the office.

The Minister for Finance & Revenue welcomed the Ambassador and stated that the Government is committed to undertake reforms to bring macroeconomic stability and sustainability. He stated that increasing the tax to GDP ratio remains a priority area. In this regard, the Government will strive to achieve end to end digitization with an aim to expand the tax base, bring transparency in the tax system and improve the client experience. He further apprised the Ambassador about energy sector reforms. While focus would be on reducing the costs in the sector,



governance issues of the distribution companies will be addressed through private participation in the management and eventual privatization. Ambassador Wada noted the commitment of

the Government to continue with the implementation of prudent fiscal policies and structural reforms. He informed that presently 80 Japanese companies are operating in Pakistan. He highlighted some of the issues being faced by Japanese automakers in Pakistan. He appreciated the government's efforts towards economic revival and expressed Japan's continued support for Pakistan's initiatives aimed at fostering growth and prosperity.

The Finance Minister informed that agriculture and IT sectors have demonstrated robust growth recently and the Government would make efforts to support these sectors to become growth leaders.

Concluding the meeting, both sides expressed their desire to further enhance the bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Japan and pledged to work together towards achieving common goals for the benefit of both nations.

Asian economy forecast to grow 4.5 PST in 2024: Report

Xinhua

BOAO, HAINAN: The Asian economy is expected to grow by around 4.5 percent in 2024, surpassing that of 2023, and continue to be the largest contributor to global economic growth, according to a report released Tuesday by the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), which convenes its 2024 conference in Boao, a resort town in southern China's Hainan Province.

According to the forum's Asian Economic Outlook and Integration Progress flagship report, despite facing various external economic challenges, the Asian economy will still maintain a relatively high growth rate, supported by relatively strong consumption and proactive fiscal policies.

The report forecasts that by region, the economic growth rate of East Asia is expected to be the same as that of 2023, at 4.3 percent; South Asia's economic growth is anticipated to rise from 5.4 percent in 2023 to 5.8 percent, maintaining its position as the fastest-growing region in Asia. Meanwhile, Central Asia's economic growth is likely to decelerate to 4.3 percent from 4.5 percent in 2023, while the economic growth in West Asia is expected to rise to 3.5 percent from 2.5 percent in 2023.



"In terms of purchasing power parity, Asia's economic aggregate is expected to account for 49 percent of global GDP in 2024, marking a 0.5 percentage points increase from 2023," the report said.

In terms of trade and investment, Asia is expected to reverse the downward trend in 2023, the report said, explaining that the accelerated development of digital trade, the recovery of tourism in Asia, the continuous advancements of economic and trade arrangements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, and the positive effects of the restructuring of Asian value chains and industrial chains on regional economic integration, are expected to gradually emerge and add new impetus to Asian trade and investment.

In terms of employment, the report said that due to the ongoing economic down-

turn, the global employment outlook for 2024 is not particularly optimistic, projecting relatively sluggish employment growth in 2024 in the populous regions of East and South Asia that may dampen Asia's overall employment growth. "But the overall unemployment rate in Asia is expected to remain below the global level," the report said.

In terms of income, the report said that income growth "remains under considerable pressure," despite an increase in total weekly working hours of full-time jobs in most Asian regions. Given the wide variance in sectoral incomes, domestic income inequality within Asian economies could further exacerbate, it warned.

The report also forecast that overall, inflation pressure in most Asian economies is expected to ease further in 2024, noting that economies currently experiencing lower inflation are projected to witness an uptick.

With a founding purpose to promote economic integration in Asia, the mission of the BFA is to pool positive energy for the development of Asia and the world. The BFA Annual Conference 2024 is taking place from March 26 to 29.

PTC acknowledged as one of Pakistan's leading taxpayers by the government



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited (PTC) has been honoured by the Government of Pakistan for its exemplary contribution as one of the country's highest tax paying company.

This recognition underscores PTC's steadfast commitment to corporate responsibility and its significant role in driving economic growth in Pakistan.

As one of the leading multinational's operating in Pakistan, PTC has always placed a strong emphasis on compliance and integrity in fulfilling its tax obligations. In 2023, PTC contributed more than PKR 229 billion

to the National Exchequer in the form of various taxes and duties.

Furthermore, PTC has actively participated in the country's development endeavours, evident through its exports exceeding USD 48 million in 2023. The Company's substantial investments for its Environment, Social, and Governance Agenda underscores its dedication to shaping A Better Tomorrow™.

The Government of Pakistan's acknowledgment of PTC as one of its highest taxpayers is a testament to the company's unwavering dedication to upholding the highest standards of corporate citizenship.

Chairman of Siddiqsons Group Receives 4th Highest Taxpayer Award

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Today, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif presented awards to 65 leading exporters and compliant taxpayers in a ceremony held at the PM Office. Among the recipients, Mr. Tariq Rafi, the Chairman of Siddiqsons Group, was recognized as the 4th highest taxpayer by the Prime Minister.

Established in 1959, Siddiqsons Group has excelled in various sectors including Textile & Denim Manufacturing, Real Estate & Construction, Tinplate Manufacturing & Tin-Can Packaging, and Dairy Industries, expanding its presence globally.

The ceremony saw the distribution of approximately 40 awards to top exporters in sectors like textiles, sports, surgical goods, pharmaceuticals, foods, and steel. Moreover, awards were presented to taxpayers who contributed significantly through their income tax payments in various categories such as companies, AOPs, and individual taxpayers.

The government also acknowledged Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and first-time filers who made substantial contributions to the national treasury, offering special incentives to those who made significant tax payments.

Noteworthy features of the Prime Minister's awards for compliant taxpay-



ers and exporters included recognizing (i) top IT exporters, (ii) large exporters in sectors other than textiles, (iii) first-time exporters with export values exceeding \$10 million, (iv) exporters of non-traditional products, (v) women exporters, and (vi) those with the highest growth compared to the previous year.

Compliant taxpayers were acknowledged based on criteria such as (i) high-

est individual income taxpayers, (ii) AOPs and companies with the highest tax contributions, (iii) overall highest taxpayers, (iv) new taxpayers with substantial tax payments, (v) business income taxpayers with significant growth, (vi) entrepreneur taxpayers, (vii) SMEs, (viii) taxpayers with substantial foreign direct investment (FDI), and (ix) entrepreneurs from underdeveloped regions.

GFS Builders and Developers to award its employees at annual award ceremony

PPA

KARACHI: Like every year this year, the annual award, also organized by GFS Builders and Developers, was held at the local hall in the city.

In which the employees of GFS Builders were honored with awards and cash prizes for their annual performance.

Senior leader of the People's Party Waqar Mehd, Provincial Minister Najmi Alam, Member of Provincial Assembly Sajid Jokhio, along with Dr. Farooq Sattar of MQM Pakistan, Junaid Yusuf of UC Catering and Qari Sajjad were also included in the special guests.

Maulana Habib Attari, the

preacher of Dawat-e-Islami Pakistan, gave a lecture on this occasion, while the chairman of the Selani Trust, a well-known social personality, Maulana Bashir Farooqi, offered a special prayer.

CEO Irfan Wahid, Managing Director Mansoor Wahid and Mohsin Wahid expressed their views on behalf of GFS Builders.

In the distribution award category, the surprising award was given to GFS CEO Irfan Wahid. Receiving it, Irfan Wahid said that this award is not for me but for my entire team. We are a family. I congratulate the entire team. On that occasion, they said that, Inshallah, we will do a big event in the



future. I dedicate this award to the entire GFS.

Appreciating the valuable services of the organization, Irfan Wahid said that whoever does good work in the organization will be appreciated. He also

said that this award was given to the employees and dealers associated with GFS for their good performance. Those who did not get the award should work harder to get the award next year as well.

GFS Managing Director Mansoor Wahid was also honored with a special performance award on the occasion.

In this regard, he said that due to the dedication and passion of the people associ-

ated with this organization with good intentions, honesty and courage, today GFS Builders is known and recognized all over Pakistan, including Karachi.

Mohsin Wahid, Director Marketing, GFS, was also awarded the Best Mind of the Year Award. While receiving the award, Mohsin Wahid said that we will make GFS the best brand in Pakistan.

At the end of the function, food was arranged for the guests. It should be noted that along with other guests, political, social, religious, ABAD members, builders and people belonging to the traders association of the city took special part in the program.

Secure Logistics Group Ltd's Book Building Starts today



PPA

KARACHI: Secure Logistics Group Ltd IPO's book building phase will be held on 27th and 28th March where high net worth individuals and institutional investors will subscribe to 100% per cent of the issue size (50 million shares).

The book building will start at the floor price of Rs 12 per share. Based on the interest from investors during the book building process, the strike price can rise by 40 per cent to up to Rs 16.80 a share, thus helping the company to potentially raise Rs 840 million.

After the book building process, successful bidders will be provisionally allotted 75 percent of the issue size (50 million shares). The remaining 25 per cent shares will then be offered to retail investors at the strike price. SLG aims to raise a minimum of Rs 600 million by offering a 18 percent stake in the company to institutional and general investors. SLG has also already secured pre-IPO equity of Rs585 million from existing strategic investors like Saudi Bugshan Group (a large Saudi conglomerate) and Karandaaz Pakistan, a FDCO backed development finance institution.

The primary purpose of the equity capital raising is to "deleverage the balance sheet in an unprecedented high interest rate environment, enhance the company's technology infrastructure base to complete the on-going Tech-Pivot and initiate expansion into the regional markets".

The company has a solid track record of capital market transactions to boost business growth. It successfully closed Rs600 million convertible Term Finance Issue in 1Q CY19 and raised another PKR 1.2 billion through equity issue to Saudi Bugshan Group and Karandaaz Pakistan in 1Q CY20. SLG's IPO has been priced at an attractive trailing P/E of 5.39x at the floor price of Rs12.

DG Sports Punjab chairs a meeting to review the arrangements of First CM Punjab Pink Games 2024

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal presided over a meeting at National Hockey Stadium on Tuesday to review the arrange-

ments of First CM Punjab Pink Games 2024.

Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Director Admin M Kaleem, Deputy Directors Zahoor Ahmed and Ata ur Rehman attended the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that the First CM Punjab Pink Games are being organized to promote sports activities among women of the province as per the vision of Punjab

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz.

"Our women have plenty of sports talent and Sports Board Punjab will continue to provide sufficient playing opportunities to nurture their sports talent," he added.

Christian Cricket League

ISLAMABAD: Pastor Samson Sohail giving trophy to winning team, at the end of the final match of the "Christian Cricket League" organized by the United Council of Churches at Sitara Cricket Ground in Federal Capital, the winning team was congratulated by the Executive Director Pastor Samson Sohail.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pak women to meet Indian counterparts in Asia Cup on July 21

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Women cricket team will face off the Indian Women team in the Women's Asia Cup 2024 on July 21 in Dambulla, Sri Lanka.

According to the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), the upcoming Women's Asia Cup 2024 is scheduled to take place in Dambulla, Sri Lanka, from July 19th to July 28th, 2024.

This edition of the tournament will feature eight teams, one more than the previous edition in 2022, indicating the growing interest and participation in women's cricket across Asia.

The Pakistan Women will meet Nepal on the opening day on July 19 and play their last group match against UAE on July 23. Both the semifinals will be played on July 26 and final on July 28.

Pakistan Women have



been placed in Group A along side India, Nepal and UAE cricket teams while Group B consists of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Thailand.

The increased participation promises to make this tournament even more competitive and thrilling for cricket fans across the region.

In line with the ACC's

vision for inclusivity and equality in cricket, the Women's Asia Cup 2024 will continue the tradition of having all female referees and umpires, following the successful implementation of the same in the previous edition.

The ACC President Jay Shah believes the Women's Asia Cup 2024 underscores the ACC's commitment to

promoting women's cricket in the region.

He said expansion of the Women's Asia Cup, from six teams in 2018 to seven in 2022, and now eight, is a testament to our commitment to the women's game and the burgeoning talent pool in Asian cricket.

He anticipated an exciting tournament that will inspire both players and fans.

Sania, Nabeel overjoyed to receive Pride of Pakistan

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Futuristic Learning founder, Sania Alam, and her student, Nabeel Hasan, who have been awarded with esteemed Pride of Pakistan believes receiving the award was a milestone that shows their efforts were valued and celebrated.

The award recognizes their contributions in advancing education through innovative Super-Learning training and for raising Pakistan's flag internationally.

Sania received the award for her efforts in transforming the educational system and enhancing human capabilities. Her Super-Learning program significantly reduces the time it takes students to complete their education, demonstrating the ability of finishing 12 years of academic work in just two to three years.

Nabeel, trained by Sania, has made a name for himself in memory sports by setting



two Guinness World Records, previously held by competitors from India.

He memorized 40 sets of three-digit numbers, totaling 120 digits, breaking the record for 'Most three-digit flash numbers memorized.' Additionally, Nabeel memorized 30 digits in 4 seconds, surpassing the record for 'Most Numbers Memorized in 4 Seconds,' earning him the Pride of Pakistan award and showcasing the talent of Pakistani youth on a global stage.

Sania's accolades also include the Brain of the Year

Award from the UK Brain Trust, joining the ranks of Stephen Hawking and John Glenn.

In Pakistan, she received the Prime Minister's Youth Excellence Award and has played a significant role in the Prime Minister's National Youth Council of Pakistan.

Another key factor in her receiving the Pride of Pakistan award was her successful coaching of students who secured 54 medals and 15 trophies across various mind sports categories, claiming six Guinness World Records and titles such as World

Memory Champion, World Speed Reading Champion and Junior World Mind Mapping Champion.

Sania was also honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by US. Sania in a statement to the youth said, "In this fast-changing world, if you want to achieve success, you should embrace Super Learning skills. There is just no way around it."

"Receiving the Pride of Pakistan award is not just an honor, but a milestone that marks my unwavering commitment to education. The Pride of Pakistan title is a reminder that when we lift the potential of our minds, we elevate our nation. I am grateful for this esteemed acknowledgment."

Nabeel said, "Being awarded the Pride of Pakistan is an incredibly humbling experience. This award is not just for me but for every young Pakistani who dreams big. Such awards reassure us that our efforts are seen, valued, and celebrated."

Pakistan Cricket Team to Tour Australia for White-Ball Cricket Series



Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan are set to visit Australia for a white-ball series scheduled for November this year. The tour, which will mark the start for Australia's white ball schedule for the summer of 2024-25, will comprise six games in total - three ODIs and as many T20Is - to be played across six venues from 4 to 18 November 2024.

Pakistan will be returning to Australia after a gap of nearly 11 months, after having competed in the Benaud-Qadir Trophy, which comprised three Test matches played across Perth, Sydney and Melbourne in December 2023-January 2024.

The three-match Dettol Men's ODI series will begin on 4 November at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground. Pakistan and Australia will then play in Adelaide and Perth on 8 and 10 November, respectively. Pakistan last played an ODI series on Australian soil back in 2016, which saw the home-side come out on top.

Subsequently, Pakistan and Australia will face one another in the three-match Dettol Men's T20I Series. Pakistan's last T20I outing on Australian soil was back in 2022, wherein the men in green appeared in the final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

The series will start at The Gabba in Brisbane. Action will then move to the Sydney Cricket Ground; Pakistan's last T20I at the venue saw them beat New Zealand at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup semi-final. Hobart will be the last stop on the tour, where the final T20I will be played on 18 November.

Full schedule:

ODI Series
4 November: MCG, Melbourne
8 November: Adelaide Oval, Adelaide
10 November: Perth Stadium, Perth
T20I Series
14 November: The Gabba, Brisbane
16 November: SCG, Sydney
18 November: Bellerive Oval, Hobart

Bangladesh recall Shakib Al Hasan for second Sri Lanka Test



A Sports

DHAKA: Star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan on Tuesday, was recalled to the Bangladesh squad for the second Test against Sri Lanka, scheduled to commence on March 30.

Shakib last represented Bangladesh at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 and his last Test was in April 2023, against Ireland.

Notably, Shakib is currently a parliamentarian, having successfully stood for the ruling Awami League during the general elections in January.

Besides his political duties, he is also featuring in the 50-over Dhaka Premier League this month.

Shakib Al Hasan was recalled to the squad by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) after the hosts succumbed to a hammering 328-run defeat against Sri Lanka in Sylhet on Monday.

Towhid Hridoy, who is yet to make his Test debut, made way for Shakib in the squad after being left out of Bangladesh's Playing XI for the first Test.

Uncapped Mushfik Hasan has been ruled out of the second and final Test because of an ankle injury and was consequently replaced by fellow pacer Hasan Mahmud.

The home side was outclassed by Sri Lanka in all departments but their batting unit disappointed the most as they failed to amass 200 runs in either innings.

Bangladesh Test squad: Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Zakir Hasan, Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Shadman Islam, Liton Das, Mominul Haque, Shakib Al Hasan, Shahadat Hossain Dipu, Mehidy Hassan Miraz, Nayeem Hasan, Tajjul Islam, Shoriful Islam, Syed Khaled Ahmed, Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud.

Australia advance in World Cup Qualifier after drubbing Lebanon



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Australia cruised into the next stage of Asian qualifying for the 2026 World Cup with a 5-0 drubbing of Lebanon in Canberra on Tuesday.

Craig Goodwin's two goals, plus strikes from Kusini Yengi, John Iredale and a Bassel Jradi own goal gave Australia a maximum of 12 points after four games and they are now assured of progressing from Group 1 of the FIFA World Cup Qualifier.

It took just two minutes for Goodwin to have an impact on his return to the side after illness when his teasing cross found Yengi to open his international account.

Yengi, a striker who plays for Portsmouth in the English third tier, bundled home at the second time of asking after his initial effort hit the post.

Goodwin almost made a second with another pinpoint delivery after 43 minutes but Harry Souttar's header struck the woodwork and it remained 1-0 at half-time.

As in the first half, Lebanon conceded after two minutes and again Goodwin, who plays for Al Wehda in Saudi Arabia, was the creator. His free-kick from the right was headed goalwards by Souttar where 'keeper Mostafa Matar's save hit hapless teammate Jradi and ricocheted back into the net.

A minute later Goodwin got his reward for a dominant display when lashing home left-footed superbly from just outside the box to make it 3-0.

Substitute John Iredale tapped in the fourth with his first touch after 68 minutes and Goodwin bagged his second from close range with nine minutes to go to cap a fine personal display.

Players report for physical fitness camp at Kakul

A Sports

ABBOTTABAD: Pakistan players began to report for the physical fitness camp here at Kakul, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced Tuesday.

Taking to X, formerly Twitter, the cricket board shared pictures of a bunch of the fitness-camp-bound players at the "home of fitness."

"Players assemble for the fitness camp at Kakul, Abbottabad," wrote PCB.

A total of 29 players will undergo fitness training in the camp, organised in collaboration with the Pakistan Army.

"The camp, organised in collaboration with the Pakistan Army, is strategically designed to prepare the players for the upcoming series and tournaments, including the home T20I series against New Zealand, the away T20I series against Ireland and England, and the forthcoming ICC T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies," the



PCB said in a press release.

"The camp will focus on team building and aims to enhance the physical and mental strength of the players, ensuring they are in the best condition to face the challenges ahead.

"Under the guidance of experienced trainers and coaches, the players will undergo a comprehensive training regime tailored to elevate their fitness levels, agility, leadership, strategic thinking and overall performance on the field."

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The camp is scheduled to commence today on March 26 and will conclude on April 8.

Pace bowler Mohammad Amir and all-rounder Imad Wasim, who recently came out of retirement, are also included in the camp along with top-order batter Usman Khan.

Pakistan Players taking part in the Physical fitness camp in Kakul are:

Babar Azam, Mohammad

Rizwan, Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Sahibzada Farhan, Haseebullah, Saud Shakeel, Usman Khan, Mohammad Haris, Salman Ali Agha, Azam Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Irfan Khan Niazi, Shadab Khan, Imad Wasim, Usama Mir, Mohammad Nawaz, Mehran Mumtaz, Abrar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Hasan Ali, Mohammad Ali, Zaman Khan, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Aamir Jamal, Haris Rauf and Mohammad Amir.

Called on

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan needs another IMF loan programme for stability, says PM Sharif

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday said that Pakistan needed another loan programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to stabilize its fragile economy.

PM Sharif said this while addressing a ceremony to encourage taxpayers in the country in Islamabad.

The prime minister said the government is compelled to enter into a new IMF deal for the purpose of stability.

He however said that along with the IMF program, the government will focus on fostering growth, creating job opportunities and addressing the issue of inflation.

Shehbaz Sharif said the federal government in collaboration with the provin-

cial governments will create enabling circumstances for the private sector and address their problems. He said that refunds to the tune of sixty five billion rupees have been made to the exporters, expressing the determination that in future the refunds will be made in a timely manner. He said he will also go towards providing electricity to the industries on competitive

rates in order to enhance their productivity.

He said the platform of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has been established to give impetus to the investment. He said the second phase of CPEC will be taken forward.

As regards tax reforms, the Prime Minister said the FBR will be totally restructured. He said consultants will be hired

next month for complete digitalization of the tax collection body. Referring to low tax to GDP ratio, he said we will have to enhance the tax base.

The Prime Minister stated that the leading taxpayers and exporters are the heroes of this country. He announced that the recipients of today's awards, consisting of exporters and taxpayers, will be issued blue passports.

Pakistan has no intention of talks with banned TTP, says FO spokesperson

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson has described the presence of different terrorist groups in Afghanistan as an 'alarming development' for bilateral ties as the country has no intention to have talks with banned outfits.

"Afghanistan has assured us all time of taking action against such groups. We hope that it keeps up to its promises. It is necessary as because of these terror groups an alarming development taking place between Pakistan and Afghanistan relations which we have to resolve together," Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in an interview with Spot Light with Munizae Jahangir aired on Aaj News on Tuesday.

She was responding to a query related to Pakistan's demand to take action against terrorist groups inside Afghan-

istan. Baloch sat for an interview with Jahangir on a day that has been busy for the former after a suicide attack in Bisham tehsil of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Shangla killed five Chinese nationals and a Pakistani citizen.

KP province shares a long border with neighbouring Afghanistan. The country has time after time urged the interim Afghan government to not allow its soil to be used as a "launch pad" for terrorist activities while Afghan Taliban have asked the government to resolve its internal matter and give some evidence.

According to the FO spokesperson, Pakistan has shared several pieces of evidence with Kabul related to groups who have been conducting terror activities - including banned outfits led by Gul Bahadur and anti-Pakistan elements present in the interim Afghan govern-



ment - on different occasions.

At the show, she strongly condemned the terrorist attack. "We have a commitment to take action against terrorist groups I want to tell you that Pakistan, along with China, has given a perspective of ending terrorism."

When asked about the commerce secretary's visit to Afghanistan on Wednesday, she said that it was already

planned many issues are under consideration including transit trade and concerns related to customs authorities.

She added that terrorism was the only issue with the transit trade. In the past as well, Pakistan has called for a confidence-building environment suitable for trade.

"It will be when terrorist incidents are low and tensions ease. Afghanistan will have to take steps in this regard including handing over those members of TTP leadership who conducted terrorist activities and fled to Afghanistan to Pakistan," Baloch said and added that trade and peace are side by side.

In response to a query, she clarified that Pakistan has no intention to have dialogue with the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban. "This is not on our agenda during talks with Afghanistan. Neither we have any intention to have nor we plan to have it

through a third party."

She claimed that 90 per cent of the Afghan immigrants left the country on their own and Pakistan did not force them to leave.

He went on to add that there were special cases where the court gave special instruction to the law enforcement agencies to consider special cases where migrants complained they fled the country for their safety.

Baloch went on to add that Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar's recent statement related to the resumption of trade with India was not unusual. She explained such proposals from the business community are always discussed.

There was no decision to talk with India until the restoration of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir's status enshrined under the Indian constitution, the FO spokesperson said.

Amna Baloch meets Director Carnegie Europe, explore avenues of collaboration

Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU, Amna Baloch on Tuesday met Director Carnegie Europe Rosa Balfour in Brussels and discussed matters of mutual concern.

In the meeting, they also discussed the ongoing policy debates in Europe and beyond.

The two sides also explored avenues of collaboration and think tank cooperation. Amna Baloch meets Director Carnegie Europe, explore avenues of collaboration. Meanwhile, Ambassador Baloch announced on her X account that she will hold e-khuli katchehri for the Pakistani community residing in Belgium and Luxembourg on Wednesday (March 27).



FM Dar discusses cooperation with Turkish, Russian, Swedish envoys

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister (FM) Ishaq Dar on Tuesday discussed Pakistan's cooperation in separate meetings with ambassadors of Turkey, Russia and Sweden.

During a meeting with Ambassador of Turkey Dr Mehmet Pacaci, he underlined Pakistan's commitment to further deepen cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Minister also received the Russian Ambassador Albert Khorev and discussed bilateral areas of cooperation including global and regional issues of mutual concern.

Swedish Ambassador Henrik Persson called on Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad today.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and cooperation in trade, investment, education, and people-to-people exchanges.

A day earlier, FM Ishaq Dar



stressed the need for early resumption of national carrier Pakistan International Airline's (PIA) flights to the United Kingdom.

The UK and several other EU countries had suspended PIA's flight operations due to concerns about the authenticity of pilot licences.

The FO today said Dar received a call from British Foreign Secretary David Cameron during which the foreign minister made his request regarding the resumption of flights, saying that it would further bolster linkages, particularly in view of the

large Pakistani diaspora in the UK. He also stressed the need to enhance bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, people-to-people contacts and climate matters.

"Reiterating the importance of [the] Pakistan-UK relationship, the foreign minister said that Pakistan and the UK had longstanding, historic relations with multifaceted cooperation. The foreign minister emphasised the early conclusion of the Enhanced Strategic Partnership agreement to take relations to the next level," the FO said.

President, PM resolve to steer country out of prevailing challenges

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday met with President Asif Ali Zardari wherein they expressed their resolve to steer the country out of prevailing challenges.

In the meeting, they discussed the country's overall political and economic situation, a President House press release said.

The meeting also featured the deliberations on the measures to extend relief to the masses during the Holy Ramadan.

UAE Ambassador distributes Iftar meals

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: H. E Hamad Obaid Alzaabi, UAE Ambassador in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and officials of the Embassy participate in the "Breaking the Fast" initiative launched by the Embassy to distribute Iftar meals to those who are fasting and approaching Maghrib Azan in the streets of Islamabad, which aims to break the fast of employees and individuals until they reach their homes.

H.E. Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi: The "Breaking the Fast" initiative contributes to strengthening community cohesion and reflects feelings of



familiarity, love and interconnectedness among everyone, and an embodiment of the concept of community brotherhood and reflects our originality, customs and values and aims to strengthen bridges of community cohesion and reflects feelings of

Data of over 2mn Pakistanis stolen from NADRA: Report

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Joint Investigation Team (JIT) on Tuesday submitted a report to the interior ministry regarding the leakage of citizens' data by the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).

The PAC issued directions to the interior ministry to probe into the data leak in collaboration with the PIA, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and Military Intelligence.

The report unveiled that data of 27 million Pakistanis was stolen from 2019 to 2023 with the help of Nadra offices of Multan, Peshawar and Karachi.

According to the JIT report, data was obtained from Multan to Peshawar and then to Dubai, and was also sold in Argentina and Romania.

The report recommended action against several senior Nadra officers.

The joint investigation team, headed by FIA Director Cybercrime, was constituted to investigate the March 2023 cyberattack, in which person-



al information of citizens, including military officials, was accessed and stolen.

The JIT submitted its report to then caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar following the completion of inquiry. The caretaker premier ordered NADRA to initiate actions as per the findings and recommendations.

In the report, the proposed measures, to safeguarding the citizens' data, include regulatory actions along with technology upgrades. Meanwhile, the authorities have launched compliance measures in light of Prime Minister's orders.

The report stated that the measures will enable better delivery of emergency services and help in ensuring standard database security.

RCCI Iftar-Dinner in the honor of Ambassadors & Diplomatic Corps



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI) hosted an Annual Iftar Dinner in the honor of the Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Diplomats and Commercial Counselors in Islamabad.

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq and RCCI Group Leader Sohail Altaf gave a warm reception to the guests and thanked the ambassadors, dignitaries and businessmen for the overwhelming gathering.

Saqib Rafiq in his welcome remarks said that annual Iftar Dinner is a regular feature of RCCI aiming to bring together esteemed members of the diplomatic corps and distinguished figures from the business fraternity.

Group Leader Sohail Altaf in his address demanded for ceasefire in Gaza and peaceful solution of Palestine. He also sent best wishes to Princess, Catherine of Wales, for her full recovery from cancer.

The event saw a notable turnout of diplomats representing a diverse array of nations, adding a touch of international flair to the gathering.

A large number of ambassadors and diplomats were present on the

occasion, including the Dean of Ambassadors, Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan Mulamov, Ambassador of Egypt, Morocco, Malaysia, Ethiopia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Finland, Belarus, Iran, Romania, Kenya, Nepal, Korea, Italy and Zimbabwe.

Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Mr. Faisal Shahzad, Former Presidents, members of the executive committee, Zia Ullah Shah, Raja Hanif, members of the Provincial Assembly (Punjab), Dr. Khurram Tariq, President of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce, Tariq Jadoon, President Small Chamber of Commerce and Small Industries, Azhar-Ul-Islam Zafar, Vice President Islamabad Chamber, Director AIC, Ejaz Qamar Kiani, Qazi Shaikat Mahmood, Chairman Qazi Group of Companies, Saboohi Hussain President, Women Chamber of Commerce Rawalpindi and representatives of district and local administrations, representatives of Anjuman-e-Tajir, Women Members, representatives from TDAP, Editors and Bureau Chiefs from Print and Electronic Media and a large number of members and businessmen attended the annual Iftar dinner.