



**Pak-Iran transit trade strengthening through enhanced road-rail connectivity: Ahsan Iqbal**

Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Dr Raza Amiri Moghaddam paid a courtesy visit to Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal and congratulated him on assuming the office. During the meeting, potential areas of co-operation for the upcoming visit of Iran's President to Pakistan... (Details on Page 8)



**Tree plantation drive to promote greening of Islamabad launched**

Ahmar Ellahi, Accountant General of Pakistan Revenues, kicked off the Spring Tree Plantation Drive on Tuesday with a publicly launched plantation effort to plant trees within the Accountant General's office. In this connection, a ceremony was organized during which AGPR's Ahmar Ellahi said that trees are significant because they improve people's lives and meet their basic requirements. (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Meeting**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a high-level security meeting on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

**PM-Besham-meeting**

**PM orders to conduct joint probe of Besham terrorist attack**

**Spokesman report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday instructed to conduct a thorough joint investigation of the Besham terrorist attack on Chinese nationals working on Dasu Hydel Power Project, utilizing all resources of the state. The prime minister offering deepest condolences to the families of the innocent victims of the attack assured that the perpetrators of this barbaric act would be brought to justice swiftly. Chairing a high level emergency meeting in the aftermath of Besham terrorist attack on

Chinese nationals, the prime minister appreciated the alacrity with which law enforcement agencies and locals responded to the attack, saving many precious lives which could have been lost. The meeting was attended by the Federal Ministers, Chief of the Army Staff, Chief Ministers, Chief Secretaries and Inspector Generals of Police of respective provinces, a PM Office press release said. The meeting discussed in detail the heinous attack on innocent civilians working on a development project, meant to contribute to energy and water security of Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

underscored the enduring bond of brotherhood between the people of Pakistan and China and conveyed that the whole nation was saddened by the loss of Chinese lives. He stated, "Terrorism is a trans-national threat that has been instrumentalized by the enemies of Pakistan to stymie Pakistan's progress and development. The acts targeting Pakistan-China friendship are particularly aimed at creating mistrust between the two iron brothers". Participants of the meeting expressed resolute commitment to completely rooting out terrorism from this country.

The participants expressed serious concerns over sanctuaries available to terrorists across the borders and emphasized upon the need for a regional approach for countering terrorism. During the meeting, the COAS reiterated the resolve of armed forces to eliminate the scourge of terrorism afflicting the country. COAS stated that the nation had steadfastly fought the war on terror for the last two decades and had defeated the nefarious designs of Pakistan's adversaries. Noting the recent surge in terrorist incidents, COAS remarked that the enemies of Pakistan had once again under-

estimated the resilience and grit of the State and the people of Pakistan. He said, "we shall fight terrorism till every terrorist casting an evil eye on Pakistan, its people and their guests, is eliminated; we shall not leave any stone unturned to ensure that every foreign citizen, especially the Chinese nationals, contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan, is safe and secure in Pakistan. We shall fight terrorism with all our might, to the very end." The meeting concluded with the participants reiterating resolve to comprehensively combat terrorism employing all resources available to the state.

**China: 'Attempts to sabotage Pak-China ties will never succeed'**



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: China has said that attempts to 'sabotage' China-Pakistan cooperation will never succeed and that Beijing will continue to support Pakistan's socioeconomic development.

The statement came a day after a suicide bombing killed five Chinese nationals and their Pakistani driver in the Besham area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The Chinese nationals were working on the Dasu dam project.

Shortly after the attack, the Chinese embassy in Pakistan demanded a thorough investigation and punishment for the people behind the attack. China also sought the protection of its nationals in Pakistan and urged Islamabad to make sure similar incidents are not repeated.

However, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian struck a different note at the regular Press Conference on Wednesday, emphasizing continued cooperation. "China firmly supports Pakistan in fighting terrorism. We

are solid in our commitment to the safety and security of Chinese nationals, institutions and projects overseas. China and Pakistan have the resolve and capability to make the terrorists pay the price. Our two countries are all-weather strategic cooperative partners. Our iron-clad friendship is deeply rooted in the two peoples," Lin Jian said.

He added, "No attempt to sabotage China-Pakistan cooperation will ever succeed. The China will continue supporting Pakistan's socioeconomic development and efforts to make lives better for its people, and we remain firm in our commitment to working with Pakistan in various fields and delivering more benefit to the two peoples."

Noting that some other countries have also condemned the attack and expressed sympathy for the Chinese victims, Lin said China is grateful for that.

Pakistan on Wednesday held a high-level security meeting attended by the prime minister and the chief of army staff.

**CJP convenes urgent full court meeting on judges' letter**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa convened a full court meeting of the Supreme Court judges over a letter sent to him by six Islamabad High Court judges.

In the letter, the judges have accused the country's intelligence agencies of meddling with judicial affairs and pressuring the judges.

The full court meeting began at around 4pm on Wednesday lasted for over two hours until after 6pm.

Sources told Aaj News that the judges examined the

letter and discussed taking the matter to a full court bench of the Supreme Court or the Supreme Judicial Council.

The letter from Justice Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, and Justice Rafat Imtiaz was received by the CJP Tuesday.

The contents of the letter included at least two appendices containing details of the letters sent to the Islamabad High Court chief justice by the same six judges.

**Senate election: Deadlock persists between PPP, PML-N over women seats**

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The talks between Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) over women's seats in the upcoming Senate election has reached a deadlock, ARY News reported.

PPP candidate for the women's seat Faiza Malik has refused to withdraw from the election as the former ruling coalition parties were at a standstill over the seat adjustment in the Punjab Senate election.

In this regard, Malik said that she filed her nomination papers on the orders of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

According to her, the PPP chief has not asked her to withdraw from the race

for the women's seat in the upper house.

It is pertinent to mention that the two women's seats of the Senate are vacant from Punjab.

The PML-N has fielded Anusha Rehman and Bushra Anjum Butt while Malik is contesting from the PPP's platform.

Read more: ECP issues revised list for upcoming Senate elections

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has nominated Sanam Javed for the Senate seat in Punjab. Dr Yasmin Rashid was reported to contest the senate election on the technocrat seat.

Sanam Javed had moved the Appellate Tribunal after her nomination papers were rejected by the Election Commission of Pakistan.

**All possible steps to be taken to root out scourge of terrorism: Tarar**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday reiterated the commitment of the government that all possible steps would be taken to root out the scourge of terrorism from the soil of the motherland.

Addressing a press conference after a high level meeting on security chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said that Prime Minister expressed the firm resolve to eliminate terrorism and make Pakistan a peaceful state.

Tarar said that all the participants of the meeting were on the same page regarding ensuring security for all.

He said today's high level meeting was attended by Federal Ministers, Chief of Army Staff, Chief Secretaries, Inspector Generals of the prov-



inces, Chief Secretaries and IGs of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Attaullah Tarar said that the meeting had the consensus that an integrated strategy should be adopted to wipe out terrorism from this country. "A message of unity was given to the nation today that all units are on the same page with the Federation", he informed the media. All were on the same page on the integrity and national interest of Pakistan, he said adding, "We know how to defend ourselves and our old friends".

He disclosed that regarding the investigation of the incident, there

was also a consultation on the establishment of Joint Investigation Team.

The minister said that morale of all participants was high in the meeting and they had a unity of thought on tackling the issue. He recalled that in 2018, the Pakistan Muslim League-N had left a peaceful Pakistan free from terrorism.

He said yesterday's sad incident in Bisham resulted in loss of six precious lives including Chinese citizens.

He said that China was a time tested friend of Pakistan that has always stood by Islamabad at all difficult times and at international forums. He said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was the guarantor of economic development in the country. The minister said after the launch of the CPEC about 64 billion dollar investment was done in Pakistan and its GDP had increased significantly.

**PM likely to meet CJP ISA today**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to hold a meeting with Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faiz Isa on the IHC Judges' letter issue today.

According to sources, PM Shehbaz along with Law Minister

Nazir Tarar and Attorney General of Pakistan Mansoor Awan will meet the top judge tomorrow at 2 o'clock in the premises of the apex court.

The meeting is scheduled after the CJP sent a message to PM Shehbaz over the matter of the letter written by six judges of

Islamabad High Court on 'interference in judicial affairs', they say.

Earlier, the Supreme Court on Wednesday held a full court meeting to deliberate on a letter by the six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges about alleged interference of spy agencies with "judicial functions."

The development took place after the bar associations and legal experts called for a probe into the letter.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa among other judges of the top court attended the meeting that lasted for over two hours in the federal capital.

The development took place after the bar associations and legal experts called for a probe into the letter.

It is pertinent to mention here that six serving judges of the Islamabad High Court have penned a letter to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), urging it to summon a judicial convention to review matter of "interference of intelligence agencies with judicial functions".

# Ramadan is a Reward for Muslims from Allah Almighty: Naeem Iqbal Naeem

**Khalid Chaudhry**

MULTAN: President of Young Pakistanis Organization Naeem Iqbal Naeem has said that Ramadan is a reward for Muslims from Allah Almighty, in which the reward for performing the duty is seventy times greater, while the reward for perform-

ing the Nafl is equal to the performance of the duty.

This is mercy. Ramadan is the blessed month of forgiveness and forgiveness. May the blessings of Mubarak be wrapped up.

In this regard, Young Pakistanis Organization organizes a two-day examination of Hasan Recitation

and Naat Sharif among the students of schools, colleges, universities and madrasas every year.

On the first day, there will be a recitation and Naat Sharif competition among the students. The special guest of the ceremony will be the well-known religious scholar, thinker of Islam, former federal minister

of religious affairs, Allama Syed Hamid Saeed Kazmi Shah, who will highlight the importance, mercy and blessings of Ramadan while giving a special address on this occasion. The host of the programs will be Naeem Iqbal Naeem President Young Pakistanis Organization and Prof. Rasht Ali Principal Spire College Multan.

## Exhibition

ISLAMABAD: Women keenly looking at old manuscripts of Quran Kareem during a Quran Exhibition organized by Cultural Consulate of Islamic Republic of Iran in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# 46 Death Anniversary of Syed Allamdar Hussain Gilani

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Allama Mazhar Saeed Kazmi the Central Ameer of Jamaat Ahle Sunnat, has said that the services of the Gillani family for the people of Multan and Wasib cannot be forgotten, while the provincial General Secretary of Jamaat Ahlus Sunnat Allama Muhammad Farooq Khan Saeedi has said that Makhdoom Syed Alamdar Hussain Gilani, the great leader of Tehreek-e-Pakistan Every year in his life, on the 3rd of Ramadan, he used to organize Iftar for the repose of Hazrat Bibi Fatima Al-Zahira. By the mercy of Allah, he also passed away on the 3rd of Ramadan for reward, but this There has been a delay in holding of the anniversary and chador-poshi ceremony due to the election year. These views were expressed by the speakers while addressing the 46th anniversary gathering of Makhdoom Syed Alamdar Hussain Gilani, father of Makhdoom Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, which was organized by Darbar. It was done in the lawn of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed. Khatam Sharif in the ceremony It was read, after which the Sajjad Nashin of Kazmiya Dargah



Central Ameer Jamaat Ahl-e-Sunnat Allama Syed Mazhar Saeed Kazmi and the Sajjad Nashin of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed Dargah Makhdoom Syed Abul Hasan Gilani led a congregational prayer while former MPA Syed Ahmed Mujtaba Gilani in the gathering. Head of Makhdoom Syed Ghulam Yazdani Gilani, President Anjuman Islamia Makhdoom Syed Tanveerul Hasan Gilani, political social leader Makhdoom Syed Rajan Bakhsh Gilani, former MPA Haji Javed Akhtar Ansari, Makhdoom Syed Tufail Mohiuddin Gilani, Makhdoom Syed Noorani Gilani, MNA Syed Ali Musa Gilani, Amid War NA 148 Syed Ali Qasim Gilani, Makhdoom Hasan Raza Gilani, Makhdoom Syed Ali Raza Gilani, Makhdoom Syed Zohaib Hasan Gilani, Makhdoom Syed Amir Abdul Qadir Gilani, Dr. Syed Hussain Gilani, Muhammad Naeem Khan, Muham-

mad Zubair, Syed Artza Hasan Gilani, Syed Amir Hasan Gilani, Syed Zainul Abedin Gilani, Sahibzada Ahsan Saeed Kazmi, Mamoon Gilani, Syed Fayazul Hasan Gilani, Syed Shaukat Hussain Gilani, Syed Ijaz Qadir Gilani, Dr. Javed Siddiqui, Makhdoom Alamin Geelani, Engineer Saddaruddin Geelani, Syed Sahab Geelani, Syed Farhan Geelani, Irfan Shah Geelani, Khalifa Yasin, Moeen Qadri, Hafiz Shahbaz Qadri, Malik Qadeer Khokhar, Malik Shahzad, Abd Thahim, Rizwan Abid Thahim, Rana Irfan Islam., including Mazhar Javed Syal, Shakir Dilawar Qureshi, belonging to various walks of life Friends attended. On this occasion, Qari Muhammad Saeed Sarmad recited the recitation and Khatam Sharif, well-known Khwaan Hameed Nawaz Asim, Waheed Nawaz, Hameed Nawaz, Khalifa Ghulam Hussain presented Hadiya Naat, Alla-

ma Mazhar-e Saeed Kazmi and Allama Muhammad Farooq Khan Saeedi added K. Gilani. Along with religion, the family always adorned the people of Multan with jewels of education. Did Allah make Syed Yusuf Raza a member of the Senate on the 3rd of Ramadan, who played an important role in the establishment of Nishtar and Madrasa Anwar Uloom, Multan? The right of representation in the Upper House will be paid after Iftar and Maghrib prayers. Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, Syed Abul Hasan Gilani and Syed Tanveer Al Hasan Gilani laid wreaths at the shrine of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed and Makhdoom Syed Alamdar Hussain Gilani and after the recitation of Fatiha, a collective prayer was offered once again. Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, Syed Ali Musa Gilani and Syed Qasim Gilani were arrested.

## Former MNA Dehar's interference at Pak Italian Burn Center worsens situation



**Kiran Asim / Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: The increasing political interference of former MNA and PMLN Candidate NA 148 Malik Ahmad Hussain Dehar at the Pak Italian Burn Center Nishtar Hospital Multan has worsened the situation with abuse of authority and misbehavior with senior doctors by junior Dr. Ahmad Ali Malik on the blessing of Former MNA Ahmed Hussain Dehar. made matters worse for burn center Multan. The senior doctors of the burn center resigned en masse due to which the fears of affecting the operation of the patients in the hospital increased. It is learned from the sources that Dr. Ahmad Ali Malik came to the burn center yesterday where he locked the AMS room. And when AMS Dr. Ali Mehdi was on his duty as usual. When he came, his room was locked. When asked by Dr. Ali Mehdi, the employees said that this lock was installed by Dr. Ahmed Ali Malik. said to throw flower petals on me when I come to the burn centre. And slogans should be raised in my favor. After that, Dr. Ahmed Ali Malik forcibly came and sat in the AMS room and when Dr. Ali Mehdi asked him why are you sitting here in my office, Dr. Ahmed Ali Malik said that You have been transferred here, now this office is mine. Meanwhile, Dr. Ahmad Ali Malik Started threatening the security guard and other employees of the hospital to sign the plain paper and write us against former Executive Director Professor Dr. Khalid Qureshi, AMS Dr. Ali Mehdi, Prof. Dr. Naheed Chaudhry, Prof. Dr. Waseem Rabbani. Do it, on which the employees refused, later on the same thing to the hospital. Senior doctors including Professor of Plastic Surgeon Professor Dr. Naheed Ahmed Chaudhry, Professor of Anesthesia Professor Dr. Waseem Rabbani, Associate Professor Dr. Bilal Saeed, Assistant Professors Dr. Naveed Shahzad and Dr. Akmal Shah, Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Multan Professor Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani met and tendered their collective resignation. In the written resignation, it is said that we all cannot work in such an environment because the junior Dr. Ahmed Ali Malik, is exercising the powers of the Executive Director at Burn Center and Full blessings of former MNA Malik Ahmed Hussain Dehar. The political interference of Ahmed Hussain Dehar is increasing to reward junior doctor in burn center due to which the environment of burn center is very bad. And also unethical with the junior doctors Dr. Ahmad Ali Malik Hospital. Therefore, they all tender their collective resignation. Sources have learned that after the resignation of senior doctors at the burn center, fears of patient operations being affected have increased.

## Local political leaders protest against police behavior

**Adam Khan Wazir**

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: In Wana, Lower South Waziristan district, row erupts between police and Tires protesters escalated.

Police fired in the air to disperse the crowd, resulting in minor injuries to a youth named Ashiq Noor.

The protestors alleged that the police charged us with heavy sticks and tortured us.

On the other hand, the police say that last week, the police caught two pick-ups full of non-custom tires in the Karab Kot area near tanai.

While the negotiations were going on with the tire owners for several days, the negotiations failed.

The police further said that when the vehicles with tires were moved to Dera Ismail Khan to be handed over to the customs authorities,

A hand-to-hand encounter took place between the police and protesters standing on Azam Warsak Road.

Eye witnesses say that the police arrested five people while charging the protesters with batons.

All the arrested persons were transferred to City Police Station Wana District president of PPP Amanullah Wazir is also included among the arrested persons.

The police said that the protestors had blocked the Wana Azam-warsak Road for traffic, which caused severe problems to the common people.

Later, after dispersing the protestors, the road was opened for all kinds of traffic.

Meanwhile, under the leadership of General Secretary of Pakistan People's Party South Waziristan Lower Imran Mukhalis, local political leaders took out a rally against the police.

The rally participants demanded the release of the arrested persons.

Ashfaq Wazir from Pakhtunkhwa MAP, District President of Jamaat-e-Islami Nadeem Wazir and Haroon Wazir from PTI and tire owners participated in the rally.

The rally participants strongly condemned the lathi charge on the protestors by the police and demanded the early release of the arrested persons.

Political leaders strongly criticized the police misconduct, and demanded the provincial government to transfer all the SHO's of Wana to other remote Districts.

The rally participants said that the SHO's of other districts should be posted in Wana.

In this regard, the business people said that the government should not affect our business and make arrangements at the border, seizing goods inside the district is cruel.

On the other hand, DPO Farmanullah said that an FIR will be registered against those who take the law into their hands.

DPO said the law is equal for all, no one will be allowed to take the law into their hands.

# Agriculture is the only Sector which is affected by Climate Change: Saqib Ali Ateel

**Khalid Chaudhry/ Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali Ateel had said that agriculture is the only sector which is affected by climate change. Environment-friendly measures are indispensable to save agriculture from the ravages of climate change. There is an increasing trend of food insecurity due to crises, and natural disasters. Several indicators that encompass different sectors of the economy lead to food insecurity.

He was addressing the participants in the provincial seminar titled "Situation of Malnutrition in South Punjab" held her at a hotel. Secretary Agriculture South Saqib Ali Ateel, speaking as a special guest, said that due to the hard work of the Punjab Agriculture Department and farmers, the production of cotton has

increased by 3 million bales last year, which has benefited the country by 1.5 billion dollars. Appreciating the efforts of FDO and Doaba, he said that the successful implementation of LANN+ APPROACH was made possible for the first time in Pakistan due to mutual efforts of both organizations.

Due to this, a lot of support has been given to combat malnutrition in riverine and desert areas and considering the challenges faced by small farmers.

The agriculture secretary also praised the food model for ensuring food security of smallholder farmers. Speaking at the event, Chief Executive Officer FDO Ghulam Mustafa said that food security has become a huge challenge worldwide.

According to the 2022 Global Hunger Index report, 828 million

people are suffering from malnutrition in the world. According to this global report, which was released in 2022, Pakistan was ranked 99th in the hunger ranking. He said that due to increasing population, climate change, natural disasters and ignorance about modern technology, most of Pakistan's population is facing food shortage.

Speaking on the occasion, Program Manager FDO Parvez Iqbal Ansari said that FDO in collaboration with WHH "Food and nutrition security" in Muzaffargarh is working on a capacity building project" aimed at linking agriculture, nutrition and natural resource management with evidence-based policy recommendations at the provincial and national levels. In order to promote sustainable agriculture and better utilization of resources, FDO has introduced

a system of one acre complete food supply to small farmers at the household level.

Program Manager Doaba Foundation Javed Iqbal while addressing the event said that multi-stakeholders coming together on this important issue is commendable. Mazhar Iqbal Dy. Manger Program shared what changes are going to happen with the implementation of LANN+ Approach towards the Nutrition security of children and women especially.

During the panel discussion Farmer, Director Agriculture, CEO Health and Chairperson SUN CSA explained the role of smallholder farmers. Chairperson SUN CSA said that civil society can play the role of a bridge between farmers and service providers to tackle the challenges of malnutrition in South Punjab.

In the seminar, Prof. Umar and



Prof. Rais highlighted the malnutrition in South Punjab and the role of all stakeholders in addressing these challenges.

Finally, the seminar was concluded with the commitment that every stakeholder will play their role to tackle malnutrition in South Punjab and cooperation will be key.

Chief Executive Health, Section Office Planning and Development, Director Agriculture, Divisional Director Social Welfare, Director Agriculture, Regional Director South Punjab Baitul Mal, Dean Chairman Food and Nutrition, and civil society representatives from across Punjab and others participated in the event.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:38 am  
Zohr ..... 12:13 pm  
Asr ..... 4:38 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:25 pm  
Isha ..... 7:49 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 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 Inquiry ..... 117  
Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service  
E-7, F-10 & F-11 ..... 9204654  
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, ..... 9203883  
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..... 9266316  
Wapda Islamabad ..... 9217579-80  
Sui Gas Complaint ..... 119, 9272249  
Wasa Water Tank  
Rawalpindi ..... 0331-5022125

**OPPO Reno 11 F 5G: Setting new records as Pakistan's most beloved smartphone lineup**

PPA

LAHORE: OPPO's groundbreaking flagship, the Reno11 Series 5G, has captured the nation's fascination since its launch, cementing its status as Pakistan's premier choice for premium smartphones. Consisting of the OPPO Reno11 5G and OPPO Reno11 F 5G, this series exemplifies OPPO's unwavering dedication to excellence, now available at an introductory price of PKR 79,999/- for the Reno11 F 5G which goes on sale today.

The buzz surrounding the OPPO Reno11 Series 5G has been electric, with unprecedented pre-order numbers showcasing overwhelming support. This fervor solidifies the series as the top contender in the premium smartphone market, delivering unrivaled value to consumers. The OPPO Reno11 F 5G is now accessible across Pakistan at authorized retailers, dealers and Naacem Electronics.

**Tree plantation drive to promote greening of Islamabad launched**

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ahmar Ellahi, Accountant General of Pakistan Revenues, kicked off the Spring Tree Plantation Drive on Tuesday with a publicly launched plantation effort to plant trees within the Accountant General's office.

In this connection, a ceremony was organized during which AGPR's Ahmar Ellahi said that trees are significant because they improve people's lives and meet their basic requirements.

During photosynthesis, trees break down food materials and absorb carbon dioxide. As a result, the trees generate carbohydrates using sunshine, he said.

He added that trees support life by providing habitat for a variety of creatures, including squirrels, bees, and birds. Trees clean the air by taking carbon



dioxide from the atmosphere and emitting oxygen.

Trees chill the surroundings by absorbing heat from the sun. Thus, there is cooling in the atmosphere. The trees provide shade for residences and roadways.

AGPR's Ahmar Ellahi also discussed the plantation's ambi-

tions, including intentions to plant lemon trees on the AGPR premises. We will also add diverse fruit-bearing, blooming, and other plant species to enhance the aesthetic attractiveness of the surroundings.

Ellahi emphasized residents' common obligation to plant trees in their houses, neigh-

borhoods, and vacant lots to protect the environment from pollution and ensure a sustainable future.

He announced the launch of a campaign among youth and children to increase environmental awareness.

He thanked AIMS Horticulture and the Kitchen Gardening Club Islamabad for their assistance in planting the trees. Mr. Naveed Ahmed Khan, editor of the Daily Spokesman, was also present.

Director AGPR, Ms. Ammara Hasan, also planted a lemon tree, emphasizing the importance of tree planting in reducing the negative consequences of climate change.

This campaign emphasized the importance of forest conservation and tree planting in addressing climate change. This effort aimed to realize the idea of a green Pakistan.

**Shortage of gas**

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is placing gas cylinders along roadside at Sector G-11, can cause an accident in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

**Fly Jinnah inaugurates second int'l flight connecting Lahore and Sharjah in the UAE**

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Fly Jinnah, Pakistan's low-cost carrier, today celebrated the inaugural flight of its second international route connecting Lahore, Pakistan with Sharjah, UAE. The carrier commemorated the start of its new route with a pre-departure inaugural ceremony at Lahore International Airport and followed by an inaugural program planned for guests in Sharjah.

Commenting on the launch of the second international route, Fly Jinnah's spokesperson said: "Just a month following the launch of our international operations with the inaugural flight from the capital city Islamabad, today we celebrate the inaugural



of our second international route into the UAE connecting Lahore with Sharjah. This step not only highlights the importance of strengthening air connectivity between Pakistan and the UAE, it also reflects our commitment to offering our customers new

options for affordable and value driven air travel domestically and internationally."

Fly Jinnah remains steadfast in offering convenient and affordable service to its passengers. With its modern fleet of five Airbus A320 aircraft, the airline currently connects five

major cities in Pakistan, namely Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta, in addition to the newly launched international destination to Sharjah in the UAE.

In addition to the extra comfort provided by the most generous seat-pitch of any economy cabin, the carrier offers affordable and value-driven travel experiences through "SkyCafe" onboard menu where passengers can enjoy a wide variety of delicacies between snacks, sandwiches, and meals at affordable prices. The aircraft is also equipped with "SkyTime", a free in-flight streaming service that allows passengers to stream a wide selection of entertainment directly to their devices.

**Tajweed classes held at AIOU**



PNP

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) organized Tajweed Al-Qur'an classes during Ramadan. A total of 37 employees of the university, including 22 female and 15 male employees, were registered for these classes. The certificate distribution ceremony for these classes took place yesterday. Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi presided over the ceremony, while Director, Coordination and Follow-up, Prof. Dr. Syed. Aamir Shah was the chief guest. Dr. Sana Ullah Hussain, Chairman of the Department of Quran and Tafseer, hosted the event.

Addressing the ceremony, Prof. Dr. Amir Shah spoke about the close relationship between the Quran and Ramadan and congratulated the Department of Quran and Tafseer for their efforts. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi praised the department's work in guiding people back to the Holy Quran, emphasizing the importance of the Quran and the Sunnah in guiding Muslims.

Dr. Sana Ullah mentioned that the teachers in Tajweed Al-Qur'an classes focused on ensuring the correct pronunciation of the Qur'an. He explained that these classes aimed to teach fundamental religious rules and regulations. The participants expressed that the classes provided them with guidance in all aspects of their lives. Certificates were distributed to the participants at the end of the ceremony.

**More than 2.6 million out-of-school children in Pakistan: Malik Abrar**



PPA

ISLAMABAD: The first meeting of the newly elected central executive body of All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association was held yesterday at the head office of the association in Islamabad. The meeting was presided over by Central President Dr. Malik Abrar Hussain, While Senior Vice President Rana Sohail Ahmad, Vice President Javed Iqbal Raja, Secretary General Ashraf Haraj, Zulfiqar Ali Siddiqui, Irfan Muzaffar Kayani, Malik Deen Muhammad Awan, Qasim Abbas, Asrar Bakhari, Muhammad Ibrahim, Malik Hafeezur Rehman, Malik Shaikat Ali, Muhammad Arif Advocate, Qari Tariq Mehmood, Antak Hussain, Syed Abid Shah, Sardar Gul Zubair Khan, Dr. Rukhsana Khan, Nagina Younis and Sadia Ishaq also participated in the meeting and expressed their views.

On this occasion, the meeting has demanded that there are more than two million and six million children out of school in the country, which is a big question mark on our education system. The government should take concrete steps to bring the out-of-school children to school. It was demanded in the meeting that the role of private education sector is above all for the educational development, social and economic improvement of Pakistan. Therefore, taking into account the services of private educational institutions, the government should provide facilities to these schools. Provision of land for construction of private school buildings, interest-free loans should be given, laboratories and libraries should be provided in registered private educational institutions. It has been clarified in the meeting that undoubtedly, the private education sector is ready to cooperate with the government in every possible way, however, the state will also have to fulfill its responsibilities and take concrete steps to solve the problems of private educational institutions.

**Narcotics smuggling bid foiled, one held**

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Jand Police on Wednesday foiled a bid to smuggle huge quantity of narcotics worth millions of rupees from KP to Punjab and arrested a narcotics smuggler.

Police spokesman said that acting on a tip off, a team of Jand Police at search park Mankor intercepted a car and during search recovered 10.50 kilogram of hashish worth millions of rupees stored in hidden parts of the vehicle. The spokesman has said that police arrested the suspect identified as Fakhar Alam who during preliminary interrogation, the suspect has confessed to be member of inter provincial gang of drugs. Police started further investigation.

**PRGMEA wants separate Apparel Policy to grab share in U.S future market**

PPA

KARACHI: Calling for the revision of the Textile Policy, the Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) has urged the government to present a separate five-year 'Apparel Policy' detaching the garment sector from textile and giving it an independent status in the aftermath of expiring GSP Plus status and opening up of new opportunities in view of the U.S International Trade Commission's (ITC) report on competitiveness of Pakistan's apparel industry to be submitted at the end of August this year.

PRGMEA central chairman Mubashar Naseer Butt, appreciating the government's urgent response to the U.S ITC report on competitiveness of apparel industry of Pakistan, observed that the move holds significant implications, presenting a valuable opportunity for Pakistan's apparel industry to enhance its export because the U.S major focus is also on apparel import from Pakistan. So, we need to strengthen this sector, giving it an identity like the rest of the world do, as the EU country's single demand is also just apparel items not the raw material or fabric.

The International Trade Commission of the U.S, during the recent hearing, also put this question, asking the participants as to why Pakistan exports raw material instead of making value-addition, as it is capable of doing this, he added. He said the textile industry is the most important manufacturing industry in Pakistan, with a relatively complete industrial chain- from raw cotton, cotton ginning, spinning, clothing, printing and dyeing to garment manufacturing.



**ANF Academy organizes workshop on anti-money laundering, counter financing of terrorism**

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Academy here on Wednesday organized a three-day Workshop/Seminar on Mar 27 (APP): n Anti Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism.

53 Investigation Officers and Public Prosecutors from ANF and sister law enforcement agencies benefited from the Workshop/Seminar.

Chief Instructor ANF Academy Sahib Khan highlighted the importance of the workshop.

The experts from relevant stakeholders on Anti Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism, including Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), FATF Secretariat and Counter Terrorism Department



ment (CTD) Islamabad were invited as guest speakers.

Honorable Commandant, ANF Academy Brigadier Ghazi Kamal Kiani graced the closing ceremony on the final day of the workshop/seminar.

Commandant ANF Academy appreciated the earnest efforts of ANF Academy

to provide a platform for capacity building on money laundering and terrorism financing related issues relevant to various stake holders.

He also highlighted Pakistan's efforts at policy, procedural and operational level to fulfill the requirements of FATF.

He underscored the importance of

ANF as a vital link in "National Integrated Approach" being a key member of various national forums on money laundering and terrorism financing. As the task is multi sectoral endeavor, ANF is actively engaged with all stakeholders namely MoI, NACTA, FATF Secretariat, FMU, Police, FIA, NAB, CTD and FBR for information sharing, cooperation and provision of data through a desk involving a dedicated focal person.

ANF Academy strives to remain at the forefront of holding specialized courses and workshops for capacity building that in turn, feeds into the national efforts against money laundering and terrorism financing, he added.

The Commandant stressed the need for continuous capacity building of investigation officers and prosecutors to better deal with the dynamics of assets investigation including financial intelligence to undertake proactive pursuance of

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# ‘Six Judges’ Allegations: Yet Challenges in Substantiation...’-I

In a remarkable development, six judges of the Islamabad High Court have penned a letter to the Supreme Judicial Council underscoring deeply troubling allegations of blatant, aggressive, and intimidating interference by the executive branch in both lower and higher judiciary affairs. The accusations range from manipulating bench formations to exerting undue pressure on judges to sway decisions in critical cases. Moreover, there are claims of defiance against judicial directives, orders, and judgments, often enforced through coercive measures such as the use of brute force or intimidation tactics like throwing crackers at residences, abducting close relatives, and covert surveillance. Such allegations, if substantiated, raise profound questions about the sanctity of judicial independence and the rule of law.

The noteworthy aspect of this situation is the decision to make the letter public. With decades of experience in government circles, it's clear that officials, including judges, are obligated to maintain confidentiality in their official correspondence. Various regulations, such as the Efficiency and Discipline Rules for government servants and the Judicial Code of Conduct, emphasize the importance of confidentiality, especially in legal proceedings. The relevant Article V of the Judicial Code of Conduct stresses that judges should avoid engaging in public controversies, particularly

political ones, to uphold the integrity of their position.

Typically, matters concerning the Supreme Court are communicated to the public through its public relations department, often pertaining to administrative issues or clarifications on court actions. However, in this instance, the letter addressed to the Supreme Judicial Council on March 25, 2024, was made public the following day, March 26, 2024. This move likely aimed to achieve several objectives.

By revealing allegations of interference by intelligence agencies, the judges aimed to highlight potential threats to judicial integrity. They likely hoped that public scrutiny would compel authorities to address the issue promptly and reinforce the importance of judicial independence. However, making internal correspondence public carries risks, including undermining confidentiality and inviting political or legal repercussions. Depending on how the allegations are perceived, it could also affect public confidence. While transparency is essential for accountability, it must be balanced with protecting the judicial process's integrity and minimizing potential fallout.

Whether the letter was leaked without the consent of the Chairman of the

Supreme Judicial Commission, or the six judges who wrote it, remains unclear. However, the gravity of the allegations made by these judges cannot be overstated. Accusing the executive branch of blatant interference in the judiciary, including manipulation of bench formations, intimidation of judges, defiance of judicial directives, and even resorting to acts of violence and threats against judges and their families, constitutes a direct assault on the foundational principles of democracy, rule of law, and judicial independence.

If proven true, these allegations would not only undermine the credibility and integrity of the judicial system but also pose a significant threat to the fundamental principles of justice and separation of powers.

However, both the judges and Supreme Judicial Council know very well that the spying agency operatives are professional trained and proficient to leave no trace of evidence of their alleged interference and intimidations to the judges or their victims or targets. They employ sophisticated protocols including encryption, secure communication channels, anonymous communication platforms, steganography, covert operatives, and deniable operations to ensure their communications and actions remain untraceable

and without evidence.

Utilizing advanced encryption methods, secure networks, and anonymous tools, they conceal their identities and activities, making it challenging for outsiders to intercept or attribute their actions. Covert operatives operate discreetly, while deniable operations provide plausible deniability. This makes proving their involvement in suppression and intimidation activities exceptionally difficult, necessitating thorough investigation and forensic analysis to uncover any traces of their involvement.

Therefore, handling allegations of interference and intimidation by spying agencies in the absence of concrete evidence presents a significant challenge for the Supreme Judicial Council. However, despite the difficulty in proving such allegations, the Council may still take appropriate steps to address the situation and uphold the integrity of the judiciary. They do so by employing various techniques and methods.

Evidently, in the absence of direct evidence, the Council will have to rely on witness testimonies and corroboration from multiple sources to substantiate the allegations. Witness testimonies, especially from the judges themselves and other individuals who may have been subjected to intimidation or interference, can provide valuable insights into the nature and extent of the alleged actions.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Clean Energy Expo in China

The Clean Energy Expo China 2024 (CEEC-2024), is being held in Beijing from Mar. 26 to 28, featuring exhibitions, forums, seminars and trade fairs. With an exhibition area of about 50,000 square meters, the three-day expo themed “Clean Energy Helps Build New Power System” has attracted more than 800 entities, among which are international companies including but not limited to Caterpillar, Bureau Veritas, Howden, as well as domestic new energy leaders, cover Trina Solar, JA solar, Huawei, BYD, LONGi, sungrow, and the like.

Exhibits contain wind energy, photovoltaics, hydrogen energy, and energy storage. It is expected that more than 1,000 new technologies, products and application scenario cases will be displayed in three days. In addition, the China Clean Power Summit, the 2nd New Energy International Cooperation Forum, the International (China-US) Clean Energy Cooperation Forum, the Photovoltaic Market Development Forum, the 2nd China Energy Storage Conference, and the International Hydrogen Energy Technology Innovation Cooperation Forum will be held concurrently, during which 300 experts and entrepreneurs would speak freely to further expand the development space of the clean energy industry, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. Hydrogen, being the key to the future development of the new energy field, the Hydrogen Energy & Fuel Cells Expo China 2024 will be held at the same time. As one of the most complete exhibition platforms for the hydrogen industry chain in China, the exhibits cover hydrogen production, storage, transportation, hydrogenation, and use, with the theme of “Hydrogen Energy Helps Plan and Build a New Energy System”. Hydrogen Energy Expo, not only a variety of high-end hydrogenated models such as cars, heavy trucks, bicycles, and tricycles, but also multitudinous application scenarios such as hydrogenation ships, aviation, hydrogen metallurgy, hydrogen methanol, hydrogen alkane, and hydrogen subways would be mushroomed on the trot. Equipment in all aspects of the industrial chain including the high-flow diaphragm compressor of the 70 MPa hydrogenation station and the integrated mobile hydrogen quality analyzer for fuel cells would also catch the eyes of audience home and abroad in an all-round way. As a clean, low-carbon, high calorific value, and diverse source of green energy, hydrogen is known as the ultimate energy in the 21st century. The heat of combustion per kilogram of hydrogen is approximately 3 times that of gasoline, 3.9 times that of alcohol, and 4.5 times that of coke. The 2024 government work report explicitly mentions hydrogen energy for the first time, treating hydrogen as an important direction in cultivating new quality productive forces.

According to statistics from the China Hydrogen Alliance, by 2025, the output value of China's hydrogen energy industry will reach 1 trillion yuan. Green electricity hydrogen production based on wind power and photovoltaics could become a porter of renewable energy to strongly support the realization of China's dual carbon goals. Taking advantage of excellent opportunity of the rapid development of the global new energy industry, the CEEC 2024 would become an international exchange platform for the entire industry chain of new energy, including hydrogen.



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

## The Role of Journalism in National Defense - I

A couple of days back, I participated in an interview on a local radio station. We delved into the crucial role journalists play in national defense. Given the sensitivity of national defense, its significance cannot be overstated in ensuring a country's independence, peace, and security. National defense stands as the cornerstone of a nation's sovereignty and security, encompassing policies, strategies, and capabilities aimed at shielding borders, citizens, and interests from external threats. In an increasingly interconnected and unpredictable world, the significance of a robust national defense cannot be overstated. It acts as a barrier against aggression, ensures stability, and promotes peace within and beyond borders.

At its essence, national defense is about safeguarding a nation's sovereignty, representing its independence and authority to govern without external interference. A robust defense is indispensable for protecting territorial integrity, deterring potential aggressors, and upholding national autonomy. Without a capable defense force, a nation risks vulnerability to incursions or annexations that could compromise its sovereignty.

National defense is closely intertwined with national security, which involves protecting citizens, infrastructure, resources, and ways of life. A well-equipped and trained military not only defends against conventional threats but also addresses non-traditional challenges like terrorism and cyberattacks. Maintaining a vigilant defense posture helps preempt and mitigate security risks, ensuring the safety and well-being of the populace.

Strong national defense contributes to region-

al and global stability by deterring aggression and preventing conflicts from escalating. Through alliances and cooperative security mechanisms, nations can collectively address common challenges and promote peace. Additionally, a credible defense posture enhances diplomatic leverage, enabling constructive engagement in international affairs.

Investments in defense-related industries stimulate innovation, create jobs, and drive technological advancements with civilian applications, fostering economic prosperity. A secure environment encourages investments, trade, and economic growth while ensuring resilience against disruptions.

Beyond its instrumental role, national defense upholds the values and principles that define a nation, particularly in democracies where defense forces protect freedoms and human rights. By championing democratic values, nations reinforce their moral authority and contribute to a more just world order.

Patriotism, characterized by love and devotion to one's country, transcends boundaries and fosters unity and resilience among citizens. It embodies a commitment to shared ideals and aspirations, serving as a beacon of civic pride and belonging. Patriotism unifies diverse communities, bridging ethnic, religious, and ideological divides within a nation. Irrespective of their backgrounds or beliefs, individuals unite under the common banner of citizenship and dedication to their shared homeland. Through the embrace of patriotism, societies not only celebrate their diversity but also forge a collective identity rooted in mutual respect, tolerance, and inclusivity. This unity of purpose bolsters social cohesion and cultivates harmony within multi-

cultural contexts. During challenging times, patriotism emerges as a wellspring of resilience and determination, motivating people to persevere in the face of adversity, whether it be natural disasters, economic downturns, or external threats. A robust sense of patriotism inspires communities to surmount obstacles with unwavering resolve, fostering a spirit of sacrifice and cooperation for the greater good of the nation and its citizens. Moreover, patriotism nurtures a culture of civic engagement and accountability, encouraging active involvement in democratic processes and societal improvement. Recognizing that the strength of a nation lies in its people, patriots fulfill their civic responsibilities through voting, volunteering, and advocating for positive change. They enrich the social fabric through acts of service, philanthropy, and community engagement, embodying the ideals of democracy and collective responsibility. At the heart of patriotism lies the preservation of national heritage, traditions, and cultural identity, ensuring that future generations inherit a legacy worth cherishing and safeguarding. By honoring the sacrifices of the past and celebrating present achievements, patriots instill a deep appreciation for their country's history and global contributions. Through education, commemoration, and cultural expression, they transmit a sense of pride and belonging that strengthens intergenerational bonds. While patriotism emphasizes love for one's country, it also encompasses a broader commitment to global citizenship and the well-being of humanity. Patriotic individuals recognize the interconnectedness of nations and advocate for international cooperation in addressing shared challenges such as climate change, poverty, and conflict. By championing peace, diplomacy, and humanitarian efforts, patriots extend their allegiance beyond borders, fostering goodwill and understanding on a global scale.

*To be continued*

## Despair and hope - I

Jalaluddin Kakar

Before I encapsulate my thoughtful observations, let us silently acknowledge that we cannot reach the right destination by walking on the wrong path. This lamentation is really heartbreaking, inasmuch as the so-called Islamic Republic of Pakistan has never celebrated its heydays. She always came in the throes of revolving-door democracy, politically challenged economy, hybrid reign, military-backed politics, mired health sector, fragile education system, and more humiliating, religious fanaticism in the extremist Pakistani society.

A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) demoted Pakistan 11 places in the global ranking on the state of democracy and downgraded it from a “hybrid regime” to an “authoritarian regime.” As a global parameter, each country is classified as one of four types of regime: full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime, or authoritarian regime. A case in point is Pakistan, which has suffered the biggest regression in the Asian region, with its score falling to 3.25, triggering a downgrade from ‘hybrid regime’ to ‘authoritarian regime’ and a decline of 11 places in the global ranking. One piece of good news is that it is an “age of conflicts” and democracy all over the world is declining as over 35 years of international advances in democracy have been wiped out in the last decade. It found there are more “closed autocracies” than liberal democracies for the first time in over two decades, with the current “wave of autocratization” sweeping across all regions. It also found that 72 percent of the global population (5.7 billion people) lives in autocracies—a substantial increase from 46 percent a decade ago. Melancholy, the Economist Intelligence Unit conducts an annual survey of the health of democracy in 167 countries, assessing them across five measures. They

are electoral processes and pluralism, political participation, a functioning government acting in the public interest, civil liberties, and political culture. Quintessentially, its 2022 report concluded that only 8 percent of people in the world live in a ‘full democracy’, with over a third residing in an authoritarian regime, 37 percent in a flawed democracy, and 18 percent in a hybrid democracy. To cap it all, democracy extinguishes our hope to ameliorate Pakistan's traumatized journey of 76 years.

What I need to say expressly is that Pakistan is mired in a politically challenged economy that, instead of supporting the nation, has brought them to the IMF's doors, where the be-all and end-all choice is only to beg for the sake of getting limited breathing space. The matter of fact is that Pakistan has no structural economic policies to boost her economy substantially, inasmuch as everyone is cognizant of this dissatisfying news that Pakistan's total debt and liabilities have peaked at Rs 81.2 trillion, a figure that grew at a faster pace of over 27% during the past year. To put things in perspective, one can plainly argue that we must not beg for the IMF's assistance all the time to remediate the economic downturn. This is a one-step forward, two-step back approach. In any case, an IMF program is necessary but not sufficient for the country to achieve economic recovery and embark on a path of growth. A comprehensive set of home-grown structural reforms is needed for Pakistan to escape from the vicious cycle of high budget and balance-of-payments deficits.

What is more regrettable is Pakistan's ranking among the worst-performing countries, where it stands third after Niger and Gabon. The index points out the establishment's outsized political influence as a critical factor. What needs to be contemplated is that Pakistan has never experienced a full democracy in the sense that no Pakistani democratic government has yet completed its democratic tenure.

*To be continued*

## Xi meets U. S. guests

Xinhua

**BELJING:** Chinese President Xi Jinping met with representatives from American business, strategic and academic communities in Beijing on Wednesday.

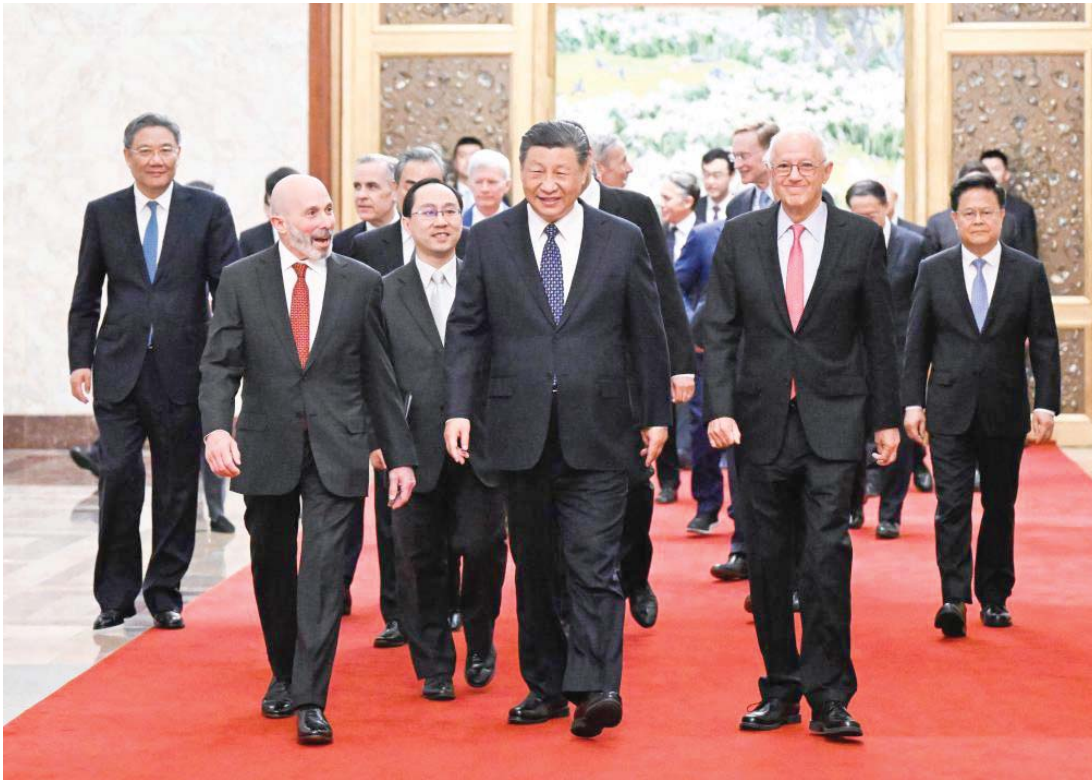
"The success of China and the United States is each other's opportunity. As long as both sides treat each other as partners with mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, China-U. S. relations will get better," Xi said.

"China's economy is healthy and sustainable," Xi said, noting that China's growth rate was one of the fastest among major economies last year.

Xi said China is planning and implementing a series of major measures to comprehensively deepen reform, foster a world-class business environment that is market-oriented, law-based and internationalized, and provide broader development space for international businesses including U. S. companies.

Xi urged the United States to work with China in the same direction, establish a correct strategic perception, and properly handle sensitive issues to maintain the momentum for bilateral relations to stabilize from a downward spiral.

The attendees included Evan Greenberg, chairman of the National



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with representatives from American business, strategic and academic communities at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, March 27, 2024. (Xinhua/Shen Hong)

Committee on U. S.-China Relations, Stephen Schwarzman, chairman and CEO of the Blackstone Group, Cristiano Amon, president and CEO of

Qualcomm, Graham Allison, founding dean of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and Craig Allen, president of the U. S.-China Business Council.

## Prof Adeeba Malik CBE DL Declared New High Sheriff

Spokesman report

**ISLAMABAD:** Professor Adeeba Malik CBE DL has made history as the first ethnic minority female to be declared High Sheriff for West Yorkshire.

In the historic appointment, Ms Malik made her Oath of Declaration in the formal Declarations ceremony, presided by High Court Judge Sir Nicholas Hilliard at Leeds High Court on Monday 25 March. Adeeba,

The year-long Royal appointment, which is non-political and unpaid, continues a tradition which stretches back over 1,000 years. The Office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular Office in the United Kingdom after the Crown, and dates from Saxon times.

The Office of High Sheriff is carried out on a wholly voluntary basis. It is appointed by The Crown that represents King Charles in upholding all matters related to the judiciary and law and order.

Ms Malik deputy chief executive of the Bradford-based national ethnic minority-led charity, the QED Foundation, has been with QED for over 32 years, helping it become one of the most influential organisations of its kind in the UK.

Born in Bradford the daughter of Pakistani immigrants, she began working as a teacher in Bradford and Hull before dedicating her career to creating social and economic opportunity for disadvantaged communities across the country.



Ms Malik said: "It is an enormous honour to take on this important role. I look forward to serving my home county and meeting the many different people who do so much good for West Yorkshire. It will be a privilege to support those who work so hard in crime prevention, as well as those from the public, private, community, charity, and voluntary sectors, who create such positive impact for the region."

She added: "West Yorkshire, like the rest of the UK, has faced many challenges over decades. However, through my years of work in the county, I know there is so much good work taking place by so many different people, and I want to acknowledge that in my year as High Sheriff, and champion those people who do great work across our

communities." As High Sheriff, Ms Malik's more formal duties will include attending royal visits throughout West Yorkshire, and supporting His Majesty's High Court Judges.

Ms Malik has a 27-year track record working across Whitehall, holding numerous ministerial and non-ministerial roles on various boards in Bradford, Yorkshire, and nationally.

Some of these include Yorkshire Forward, The Waterways Trust, Ethnic Minority Business Forum, Sheffield Hallam University, British Waterways, The Cabinet Office Race Disparity Advisory Board, and the Women and Work Commission.

From facilitating integration to shaping government policy, she has

become a leading voice for the socially disadvantaged.

Currently she is a Board Member of the Home Office Strategic Race Advisory Board, Director of the Bradford Culture Company, Member of a State Honours Committee, and Member of Nurture Academies Trust. She is a Visiting Professor at York St John University and a Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire.

Ms Malik has won many accolades and awards over the years, including the Yorkshire Post Top 20 Influential Women of Yorkshire and Top 50 Northern Power List for Women. In 2023, she was the recipient of Woman and Home magazine's, Amazing Woman Award.

In 2004, she received an MBE, and in 2015, a CBE for her contribution to mainstream public bodies.

Dr Mohammed Ali OBE, CEO of the QED Foundation, said: "When I set up QED 34 years ago, I stated a vision, which was to see ethnic minorities play full roles in Britain's mainstream social and economic life. I see this vision becoming reality in all walks of life, which gives me great pleasure that we are on the right track. Adeeba's appointment as the first ethnic minority woman High Sheriff for Yorkshire is a great example of that. I'm immensely proud of Adeeba and all her achievements and contribution to QED over the years. She's already a much-loved and respected force for good in our region and beyond."

## Minister discusses bilateral issues with Turkiye Ambassador

Spokesman Report

**ISLAMABAD:** Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan H. E. Dr. Mehmet Pacaci, paid a courtesy call on Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer at the Law Ministry on Wednesday. In a cordial exchange, both parties underscored the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Turkiye and Pakistan, emphasizing the shared interests and common values that bind the two nations together, said a press release.

During the meeting, discussions traversed various facets of collaboration, with particular attention given to the realms of education and



The Law Minister assured the Ambassador of Pakistan's unwavering commitment to fostering cooperation in the field of education, affirming

full support for initiatives aimed at enhancing educational opportunities. In his remarks, the Law Minister reiterated Pakistan's profound appreciation for its relations with Turkiye, highlighting Turkiye's enduring presence on Pakistan's priority list. The sentiment of brotherhood and solidarity between the two nations was reaffirmed, reflecting the shared aspirations for peace, prosperity, and progress in the region and beyond. The meeting concluded on a note of optimism, with both sides expressing their commitment to continue working closely to deepen the bonds of friendship and cooperation between Turkiye and Pakistan.

## Pakistani Embassy organizes a webinar on opportunities in Pakistan's Textile Sector

Spokesman Report

**BRUSSELS:** The Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels organized a webinar on "Opportunities in the Textile Sector of Pakistan" for companies based in Belgium and Luxembourg. The event witnessed substantial participation from companies eager to explore collaborations and investments in Pakistan's textile industry.



Ambassador of Pakistan to the European Union, Belgium, and Luxembourg, H. E. Amna Baloch extended a warm welcome to the participants and provided a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's vibrant textile sector along with the business-friendly policies of the Pakistani government. She highlighted the numerous trade and investment opportunities available to foreign firms in Pakistan and emphasized the government's commitment to facilitating them through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

A detailed presentation on the landscape of Pakistan's textile sector was delivered by Mr. Muhammad Bilal Khan, Trade and Investment Attaché at the Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels. Additionally, Mr. Shaikh Iqbal, CEO of the Pakistan Textile Council (PTC), shared valuable insights into the potential of Pakistan's textile industry with the participants.

The initiative received high praise from the participants, who appreciated the Embassy's efforts to engage and attract the business community to invest in Pakistan.

This webinar serves as a testament to the Embassy's commitment to fostering stronger economic ties between Pakistan and Belgium/Luxembourg and promoting investment opportunities in Pakistan's thriving textile sector.

## RCCI membership renewal deadline is March 31

PPA

**RAWALPINDI:** The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) membership renewal deadline is March 31.

Saqib Rafiq, President RCCI, said that they had already intimated the members through letters, emails and SMS that the membership of Rawalpindi Chamber shall expire on March 31 and all members have been advised to get their membership renewed on or before the last date.

Saqib Rafiq said that for renewal of membership we have to submit an income tax return along with fixed fee and sales tax return if applicable. Fees can be paid online and a WhatsApp number has also been provided on which members can renew their membership at home by sending a copy of paid fee and tax return, he added.

## Minor Girl recovered a day after her abduction in Thatta

Kamran Khamiso Khowaja

**THATTA:** Timely police action and public reaction led to recovery of 4 year old girl Nabila who was allegedly abducted on Tuesday evening from the busy area of Gharo city of district Thatta the other day. As soon as the news of the minor's abduction broke a large number of people blocked a section of National Highway forcing SSP Thatta Dr Imran Khan to constitute an eight-member team for investigation. The footage of CCTV installed near the victim's house showed a strange man taking the girl with him. Following a swift police action the kidnapper left the girl near Mirpur Sakro town from where she was recovered on Wednesday. Father of the girl said that the condition of the girl was stable while no mark of assault was found on her body. No FIR of the incident was registered till the filing of this report.

## CCP will sign mou China's market regulator

PPA

**ISLAMABAD:** China has made significant investments in Pakistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and various Chinese companies operating in the country. This investment is expected to increase manifold after the second stage of CPEC. To facilitate these expanding business activities, the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) is preparing to put in place a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework.

CCP is poised to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China's State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR), marking a significant milestone in bilateral cooperation. The MoU, which has received the final approval from the last Federal Cabinet, aims to enhance information sharing and technical capacity between the two countries.

SAMR is a ministerial-level agency under China's State Council responsible for enforcing anti-monopoly laws and regulating markets. The signing of the MoU is expected to usher in a new era of collaboration between China and Pakistan in the field of anti-trust.

On October 19, 2023, a high-profile Chinese delegation led by Dr. Gan Lin, Vice Minister of SAMR visited the CCP. Discussions between CCP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu and Vice Minister Gan Lin highlighted the strategic importance of a partnership focusing on enhancing market regulations, providing training and capacity building, sharing expertise in cartel detection, and collaborating on research projects to improve regulatory efficiency.

The MoU will solidify the partnership between CCP and SAMR by establishing a framework for enhanced cooperation through bilateral meetings, training programs, workshops, research collaborations, experience sharing, exchange of information, and cooperation in the field of competition law and policy.

## Pakistan can play an important role in global economy by becoming a part of BRICs: Olyntho Vieira

PPA

**ISLAMABAD:** Ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan, Olyntho Vieira on Wednesday said that Pakistan can play an important role in the global economy by becoming a part of the international multilateral forum BRICS.

Pakistan is a big market in terms of its population which can play an important role in BRICS and promote trade with these countries, the Ambassador said.

Ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan, Olyntho Vieira said this in call on meeting with President Islamabad Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Secretary General UBG, FPCCI Zafar Bakhtawari.

The Brazilian ambassador said that the BRICs have an important role in the future global economy and with it, South-South cooperation will also grow and international multilateralism will be strengthened.

He said that Pakistan is the largest market in terms of population in the Islamic world, which is important because of its geo-strategic location and there is a need to strengthen the trade relations between Brazil and Paki-

stan. He said that Pakistan and Brazil have vast trade and cooperation opportunities in technology and fruits, especially mango and Citrus, which need to be expanded further.

Brazilian Envoy said that Brazil is part of various economic and trade integration forums in the world and South, South Cooperation are very important from which Pakistan can take full benefits.

The Ambassador said that between Pakistan and Brazil there is a mutual trade of \$45 million in which Brazil is in trade surplus.

He said that Brazil is exporting soybeans and cotton to Pakistan, while Pakistan is exporting surgical equipments, textiles and fruits to Brazil.

He said that in the same way, Brazil is a big market with which Pakistan can be connected with the market of South America by being economically connected.

Meanwhile, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the signing of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and Brazil will promote mutual trade in both countries and both countries will be able to

benefit from each other's markets.

He said that the role of the business community is very important for the promotion of mutual trade relations between Pakistan and Brazil and ICCI is ready to play its full role in this regard.

Ahsan said that Brazil is a big trade market which is connected to a big trade block like BRICS and its trade and economic relations with Pakistan are important.

He said that there are wide possibilities of cooperation between Pakistan and Brazil in the field of sports, especially in



football. Brazil can co-promote football in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Zafar Bakhtawari highlighted the international importance of Brazil and its role in global trade and expressed hope for the expansion of mutual economic and trade relations between the two countries in the future.

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
66,547.78	65,906.27
Day's High	Day's Low
66,607.87	66,003.43
Index Value	Change
8,706,878,757	+641.51
Percentage	Time
+0.97%	27 Mar, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,931.98	+1.02
Percentage	Time
+0.013%	27 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,566.41	+284.08
Percentage	Time
-0.72%	27 Mar, 3:10 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
40,762.73	+364.70
Percentage	Time
+0.90%	27 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

# Attacks on foreigners are attacks on Pakistan's economy: Mian Zahid Hussain

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that the business community strongly condemns the incident of terrorism in the Bisham area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that five Chinese engineers and one Pakistani were killed in this attack, which was a conspiracy to spoil relations with Pakistan's most valued friend, which will never succeed. Mian Zahid Hussain said that attacks on foreign experts are attacks on the Pakistani economy, which should be stopped, and those

responsible should be punished. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that five Chinese citizens have been killed, while many people have also been injured in the suicide attack. In 2021, 13 people were killed in a similar incident, after which work on the local dam was stopped for several months. Again, such an attack on the Chinese working on the same dam is both condemnable and a security failure. According to Mian Zahid Hussain, terrorists are destabilizing Pakistan by attacking all over the nation, and we need to take strong action against them. Enemy nations may be involved in terrorist incidents across the country. Certainly, enemy



countries do not want political and economic stability in Pakistan. Hostile nations are not ready to accept CPEC and they have been doing everything in this regard. He warned that we should frustrate the unholy designs of our enemies, lest they set the entire country on fire. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the security of Chinese citizens should be increased, laws should be tightened, and cases against them should be disposed of immediately. Elements involved in terrorism and their handlers should be arrested, and public executions of sentences should be considered. Every possible step should be taken to eliminate their sleeper cells and overseas sanctuaries.

## Briefing

ISLAMABAD: A 6-member delegation of Pak Navy led by Cdre K M Asif SI(M), COMNOR called on Vice Admiral (Retd) Ahmed Saeed HI(M), President NIMA. Mis Sana Fatima, an RA of NIMA, delivered a comprehensive briefing. In the end, areas of common interests were discussed prior to the presentation of souvenirs.



## S&P Global Pakistan Investing in Women to Accelerate Progress



ISLAMABAD: S&P Global Pakistan celebrated March 2024 as 'Women's History Month', aligning with the United Nation's International Women's Day theme for 2024, 'Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress'. In celebration of Women's History Month, S&P Global has undertaken various activities in collaboration with its People Resource Group WINS (Women's Initiative for Networking & Success). These initiatives aim to amplify women's voices, invest in their growth and development, and break down barriers to equality. Mujeeb Zahur, Managing Director, S&P Global Pakistan, shared, "I am excited about our continued focus towards empowering the women workforce that help them break barriers and reshape narratives. As a part of Women's History Month, our Women's Recruitment Drive is one such initiative that identifies and nurtures female talent for upcoming positions at S&P Global Pakistan. We believe in providing equal opportunities and ensuring a diverse workforce that reflects our values and culture." Samia Qamar, Director People at S&P Global Pakistan, highlighting the company's focus on women empowerment said, "Our aim is to provide a platform for women to share their views and opinions without any judgement and encouraging them to claim their space, and forging pathways to success in a world where opportunities are abundant but not always equally distributed."

## Asia remains attractive destination for global investment

**Xinhua**

BOAO: Asia remains a dynamic and attractive destination for global investment, said attendees at a sideline forum of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), which convenes its 2024 annual 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, Asian economies demonstrated strong resilience in investment activities in 2022. Foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into Asia-Pacific economies amounted to 809.4 billion U. S. dollars, growing by 6.76 percent over the previous year and accounting for 62 percent of international FDI inflows. Asia has been a significant beneficiary of FDI, said Shamsad Akhtar, Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs of Pakistan, while noting the role of FDI in Asia's development at the sub-forum with a theme of "Investing the Future of Asia." It is important to recognize that Asia, particularly emerging markets, is now on its own development momentum. Asia has become the world's manufacturing and trade hub supported by foreign capital and investments, she noted. In 2022, Asian economies attracted a total of 8.8 trillion U. S. dollars in portfolio investment, and China's stock of portfolio



investment surpassed 1 trillion U. S. dollars for the first time, said the report. Speaking at the forum, Charles Dallara, a member of the Board of Directors of Partners Group, said foreign investments are supporting the global market developments and Asia is really a dynamic and attractive location for investments, especially FDI. Geopolitical influence, rule of law, market potential, industrial system, labor forces, market players, and policy support are factors that affect the inflow of FDI, said Xu Zhibin, deputy administrator of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. Governments also play an important role in attracting global capital, said Shimizu Tokiko, assistant governor of the Bank of Japan, adding that Asian countries have resilient economy and governments should have consistent policy arrangements and provide a clear map on its own development for investors. According to the report, 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. 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 runs from March 26 to 29.

## Kaspersky warns of Android malwares capable of jeopardizing user privacy and security

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Three new dangerous Android malware variants have been analyzed by Kaspersky researchers. The Tambir, Dwphion, and Gigabud malicious programs exhibit diverse features, ranging from downloading other programs and credential theft to bypassing two-factor authentication and screen recording, jeopardizing user privacy and security. In 2023, Kaspersky solutions blocked nearly 33.8 million attacks on mobile devices from malware, adware, and riskware, highlighting a 50% global increase of such attacks from the previous year's figures. Android malware and riskware activity surged in 2023 after two years of relative calm, returning to early 2021 levels by the end of the year. Last year Kaspersky detected more than 1.3 million unique malicious installation packages targeting the Android platform and distributed in various ways. Among these were Tambir, Dwphion and Gigabud malicious programs with the diverse features. Tambir is a spyware application disguised as an IPTV app. It collects sensitive user information, such as SMS messages and keystrokes, after obtaining the appropriate permissions. Gigabud, active since mid-2022, was initially focused on stealing banking credentials from users



in Southeast Asia, but later crossed borders into other countries and regions. It has since evolved into a fake loan malware and is capable of screen recording and mimicking tapping by users to bypass two-factor authentication. Dwphion, discovered in November 2023, targets cellphones from Chinese OEM manufacturers, primarily targeting the Russian market. The same malware earlier had been found in the firmware of a kids' smart watch by an Israeli manufacturer distributed mainly in Europe and the Middle East. Dwphion is capable of downloading, installing and deleting other applications on the device. "Users should exercise caution and should avoid downloading apps from unofficial sources, meticulously reviewing app permissions. Frequently, these apps lack exploitation functionality and depend solely on permissions granted by the user. Furthermore, using anti-malware tools can help preserve the integrity of your Android device," comments Hafeez Rahman, Technical group manager at Kaspersky.

## Scamming in Easy Paisa Accounts

Company not ready to proceed against the hacker & his accounts

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Digitization has made easy many things including saving money in online accounts and transactions without going to bank but the risks are higher here as well of being looted by the Scammers. Same happened with one Ali Mujtaba, resident of G-11/1 Islamabad when a scammer/hacker deprived him of 35,300 pkr in his easy paisa. Moreover the hacker managed to borrow 5,000 pkr and transacted whole money from Ali's Easypaisa Account: 03145126357 to other accounts. "The scammer posed as an EasyPaisa representative, who defrauded me by siphoning off my money to the tune of Rs. 41300, shared the victim Ali. The numbers that were used by the scammer are as follows: 03478516423 (for cellphone call) 00920211113737 (missed call) 03491881151 (for whatsapp video call that was used to capture my photo) The transactions were made to the following account holders from Ali's Easypaisa account by the scammer/hacker: 1. Muhammad Ismail (Rs. 10,000 vide transaction ID 27167193751-last 4 visible Raast/IBAN digits \*\*\*\*7463 at 14:52:18 on March 27, 2024) 2. Muhammad Ismail (Rs. 11,300 vide transaction ID 27166953398 last 4 visible Raast/IBAN digits \*\*\*\*7463 at 14:38:31 on March 27, 2024) 3. Parveen Bibi (Rs. 20,000 vide transaction ID 27167378270 last 4 visible Raast/IBAN digits \*\*\*\*5906 at 15:01:37 on March 27, 2024) 4. EasyPaisa Loan Rs.5000 in my name upon hacking into my Easypaisa account at 14:37 on March 27, 2024 vide Ref# 1772920748310982656 which was added to the aforementioned transaction number 2 of Rs. 11300 to Muhammad Ismail vide vide transaction ID 27166953398. However, the worst part of this fraud is, that EasyPaisa representatives on their helpline, after keeping Ali waiting on hold for more than 10 minutes, instead of fully listening to the complaint, hung up on him. There was no response from Easypaisa on their Whatsapp helpline as well.

## Mobilink Bank launches 'Center of Excellence for Women' at Arid University

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank, Pakistan's leading digital micro-finance bank, has reaffirmed its commitment to women's financial inclusion with the launch of the country's first "Center of Excellence for Women" in partnership with Arid Agriculture University, a leading agricultural institution in Pakistan, to advance financial education. In this joint endeavor, Mobilink Bank will serve as the exclusive financial partner for Arid University's outreach program, which extends its services to approximately 200 rural villages in the Potohar region. Alongside offering customized financial services, the Bank will actively contribute to advancing agricultural education by supporting financial literacy training, skills development, and capac-



ity building for women. Mobilink Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of the world's population. Speaking about the initiative, Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, Chief Operating Officer Mobilink Bank, said, "We are deeply committed to fostering growth within Pakistan's agricultural sector, recognizing its vital role in the nation's rural landscape. Currently, 40% of our borrowers are engaged in agriculture, highlighting our dedication to supporting those who form the backbone of rural communities. Understanding their challenges, we strive to empower them with innovative financial solutions. One such initiative is our WIN

program, which has already made strides by imparting valuable skills and knowledge to thousands of women nationwide. We are poised to take another leap forward by partnering with Arid University. With the launch of this center, we are expanding our reach and equipping more women, particularly women farmers, with the essential digital and financial tools they need to thrive in today's challenging landscape." Dr. Gulshan Irshad, Associate Professor, Department of Plant Pathology, Faculty of Agriculture, PMAS AAUR, said, "As an institution dedicated to agricultural advancement, we are proud to partner with Mobilink Bank. Our outreach programs offer joint awareness sessions, educating farmers, especially women, on both agricultural best practices and financial literacy."

# Multan Sultans join hands with National Emergency Operations Centre for polio eradication

**Kiran Asim / Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: In a significant step towards combating polio, Multan Sultans and the National Emergency Operations Centre have collaborated through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at eradicating polio from Pakistan. The MoU signing signifies the unwavering commitment of Ali Tareen, Owner of Multan Sultans, towards raising awareness for polio eradication.

Ali Tareen emphasized the profound impact sports figures and sports franchises like Multan Sultans have on society, underscoring the responsibility they bear towards community welfare. He pledged full support from Multan Sultans in actively participating in polio eradication campaigns to disseminate



crucial awareness.

"Polio eradication is a noble cause,

and we envision a future where every child is safeguarded against this disease," stated Ali Tareen. "We recognize the pivotal role of our cricketers in uniting the nation towards this common goal. Through various channels, including video messages, our players will advocate for polio vaccination, leveraging the immense reach of cricket."

Acknowledging the tireless efforts of polio workers, Tareen emphasized their indispensable role in securing a polio-free future for generations to come. "Our polio workers are the unsung heroes in this fight, and we are committed to providing every possible support to their noble cause," he added.

Ali Tareen further added, "The collaboration between sports and

public health initiatives marks a pivotal moment in Pakistan's fight against polio. With polio remaining endemic in only a handful of countries, including Pakistan, the collective mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of every child."

As Pakistan's beloved sport, cricket holds the power to unify the nation towards this critical objective. Multan Sultans, with their extensive fan base and influence, vow to harness this power to propel the nation towards a polio-free future.

The partnership between Multan Sultans and the National Emergency Operations Centre for Polio Eradication signifies a strengthened resolve to combat polio, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to global health initiatives.

## 'Give him time,' Shahid backs Shaheen Afridi as T20 captain

**A Sports**

KARACHI: Former Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi has come out in support of Shaheen Shah Afridi amid uncertainty surrounding his future as the T20I captain of the national cricket team.

Shaheen succeeded Babar Azam as the T20I captain of the national team, following their dismal campaign at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

But the left-arm pacer had an unwanted start to his captaincy reign, which started with a five-match away series against New Zealand in January this year.

Pakistan succumbed to a 4-1 series defeat and Shaheen's future as a captain straightaway came under scrutiny.

Things worsened for the 23-year-old in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season nine as two-time champions Lahore Qalandars, under his captaincy, managed to win only one out of 10 matches and finished at the bottom of the table.

The Qalandars' disastrous PSL 9 campaign ignited speculations that Shaheen Afridi may get replaced as the T20I skipper.

Meanwhile, the newly-appointed Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi addressed the ongoing captaincy saga and revealed that the new selection committee would decide regarding the national team's



leadership.

On the contrary, former chief selector Shahid Afridi threw his weight behind Shaheen and stated that a captain should be given ample time to prove his mettle.

"I think that if you have appointed someone as captain (Shaheen) and given him the responsibility then give him time as well," Afridi told the media on Tuesday.

"If you change the captain then either the decision to appoint him was wrong or the decision to change him now is wrong," he added.

Commenting on the retirement reversals by Imad Wasim and Moham-

mad Amir, Shahid Afridi advised the duo to prove their fitness in the ongoing camp at Kakul, Abbottabad and also to prioritize domestic cricket.

"In my opinion, their decision to retire was not right. They had enough cricket left in them and obviously, the thrill to play for Pakistan is nowhere else," said Afridi.

"They both are talented but firstly, they have to show their fitness and then become a part of the domestic circuit because Imad Wasim and Mohammad Amir are such senior and experienced players that their presence in the dressing room would benefit our youngsters," he added.

## Nasira Kafeel elected president of Punjab Targetball Association

**Sports Desk:**

LAHORE: The office-bearers of Punjab Targetball Association (PTA) were elected unopposed for the next four-year period at a meeting held in the provincial capital Lahore on Thursday.

Nasira Kafeel was elected as president, Mian Atiqur Rahman as chairman, M Akram as general secretary, Hira Javed as treasurer and Arslan Ali Tariq as senior vice-president were elected.

Qamar Hafeez (Ahmedpur Sharqia), Asghar Ali (Faisalabad), Naem Shaukat (Okara) and Raja Zeeshan (Lahore) were elected vice-presidents while Abdullah Mughal, M Nawaz Urmi (Gujranwala) and M Qaiser were elected Associate Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Information Secretary respectively.

The members of the selection committee include Hamza Malik, Faisal Khan (Bahawalpur), M Usman, Rana Kefiatullah, Jamshed Fareed Tipu and Moeen Ahmed. The ladies members include Nazia (Bahawalnagar), Anam Pervez (Lahore), Kainat Akbar, Abida Changez, Samina, Maleeha and Muneeba.

## Govt National College and Govt College for men Nazimabad win in Inter College Ramadan T-20 Cup

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Two more matches decided in the Inter College Ramadan T-20 Cup Played at various cricket grounds.

Government National College and Government College for men Nazimabad win their matches. Abdul Raffay and Rohail Nisar declare Player of Match.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Pakistan Cricket Board.

**Scores in Brief:**

Government National College beat Government Pak Shipowners College by 54 runs at IBA Karachi University Ground. Government National College



173 all out and in 20 overs. Muhammad Sufiyan 38, Fahad Durrani 33, Abdul Rafay 26, Daniyal Junaid 26, Saifullah 2/27.

Government Pak Shipown-

ers College 119 all out in 20 overs. Noor Zaman 25, Abdullah Khan 24, Abdul Rafay ul Haq 21. Abdul Raffay (ob) 4/23, Rayan Afridi (mf) 3/24, Muhammad Sufiyan 2/24. After the

end of the Match Former Test Cricketer Touseef Ahmed give the Player of the Match Award Rupees Five Thousand to Abdul Rafay of Government National College. Rahat Ali Shah Coordinator, Azam Khan, Arif Waheed and Zaib Iqbal also present on the occasion.

In the 2nd Match match Government College For men Nazimabad beat Happy Palace Green by 10 Wickets at Eid Gah Ground Nazimabad.

Happy Palace Green 66 all-out in 18.1 overs. Arham Asif 21, Faraz Hussain Khan 16. Rohail Nisar (mf) 3/8, Burhan Mehmood 2/7, Abdullah 2/18. Rohail Nisar received the Player of the Match Award of Rs.5000/= from former First Class Cricketer Agha Sabir.

## International Cricket Council (ICC) Delegation Meet with Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi

**Asim Tanveer**

ISLAMABAD: The International Cricket Council (ICC) delegation visiting Pakistan to inspect venues and facilities for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 called on Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi today. The delegation led by Chris Tetley, ICC's Head of Events, included Sarah Edgar, Senior Manager event operations at ICC and Aun Zaidi, Manager event operations.

The meeting was also attended by COO PCB Salman Naseer and Director International Cricket PCB Usman Wahla and other PCB officials. Discussions regarding the lead-up to and successful conduct of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 took place between the PCB and ICC delegation.

Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi: "Pakistan is set to host an ICC Tournament which is an absolute pleasure and a welcome development not just for the board but also for the fans across the country who are an important stakeholder in this sport. The PCB will arrange top-notch facilities as per the stature of this historic tournament."

"I am delighted to announce that the PCB will upgrade the three major venues in the country well in time before the start of ICC Champions Trophy 2025. The PCB will leave no stone unturned in making this a very successful and memorable tournament."

## Participation of female athletes in sports activities highlights country's soft image: Minister

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Sports Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that the participation of female athletes in sports activities definitely highlighted country's soft and positive image.

He expressed these views while talking to female players of powerlifting and hockey who called on him at the National Hockey Stadium on Wednesday.

International powerlifting athletes Sybil Sohail and Twinkle Sohail and RAWHA Hockey Academy official Sehrish Ghuman apprised the Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs about their challenges and problems.

Talking to female athletes, Punjab Youth Affairs Minister said that the doors of his office are open for all male and female players of the province. "All possible measures will be taken for the betterment of women athletes through Punjab Sports Endowment Fund," he added.

Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that there is immense sports talent in Pakistan and women have an important role in the sports sector. He acknowledged that Twinkle sisters have achieved several notable feats for Pakistan at the international level. "Playing a tough sport like powerlifting is definitely a matter of pride especially for females," he added.

The minister said that Sehrish Ghuman is also playing an important role in the promotion of hockey among the females of the province.

## PCB Inter-Club One-Day Tournament announced

**A Sports**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced the Inter-Club One-Day tournament, which is set to take place in April across the 16 regions in the country. All registered cricket clubs (active and inactive) under the PCB Constitution 2014 shall be eligible to participate in the above tournament.

It is clarified that where latest scrutiny has been held after the election in 2023, that notified list will be considered as final.

Moreover, the PCB will also open the registration process for new clubs and the interested clubs may apply for fresh registration with the concerned District/Zonal Cricket Association in accordance with the provisions of Model Constitution of District/Zonal Cricket Association and may get playing rights.

The districts are tasked to finalise schedules. Initially, this will be monitored by the respective regions and later by the PCB.

Each club will play at least three matches in the pool stage. The Inter-Club One-Day Tournament will be played as per PCB rules and regulations for One-Day matches.

Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi: "Club Cricket is a vital component of any national cricket structure and in Pakistan, it has a rich history of producing talented players. The PCB is committed to reviving the good old competitive culture of club cricket and engaging aspiring players at the club level. I am confident the PCB Inter-Club One-Day tournament will pay dividends and provide us with talented players."

Abdullah Khurram Niazi, Director - Domestic Cricket Operations: "We are delighted to announce the Inter-Club One-Day tournament across the 16 regions in the country. This tournament aims to provide quality and competitive cricket to hundreds of cricket clubs nationwide. As per Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi's vision, we look forward to arranging more than 6,000 matches in this tournament."

## Al-Taamari scores hat-trick as Jordan hammer Pakistan in World Cup Qualifier

**A Sports**

AMMAN: Star player Musa Al-Taamari struck a rampant hat-trick and bolstered Jordan to a thrashing 7-0 victory over Pakistan in the FIFA World Cup Qualifier at the Amman International Stadium here on Wednesday.

Al-Taamari opened the scoring for Jordan just 15 minutes into the game before Yazan Al-Naimat successfully converted a penalty in the 28th minute to double the home side's lead. Being put under immense

pressure, Pakistan's defence managed to hold on to their nerves and conceded no further goal in the first half.

But it crumbled in the second half of the game as the hosts completely outclassed them by scoring five goals.

Saad Al-Rousan brought third success for Jordan in the 52nd minute and opened the floodgates for Pakistan.

Musa Al-Taamari struck his second in the 62nd minute while Ali Olwan secured the fifth goal for Jordan in the 75th minute.

A-Taamari struck again in the 79th minute to complete his hat-trick before Muhammad Abu Zureiq wrapped up the scoring with the seventh goal in the 83rd minute.

The 7-0 victory propelled Jordan to second place in Group Seven of the World Cup Qualifiers, accumulating seven points while Pakistan remained at the bottom.

Last week, Pakistan faced a 3-0 defeat at the hands of Jordan in the first leg of the World Cup Qualifiers against the Asian Cup finalists.

Jordan's star player Musa Al-Taamari struck twice while Ali Olwan chipped in with a goal during the important match against Pakistan.

Pakistan squad for FIFA World Cup Qualifiers: Goalkeepers: Yousuf Butt, Saqib Hanif, Abdul Basit and Hassan Ali.

Defenders: Easah Suliman, Abdullah Iqbal, Mamoon Musa, Haseeb Khan, Mohammad Saddam, Mohammad Sohail, Omer Rao, Mohammad Fazal and Mohammad Adeel.

Midfielders: Rahis Nabi,



Harun Hamid, Alamgir Ghazi, Dost and Abdul Samad. Forwards: FareedUllah, Waleed Khan, Imran Kayani and Adeel Younis.

## Crocus City Hall

A view shows the burnt-out Crocus City Hall following a deadly attack on the concert venue in the Moscow Region, Russia, March 27, 2024.



Photo: Courtesy Reuters

## PM reaffirms Pakistan's firm support to global efforts for peace, stability

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's firm support to global efforts for peace and stability without compromising on the security of its people, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Addressing an Iftar dinner hosted in honour of the members of the diplomatic corps at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the prime minister said 'a peace loving nation, Pakistan desires peace with all and enemy with none'.

He reaffirmed that his government would follow this message of the founding fathers of the country. The prime minister further said that constitution of Pakistan guaranteed equal rights to all citizens without any distinction. To translate it into reality, different policies had been enacted and every community in Pakistan had the complete freedom to profess their faith and practice their religion, he added. The prime minister also spelled out the priorities of the government and said that after conclusion



of peaceful general elections, progress and prosperity of the people of Pakistan were at heart of the government's agenda. About the holy month of Ramadan, he said that this month signified more than fasting and gave a message of sacrifice, discipline and warm hospitality, respect for all and embod-

ied a spirit of compassion. He said besides, the month gave a powerful message of harmony, peace and tolerance, adding these qualities were required most in a world grappled with diverse challenges and divides. The prime minister said that they should make endeavours to spread the shared message of peace and equality and work collectively for 'an equitable and peaceful world order'.

Earlier Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said that the month of Ramadan was of special religious and social significance as it provided time for reflection, compassion and unity, showing unity among diverse cultures. The foreign minister said that Pakistan stood for the principles of peace, equality and justice, and continued

to support all efforts at multilateralism, peace and mutual prosperity.

The foreign minister said terrorist attacks in Moscow and Bisham reminded them of the collective threat posed by terrorism. He reiterated that Pakistan would continue supporting the regional and global cooperation in addressing this menace. The war against terrorism would not end till peace won, he stressed and said that Pakistan was ready to build bridges for the agenda of peace for the entire world. He said during Pakistan's term at as the non-permanent member of the UNSC, Pakistan worked for the international peace and prosperity and supported collective efforts to face the contemporary challenges.

## Pak-Iran transit trade strengthening through enhanced road-rail connectivity: Ahsan Iqbal

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Dr Raza Amiri Moghaddam paid a courtesy visit to Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal and congratulated him on assuming the office. During the meeting, potential areas of cooperation for the upcoming visit of Iran's President to Pakistan came under discussion, a Planning Ministry news release said on Wednesday.

Minister Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the historical ties between Pakistan and Iran and emphasized the importance of enhancing connect-

tivity through trade routes, considering the 900-kilometer shared land and maritime border. He urged the need for effective road-rail transit routes to boost economic cooperation, aiming to increase the current \$2.5 billion trade volume between the two countries manifold. Acknowledging Iran's energy as a vital resource, the minister proposed leveraging it to alleviate Pakistan's energy crises, particularly considering the cost-effectiveness of Iranian energy resources. He also advocated reviving the cargo train service between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey initiated in 2009 under the Economic Coopera-



tion Organization (ECO). The ambassador commended the

strategic significance of Chabahar, Gwadar and Karachi ports

for trade and expressed Iran's commitment to connecting Chabahar port with the Zahidan railway network, potentially extending connectivity to Russia and Central Asia countries. The Gabd-Rimdan border crossing was identified as a more viable option than Quetta-Taftan, given its proximity to Gwadar and Chabahar. Ahsan Iqbal proposed adopting Iran's vocational and technical training mechanism to empower unemployed youth in Balochistan. During the meeting, both sides agreed that strengthened bilateral ties could contribute to reducing tendencies of terrorism and extremism in the region.

## Pak ambassadors express condolences to Russian govt, people

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan High Commissioner in the United Kingdom Dr Muhammad Faisal on Wednesday visited the Russian Embassy in London to convey Pakistan's condolences to the Russian people and government on the deadly terrorist attack in Moscow. On X, the High Commission said, signing the condolence book, Dr Faisal said "We strongly condemn the horrendous attack carried out at a concert hall in Moscow. We express our deepest sympathies with the families of the victims. At this difficult hour, we stand in solidarity with the people and Government of the Russian Federation".

## Centre for national cohesion launched at Lok Virsa

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 27 (APP): A "Centre for National Cohesion" has been launched at Lok Virsa here Wednesday aimed to work for research, analysis, policy development, and operational strategies to promote national cohesion on a national scale through culture.

Federal Secretary National Heritage and Culture Division, Hassan Nasir Jami was the chief guest on the occasion, said a press release issued here. In his address, he appreciated the efforts taken by team of the National Heritage and Culture division and Lok Virsa for setting up the centre.



He assured full support of his division for promoting the objectives of the centre.

Muhammad Uzair Khan, Executive Director, Lok Virsa, Muhammad

Kashif Irsahd, Adviser (Culture), Ahmer Bilal Sufi, Advocate and Dr. Zia, Director General, IRI also spoke about the significance of the centre.

Neelofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson

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## Russian investigators say received 143 missing persons reports after concert attack

### News Desk

MOSCOW: Russian investigators have received more than 140 missing person's reports after last week's deadly concert hall attack near Moscow.

The official death toll from Friday night's mass killing at the Crocus City Hall music venue stood at 140 as of Wednesday afternoon, while another 360 people were listed as wounded.

Islamic State affiliate ISIS-K has claimed responsibility for the attack, and 11 people were arrested over the weekend in connection to the incident, including four suspected gunmen who were caught trying to flee Russia.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said it

had received 143 missing persons reports "from victims" of the deadly shooting who say their relatives and loved ones remain missing.

Authorities have so far identified 84 bodies, including those of five children aged between 9 and 16, the Investigative Committee said.

The identities of the remaining victims are being established through genetic tests, it added.

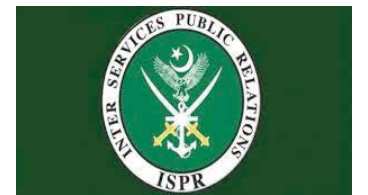
The law enforcement agency also said it was examining Crocus City Hall's fire safety and anti-terrorism measures as part of an ongoing criminal investigation.

Law enforcement agents were said to be searching through the suspect gunmen's personal electronic devices to determine how they planned the attack, the Investigative Committee said.

## Turbat attack martyr laid to rest with full military honors

### City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Shaheed Sepoy Noman Farid (age 24 years, resident of Muzaffargarh) who was martyred in the terrorist attack on Pakistan Naval Base, PNS Siddique in Turbat on the intervening night of March 25 and 26, was laid to rest in his native area with full military honors on Wednesday. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the senior officers of Pakistan Army, soldiers, families and



relatives and local people attended the funeral prayer of the martyr.

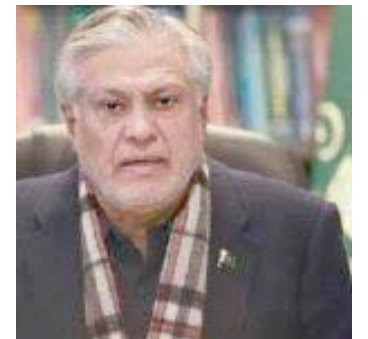
"These sacrifices of our martyrs strengthen our resolve against terrorism and our love for motherland," the ISPR said.

## FM Dar, Dr Abdullatif agree to further enhance mutual cooperation between Pak, Bahrain

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Bahrain Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani on Wednesday discussed entire gamut of the bilateral relations and looked to enhance mutual cooperation in different sectors. The foreign minister, on X, said that it gave him immense pleasure to receive congratulatory telephone call from the Bahrainian counterpart.

"Looking forward to further strengthening and solidifying our



relations between our two countries," he further posted.

## Iranian Cultural Consulate hosts 3-day 'Quran Exhibition' at Safa Gold Mall

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A three-day exhibition featuring rare editions of the Holy Quran commenced here Wednesday at Safa Gold Mall, hosted by the Cultural Consulate of Iran.

The inaugural session of the 'Quran Exhibition' saw esteemed figures such as Council of Islamic Ideology Dr. Qibla Ayaz, Iranian Cultural Counsellor Majid Meshki, and Sajjada Nasheen, Hazrat Sultan Bahoo, Pir Azmatullah, Sultan Qadri Sarwari. These prominent personalities were present on the occasion.

During address to the participants, Dr. Qibla Ayaz expressed admiration for Iranian Cultural Counsellor Majid Meshki and his team for showcasing ancient and rare manuscripts of the Holy Quran.

Iranian Cultural Consulate hosts 3-day 'Quran Exhibition' at Safa Gold Mall

He emphasized the longstanding relationship between Iran and Pakistan, highlighting the significance of such exhibitions in elevating this relationship to new levels of prominence.

Meanwhile, Majid Meshki conveyed his gratitude, noting the inclusion of 'Quranic manuscripts' dating back 500 to 1000 years, alongside manuscripts in Turkish, Iranian, and Arabic scripts embellished with gold and silver wate.

## Ambassador Atif highlights booming bilateral ties between Pak, Ethiopia

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan in Ethiopia Atif Sharif has praised Pakistan's cordial relations with Ethiopia and shared that opening of Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad, inauguration of direct flights and rising trade flows were signs of booming bilateral relationship. The ambassador underscored the historical significance of Pakistan Day and paid tribute to the founding fathers of the country.

He also reiterated Pakistan's principled support for right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir and Palestine facing brutal occupation. He expressed these views during an Iftar-dinner reception which was held to celebrate the 84th National Day of Pakistan at the Hilton Hotel, Addis Ababa, a press release, on Wednesday, said. Ambassador Atif highlights booming bilateral ties between Pak, Ethiopia Over 170 guests including Ambassadors from Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Kuwait, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Oman, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Chile, Finland, Spain, New Zealand and deputies Ambassadors from US, UK, Germany, France, Russia as well as Ethiopian dignitaries, businessmen and Pakistani expatriates attended the event. Ambassador Gebeyeu Ganga, Director-General (Middle East and Asia Pacific) graced the event as the chief guest.