



**Pakistan and Japan pledge to boost trade relations and collaboration in joint meeting**

In a significant meeting, Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro and Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, convened to discuss ways to strengthen trade relations and mutual trust between Japan and Pakistan. During the meeting, Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro congratulated Minister Jam Kamal Khan on his recent portfolio... (Details on Page 5)



**NEPRA notifies Rs2.75 per unit hike in power tariff ahead of Eidul Fitr**

Nepra on Monday notified Rs2.75 per unit increase in the uniform electricity rate for all consumers across the country, including Karachi, ARY News reported. This hike is part of the second quarterly tariff adjustment (QTA) mechanism designed to offset the financial pressures on power companies. The hike will apply to all electricity users except "lifeline consumers", who use less than 100 units monthly. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Interact**

DAASU (Upper Indus Kohistan): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif interacts with engineers of the China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC) working at the Dasu Hydropower project on Monday.



Photo: PID

**President for early finalization of transit trade agreement with Turkmenistan**



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for an early finalization of the Transit Trade Agreement with Turkmenistan to further boost bilateral cooperation between the two brotherly countries. He said that the agreement, once signed, would help expand trade, promote regional connectivity as well as enhance economic activities in the region. The President expressed these views while talking to the Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, Mr Atadjan Movlamov, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The Ambassador congratulated the President on assuming the office of the President for the second time. Both sides expressed the desire for the early completion of the TAPI Gas Pipeline, which would not only support Pakistan's economy but would also help meet its energy needs. Welcoming the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan attached special value to its bilateral relations with Turkmenistan due to the centuries-old historical, religious and cultural links and wished to increase high-level exchanges to give fresh impetus to bilateral ties. The President fondly recalled his visit to Turkmenistan during his first term as the President in 2010 to participate in the TAPI Summit as well as the 4th International Nauroze Festival in 2013. The Ambassador of Turkmenistan conveyed the warm greetings of the Turkmen President, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, and former President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov to President Asif Ali Zardari on his election. He said that the Transit Trade Agreement was not only important for both friendly countries but also for the region as it would generate huge transit trade activities. The President expressed warm wishes for the leadership of Turkmenistan and thanked them for their felicitation message on his election.

**PM assures foolproof security arrangements for Chinese nationals; March 26 culprits to get exemplary punishment**

**Spokesman Report**

DASU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assured foolproof security measures for the Chinese nationals working on Dasu Hydropower Project as well as across the country and resolved to ensure exemplary punishment for the perpetrators of March 26 Bisham incident. Addressing a gathering of the Chinese nationals working on the power project, he said the government would ensure that the perpetrators and culprits of March 26 incident should get the exemplary punishment, so that it would be a lesson and that no one could commit such dastardly act in future.

The prime minister said that the sole purpose of his visit was to offer deep and sincere condolences and express feelings to the Chinese brothers and sisters in Dasu over a sad incident that took place on March 26 in which five Chinese and one local lost their lives. He said it was a cowardly act on part of the terrorists to kill innocent Chinese and a Pakistani for no other reason except to disturb and damage the exceptional friendship between Pakistan and China. Federal ministers Amir Muqam, Attaullah Tarar, Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen. (ret'd) Sajjad Ghani, Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Jiang Zaidong,

members of the Chinese company and senior officials were also present on the occasion. Terming it a job of the enemies of Pakistan, the prime minister said that it was a dastardly act on part of the perpetrators who found every opportunity to harm this friendship which was strengthening by each passing day and expanding and moving forward with speed. "That is the reason enemies do not spare any opportunity to damage and create a wedge between the two Iron Brothers," he added. Prime Minister Sharif said that they shared the moment of sadness and sorrow and assured that the government would not leave any stone unturned and would not spare any opportunity to ensure the best possible security measures for the Chinese families and nationals. He also assured the Chinese leadership, the people and the Chinese ambassador that all foolproof security arrangements would be made for the Chinese people working and supporting a prosperous and developing Pakistan. The prime minister said that after the incident, he had visited embassy immediately to offer condolences on behalf of his government and the people of Pakistan to the Chinese leadership and the Chinese people. He informed that a joint investigation team was also constituted on the same day and its report was due any time. He further assured that they would not waste time to act upon the recommendations of the inquiry committee in letter and spirit. Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said that the prime minister visited the embassy and reassured security for the Chinese nationals. He also expressed gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for expressing solidarity, adding that they were ready to work together to further build their strategic partnership with Pakistan. The gathering also observed 30-second silence for those who lost lives in the tragic incident.

**Iranian Guards commander killed in Israeli strike on consulate in Damascus**

**Agencies**

TEHRAN: Israeli warplanes struck the Iranian consulate in Damascus on Monday, and a Lebanese security source told Reuters a senior commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps, Mohammad Reza Zahedi, had been killed in the attack. Reuters reporters at the scene in the Mezzeh district of the Syrian capital saw smoke rising from rubble of a building that had been flattened, and emergency vehicles parked outside. An Israeli military spokesperson said: "We do not comment on reports in the foreign media." Syrian state television confirmed the consulate building had been attacked. Syria's official news agency SANA said "The Israeli attack targeted the Iranian consulate building in the Mazzeh neighbourhood of Damascus".  
*Continued on Page 8*

**Meeting of Country Director WB and Country Manager IFC with Minister for Finance and Revenue**

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb, was called on by Mr. Najib Benhassine, Country Director of the World Bank (WB) and Mr. Zeeshan Ahmed Sheikh, Country Manager of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), to discuss the collaborative development strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting economic growth, enhancing financial stability, and fostering sustainable development within the country. During the meeting, the importance of strengthening partnerships with international financial institutions like IFC and WB was high-



lighted. Discussion was done to leverage their expertise and resources for the country's development agenda. Respective representatives from WB and IFC appreciated the efforts of the Government aimed at bringing reforms in economic and financial sectors to ensure sustained economic growth in terms of expanding the tax base, SOEs restructuring, and Privatization. The delegates expressed their organizations' continued support for the country's development goals and agendas for the welfare of the people of Pakistan.

**IHC suspends Bushra and Imran's sentence in Toshakhana case**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court suspended on Monday the 14-year sentences handed out to former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana reference-related to state gifts. The high court also ordered the former prime minister and former first lady to be released from prison in the case. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq remarked that the appeals in the case will be taken up after Eid. The two will not be released as they have been convicted in other cases. Khan and Bushra had been sentenced to 14 years in prison in the Toshakhana case earlier this year. Khan has been tangled in more than 200 legal cases since he was ousted in April 2022, in what he said was a campaign to keep him from power.

**NA Deputy Speaker directs CDA to ensure supply of safe and clean water**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Honourable Deputy Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah has said that it is incumbent upon Capital Administration Authority (CDA) to ensure supply of safe and clean drinking water for every citizen in capital. He expressed his displeasure over CDA water supply management as recent report of Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) found water samples in Parliament Lodges and Parliament House contaminated. He expressed these views during his meeting with Senior officers of CDA to take cognizance of recent report of PCRWR in Parliament House Islamabad. While expressing grace concern over the report, Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Shah has directed CDA to evolve proper Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cleaning of water tanks in Parliament Lodges and Parliament House. He also directed CDA to ensure proper cleanliness of water tanks and then sending water samples to PCRWR at least after every three months.

**Afghanistan confirms detention of two Americans for 'violating law'**

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Afghanistan's government has arrested to United States nationals over violations of law in the country, spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said on Monday. Mujahid did not reveal the identities of the detained individuals and said that other foreigners had also been arrested. "I think there are two Americans, and the reasons for their visit are not clear yet; but whatever the reasons, anyone coming to Afghanistan is obliged to observe the laws of Afghanistan. Anyone who gets an Afghan visa means they agree to follow our laws," he was quoted by TOLO News as saying. American officials have already said that two of their nationals are in Afghan custody. They had even identified one of the men as Ryan Corbett. The US officials had also claimed that the Americans were being detained 'without reason'. International relations analyst Rashid Qutbzaada said that it was possible that the Taliban might ask for the release of someone they want in exchange for the two detained Americans. The State Department had said in a February briefing that America was continuously pressing Afghanistan over the release of its citizens. "U.S. officials have continuously, consistently pressed - including in meetings with Taliban representatives - for the immediate and unconditional release of Americans detained in Afghanistan, noting that these tensions are a significant obstacle to positive engagement," Matthew Miller had said.



# Home department spokesman blasts Indian media for giving communal colour to KFC incident

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: The spokesperson of the home department of Azad Kashmir government has strongly condemned the Indian media's attempt to defame Pakistan and Azad Kashmir by giving communal colour to the unpleasant incident at KFC Mirpur.

The spokesman said that the Indian media was in the habit of making a mountain out of a molehill. It is a result of a misunderstanding. This franchise was providing jobs to 100 plus local people paying a good amount of tax to local tax authorities, and its total supply chains were local too. Some miscreants agitated and misinterpreted the whole issue, and mob went out of control,

he added.

The spokesman made it clear that, "It has nothing to do with religious or any other kind of extremism. State which has a long history of non-violence, tolerance and coexistence is the beauty of the state that the society exhibited throughout. Indian media having no knowledge of the issue, exploiting and blowing it out of proportion. The owner of the franchise condemned this negative attitude of the biased Indian media".

Referring to the KFC owner's contention on the issue, the spokesman said that according to the owner the attackers stormed the food chain due to a long-standing dispute, which caused a loss of lakhs of rupees.

He said that after registering the

FIR crackdown has been launched to nab the accused involved in this incident.

Terming Azad Kashmir as the most peaceful region, the spokesman further said that the liberated territory offers a favorable and business-friendly environment for investors.

He said that along with the KFC several international business chains/branches were operating in the region and doing business successfully.

"These international business outlets have been hugely contributing to the region's local economy", he said, adding that the law and order situation in Azad Kashmir was also ideal for foreign investment.

India, he said, cannot deflect world attention away from the deteriorating

situation of human rights in Occupied Kashmir simply by giving communal color to an incident, which he said was purely of personal nature.

The spokesman made it clear that a stern action would be taken against all those who were involved in this incident.

"No body, whosoever, will be allowed to take the law in his hands or disturb peace and order or damage private properties", he said.

The spokesman said that 54 suspects have been named in the incident, whereas 250 people were suspected.

"On the basis of videos, CCTV footages and testimonies, 60 people have been arrested and the investigation process is going on fast track", he clarified.

## Intellectuals condemn KFC attack on Muslims in Mirpur: 'All schools of thought'

**Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: Maulana Mufti Waseem Raza, the central chairman of the Ulama Mashaikh Council, while holding a press conference along with scholars belonging to different religious schools of thought, condemned the attack on KFC in Mirpur on March 29 and the unpleasant incident and said that from this incident.



The scholars of any religious group and sect have nothing to do with it. There were peaceful protests in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir against the atrocities on the Muslims of Palestine and Gaza, in which the scholars participated fully. Not broken anything during the peaceful protest. He said that it is not a method to protest in support of the Muslims of Palestine to damage the property of one's own country, neither the religion of Islam nor the law of Pakistan allows it. The scholars of all schools of thought in Mirpur are responsible and they have not used any mosque or mihrab for extremism, they warned.

He expressed these views while addressing a crowded press conference. In the press conference, Maulana Muhammad Azam Arif, Professor Tahir Naqvi of Ahl Tasbeeh, Qari Abdul Jabbar of Deoband, Maulana Qari Farooq Mujjadi, Maulana Ansar Raza and other scholars were also present. In the press conference, prominent scholars of different schools of thought strongly condemned the attack on KFC in Mirpur on March 29, saying that this unfortunate incident has nothing to do with any religious sect or any religious group. This protest has been supported by the community. The administration should conduct a clear and transparent inquiry into the incident and strict action should be taken against all the accused so that in the future such miscreants use religious fanaticism to destroy any property.

He said that Mirpur is a peaceful district, inter-religious harmony is found here. The scholars are completely in touch with each other. The scholars have nothing to do with the March 29 protest and this sad incident. A wrong message has been sent around the world. He said that the businessmen and business community are ours and we have to move forward by keeping them together and not harming the business of the people. They should also protest by writing, language and pen, but protest peacefully under the constitution of Pakistan and the law.

## Building collapsed: 4 people were injured

**Abdil Majid**

FAISALABAD: There was a huge explosion in a firecrackers factory in Muko Ana, Kharrianwala police station limits, two people were killed and four injured, the entire building was destroyed by the explosion. Inflammable substance was detonated in a loud explosion, as a result of which the uncle and nephew died on the spot. Those who were blocked were identified as Shehbaz, Zia's father, Ehsan-ul-Haq, who is a resident of Muko Ana, while four people were injured. There are reports that the blast was so loud that its sound was heard far away, causing panic in the area. Forced to live a life of disability. The rescue team reached the spot and brought the fire under control. Heavy police presence was also found at the spot.

## Gas blast in Multan institute of Cardiology due to gas leakage: Two men injured

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Explosion due to gas leakage in Chaudhary Parvez Elahi Institute of Cardiology Multan. Due to the sound of the loud explosion, the glasses of some parts of the hospital were broken. There was a panic in the whole hospital. The doctors left the patients and came out for angiography. The patients who were taken also ran out of the gas.



After the leakage explosion, the hospital administration was alerted. The entrance of the emergency ward was immediately cleared. According to the details, two people were injured due to the fire. Staff, doctors, staff and patients reciting Kalima Teyyaba. Some of the patients who came out ran away and fell even while running. On the report of the gas leakage explosion, the rescue control teams reached the spot and participated in the rescue operations. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal from MS Cardiology Hospital said As employees were preparing to shift patients to the operation theatre, a modular operation theater being built near the first floor where masons are working, it is feared that the masons hit an underground gas pipe line inside, causing a gas leak. However, further investigations are underway. After the gas leak continued to accumulate in the fore ceiling of the first floor, the gas accumulation caused a sudden explosion which broke the fore ceiling under which the Chief Perfusionist of Cardiology Hafeez was injured. The patient's attendant was hit on the head and received minor injuries, immediately from the main center. But the gas was turned off and there was no damage to the building. Eyewitnesses say that the explosion was so intense that the sound of the explosion was heard far away. They kept running and the hospital staff also kept evacuating the patients while in the hospital. The working doctors, nurses and other staff also came out immediately after the explosion and when the rescue teams completed the operation, after that the doctors, nurses and other staff went inside the hospital and examined the patients as usual. Soon after, the Chief Executive of Multan Institute of Cardiology Executive Director Professor Dr. Mujtbe Sadiqi and AMS Dr. Farhan Khan also reached the spot and supervised the relief operations under their supervision.

## Below the poverty

FAISALABAD: An elder vendor is taking rest under the shade of a tree alongside a road in the city.



Photo: Online

# Mirpur Chamber of Commerce, Industries condemns KFC attack on its employees



**Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: A meeting of the Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries was held under the chairmanship of the President of the Chamber, Sabir Hussain Shah, with reference to condemning the incident at KFC in Mirpur. Senior officials of Mirpur Chamber of Commerce, members of the executive committee and former presidents and officials participated

in the meeting.

The participants of the meeting strongly condemned the attack on the KFC branch in Mirpur by miscreants and passed the resolution unanimously. The resolution said that this meeting strongly condemns the attack on Mirpur branch of KFC, causing loss of crores of rupees, harassing and injuring hundreds of employees.

The resolution demanded the government of Azad Kashmir and the

district administration of Mirpur to inquire into the incident and bring forward all the characters involved and give them the most severe punishment so that no miscreant would dare to do such an act in the future.

The resolution demanded the Azad Kashmir government to immediately punish those involved in the attack on KFC, affecting the image of Mirpur as an international and peaceful city and hurting the sentiments of over-

seas Kashmiris.

Panic has arisen among the industrialists and traders of Mirpur, while the business people have become victims of insecurity. In order to restore the confidence of the business community, the government should take immediate steps to restore the confidence of the business community. The resolution said that the loss of the affected enterprise should be assessed immediately and compensation should be paid.

# Young doctors vow to continue strike in Nishtar Burn Center if salaries not paid

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: Press conference of Young Doctors Association (YDA) Multan. President of Dr. Nadeem Qaisrani, his other officials, Dr. Saddam, Dr. Salman Lashari, Dr. Ifat, Dr. Haris and others have said in a press conference that if Nishtar administration did not pay salaries. The complete strike will continue in the outdoor ward until the burn center has been turned into a political arena for the past two years.

The Punjab government should immediately end political interference from the burn center because of the resignation of senior doctors. Opera-

tion theaters are still closed and patient problems are increasing. And along with this, the training of young doctors is also being badly affected due to the political fight there, and plastic surgery training is not being given there, while addressing the press conference, the young doctors added that our salaries have not been paid for four months. Time is not being given to private clinics of young doctors, they do not have time. Every salary is not being paid. The administration neither Hospital Multan cares about the patients nor the doctors. When the administration does not pay the salary to those who give duty for 36 hours, the only option is

to protest. On March 21, a notification came in the burn center that the ED was changed. Since then, senior doctors have resigned following protests, but no serious notice is not taken there, operation theaters are closed, OPD is closed, plastic surgery cases are not available to young doctors, how will young doctors learn. So young doctors are also involved in their protest. Young doctors are facing problems in chest diseases, even after four months, no serious steps have been taken by Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Multan (VC). The rest of our departments should be approved so that the problems of young doctors are solved.

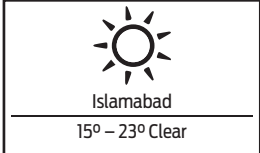


The big clear message is to shift the urology ward to another place. It should be approved by the academic council meeting first. Let a few people decide together in the VC office. Preparations have been made in case the management is forced to shift the urology ward. If tried, young doctors will strong-

ly protest. If the management cannot pay the young doctors on time, then leave their seats. Eid is coming, it will be difficult to work in these conditions. The strike will continue and the services of the outdoor ward will remain closed until the salary is paid. The hospital does not have a budget. At this time, the

administration has no solution to pay the doctors. If the government takes away our right to live, we will protest because we told the administration six days ago that if we don't get salary by 1st, we will go on strike, if our right is not given, Young Doctors have to take their rights.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	4:31 am
Zohr	12:12 pm
Asr	4:41 pm
Maghrib	6:29 pm
Isha	7:53 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	92766044
Motorway Police	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

# CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif chairs parliamentary party meeting to devise strategy for Senate elections

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired a joint meeting of the parliamentary party of Pakistan Muslim League-N, People's Party, Muslim League-Q and other members of the Provincial Assembly to consider senate election strategy. Election procedure was explained in the meeting, besides discussion on suggestions and recommendation by the assembly members.

PPP Parliamentary leader Ali Haider Gilani said, "Our female candidate has withdrawn. We will vote for Bushra Butt and Anushe Rehman." The withdrawal of the woman Senate candidate by People's Party was hailed as a goodwill gesture.

PPP Parliamentary leader Ghazanfar Abbas Chheina said, "PPP will also vote



for the candidates of Muslim League-N." Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif

said, "I am the chief minister of all. Together we will walk." She added, "Our determination is the development of entire Punjab. No area will be deprived of development." PML-N senate candidate Muhammad Aurangzeb said, "Thank you all for your support for the senate election."

"Credit of every success goes to Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif," said Dr Musaddiq Malik Bushra Anjum said, "I will be the voice of all of you." Anushe Rehman said, "I thank party leadership for trusting me."

PML-N Senate candidates Muhammad Aurangzeb, Mosaddiq Malik, Khalil Tahir Sindhu Bushra Anjum Butt, Anusha Rehman. Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb and other leaders attended the meeting.

## Duty non-paid cigarettes worth millions confiscated from Bhimber, AJK

**PPA**

BHIMBER: Department of Excise & Taxation AJK, in collaboration with local police confiscated a huge quantity of duty non-paid cigarettes which were meant to reach Lahore from Bhimber, AJK.



According to the details, Inspector Inland Revenue and Incharge Excise Squad, Bhimber Haq Nawaz along with the officials of City Police, Bhimber intercepted a truck during a routine checkup at Barhang Check Post, and found 100 cartons of a couple of renowned cigarette brands named Kissan and Olympic.

Upon demand, the driver of the truck was unable to present invoices of the cigarettes under the Federal Excise Tax 2005 and Sales Tax Act 1990. The police later confiscated the truck and registered an FIR against Muhammadullah Khan s/o Abdul Akbar and Siraj Muhammad s/o Noor Muhammad, both were the directors of National Tobacco Industries (Pvt) Ltd.

During further investigation, the driver revealed that those cigarette cartons had been loaded from National Tobacco Industries (Pvt.) Ltd. RG-1 and Sunrise Corporation, both situated in Mohra Sidha area of Bhimber. According to the FIR, 83 out of 100 cartons contained Kissan 25HL while 17 contained Olympic 25HL.

It is pertinent to mention here that the duty of Rs 7.6m had been evaded through this one consignment. Sources revealed that such companies ship hundreds of trucks loaded with duty non-paid cigarettes to Lahore every year, denting billions of rupees to the national exchequer of AJK.

## AIOU to close admissions on April 15

**PNP**

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced that the last date for admissions for Semester Spring 2024 is April 15. The programs offered in this phase include Associate Degree (BA/BCom), BBA, BS (ODL) programs, teachers training programs (1.5, 2.5 and 4 Years B. Ed.), postgraduate diploma programs, and certificate courses. Admission forms and prospectuses for these programs can be found on the university website. For students in remote or backward areas without internet access, or those facing difficulties applying online, manual applications for BA, BCom, and B. Ed programs can be submitted at regional offices.

Overseas Pakistanis and international students living all over the world can enroll in these programs. The university offers academic programs for international students through an online learning management system. All educational activities, from admission to examinations, will be conducted online. It is pertinent to mention here that Allama Iqbal Open University has the largest teacher training program in Pakistan.

## Two Islamabad SHOs removed, seven suspended over 'poor performance'

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: At least two station house officers (SHOs) of Islamabad police were removed from posts while seven were suspended over "poor performance", citing police.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police (Operations) Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bokhari presided over a meeting to look into the performance of police officials, an Islamabad police spokesperson said.

During the meeting, DIG Bokhari warned the officers that corruption and misbehaviour with the citizens would not be tolerated while on duty.

According to the spokesperson, two SHOs were removed from their positions while seven SHOs of different police stations were suspended over incompetence.

The SHOs of Aabpara and Sihala police stations were removed from the posts while Humak, Korai, Lohi Bher, Margalla, Nilore, Sangjani and Ramna SHOs were suspended over poor performance.

The SHOs of Industrial Area I-9 and Karachi Company police stations were awarded prizes for excellent performance.

DIG Operations Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bokhari said that the suspended SHOs were given four days to improve their performance.

He went on to add that police officials who improve their performance will remain part of the Islamabad police team.

It is pertinent to mention that the federal government on March 29 appointed Ali Nasir Rizvi as the Inspector General (IG) of Islamabad police. He replaced Akbar Nasir who was directed to report to Establishment Division.

Following the notification of his appointment, as many as three senior deputy inspector generals (DIGs) of Islamabad police went on leave after a junior officer was appointed as IG of the capital city.

DIG Awais Malik, DIG Hassan Raza and DIG Shoaib Janbaz were among the high-ranking officials who went on leave following the change of command in the Islamabad police.

The newly-appointed IG Islamabad has served as SSP Operations, DPO Kasur, DIG Operations Lahore and other key postings during his services.

## Preparation of Eid

ISLAMABAD: Women are buying fancy shoes at a local market in the Federal Capital, ahead of upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## UNI Int'l delegation meets NAVTTC chairperson to boost collaborations

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from UNI International, led by Chief Executive Officer Max Ma, on Monday, convened with NAVTTC Chairperson Gulmina Bilal Ahmad and presented the ITMC portfolio.

NAVTTC Director General Skills Standard and Curriculum Hafeez Abbasi, and UNI International Director Abbas were also in attendance during the meeting.

Chairperson Gulmina extended a warm welcome to the UNI International team, expressing appreciation for



their ongoing collaboration with the curriculum development team under Director General Hafeez.

She specifically commended UNI International's dedication to joint curriculum development and anticipated further endeavors in the future.

Emphasizing the importance of collaborations, she particularly highlighted the initiative to send Pakistani skilled youth abroad.

Furthermore, Chairperson Gulmina underscored the necessity of job placement services for Pakistani youth, particularly within Chinese companies both in Pakistan and overseas.

## Pakistan strongly condemns the attack on the Consular Section of the Iranian Embassy in Damascus, Syria

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan strongly condemns the attack on the Consular Section of the Iranian Embassy in Damascus, Syria.

We offer our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and the people and the Government of Iran.

The attack is an unacceptable violation of the sovereignty of Syria and undermines its stability and security. It is a violation of international law and the UN Charter. Attacks against diplomats or diplomatic facilities are also illegal under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.

The irresponsible act of the Israeli forces is a major escalation in an already volatile region. We call on the UN Security Council to prevent Israel from its adventurism in the region and its illegal acts attacking its neighbours and targeting foreign diplomatic facilities.

## Al-Shifa Trust suggests sunglasses for people living in twin cities

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Leading ophthalmologist at Al-Shifa Trust, Dr. Tayyab Afghani, stated on Monday that the springtime brings an extremely high pollen count, which can cause burning and redness in the eyes.

He said that eye allergies can cause watery and puffy eyes, but the same therapies and self-care techniques that relieve the symptoms of nasal allergies also work for eye allergies.

In addition to sneezing and a stuffy, runny nose, the symptoms can include red eyes, irritation, itching, tearing or runny eyes, swollen eyelids, soreness, burning, or pain, he added.

Dr. Tayyab Afghani said that ocular allergies result from the body overreacting to an allergen, just like any other allergy.

The immune system produces antibodies that release histamine and other chemicals from the eyes, causing red, watery eyes and irritation.



Typically, seasonal allergies occur in early spring, during the summer, and into the fall. He informed that allergens in the atmosphere, such as spores from mold and pollen from grasses, trees, and weeds, are known as triggers.

He claimed that aside from causing momentary blurriness, ocular allergies, commonly known as allergic conjunctivitis or eye allergies, do not significantly endanger vision. In many cases, symptoms appear as soon as the allergen comes into contact with the eyes.

According to Dr. Tayyab Afghani, the first step is to try to avoid triggers by staying inside during high pollen count periods, which are often mid-morning and early evening.

In order to protect their eyes from pollen, people should drive with their windows closed and wear large sunglasses or eyeglasses.

He said people frequently use eye drops to treat severe, chronic ocular allergies.

## Coordinator to PM on Health directs IDAP for timely completion of PGMI-II

**PNP**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, conducted a visit to the construction site of Post Graduate Medical Institution II (PGMI-II). Accompanied by Federal Secretary Health, Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed received a detailed briefing on the progress of the vital public welfare project.

Coordinator to Prime Minister was briefed that the PGMI-II, a 300-bed hospital, is slated for completion by September 2025. Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to expeditiously completing public welfare projects. He said that the initiative would play a role in alleviating the burden on existing healthcare facilities in Islamabad. He directed the Infrastructure Development Authority of Punjab (IDAP) to strictly adhere to the construction schedule to ensure

the timely completion of the PGMI-II project. He further instructed the contractor to incorporate provisions for the addition of more floors in the future to ensure that the hospital can adapt and expand in response to evolving healthcare demands.

Earlier, Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed was briefed by President, Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PMDC) about the working of the organization. He directed PMDC to ensure improving the standard of medical education and the welfare of Pakistani medical students pursuing education overseas.

Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed congratulated PMDC for its accreditation with the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) which has made Pakistani graduates eligible to pursue training and practice in other countries that require WFME recognition.

Coordinator to Prime Minister further instructed PMDC to establish Special Desk to facilitate temporary stay of foreign doctors in Pakistan for attracting international patients.

## Win a Whopping 4 Million Rupees Jackpot. Click now to find out how!!!



**PPA**

LAHORE: TECNO, one of the biggest smartphone companies in Pakistan, is once again spreading joy by offering Eidi to its users, continuing the tradition of giving back to their customers and followers. The TECNO 'SPARK YOUR LUCK' contest by SPARK 20 Pro series gives you a chance to win cash prizes up to 4 million.

All you have to do is visit TECNO Mobile Pakistan page on Facebook, simply reshare the contest post on your Facebook profile, scan the QR code, and fill out the form to enter the contest for a chance to win a cash prize of 1 Million. Winners will be announced through live lucky draws.

Not only that, if you purchase any TECNO smartphone between April 1st and April 10th and reshare the contest picture, you can enter the contest to win a cash prize of 2 million. And if you think that's all, think again. If you buy a SPARK 20 Pro+ between April 1st and 10th, reshare the post, you could be one of the lucky winners to win a staggering 4 MILLION CASH PRIZE!

Aligned with its tagline 'stop at nothing', TECNO consistently offers engaging contests, gifts, rewards, and more. However, this time, the prize isn't just big—it's set to be the highlight of the year.

The contest is currently live! Don't wait; participate now to add an extra touch of excitement to your Eid.



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# ‘Beyond Interference: Redefining the Scope of Judicial Protection’-I

**C**hief Justice Qazi Faez Esa, nearing the end of his tenure, chose not to address the complaint filed by six serving judges through the Supreme Judicial Council or by convening a full court of the Supreme Court. Instead, he passed it onto the civilian government, which many perceive as being under the complete influence of the powerful establishment. This decision has been viewed as a missed opportunity to restore judicial independence from the alleged overwhelming control exerted by the establishment, which is often equated with the state itself. This control extends to all facets of governance, including the parliament, governments, cabinets, electoral processes, judicial proceedings, and foreign policy decisions, as well as the management of trade, business, investment, agriculture, and livestock.

The Chief Justice's decision to avoid addressing the complaint prompted over 300 members of the legal fraternity to stage a protest before the Supreme Court today (31.03.2024), urging the Court to take responsibility for adjudicating the matter under Article 184(3) of the Constitution. They argued that any government-led commission would lack the necessary independence and authority to properly investigate the claims.

Analysts, jurists, and lawyers have widely criticized the appointment of Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, who served as the 21st Chief Justice of Pakistan

from 2013 to 2014, to head the one-man commission tasked with adjudicating the complaint of six judges. Many have deemed this appointment highly inadequate, inappropriate, and out of context, given Jilani's age—barely two years younger than Pakistan itself. They argue that since the complaint directly implicates the executive branch as the culprit, appointing a commission headed by someone associated with the executive undermines the integrity of the process. It's seen as illogical and unfitting for the accused to be tasked with providing justice to the complainants.

Meanwhile, the PTI, emerging as one of the largest stakeholders, has been particularly affected by judicial decisions allegedly manipulated by the establishment. These decisions have targeted the incarceration of PTI's former chairman and top-tier leadership, resulting in significant upheaval within the party. PTI has not only lost its founding chairman, top and second-tier leadership, but also its iconic symbol and brand name. Currently, it has been absorbed into an irrelevant and sectarian party, Sunni Ittehad, thereby alienating sympathizers from other sectors. The heavy toll this has taken on PTI appears irreversible at this juncture.

The terms of reference assigned to the commission are notable for their

focus on investigating direct involvement of officials in judicial interference and recommending appropriate action against implicated agencies, departments, or state institutions based on evidence uncovered. However, the absence of mention regarding indirect involvement suggests a potential gap in the scope of the inquiry. Additionally, the commission's starting assumption that no interference has occurred places the burden of proof on the six judges, who must substantiate their claims comprehensively with evidence, witnesses, and circumstantial evidence. Failure to do so could lead to the judges facing accusations of lodging false or concocted complaints, adding a significant layer of complexity to the proceedings. Moreover, granting the commission the authority to explore additional matters deemed totally inappropriate.

The analyst and jurists believe that the TORs assigned to the commission lack specificity and urgency in addressing the issue of unlawful interference. While they include provisions for investigating interference and recommending action, they may not adequately address the need for proactive measures to prevent future interference or hold accountable those responsible. Additionally, the assigned TORs may

not fully acknowledge the complexity of the issue or provide clear guidance on how to address challenges such as fixing responsibility in the absence of concrete evidence.

Rejecting the Terms of Reference (TORs), analysts and jurists argue the letter written by the six judges transcends mere complaints or allegations. Instead, it resembles a decision by a six-member high court bench. After conducting investigations, gathering facts, and recording witness testimonies, the bench unequivocally declared the unlawful elements within the country's prime spy agency and the establishment guilty of blatant and brute interference in judicial matters.

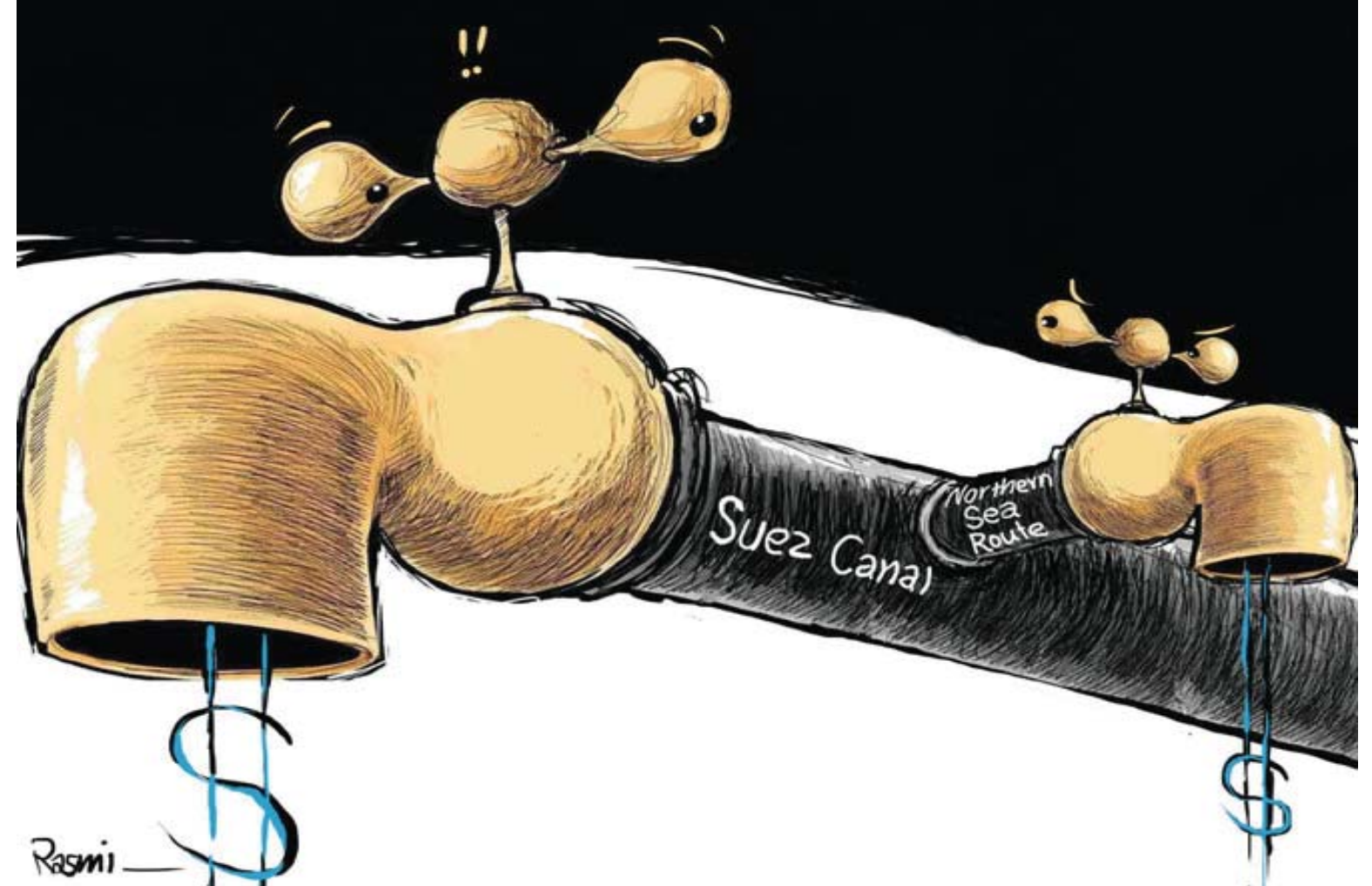
The bench highlighted that the unlawful elements within the establishment use coercive tactics, including intimidation, blackmail, and eavesdropping, to influence bench formations and court decisions aligning with their political and administrative agendas. Furthermore, by openly defying or frustrating court orders that contradict their objectives, the unlawful elements within the establishment undermines the judiciary's independence. The bench sought guidance from the Supreme Judicial Council on defensive measures to safeguard against such unlawful interference and ensure the judiciary's autonomy to dispense justice impartially and transparently.



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

To be continued



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

## Pak Army's Significant Contribution to Education in AJK - II

**O**ne of the primary hurdles confronting the education sector in AJK is the insufficient infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas. Numerous schools contend with deteriorating buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and a deficiency in fundamental amenities like electricity, clean water, and sanitation. These circumstances not only impede the learning process but also jeopardize the safety and well-being of both students and teachers. Additionally, the quality of education in AJK often suffers due to outdated curricula, inadequate teacher training, and a scarcity of educational materials. Many educational institutions struggle to attract and retain qualified educators, especially in subjects such as science, mathematics, and English. Furthermore, socio-economic disparities pose significant obstacles to education in AJK, with poverty, unemployment, and limited access to essential services hindering children's attendance or causing premature dropout rates. Cultural norms and attitudes towards gender and education may further discourage girls from pursuing academic endeavors, exacerbating disparities in access and outcomes. Natural disasters and conflict also present challenges, with the region's susceptibility to earthquakes, floods, and landslides disrupting schooling and damaging educational infrastructure. Additionally, the ongoing conflict in occupied Jammu and Kashmir heightens security concerns and instability, complicating efforts to ensure a safe learning environment for children.

Despite these challenges, initiatives are underway to address the issues plaguing the education sector in AJK. Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international partners collaborate to enhance infrastructure, bolster teacher training, and promote inclusive access to education. Efforts also focus on curriculum revision, the introduction of innovative teaching methods, and the expansion of vocational and technical education opportunities to better prepare students for the workforce. However, rectifying the problems in AJK's education sector demands sustained efforts from all stakeholders. It necessitates investment in infrastructure, resources, and teacher development, alongside policies and programs prioritizing equity, inclusivity, and quality. Furthermore, engagement with communities, parents, and students themselves is vital to ensure their needs are addressed and their voices heard.

In the scenic region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the Pakistan Army emerges as a transformative force in the education sector, significantly expanding access, enhancing quality, and fostering community development. Through various initiatives and collaborations, the Pakistan Army's dedication to education in AJK has profoundly impacted the lives of numerous children and communities.

The list of work done by the Pak Army in AJK's education sector is extensive, and it is heartening to highlight here some of the key projects. In the backdrop of the "Parha Likha Lipa Drive," renovation and uplifting of Read Foundation Middle School Lubgran-DSS commenced in February 24. In a short span of time, the school building underwent upgrades facilitated by 653 MR/75 Bde, including painting, installation of a Main Gate, preparation of Model classrooms and new stairs, leveling of the ground, installation of educational charts, construction of

cemented link pathways between classrooms, overall building maintenance, and preparation of lawns & plantation in the schoolyard. Additionally, 830 MMRA/6 AK Bde oversaw the renovation of a Madrasa at Bhont Bazar, where whitewashing and distemping of the building were carried out. Furthermore, 646 MR/75 Bde conducted renovation work at Govt Boys Pilot High School in Lipa, including distemping of the building. In Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), there is one cadet college, while in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), there are four. AJK hosts 28 Army Public Schools (APS), accommodating a total of 19,604 students, supported by 1,330 teachers and 467 ancillary staff members. Additionally, AJK is home to five Federal government Education Institutions catering to 2,266 students, along with two special education institutions situated in Muzaffarabad and Rawalakot, serving 57 special students. Recently, the Arfa Karim one-month Pilot Project, offered free of cost at APS Hjira, concluded on March 22, 2024, with 120 students and local youths attending the course physically, and 38 individuals participating online. An extension phase of the paid course, spanning three months, is scheduled to commence from May 24. Furthermore, efforts have been made to provide free internet services at four locations, establishing freelancing hotspots at the University of Poonch Rawalakot, Neelum University Athmuqam, APS Athmuqam, and APS Bagh.

Readers, these examples are just a glimpse of the remarkable work carried out by the Pak Army in the education sector of AJK, while the detailed list is considerably extensive. The active participation of the Pak Army in providing educational facilities in AJK is highly appreciated by the people of AJK. Both the people of Pakistan and AJK are grateful to the Pak Army for their practical contributions towards the betterment of society.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

## Coalition Payoffs - II

**A** loose accord of two major political parties to form a coalition government seems to be a betrayal, both to their pre-elections manifestos and to their electors as they have virtually abandoned their undertakings to their voters and to their own principles in order to attain political offices. And, lastly, an ideological disconnect combined with non-monotonic relationship between the political partners of this coalition may trundle the risk of policy disagreement and its eventual dismissal through a no-confidence vote. An academic criticism on coalition government apart, its effectiveness can be measured by looking at completion of its three stages life cycle: government formation; coalition governance; and, government termination. Its first stage starts with the distribution of political offices amongst the political partners. The second stage of a coalition's life cycle comprises coalition governance where the political partners support each other on legislative and non-legislative policy work of the cabinet. The third and last stage of coalition government is its termination which takes place when a policy disagreement between the political partners results in its dismissal through a no-confidence vote.

The first stage of forming government has informally been concluded as the distribution of political offices is decided between the two parties, the PML-N and the PPPP. The PPPP's claim of grabbing constitutional offices i.e. the president, the chairman of the Senate and the provincial governors indicates its intention to not share collective ministerial responsibility, a fundamental feature of a coalition government. Such decline of sharing ministerial responsibility predicts an inherent inability of contemporary multiparty coalition to take difficult policy decisions under the guise of economic and political instability in the country. It also indicates how wisely one of the major political partners,

the PPPP, has avoided sharing its policy payoffs. The durability of the second stage, the coalition governance, varies from a coalition governance model to another. The literature on coalition governance suggests three models: PM-dominated model where a prime minister dominates on policy decisions alone; ministerial autonomy model where minister-in-charge of respective ministry enjoys a considerable agenda-setting autonomy; and, coalition compromise model where political partners agree on policy decisions by deviating from their original party positions in order to produce a democratic governance.

If the PML-N led coalition government tries to reinforce the PM-dominated model of governance, the chances of completing its five-year term seems minimal as nominated candidate for premiership Mr. Shahbaz Sharif does not enjoy a parliamentary majority surplus. The contemporary coalition can also not afford a ministerial autonomy model which would result in dividend policy decisions to be taken by the cabinet members of at least two parties, PML-N and MQM, having two conflicting policy positions. What is advisable is to go for coalition compromise governance model where all the political partners, whether becoming part of cabinet in case of MQM, or declining to hold ministerial positions in case of PPPP, needs to develop consensual policy decisions for producing a democratic governance and for prevention of approaching to third stage of coalition life cycle where a policy disagreement result in its termination. Arguably, the successful completion of the life cycle of this multiparty coalition government potentially depends on how the political partners would work together for a democratic coalition governance.

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Analysis

Dilawar Hussain



# Pakistan and Japan pledge to boost trade relations and collaboration in joint meeting

PPA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant meeting, Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro and Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, convened to discuss ways to strengthen trade relations and mutual trust between Japan and Pakistan.

During the meeting, Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro congratulated Minister Jam Kamal Khan on his recent portfolio, expressing a commitment to enhancing bilateral ties.

Notably, the ambassador extended an invitation to Pakistani businesses to participate in World Expo 2025 which is scheduled to be held in Osaka Japan in 2025 to promote economic cooperation.

Despite the optimism, challenges faced by the Japanese business community in imports were brought to light by Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro.



Minister Jam Kamal Khan responded by assuring government support to facilitate ease of doing

business for local and international entrepreneurs.

Emphasizing sustainable economic development, Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted key sectors such as automobile, steel, machinery, textiles, minerals, and IT HR for potential collaboration with Japan.

Moreover, Minister Jam Kamal Khan disclosed the Ministry of Commerce's comprehensive five-year plan aimed at streamlining business processes and attracting both local and foreign investors.

Both dignitaries reaffirmed their commitment to fostering a balanced trade environment and strengthening the longstanding bilateral relations between Pakistan and Japan.

They also agreed to work towards enhancing the trade volume, which stood at \$1.26 billion USD in 2022-23, according to sources from FBR and TDAS.

## Pakistani envoy visited the Crocus City Hall Moscow

Spokesman Report



MOSCOW: Pakistan's Ambassador to Russian Federation HE Muhammad Khalid Jamali visited the Crocus City Hall Moscow and placed flowers to pay homage to the victims. He took part in the ceremony to commemorate the victims of the deadly terrorist attack that occurred last Friday at the Crocus City Hall.

"I offer my condolences... We share the grief of the people of Russia. We can imagine the horror and pain it brings, as Pakistan has sacrificed more than 100,000 lives fighting terrorism," the Ambassador said earlier.

## Kazakhstan Embassy supports Mardan Center for Children with Speech and Hearing Impairments during Ramadan

Spokesman Report



ISLAMABAD: In accordance with the established good tradition, during the holy month of Ramadan, the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Pakistan provided assistance to the Center for Children with Speech and Hearing Impairments in Mardan. Together with the former member of the National Assembly and the Kazakhstan-Pakistan Friendship Group, Mrs. Begum Shahin Saifullah, 100 food boxes were distributed to students of the Center and their families.

The Center's management expressed gratitude to the Embassy for the support provided. In return, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan highly appreciated the efforts of the Center to support children with speech and hearing impairments, declaring his intention to continue providing assistance.

## Pakistan elected to lead UN Disarmament Commission's 2024 session

PPA

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan Monday was unanimously elected Chairman of the UN Disarmament Commission as it opened its 2024 session amid rising geopolitical tensions and concerns over deepening mistrust between some of the world's largest military Powers.



A vital subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly, the Commission makes recommendations on various issues in the field of disarmament.

"I assure you that - in keeping with Pakistan's ethos and tradition of multilateral diplomacy - I will be an honest broker and a facilitator of dialogue," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, said after his election, by acclamation, to head the Commission's 2024 session. "I will be listening to you patiently and attentively, and collaborating with the members of the extended bureau to utilize the available time efficiently and effectively," he told delegates.

The UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, was present. "It is a matter of great honour and privilege to have been elected as the Chairperson of the UN Disarmament Commission's 2024 substantive session," Ambassador Jadoon said. "I extend my gratitude to the Asia-Pacific Group for nominating me to this position, and to all UN Member States for reposing their confidence in me to lead the Commission's deliberations this year."

The Disarmament Commission, he said, plays a crucial function as a "deliberative body" on disarmament issues. "It is distinct from the First Committee - which deals with questions of disarmament and related international security issues from a wider and higher political plane - and the Conference on Disarmament - which acts as the 'single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum' to conclude legally binding instruments." The UN disarmament machinery, Ambassador Jadoon said, has delivered in equally challenging times in the past, and remains well equipped to do so in the present, with the right amount of political will and attention. "We need flexible attitudes based on mutual respect and a genuine understanding of the security concerns of all to build consensus-based and inclusive solutions."

# AI startup Finanshels.com launches AI bot to streamline UAE corporate taxes

News Desk

DUBAI: In an impressive stride toward modernizing the UAE's approach to business taxes, Finanshels.com has introduced an AI WhatsApp bot that revolutionizes corporate tax registration. This sophisticated bot reduces the process to a mere 4-document upload, completed in under 5 minutes—a stark contrast to the current method requiring direct submission through the FTA website. This existing procedure, involving detailed forms in Arabic and English, typically demands expert knowledge and takes between 1 to 2 hours to complete.

The complexity of the existing process and the potential for costly errors have led small business owners to rely on tax consultants, incurring high fees that range from 500 to 2000 AED and often accompanied by a lack of clear pricing and manual back-and-forth emails. Finanshels.com's service cuts through this traditional approach, reducing both the time and financial investment, with a modest fee of just

199 AED.

This game-changing service, according to CEO Muhammed Shafeekh, is set to democratize tax registration for small and medium business owners throughout the region, offering an efficient, transparent, and cost-effective alternative to the laborious tasks of the past.

The project comes from the Mohammed Bin Rashid Fund-supported startup Finanshels.com, which is dedicated to boosting the UAE's digital economy by automating back office operations. This goal is resonating with the business sector, as shown by the outstanding welcome the service has received. Already, more than 500 companies have adopted the platform and have given it a high 4.9 out of 5 rating on Trustpilot, making the advantages of this service evident.

Feedback from users underscores the impact of Finanshels.com's innovation. One business owner remarked on Trustpilot, "The seamless experience and attentive support team made the registration process remarkably straightforward. This kind of inno-

vation is precisely what the business sector needs." Another echoed this sentiment, highlighting the ease of the process: "I was amazed at how simple Finanshels.com made the tax registration. What used to be a daunting task is now surprisingly easy."

Muhammed Shafeekh, CMA, CEO of Finanshels.com, emphasized the broader implications of their service, stating, "Our goal extends beyond simplifying tax registration. We aim to change the narrative around back office operations, making it accessible and simpler for all entrepreneurs, regardless of their technical expertise that make it super easy and affordable for anyone to setup and run a company here in UAE."

This service represents a significant shift from the traditional, labor-intensive tax registration methods, showcasing the UAE's increasing adoption of fintech solutions that streamline business functions. Finanshels.com is leading this change by simplifying compliance and back-office tasks, contributing to a more efficient business environment and aligning with

the UAE's Vision 2030 goals. This progression towards digital fluency is paving the way for the region's ambitious economic objectives.

The introduction of the AI WhatsApp bot by Finanshels.com is a clear indicator of the evolving dynamics in the UAE's commercial sector, where technology and user-friendly solutions are becoming central to fostering a conducive business environment. As more companies adopt this streamlined approach to tax registration, the anticipated impact on the UAE's economic landscape is both significant and promising.

Entrepreneurs interested in leveraging this service can initiate the process by contacting the Finanshels.com AI WhatsApp bot directly, joining a growing list of businesses that have already experienced the transformative benefits of this innovative solution. This development is not just a milestone for Finanshels.com but a leap forward for the UAE's business community, offering a glimpse into the future of financial compliance and regulation in the region.

# Chinese Educationist MAX MA Paves the Way for Pakistani Youth's Success

PPA

ISLAMABAD: An esteemed Chinese educationist is diligently striving towards enhancing the skill sets of Pakistani youth and facilitating their integration into employment opportunities within Chinese enterprises, thereby fostering enduring camaraderie between China and Pakistan.

Max Ma, the distinguished CEO of UNI International, has been an integral part of the Pakistani landscape for the past 18 years. His unwavering commitment extends to bolstering the technical education, vocational training, and Chinese language proficiency among Pakistani youth, alongside providing bespoke job placement services.

In a dialogue with the Associated Press of Pakistan



(APP), Max Ma underscored his dedication to promoting domestically crafted products through the Pakistan National Pavilion in Kashgar, coupled with online sales channels. Professing his profound admiration for Pakistan, the CEO articulated his collaborative efforts with Chinese educational institutions to equip Pakistani youth

with essential skills and technical expertise.

Post-training, Max Ma actively advocates for the placement of Pakistani youth in reputable Chinese companies, particularly across Middle Eastern countries, through meticulously tailored job placement services. Emphasizing the significance of Chinese language

and cultural education, he advocates for their integration into primary, secondary, and technical education curricula, thereby enhancing avenues for academic and professional pursuits in China.

Additionally, Max Ma endeavors to introduce Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) technology, encompassing herb cultivation, manufacturing, and clinical applications, thereby enriching the healthcare landscape in Pakistan. Notably, he harbors a keen interest in fostering tourism between China and Pakistan, envisioning a network of hotel services spanning Kashgar, Urumqi, Lanzhou, and Xi'an along the historic Silk Road.

Acknowledging the commendations received from top leadership and stakeholders in academia and business, Max Ma reaffirms his team's unwavering

commitment to the welfare of Pakistani youth. Over the span of two years, extensive field research spanning 60,000 kilometers across all provinces of Pakistan has been conducted, encompassing inspections of over 50 vocational institutions. Max Ma emphasizes a market-driven approach to service solutions, tailored to meet the evolving needs of the populace.

Max Ma articulates his aspiration for Pakistani youth to diligently pursue academic excellence, proficiently grasp the Chinese language and culture, hone vocational skills, and ultimately secure fulfilling employment opportunities. Such endeavors epitomize Max Ma's enduring commitment to empowering the youth of Pakistan, heralding a promising future of collaboration and prosperity.

# FPCCI delegation holds crucial talks with Minister Jam Kamal Khan to tackle economic hurdles together

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) met with Minister Jam Kamal to address economic challenges through close collaboration.

Led by Atif Ikram Sheikh, President of the FPCCI, the delegation held discussions with Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday to address pressing economic

matters.

During the meeting, the delegation congratulated the minister on his new appointment and pledged their full support towards collaborative efforts to address issues facing the business community.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan assured the FPCCI delegation of his commitment to addressing their concerns, emphasizing the importance of regular coordination meetings to facilitate smoother operations.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan acknowledged the challenges faced by the business community, particularly in the areas of electricity and gas, and assured the delegation of his commitment to addressing these issues along with the rest.

The delegation highlighted the establishment of a think tank within the FPCCI, led by Former Commerce Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz, aimed at shaping the vision for 2030 and requested close coordination with ministry

departments for improved efficiency and ease of doing business.

The minister appreciated the concept and extended full support. He assured the delegation of full support and promised to extend all facilitation.

Discussions also revolved around strategies to boost exports, with the minister reaffirming his intention to involve the delegation in ongoing efforts, emphasizing their collective role as a team.

Prominent figures within



the delegation included Ghazianfar Bilour, former president of FPCCI, Karim Aziz Malik, Chairman, Malik Sohail Hussain, and Mian Zahid Hussain, Chairman Coordination FPCCI, Zaki Ejaz, Vice President FPCCI, and Mian Zahid Hussain, Chairman FPCCI Budget Advisory Council.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
66,796.32	67,005.10	
Day's High	Day's Low	
67,304.36	66,740.91	
Index Value	Change	
3,751,967,574	-208.78	
Percentage	Time	
-0.31%	1 Apr, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,952.62	+20.64	
Percentage	Time	
+0.26%	28 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
39,536.85	-270.52	
Percentage	Time	
-0.68%	1 Apr, 1:08 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
39,803.09	-566.35	
Percentage	Time	
-1.40%	1 Apr, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.7	184.5
Bahrain Dinar	738.93	746.93
Canadian Dollar	204.25	206.45
China Yuan	38.74	39.14
Danish Krone	40.3	40.7
Euro	301.45	304.45
Hong Kong Dollar	35.55	35.9
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	903.19	912.19
Malaysian Ringgit	59.25	59.85
New Zealand \$	170.56	172.56
Norwegians Krone	26.19	26.49
Omani Riyal	721.67	729.67
Qatari Riyal	76.57	77.27
Saudi Riyal	73.65	74.4
Singapore Dollar	206	208
Swedish Korona	26.89	27.19
Swiss Franc	313.78	316.28
Thai Bhat	7.76	7.91
U.A.E Dirham	75.4	76.15
UK Pound Sterling	354	358
US Dollar	278.1	281

# ICCI appreciates SIFC's initiative to establish country's largest IT Park in Islamabad-Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari

PPA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has highly appreciated the Special Investment Facilitation Council's (SIFC) decision to establish the country's largest IT Park in Islamabad. In a statement here on Monday he said that the landmark decision is indeed a manifestation of a significant stride-forward for Pakistan's expanding tech landscape and promising unparalleled opportunities for innovation and progress. He said that the mega project covering an area of 3.3 acres to be built in the G-10 Sector of the federal capital will hopefully be a hub of technological advancement and array of facilities to foster creativity and entrepreneurship.

The ICCI President praised that the gigantic project, to work under public-private partnership, will have immense attraction for country's burgeoning freelance economy, will have a

research center, a well-stocked library, software houses, conference rooms, dedicated work spaces for freelancers and start ups and an exhibition area for showcasing cutting-edge IT products. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari further said that the project will not only create business opportunities for young entrepreneurs but will turn a big source of foreign exchange earnings for the country.

The President said the construction of an IT Park of such a paramount importance in Islamabad was the long-standing demand of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and that the business community wholeheartedly welcomes the initiative and assures that every possible cooperation will be extended for the materialisation of the project. He also expressed the hope that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be taken on board at all the stages for the benefit of the business community and making the project a state of the art in real sense.



## Called on

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al Zaabi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) called on Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday.



Photo: PID

# Mashreq's groundbreaking partnership with 1LINK to enhance digital banking in Pakistan

PPA

KARACHI: Mashreq Pakistan, a part of Mashreq which is the leading financial institution in the MENA region, is proud to announce its partnership with 1LINK-Pakistan's premier switch and payment services provider. This is a significant milestone towards Mashreq's bid to revolutionize the digital banking experience for Mashreq customers across Pakistan.

Commenting on the partnership, Muhammad Hamayun Sajjad, Chief Executive Officer, Mashreq Pakistan, said, "As a trusted international digital leader, Mashreq aims to offer unparalleled digital banking solutions in Pakistan powered by state-of-the-art technology, seamless customer experience and a strong commitment to responsible banking. We are here to catalyse Pakistan's growth by empowering its people through banking innovation, superior customer experience and financial accessibility for all. This partnership enables us to offer superior digital banking through the full spectrum of 1LINK's services and is testament to Mashreq's



commitment to exceptional customer experience."

Mr. Najeeb Agrawalla, CEO 1LINK, commented "We welcome and congratulate Mashreq Pakistan as the first digital bank on 1LINK's grid. This collaboration

will enable Mashreq to innovate tailored products and services for its customer segments using 1LINK rails. This also reflects 1LINK's commitment to continuous innovation, making it an ideal partnership."

# TikTok releases its Q4 2023 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report

PPA

ISLAMABAD: In its continuous effort to foster a secure and positive online environment, TikTok has unveiled its latest Community Guidelines Enforcement Report for the fourth quarter of 2023. This release highlights TikTok's unwavering commitment to transparency, safety, and inclusivity, reflecting its dedication to building trust and ensuring a safe platform for its global community.

During the October-December period of 2023, TikTok's proactive measures led to the removal of 176,461,963 videos worldwide, representing about 1.0% of all videos uploaded on the platform. A substantial portion of these, 128,300,584 videos, were identified and removed through automated detection technologies, while 8,038,106 videos were reinstated upon further review. In Pakistan alone, the platform took



action against 18,596,077 videos for breaching its Community Guidelines in the fourth quarter, underscoring its resolve to combat violations effectively. Moreover, TikTok aggressively pursued spam accounts and related content, implementing robust measures to prevent the proliferation of automated spam accounts.

Notably, approximately 95.3% of videos that violated the guidelines were removed within 24 hours of posting, and the proactive removal rate for the quarter

stood impressively at 99.5% globally. In a global effort to safeguard younger users, TikTok also deleted 19,848,855 accounts suspected of belonging to individuals under the age of 13.

TikTok's Community Guidelines are meticulously crafted to cultivate an environment that is safe, inclusive, and authentic for all users, without exceptions. The guidelines are enforced uniformly across all content and users, with TikTok striving for consistency and fairness in its enforcement actions.

Leveraging advanced technology and human oversight, TikTok efficiently identifies, reviews, and addresses content that contravenes its guidelines. The periodic publication of the Community Guidelines Enforcement Report offers insights into the scale and nature of content and account actions, underscoring TikTok's commitment to full transparency.

# LONGi Pakistan launched Hi-MO X6 bifacial modules

PPA

LAHORE: LONGi, a global leader in solar panel manufacturing, has captured the attention of visitors to the Solar Pakistan exhibition held at Lahore's Expo Centre with the long-awaited debut of its game-changing Hi-MO X6 bifacial product, with attendees queuing to view the innovative piece of solar technology first-hand.

If the Americans invented BC technology, LONGi has, on this basis, invented HPBC technology, combining the features of TOPCon and BC technology to significantly improve the efficiency and reliability of both cells and modules. The Hi-MO X6 bifacial marks a paradigm shift in the industry by offering unmatched efficiency and performance. With power

efficiency ranging from 560 to 585W, this cutting-edge panel outperforms traditional models and sets a new benchmark for the distributed market, its exceptional maximum module efficiency of 23% heralding a new era of energy production.

LONGi's country director Ali Majid commented: "We are delighted to have introduced the Hi-MO X6 bifacial modules at Solar Pakistan. LONGi's commitment to pushing the boundaries of solar innovation is evident in this groundbreaking product, and the enthusiastic response from visitors reinforces our position as industry leaders. The launch of the Hi-MO X6 bifacial modules is without doubt a significant milestone in the journey towards sustainable energy solutions."

# Peshawar Traders Chamber seeks action on trade and commerce in Cantonment

PPA

PESHAWAR: A delegation from Peshawar Traders Chamber, led by its President Ghulam Bilal Javed, held a meeting with the CEO of Cantonment Board Peshawar, Irfan Ahmed. The services of Cantonment Executive Officer, Ghulam Bilal Javed, were acknowledged during the meeting. President Ghulam Bilal Javed and CEO Irfan Ahmed discussed various issues related to trade and commerce, emphasizing the need for immediate resolution of prevailing challenges and collaboration between business sectors. President Ghulam Bilal Javed highlighted ongoing and proposed projects in Peshawar Cantonment and its surrounding areas, stressing the importance of addressing trade-related issues. The delegation, comprising members such

as Miyan Muhammad Aqeel, Basit Khan, and Mukhtiar Hussain, also presented their concerns during the meeting. CEO Irfan Ahmed assured the delegation of prompt action on trade-related matters and pledged to address the issues raised during the meeting. He emphasized the importance of addressing professional tax matters and undertaking initiatives to improve infrastructure and security measures, including the restoration of streetlights, installation of surveillance cameras, and strict enforcement against illegal parking and encroachments. Furthermore, CEO Irfan Ahmed expressed his commitment to implementing solutions based on the recommendations and suggestions put forth by President Ghulam Bilal Javed and other members of the delegation.

# UBL Introduces SoftPOS Solution with TapSys

PPA

KARACHI: United Bank Limited (UBL), in collaboration with technology innovator TapSys, proudly announce the launch of SoftPOS, a groundbreaking advancement in mobile payments in Pakistan. SoftPOS by UBL transforms smartphones and tablets into efficient payment terminals, offering businesses versatility, convenience and security.

As the first Pakistani bank to introduce this revolutionary technology, SoftPOS by UBL is a comprehensive solution with an intuitive interface and robust functionality. Compatible with

a wide range of Android devices, SoftPOS eliminates the need for additional hardware investments, making payment processing accessible to all businesses.

Tughrul A. T. Ali, Head Digital Money & Financial Inclusion, UBL, remarked, "This initiative marks a significant milestone in our mission to drive digital payment adoption and empower local enterprises."

Karim Jindani, CEO of TapSys, expresses excitement about expanding digital acceptance in Pakistan, stating, "SoftPOS will enable merchants in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities to onboard and accept card transactions digitally."

## Take Charge with Infinix NOTE 40 series fore fronting a 20W Wireless MagCharge Revolution



PPA

PAKISTAN: Infinix NOTE 40 series, featuring the first of its kind 20W Wireless MagCharge technology; is now available to pre-order online at a starting price of Rs 54,999 along with exclusive pre-order gifts. The 20 Wireless MagCharge technology enables an efficient and seamless charging experience thereby eliminating the need for cumbersome cables and adapters. Infinix NOTE 40 Pro is accompanied by 70W All-Round FastCharge 2.0 whereas NOTE 40 features a 45W All-Round FastCharge 2.0 venturing for lightning-fast charging speeds. Pre-orders for Infinix NOTE 40 series are now taking place on Xpark at a starting price of Rs 54,999, that too with exclusive pre-order gifts.

Infinix NOTE 40 series is carefully crafted to resolve all sorts of smartphone charging pain points be slow charging, low battery anxiety and the never ending need to find a power socket. The 20W Wireless MagCharge eliminates the need for physical connectors, making the charging process incredibly convenient where Users can simply snap it either with Infinix NOTE 40 Pro or NOTE 40 and get along with their day. On the other hand, both 70W and 45W 70W All-Round FastCharge 2.0 enables unparalleled convenience, allowing users to quickly recharge their devices in no time or while on the go. In addition to this, the advanced All-Round FastCharge 2.0 of Infinix NOTE 40 series enables multiple other charging modes such as 20W wireless charging, bypass charging, AI Smart Charging etc.

Simon Feng, CEO of Infinix Pakistan, remarked, "Low battery anxiety is commonly faced by every other smartphone user today. It's been haunting specially for the younger generation as it hurdles their productivity.



# Chairman PCB visits Kakul camp

ABBOTTABAD: Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi, visited Kakul in Abbottabad today to personally observe the ongoing fitness camp being conducted by trainers from the Pakistan Army for Pakistan's T20 players. The visit aimed at gathering first-hand insights into the training camp and to extend gratitude to the Pakistan Army for their invaluable support in organising the camp.

The fitness camp has been instrumental in enhancing the physical capabilities of Pakistan's T20 players, ensuring they are in optimal condition for forthcoming cricketing assignments which also includes ICC T20 World Cup in June this year.

Chairman also took the opportunity to interact with the players, personally commending them for their dedication and active participation in the camp. He expressed satisfaction over the players' enthusiasm and commitment towards enhancing their fitness levels.

In addition to meeting with the players, Chairman PCB also held a meeting with the selection committee to talk about the team's selection ahead of the New Zealand T20I series. The meeting was also attended by captain Babar Azam. Chairman PCB also took the members into confidence on the developments made by the Board regarding the appointment of head coach.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi: "I want



to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Pakistan Army for their support to our cricketers. Their collaboration will not only enhance the fitness levels of our players but will also make them more disciplined in future.

"This camp will surely put the players in good stead before undertaking a challenging journey leading to a global tournament in the USA and West Indies.

"The PCB remains dedicated to providing comprehensive support to its players, equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to excel at the

international level."

Malik Faisal discusses promotion of sports in Punjab: top sports figures

Tahir Amin Malik

Leading sports figures of the country belonging to different games called on Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar and discussed the promotion of sports culture among the youth during their separate meetings at National Hockey Stadium on Friday.

The top sports stars such as Olympian Khawaja Junaid, former captain national

kabaddi team Shafiq Chishti and Secretary Punjab Taekwondo Association Dr Izhar ul Haq apprised the Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Faisal Ayub Khokhar about different issues of their respective games.

Talking on this occasion, Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that the revival of hockey is among the priorities of the Punjab government. "Sports Board Punjab will establish district level centres for the development of hockey in Punjab province," he added.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that there is immense hockey talent in our country and we just need long-term planning, provision of sufficient facilities and resources to our emerging hockey players.

He said that the establishment of a healthy society is closely linked with the promotion of sports culture. "All sports veterans, athletes and stakeholders should give suggestions for the development of sports among the young generation," he opined.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Faisal Ayub Khokhar further said that there is immense hockey talent in our country and we just need long-term planning, provision of sufficient facilities and resources to our emerging hockey players.

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## Ebrahim Mughal and Abrar Ahmed won the Ramadan Mubarak Badminton Cup Tournament



Khalid Chaudhry

MULTAN: The Ramadan Mubarak Badminton Cup was held at Sports Complex Multan in which teams from different cities participated, including teams from Muzaffargarh, Wahari, Melsi, Alipur, Leh, Bhakkar, Pir Mahal, and Toba Tek Singh. In this tournament, Muhammad Ebrahim Mughal and Abrar Ahmed won the first position and thus won the Wing Cup and the first prize, bringing the name of Multan district to light and this title went to Multan district.

## Saim won the final match: Ramadan Night Cricket Cup



Khalid Chaudhry

MULTAN: Ramadan Night cricket is going on in full swing in this regard, the final cricket tournament was held in Basti Buch in which the teams of Saim and Ayan participated. In which, after a bitter competition, the team of Saim won the final match and took the trophy of the final match. The special guests of the final match were Hasnain Bhatta and Muhammad Salman and they congratulated the winning team and expressed happiness while Muhammad Usman performed the duties of the umpire in the final match.

Multan-The final cricket tournament was held in Basti Buch, in which after a tough competition, Saim's team won and took the trophy of the final match. Hasnain Bhutta was the special guest.

## Babar Azam's father advises him to respect Imad Wasim, Mohammad Amir



A Sports

LAHORE: Azam Siddiqui, the father of Babar Azam, advised his son to show respect to Mohammad Amir and Imad Wasim upon becoming captain of the Pakistan cricket team. Amir and Wasim recently came out of international retirement and made themselves available for the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup 2024.

The tournament is scheduled to be played in the West Indies and the United States of America in June.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday reinstated Babar Azam as the white-ball captain of the national team. Babar Azam's father took to his Instagram account and expressed his excitement over his son's reappointment as captain.

"The most important thing is that the people of the authority gave honour and respect again," posted Azam Siddiqui.

He advised the right-hand batter to respect Wasim and Amir due to their seniority and let bygones be bygones.

"Now there are echoes that the team will not be united but I have said to Babar to forget the past. [Mohammad] Amir and Imad [Wasim] are older than and senior to you, meet them with respect and honour their opinion," he added. "I have also told Babar to treat everybody in the team like brothers. As all the eleven brothers will conquer the world with unity," he concluded. The first assignment of Babar Azam during his second tenure will be a five-match home T20I series against New Zealand, commencing on April 18 in Rawalpindi. The star batter had previously led Pakistan in white-ball cricket from 2019 to 2023 before stepping down following the team's dismal performance in the ICC World Cup 2023.

After his resignation, PCB appointed Shan Masood as Test captain, while Shaheen Afridi was handed responsibility to lead the T20I side. Afridi had an unwanted start to his captaincy reign, which started with a five-match away series loss against New Zealand in January this year.

# Syed Foundation hosts Iftar Dinner at Dar Ul-Sukoon for Special Children

KARACHI: A grand iftar dinner was organized by Syed Foundation at Darul Sukoon Head Office Kashmir Road in which the Chairperson of Special Olympics Pakistan Ronak Lakhani, Syed Foundation President Syed Waseem Hashmi, Asif Azeem, Yasmin Hyder, Farah Saeed, Dr. Hina Jamshed, Tehmina Asif, Manager Corporate Bonnie Burnation of Darul Sukoon and a large number of special children participated.

On this occasion, the guests mingled with the special children took photos with them and distributed gifts.

While expressing their thoughts on the occasion, Ms Ronak Lakhani said that special children are also an important part of our society. Allah Almighty has hidden immense abilities in them. These children have made the name of Pakistan bright all over the world by showing the essence of their abilities in Sports, education, infor-



Ronak Lakhani, Syed Waseem Hashmi, Asif Azeem, Yasmin Hyder, Farah Saeed, Dr. Hina Jamshed, and others participated.

mation, and technology.

Ronak Lakhani further said that she wanted to say that the officials and volunteers of Darul Sukoon are engaged day and night in serving special children under the spirit of serving humanity. I salute their spirit.

Farah Saeed said that without a doubt, the perfor-

mance of Dar ul-Sukoon, an institution for children with mental and physical disabilities, is an example at the national level. Today, I feel thrilled to participate in the happiness of these children. Such events create more motivation in these children.

Syed Waseem Hashmi, President of the Syed Foundation, said that the abilities

of special children are not less than others in any way.

He said that our organization will expand its activities in the Darul Sukoon in future.

Later, the Darul Sukoon Manager Corporate Bonnie Burnation thanked Syed Foundation for the event for the children of the institution.

# Sri Lanka batter equals Javed Miandad's long-standing Test record

A Sports

LAHORE: Sri Lanka's batting prodigy Kamindu Mendis equalled a record held by Pakistan's former captain and legendary batsman Javed Miandad for the most Test runs after four innings with a stunning display of skill in the game.

The 25-year-old batter has scored 419 runs in the first four innings of his Test career, equaling Javed Miandad's achievement from 1976.

Kamindu Mendis made his Test debut against Australia in Galle in 2022, scoring 61 runs in the first inning, and did not have to come to bat for the second



time as Sri Lanka thrashed the visitors by an inning and 39 runs.

Mendis hammered 102 and 164 in the second Test of his career against Bangladesh at Sylhet. The 25-year-old batter narrowly missed

the third consecutive ton as he made an unbeaten 92, missing partners from the other end.

He missed an opportunity to tie with Mohammad Azharuddin for the most centuries after four test innings as

he ran out of partners in the fourth innings.

Kamindu Mendis has amassed an incredible 419 runs, matching the record held by Javed Miandad, with scores of 61, 102, 164, and 92 not out.

In the series against Bangladesh, his only failure came in the second inning of the second Test inning when he was only able to score nine runs.

Pakistan's former captain and legendary batsman Javed Miandad had also scored 419 runs in his first four Test innings. In his first four innings of the Test, Miandad scored 163, 25 not out, 25, and 206.

# PSG edge past Marseille to take step closer to Ligue 1 title

Sports Desk

Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) overcame a controversial first-half sending-off to win 2-0 away to bitter rivals Marseille in Ligue 1 on Sunday, with Portuguese duo Vitinha and Goncalo Ramos scoring their goals.

Marseille's hopes of a first home league win against PSG since November 2011 were raised when the away side had Lucas Beraldo sent off five minutes before the interval.

But the Qatar-owned club still came out on top, with Vitinha exchanging passes with Ousmane Dembele before firing home a superb opening goal in the 53rd minute on a wet night at the Velo-

drome.

Marseille, who had been unbeaten at home this season, went looking for an equaliser and Jordan Veretout had a goal disallowed for an offside against teammate Luis Henrique.

PSG coach Luis Enrique then withdrew captain Kylian Mbappe just after the hour mark and it was his replacement Ramos who made sure of the win five minutes from time.

The goal came on the break-away, with the visitors clearing a corner before Achraf Hakimi found Marco Asensio and he picked out Ramos, who finished coolly for his 10th goal of the season.

Only Mbappe, with 38 in all

competitions, has found the net more often for PSG this season.

The result means PSG end the weekend as they started it, 12 points clear of second-placed Brest, who won 1-0 at Lorient earlier on Sunday.

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There are just seven games of the campaign remaining, and PSG need only 10 more points to claim a 10th title in 12 seasons.

The biggest talking point on the night was the red card for Beraldo, the young Brazilian defender signed in January.

He went shoulder-to-shoulder with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, knocking the attacker over just past halfway

near the right touchline.

Already on a booking, he escaped a second caution but then referee Benoit Bastien came across to check the VAR monitor and, following the review, surprisingly chose to show Beraldo a straight red card, judging him to have been the last defender.

"I don't usually judge refereeing decisions, especially when there is VAR," said Luis Enrique. "The action happened right in front of me, and I didn't think there was a foul.

"But I don't come here to talk about the referee, to comment on his decisions or to demand explanations."

Marseille could not take



advantage of the extra man and a second straight league loss means they remain seventh, three points

away from the European places. PSG face Rennes at home in the French Cup semi-finals on

Wednesday, and host Barcelona in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final a week later.



## Group photo

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain in a group photo with the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Jiang Zaidong at Nur Khan Airbase on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Wreath laying ceremony held at Nur Khan Air Base for Chinese died in recent terrorist attack

## City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A wreath laying ceremony was held here at the Nur Khan Air Base for the

five Chinese citizens who died in the recent incident of terrorism. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Monday, the wreaths

were laid on behalf of the President, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Air Staff at the

base. Thirty seconds of silence was observed in honour of the deceased, it said. "The Government of Pakistan strongly

condemns this heinous act of terrorism and will take all necessary steps to bring the terrorists and their facilitators to justice," the ISPR added.

## NEPRA notifies Rs2.75 per unit hike in power tariff ahead of Eidul Fitr

## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Monday notified Rs2.75 per unit increase in the uniform electricity rate for all consumers across the country, including Karachi, ARY News reported.

This hike is part of the second quarterly tariff adjustment (QTA) mechanism designed to offset the financial pressures on power companies. The hike will apply to all electricity users except "lifeline consumers", who use less than 100 units monthly.

The new tariff would be in effect for the upcoming three months, imposing a significant burden on consumers amounting to Rs85.2 billion.

This increase, which will show up in the electricity bills for April, May, and June, is the result of several factors 'influencing' the operational costs of the power industry. The NEPRA stated that the tariff revision was mostly due to growing fuel prices and maintenance costs.

To lighten the load on low-consumption households, NEPRA has granted an exemption from tariff increase to lifeline customers who use up to 50 units.

Earlier in February, the NEPRA hiked Rs7.5 per unit in the price of electricity as part of the fuel price adjustment (FCA).

According to NEPRA, the power sector's regulatory authority approved increase in the electricity tariff by Rs7.5 per kilowatt hour (kWh) under the head FCA of January 2024 and this hike in power tariff will be charged to power consumers during the month of March 2024.

## Arwais Leghari directs to ensure follow up of all received complaints



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Sardar Arwais Leghari while terming performance of Customer Care Service Centres of power distribution companies (DISCOs) unsatisfactory on Monday directed Pakistan Information Technology Company (PITC) to ensure follow up of all received complaints.

Chairing a meeting on working of customer care service centres here, he said, "every complaint received at the customer care centers across the country should be followed up with a phone call."

He said that the consumers should also be informed about the steps being taken to address their complaints, said a statement issued here.

This initiative sought to improve communication and transparency in the complaint resolution process.

The minister pointed out wrong reporting of addressal of consumer's complaints in the meeting. He also directed comprehensive analysis of all complaint received since 2018. The objective is to determine the percentage of complaints initially marked as resolved but later deemed invalid, thereby enhancing accountability and transparency within the sector.

The Minister emphasized the importance of making this data accessible to the general public.

In efforts to expedite complaint resolution, Minister Leghari directed a thorough reevaluation of complaint redressal time-frames. He also reiterated the importance of strict adherence to load shedding guidelines, with zero tolerance for any additional load shedding beyond the established formula.

## Dr Vankwani Introduces National Minority Commission Bill in NA

## PNP

ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly, Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, has tabled a bill in the National Assembly seeking to establish the National Commission for Minorities.

The bill submitted to the Secretary National Assembly Secretariat outlines that the National Commission for Minorities will comprise 30 members representing various religious groups.

The head of the commission will be from the non-Muslim minority community. Speaking to the media Dr Ramesh Kumar said that the purpose of establishing the National Minority Commission is to ensure the protection of the rights of the minority community as per the Constitution of Pakistan. The commission will be based in Islamabad, but it may open more offices in different parts of the country as needed.

A selection panel led by a retired Supreme Court judge appointed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan will oversee the competitive recruitment process for the head of the Minority Commission.

Dr Ramesh Vankwani's dedicated efforts resulted in the approval of the bill by the National Assembly during the previous government's tenure. However, due to the National Assembly's term ending, it was halted in the Senate.

Dr Ramesh Kumar said that right now he has tried to advance the struggle to protect the rights of minorities once again by submitting this bill. In the historic decision of the Supreme Court on June 19, 2014, the government was advised to establish a minority commission.

## NA observes one-minute silence over killing of Chinese nationals in Dasu

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Monday observed a one-minute silence over the killing of five Chinese nationals in the Dasu terrorist attack to express solidarity with the people of China. Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, said, "We condemn the attack on Chinese nationals on behalf of the National Assembly, which is a representative of the House of the people of Pakistan."

He further said, "We reiterate that such nefarious attempts to damage Pakistan-China friendship will not succeed."

## Pakistan annual CPI gauge drops to 20.7% in March, data shows

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's consumer price index (CPI) for March was up 20.7% from the same month last year, data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics showed on Monday, the lowest reading in nearly two years and below the finance ministry's projections for the month.

Compared with the previous month, inflation for March registered a 1.7% rise.

The struggling \$350 billion South Asian economy has been beset by inflation above 20% since May 2022, registering a high of 38% in May 2023, as it navigates contentious reforms it must implement as part of an

International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme.

The country has also witnessed stunted growth, with GDP shrinking 0.17% in the financial year 2023 as economic activity ground to a halt on the back of a historic high interest rate which currently stands at 22%.

In February, annual CPI inflation clocked in at 23.1% while there was no change month on month.

The IMF and the central bank projected that inflation would slow in the last quarter of the current financial year, which ends in June. But the March drop was sharper than expected.

The finance ministry said on

Friday that inflation is expected to hover between 22.5% and 23.5% in March, citing the high base effect as well as favourable domestic and global factors.

On Sunday, the government announced another hike in fuel prices, raising them 3.5% to 289.41 Pakistani rupees (\$1.04) per litre (0.26 gallons). The finance ministry said there were signals of growth prospects in the current year.

There have been increasing calls for a cut in the central bank's main interest rate. It has left the rate unchanged for six straight policy meetings in a bid to spur growth, and says any easing would be based on inflation data.

## Court cancels arrest warrant for KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A local court in Islamabad on Monday canceled the arrest warrants of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur in a case related to PTT's 'Haqiqi Azadi March'.

Judicial Magistrate Naveed Khan issued the order and adjourned the hearing of the case against Gandapur till May 20.

Earlier, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur approached the District and Sessions Court of Islamabad to cancel the non-bailable arrest warrant in the long march and vandalism case.

## CJP takes suo motu notice of IHC judges' letter



## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In a surprise move on Sunday, the Supreme Court of Pakistan took suo-motu notice of the letter by the six judges of the Islamabad High Court on Monday and formed a larger bench to hear the case.

The seven-member bench will be headed Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

The bench also includes Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Jamal Mandokhail, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Musarrat Hilali, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Naem Afghan.

The notice comes soon after

the government set up a judicial commission under Justice (r) Tassaduq Hussain Jilani to probe the allegations made by the IHC judges.

The commission had been formed after CJP Isa and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Law Minister Azam Tarar.

Prior to the meeting, a full court meeting had taken place in the Supreme Court as well.

However, over 300 lawyers across the country had asked the SC to take suo motu notice of the matter under Article 184(3) calling it a matter of public importance.

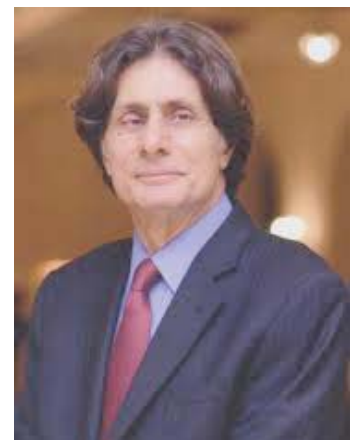
## PTI rejects CJP Isa's seven-member suo moto case bench

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday rejected the constitution of a seven-member larger bench of the Supreme Court to hear the suo moto case on six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges' letter.

PTI spokesperson Raouf Hasan demanded a full court bench to conduct a hearing on the case while urging for the proceedings to be live telecast.

According to Hasan, his party will not accept the verdict of the seven-member bench as he alleged that it comprised "favourite judges."



## PPP, MQM-P MPs to vote for Faisal Vawda

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmakers will vote for former federal minister Faisal Vawda in April 2 Senate polls, ARY News reported on Monday.

According to details, PPP has directed six Sindh Assembly lawmakers to vote for Vawda while the former PTI leader has also support of 17 MQM-Pakistan MPs.

The PPP's support will pave for



Vawda to emerge victorious in the general seat of the Senate.

## Tarbela power house generation to touch 6418 MW in 2025

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Tarbela Power House will emerge largest hydropower generation unit in the country having 6,418 megawatts (MW) capacity after the completion of the 1530-MW 5th Extension.

The total power generation of Tarbela Power House would jump to 6418 MW from the existing 4,888 MW after the commissioning of the 5th Extension Hydropow-

er Project, official sources told APP here Monday.

The 1530 MW-Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project would commence electricity generation in 2025, they said. They said that the project would generate 1.347 billion low-cost and environment-friendly electricity per annum. World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank were providing US\$ 390 and \$ 300 million respectively for the project, they said.

## Iranian Guards commander killed ...

Continued from Page 1

Iranian media also reported that the strikes in Damascus completely destroyed the annex building, and that the ambassador was unharmed.

"Hossein Akbari, ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus, and his family were not harmed in the Israeli attack," Iran's Nour news agency said.

Two AFP correspondents at the site confirmed the building next to the embassy, had been razed to the ground by the strike.

Britain-based group the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights

said "Israeli missiles... destroyed the building of an annex to the Iranian embassy... in Damascus, killing six people".

Syria's official SANA news agency earlier reported that "our air defence systems confronted enemy targets in the vicinity of Damascus".

The incident came days after the Observatory reported Israeli strikes that killed 53 people in Syria, including 38 soldiers and seven members of the Iran-backed Hezbollah.

It was the highest Syrian army toll in Israeli strikes since the Israel-Hamas war began on October 7, said the monitor.