



**Estranged PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi approaches ECP to launch new political party**

Disgruntled Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Monday approached the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for the registration of a new political party. He submitted relevant documents to the poll organising authority's office for the registration of a new political party.



**Dr Al-Issa: A global advocate for peace, interfaith dialogue, moderation**

Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa stands as a towering figure in the contemporary Islamic world, renowned for his steadfast commitment to promoting moderate Islam and fostering interfaith harmony on a global scale. As the Secretary-General of Muslim World League (MWL) and the head of the Intellectual Warfare Center, Dr. Al-Issa has dedicated his life to combatting extremism and advocating for the true message of Islam... (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Ziaaraat**

JEDDAH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during Ziaaraat of Al Masjid e Haraam on Monday.



Photo: PID

**Iranian President to visit Pakistan shortly**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: With Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan, work on the Pakistan-Iran Gas Pipeline has already begun.

According to details, Pakistan has begun building the 80km pipeline that will begin in Gwadar and will connect to the Iranian pipeline.

Raisi is expected to visit Pakistan on April 22. The visit has also been foreshadowed by missile strikes exchanged by the country earlier this year.

The Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline will cost a total of Rs44 billion and will be completed in 24 months.

In addition to drawing money from the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess, the project will also be funded by the Public-Sector Development Program.

The project was originally supposed to have been completed by en of 2014 and



become operationalised by January 2015.

Meanwhile, the United States has openly stated its opposition to the project, adding that Pakistan risks sanctions if it goes ahead with the project.

Pakistan has used sanctions as a reason to delay the project. However, Iran believes that the sanctions are unjustified. Iran has even told Pakistan that it would have to pay \$18 billion as penalty in the project.

The 80-kilometer pipeline section is expected to handle 100 million cubic feet per day (mmcf) gas, compared to the anticipated 750 mmcf for the project's 25-year duration, the Business Recorder reported.

**Pakistan, Saudi Arabia affirm commitment to expedite first wave of \$5b investment package**

**Spokesman Report**

MAKKAH AL-MUKARRAMAH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud here wherein the two countries affirmed their commitment to expediting the first wave of the previously discussed investment package worth \$5 billion.

The bilateral ties and regional as well as global developments of mutual interest, including the worrying situation in Gaza

were discussed in the meeting that took place at Al-Safa Palace here on Sunday during Prime Minister Shehbaz's three-day visit to the Kingdom, according to a joint statement issued on Monday.

The discussions centered on fortifying the fraternal relations between the two brotherly nations and exploring avenues for enhanced collaboration across various sectors. Emphasis was laid on the Kingdom's supportive role in Pakistan's economy and the mutual desire to strengthen trade and invest-

ment ties, the statement added. The two countries called for efforts by the international community to halt Israeli military operations in Gaza and mitigate humanitarian impact besides emphasising the need to advance the peace process.

Both sides underscored the imperative for the international community to pressure Israel to cease hostilities, adhere to international law, and facilitate unhindered humanitarian aid access to Gaza.

Two sides discussed the need for advancing the peace process

in accordance with relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly as well as the Arab Peace Initiative aimed at finding a just and comprehensive solution, to establish an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The two sides stressed the importance of dialogue between Pakistan and India to resolve the outstanding issues between the two countries, especially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute to ensure peace and stability in the region.

The Crown Prince congratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on assuming the office and expressed warm wishes for his tenure.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also conveyed gratitude for the Kingdom's steadfast support and hospitality and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to bolstering bilateral ties and economic cooperation.

PM Shehbaz invited the Crown Prince to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at the earliest convenience which he accepted.

**Interior Minister Naqvi strongly condemns explosion in Khuzdar**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the explosion in Khuzdar, Balochistan and has expressed deep sorrow and regret over the loss of precious lives in the blast.

In his message, the Federal Interior Minister has expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of the martyrs and prayed for patience.

Interior Minister Mohsin



Naqvi prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured in the blast.

He said that the government, security forces and the people are determined in the war against terrorism and this scourge will be eradicated from the land of Pakistan.

**Cop martyred, 12 injured in Quetta blast**

**Bureau Report**

QUETTA: A policeman was martyred, while 12 individuals sustained injuries in a blast near a mosque situated on Kuchlak Road in Quetta.

According to rescue sources, an Eagle Squad official embraced martyrdom while 12 people including five security personnel were injured.

The injured were rushed to nearby medical facilities for medical treatment.

Meanwhile, law enforcement agencies cordoned off the area and launched an investigation into the incident to determine the nature and cause of the



explosion. The province has witnessed a surge in terrorism activities of late. In February, at least 12 people were killed and 25 injured in a blast outside a political party's office in Balochistan's Pishin region.

Separately, at least 12 people were killed and several injured in a blast that occurred near the JUI-F election office in Balochistan's Qila Saifullah.

**Balochistan CM condemns Kuchlak blast**

**Bureau Report**

QUETTA: Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti strongly condemned Quetta's Kuchlak blast which left one police personnel martyred and three others injured on Monday.

He ordered to conduct an investigation of the incident and submit it's report.

Balochistan government spokesman said that one policeman was martyred and three others were injured in the incident.

He said that the bomb disposal squad team reached the spot and the nature of the explosion was being investigated.

He said the chief minister has directed to provide better treatment facilities to the injured,

**'Panama Papers' trial to begin eight years after tax scandal**

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Twenty-seven people are set to go on trial on Monday for money laundering in connection with the "Panama Papers" tax evasion scandal, which revealed how many of the world's wealthy stashed assets in offshore companies.

The 2016 revelations rocked governments, exposed high-profile personalities, triggered scores of investigations around the world and dealt a blow to Panama's reputation as an offshore financial hub.

The defendants due to go on trial in a Panamanian criminal court include Jurgen Mossack and Ramon Fonseca Mora, the founders of the now-defunct law firm at the center of the scandal.

The leaked trove of 11.5 million files from their company Mossack Fonseca implicated influential figures including billionaires, politicians and even sports stars.

Icelandic prime minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson was forced to resign after it was revealed his family had offshore accounts.

Then Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif was disqualified for life from office after being implicated in the documents.

Others implicated included former British premier David Cameron, football star Lionel Messi, Argentina's then president Mauricio Macri, Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar, to name but a few.

The files were leaked to a German newspaper, Sueddeutsche Zeitung, which shared them with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.

Many of those caught up in the scandal put forward reasons to explain their offshore presence and said they did not act illegally.

Even so, Mossack Fonseca said in 2018 that it would close due to "irreparable damage" to its reputation.

Panama has adopted new legislation since the scandal broke out, but the Central American country remains on a European Union tax haven blacklist.

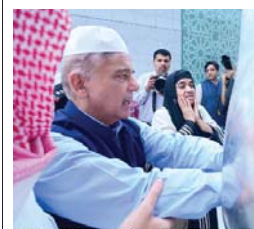
The fact that part of its laws against money laundering did not exist when the Panama Papers revelations emerged could complicate efforts by the judiciary to achieve convictions.

In Panama, the crime of tax evasion has only been punishable since 2019 and for amounts greater than \$300,000 annually.

In 2023, Mossack and Fonseca were tried in Panama for alleged money laundering in Brazil's "Car Wash" corruption scandal involving construction group Odebrecht.

The prosecution requested up to 12 years in prison for both in that case. The sentence has not yet been announced. The latest trial is expected to run until April 26, according to the judiciary.

**PM leaves for Lahore after concluding his visit to KSA**



**News Desk**

JEDDAH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Monday, left for Lahore after wrapping up his visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. At the Jeddah International Airport, the prime minister was seen off by Governor Jeddah Prince Saud bin Abdullah bin Jalawi, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

**Senate to elect new chairman, deputy chairman today**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has convened a session of the Senate on April 9.

A circular issued by the Senate Secretariat today said that the upper house of Parliament would meet tomorrow at 9am to

swear in newly elected members and also to elect the chairman and deputy chairman.

It should be mentioned that earlier the president had appointed Ishaq Dar as the presiding officer for the first session of the upper house of Parliament.

The ruling alliance has nominated PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani as its candidate for the Senate chairman's position.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday decided to boycott the election for Senate chairman and deputy chairman scheduled

for tomorrow (Tuesday).

The decision was taken in the PTI's core committee meeting where the party urged for delaying the election owing to the postponement of the Senate election in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The PTI, in a statement,

said that the upper house of the parliament was incomplete without the election of Senators from the KP, thus the election has been unconstitutional.

The party said that the elections would be "unconstitutional" if it fails to represent all units of the federation.



# Commissioner Dera finalised all arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr in all four districts

Adam Khan Wazir

**SOUTH WAZIRISTAN:** Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Zafar Ul Islam has said on Monday that all the arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr should be finalized and the best arrangements should also be ensured while adequate measures should be taken for security plan and sanitation.

He gave these instructions while presiding over a meeting held in his office regarding the arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr.

In the meeting, Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Nasir Mehmood Satti, Deputy Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, South Waziristan (Upper), Additional Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan (Lower), Hospital Director DHQ, MTTI DI Khan, Pesco, Halal Food and Food Safety Authority, RTA, Rescue



1122 and other relevant departments officers and representatives participated. During the meeting, a briefing was given regarding the arrangements regarding Eid-ul-Fitr by various departments.

Commissioner Dera while issuing instructions on this occasion said that all the arrangements should be finalized as well as the best management should be ensured while adequate

measures should be taken for the security plan and cleanliness of the city.

He said compile report and share a plan regarding security plan and traffic management, security of all Jamia mosques and places of worship should be ensured.

Commissioner Dera further said that aerial firing and one-wheeling are dangerous and deadly practices.

He said therefore, to remedy them,

not only a complete ban should be imposed, but the police department should take immediate action to ensure their remedy.

He said similarly, bus stands should be visited continuously by RTA and immediate and strict action should be taken against those who charge more than passengers.

He added that Rescue 1122 has performed well in recent times, especially, the efforts of the department in recovering the bodies of the youth who drowned in the CRBC canal two days ago and handing them over to their families are commendable.

However, full implementation of the emergency plan should be ensured regarding Eid-ul-Fitr as well.

He said while the establishment of a control room in the offices of Deputy Commissioners should also be implemented.

## Kay & Emms to build cardiac surgical ward in Mujahid Hospital



Abdul Maid

**FAISALABAD:** A floor has been dedicated for cardiac surgical ward in Mujahid Hospital with donation of Rs. 10million by Haji Muhammad Sharif Tariq Chairman Kay & Emms (Pvt) Ltd. A new 14-storey building is under construction in Mujahid Hospital Madina Town. Haji Sharif Tariq and Dr Khurram Tariq President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) had pledged to complete this state-of-the-art ward with an estimated cost of Rs.10 million. Last year on May 10, 2023 Haji Sharif handed over a cheque of Rs. 5million as first installment. Now they formally inaugurated the cardiac surgical ward and also handed over another cheque of Rs. 5million to the hospital administration. The high ups of Mujahid Hospital were also present during the inaugural function who thanked Haji Sharif Tariq and Dr Khurram Tariq for their generous donation.

## Police provide fool proof security for citizens on Eid-ul-Fitr: RPO Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

**FAISALABAD:** RPO Faisalabad Dr Muhammad Abid Khan has directed the CPO Faisalabad and DPOs Jhang, T. T. Singh and Chiniot to ensure fool proof security arrangement on the eve of Eid ul Fitr to thwart any untoward incident on the festive occasion, moreover, he said that as many as 1321 officers and officials have been deployed to secure 79 Market places. Moreover, 6568 police personnel have been deployed to provide safety to 1403 mosques and 287 open designated prayer places. Furthermore, in order to ensure security to 35 amusement parks, 08 river points, 136 shopping centers, 110 shrines and 36 graveyards, almost 1477 police officers and officials have been deputed. However, all district officers and district traffic incharges have been directed to ensure safe environment and smooth traffic flow to augment the joyfulness and peaceful environment for commuters and citizens on the festive occasion of Eid. Moreover, police pickets will be erected on the entry and exit point of districts. Stern action should be taken against one wheelers, eve teasers, miscreants resorted to aerial firing, exhibition of weapon and hooliganism. Moreover, RPO Dr Muhammad Abid Khan said that laxity and lackadaisical attitude during duty will not be tolerated and strict action will be taken against the delinquents.



## Bishop Rehmat offers Eid greetings to Pakistanis on occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr

**FAISALABAD:** Bishop Dr. Andreas Rehmat, while offering heartfelt greetings to all Pakistani Muslim brothers and sisters on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, said that let's support each other on the occasion of happiness and he prayed on the occasion that God bless the dear country always. Peace be upon you, make it a cradle of prosperity and peace. We also have to remember the builders and defenders of the dear motherland who have sacrificed their lives for the great cause of protecting, building, developing and exalting the dear motherland.



## Gillani family holds iftar in honor of academics in Multan

Syed Nadeem Kazmi

**MULTAN:** Iftar dinner was organized by the director of the Royal Institute of Health Sciences, the head of the Gilani family, Makhdoom Yazdani Gilani, was attended by political and social leaders of Famous Personalities Of The City and iftar in honor of academics The dinner was organized at the Royal Institute of Health Sciences. On this occasion, the head of the Gillani family and chairman Tehreek Aman Pakistan Makhdoom Syed Ghulam Yazdani Gillani, Director of Hajj Complex Rehan Abbas Khokhar, former MPA Syed Ahmed Mujtabi Gillani, Sajjadan Nashin Darbar Ouch Sharif, Makhdoom Syed Sohail Hasan Gilani, Intiaz Pakistan Medal Of Cyber Security Officer Dr. Haider Abbas, CEO Barb Que to Night Chaudhry Altaf Shahid, Director Colleges Ferooz Sharif, Principal Nishat Group of Colleges Ashraf Chauhan, Head of Commerce Department of Bahauddin Zakaria University Dr. Asif, Principal Executive College Prof. Ali Sakhan Prof. Azam Hussain, political leaders Khawaja Rizwan-Scholar, Malik Naseem Hussain Labartabish Khan Durrani, Rana Naem, Journalists Farhan Anjum Mulghani, Yasir Sheikh, Toqeer Shah Bukhari, Sarfaraz Awan, Rana Irfanul Islam, Dr. Arsalan Haider, Dr. Nisar ul Rehman and others participated in this occasion for the country's prosperity and development. Deliverance from crises was prayed and Makhdoom Syed Ghulam Yazdani Gilani addressed He said that fasting is the purification of the soul and the zakat of the body. Also help Rehan Abbas Khokhar cyber security services In recognition of this, the Government of Pakistan paid tribute to Dr. Haider Abbas for receiving the Medal of Distinction from the President of Pakistan.

## Price Control Committee, Food Sampling Team in the Cantonment Area to provide Facilities to the Public in Ramadan and the Arrival of Eid: Frasad Ali Shah

Quratul Ain Asim

**MULTAN:** Cantonment Executive Officer Farast Ali Shah conducted a grand operation with the Enforcement Cell Team, Price Control Committee, Food Sampling Team in the cantonment area to provide facilities to the public in Ramadan and the arrival of Eid. Stalls, hotels and milk shops were inspected and rate lists were checked. On this occasion, they imposed spot fines on those selling substandard items and overcharging and an operation against illegal encroachments was also ordered. CEO Cantonment Board also visited Qasim Road Lalak Jaan Park Chowk

## Waiting for customer

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is displaying prayer caps alongside a road in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

# Pakistan People's Party to hold general meeting on April 14 instead of April 4

Asim Tanveer

**MULTAN:** Pakistan People's Party has announced to hold the grand Public Meeting on the martyrdom day of Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on April 14 this time instead of April 4.

According to Pakistan People's Party South Punjab Senior Vice President Khawaja Rizwan Alam, the public meeting on April 4 was postponed in respect of Ramadan and now this grand public meeting will be held on April 14 at Nau Dero Garhi Khudabakhsh Larkana.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will deliver an important address at the general meeting, which will be attended by millions of people and people from all over Pakistan.

Khawaja Rizwan Alam said that 45 years ago today, the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan was arrested by a dictator for planning a fake case and after that the controlled courts sentenced the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan to jail in Rawalpindi. They were hanged and martyred to get American pleasure The plan was completed.

Khawaja Rizwan Alam further



said that during this time, dictator Zia-ul-Haq imprisoned thousands

of workers of Pakistan People's Party in jails.

Dictator Zia-ul-Haq narrowed the ground against the leaders and workers of PPP, but dictator Zia-ul-Haq could not eliminate Pakistan People's Party. Even after 45 years, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto lives in the hearts of people.

To pay tribute to Shaheed Zulfikar Bhutto, a grand public meeting is being organized on April 14 at Nodero Garhi Khuda Baksh. Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will address the general meeting.

# IEEE ComSoc Tech Meetup 2024 at IEEE Faisalabad Subsection

Tahir Malik

**LAHORE:** In an enlightening convergence of minds and ideas, the IEEE COMSOC Tech Meet-up at The University of Faisalabad (TUF) on 2 April 2024 unfolded as a landmark event, strengthening the connections between academia, industry, and future innovators in the ICT technology realm. The assembly was graced by the presence of the COMSOC Lahore delegation, including Mr. Kashif Bashir, Chair of the COMSOC Lahore Chapter and Vice Chair of IEEE Lahore Section, Mr. Shahid Zulfikar, Treasurer of IEEE Lahore Section and COMSOC Chapter, both of whom were warmly welcomed by Dr. Majid Hussain, Dean of the Computer Science Department at TUF, emphasizing the collaborative spirit of the event.

The event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran. Prof. Dr. Majid Hussain welcomed all Deans and Chairmans from renowned universities of the Faisalabad Subsection and

the Executive Committee of the Faisalabad Subsection. He expressed gratitude to the COMSOC Lahore Chapter for their support in recent activities in Faisalabad and shared the successful outcomes of the AI summit at the University of Faisalabad, sponsored by the COMSOC Lahore Chapter. He highlighted the summit's success story, which saw over 12 speakers delivering talks on various AI technologies, alongside panel discussions. Despite the foggy winter conditions, distinguished speakers from Islamabad and Lahore attended, and the summit attracted more than 300 participants in 2023.

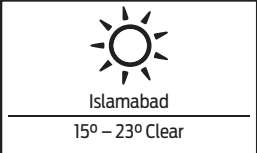
Later, Mr. Kashif Bashir outlined the achievements of the COMSOC Lahore Chapter in 2023 and detailed upcoming opportunities for community engagement and development. He introduced the COMSOC student competition, with increased prize money of \$2500 for the first prize, \$1500 for the second, and \$1000 for the third, to be awarded at the International GLOBCOM conference. The

meet-up witnessed the participation of luminaries from various academic and professional backgrounds, including Prof. Dr. Majid Hussain from The University of Faisalabad, Dr. Abdul Rauf from The University of Faisalabad, Prof. Dr. Sultan Zia from NFC Institute of Engineering & Fertilizer Research, Faisalabad, Dr. M Asif Malik and Dr. Mudassar Ahmad from National Textile University, Faisalabad, Dr. Ahsan Latif from University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Dr. Fayyaz Awan and Dr. Muhammad Gufran from FAST-NU, Faisalabad, Prof. Dr. Abdul Rauf Bhatti and Dr. M. Kashif Hanif from Government College University, Faisalabad (GCUF), Prof. Dr. Irfan Abid and Dr. Ejaz Shaukar from Riphah International University, Dr. Uzma Jamil from Chair Faisalabad Sub Section, Dr. Aashir Waleed from Vice Chair Faisalabad Sub Section, Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman from Secretary Faisalabad Sub Section, Mr. Zubair Gill Treasurer Faisalabad Subsection, Mr. Aal e Muhammad Hasnain SAC Chair

Faisalabad Subsection, Mr. Samraiz Zahid from TUF, Mr. Imran Khan from Systems Limited, Dr. Muhammad Gufran Khan from FAST NU Faisalabad. Their shared experiences and aspirations emphasized a collective commitment to fostering innovation and collaboration. The event also highlighted the forthcoming Faisalabad Student Congress, with Mr. Aftab, General Secretary of the Faisalabad sub-section, and Dr. Uzma, Chair of the IEEE Faisalabad subsection, encouraging broad participation to ensure its success.

Certificates of participation were distributed to all esteemed participants, and Dr. Majid Hussain was acknowledged and appointed as Vice Chair Technical Events of the COMSOC Lahore Chapter. The ceremony concluded with the announcement of the COMSOC Faisalabad secretariat to be at the University of Faisalabad (TUF), with Dr. Majid Hussain overseeing COMSOC activities in the Faisalabad region.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:19 am  
Zohr ..... 12:09 pm  
Asr ..... 4:45 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:34 pm  
Isha ..... 8:01 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway 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

*Take Charge with Infinix NOTE 40 Series*

PPA

LAHORE: Infinix NOTE 40 series, featuring the first-of-its-kind 20W Wireless MagCharge technology; is now available to order at Outlets Nationwide at a starting price of Rs 54,999. 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. Orders for the Infinix NOTE 40 series are now taking place on Outlets Nationwide at a starting price of Rs 54,999. Simon Feng, CEO of Infinix Pakistan, remarked, "Low battery anxiety is commonly faced by every other smartphone user today. It's been haunting especially for the younger generation as it hinders their productivity. Wireless MagCharge and All-Round Fast Charge 2.0 embedded in the new NOTE 40 series, users can break free from the constraints of traditional charging methods and embrace a new era of convenience and efficiency."

# PRCS and IFRC distribute buffaloes among flood-affected families in Sindh and Balochistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: To support the livelihoods of the communities affected by the 2022 monsoon floods, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), in collaboration with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has successfully completed the distribution of buffaloes in Sindh and Balochistan.

Under the livelihood assistance initiative, 360 buffaloes were distributed among the flood survivors, with 60 buffaloes in each of the five districts in Sindh, including Larkana, Qambar Shahdaddkot, Dadu, Khairpur, and Shikarpur. Additionally, 60 buffaloes were distributed in Jaffarabad district of Balochistan.

120 buffaloes will be distributed in Dera Ismaili Khan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Dera Ghazi Khan Khan

district in Punjab in the coming days.

The distribution of buffaloes was done in separate ceremonies held in the aforementioned districts. The events were graced by Muhammad Abaidullah Khan, Secretary General, PRCS; Piwi Ophoff, Head of Country Delegation, IFRC Pakistan; the leadership of PRCS's respective district branches, staff and volunteers from PRCS and IFRC, and community representatives and notables.

Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari, Chairman, PRCS expressed gratitude for the tremendous efforts of PRCS staff and volunteers who have been tirelessly working day and night to provide much-needed assistance to flood-affected people. He highlighted PRCS's commitment to continuing its support to communities through various interventions, including

cash assistance, shelter, livelihood assistance, healthcare, and hygiene promotion. He also called upon Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to play an active role in assisting the affected communities.

"We remain dedicated to our mission of serving humanity and stand ready to support communities in their journey towards recovery and resilience", Chairman Laghari added.

Piwi Ophoff, Head of Country Delegation, IFRC Pakistan, commended the teams involved in providing assistance to those in need. According to him, "The distribution of buffaloes among the flood survivors is one of the key initiatives taken by the national society to empower the livelihoods of the affected communities. IFRC remains committed to supporting the national society in providing livelihood opportunities to the



flood survivors, to improve their well-being and building their resilience to climatic shocks."

The beneficiaries and community elders have appreciated the PRCS and IFRC's initiative, as it

will empower the livelihoods of the communities ravaged by the 2022 floods.

## No Eid without HENNA

ISLAMABAD: Beautician applies traditional henna designs to the hands of a customer ahead of Eid al-Fitr, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## 76 years in Pakistan, yet basic human rights are still far-flung

Sara Jabeen

Pakistan came into existence in 27th of Ramzan. Statistically about 24.3 % of Pakistanis have been living below the poverty line which is approximately 55M people. Unluckily Pakistan was labelled in 161 rank out of 192 countries by Pakistan Human Development Index-(HDI). In addition to GDP Growth of Pakistan expects to clock in at 2% in 2024. In the same page when literacy jumps in an opponent as expected to be 58%. The question arises is that, is this enough?

There are millions of people in Pakistan who need support from the government in terms of their future, finances for education, medication and for basic human necessities but are totally dismayed and lost hope regardless of paying taxes for everything they put money on. Originally rural areas are fighting to death to survive in such a situation. Again the question arises who is responsible? The government? The growing world demands? Or specifically the person himself?

It has been 76 years in Pakistan and still basic human rights are pending to hundreds of people. Who are getting the rights? Maybe the one who already has it or who does not really need it. The curiosity that makes the person ponder is that they don't have the voice to break the ice? Probably yes. Their voices are squeezed inside their vocals. They are shouting from inside knowing that they are unreadable. Situation is quite similar to the countries under attack. They do not live, expect and enjoy rather survive and compromise. They do not celebrate Eid as a festival rather cries for the ones they lost. The situation is not much different. Festivals are costly, happiness has high prices too and yet silence is tempting.

Basically it is the dissemination of disintegrated power which is rendering pressure to press the low voices to voiceless robots. This is why patriotism is dying and graphs of stats are declining drastically.

## EV transition targets elusive sans optimized funding stream, stakeholder collaboration: Experts

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The experts at a webinar on Pakistan's Electric Vehicles' Market Potential said that shifting from existing fuel-based automobiles to EV or Electric Vehicles was elusive without an optimized funding stream and stakeholder collaboration at the government and private sector level.

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) as part of its Monday webinar series organized an online discussion on "Pakistan's Electric Vehicle Market: Challenges, Opportunities, and the 2030 Agenda" here at the SDPI.

On the occasion, Dr Naveed Arshad said that battery technology is evolving and requires research and development along with enhanced capital and technical resources, where the latter could be chipped in through academia.

Dr Arshad, Associate Professor, LUMS highlighted that internationally, massive funding is available for EVs and the country would not need the IMF or World Bank to get funding, as the global community wants EVs for offsetting carbon emissions and not economic development.

Ahmed Sajeeel from Deewan Motors BMW said the Japanese automobile companies are resisting EVs which is unsustainable in the prevailing milieu as the international automobile industry has decided to shift towards EVs.

Midhat Waris said that Shell Global has the largest EV setup having over 1000 EV charging stations across the world and has piloted its EV rapid chargers in Pakistan.

Engineer Asim Ayaz, Engineering Development Board said the Ministry of Industries and Production has given licenses to 34 two and three-wheeler manufacturers, whereas other private partners are also jumping into EV manufacturing.

Dr Aazir Anwar Khan said the EV outlook for manufacturing throughout the world is based on electronics and architecture production, whereas socioeconomically, the EVs would have a huge impact on the middle class mostly relying on two or three-wheelers.

Abdul Hadi said his company 2021 started converting fuel-based cars over EVs like Suzuki FX, Mehran, and Bolan, whereas the running cost of the EV is exponentially low.

Malik Arsalan said the country needs to improve its capacity in terms of tapping climate financing as there is massive capital available in this regard and without developing milestones through public-private partnerships (PPP) no target is achievable.

In his closing remarks, Dr Khalid Waleed said linking EVs with the national trade and power sector can help resolve the problem, whereas hybrid EVs can be a way forward. The regulatory environment must be accommodating for local assembly and manufacturing infrastructure that needed to be fostered and sustained whereas the latter is the key part, he added.

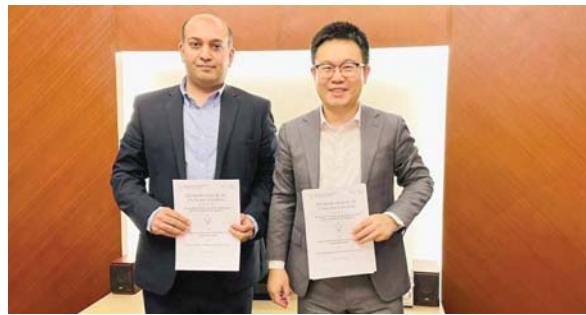
Pakistan needs to explore renewable energy financing and climate financing initiatives like the Just Energy Transition Partnerships introduced by South Africa as key initiatives that can support not only the power but transportation sector as well, he said. He mentioned that the capacity building of the parliamentarians is also very important to guide policy efforts.

## CBD Punjab Join Forces with China Machinery Engineering Corporation

PPA

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), has forged a landmark agreement with the China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) to propel cooperation for the ambitious development of Pakistan's largest IT city, Nawaz Sharif IT City in Lahore, being established under the banner of CBD Punjab.

A high-profile delegation from CBD Punjab and Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA), led by COO CBD Punjab & RUDA, Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua, embarked on a visit to China. The primary objective of the delegation



was to provide comprehensive insights into Nawaz Sharif IT City, along with shedding light on other pivotal projects undertaken by CBD Punjab. A pivotal achievement of this delegation's journey is the fruitful collaboration agreement inked between CBD Punjab and CMEC.

The agreement, sealed by Director Project Manage-

ment CBD Punjab, Asif Iqbal and General Manager CMEC Wei Guang, was formalized at the headquarters of CMEC in China. This significant event witnessed the presence of Assistant General Manager CMEC Li Minglang, Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab Riaz Hussain, Director Business Development CBD Punjab, Ali Waqar Shah, and

several other senior officials from CBD Punjab and CMEC.

Director Project Management, Asif Iqbal, underscored the substantial impact of this collaboration on ongoing projects within Pakistan's premier IT hub, Nawaz Sharif IT City, and the broader CBD Punjab landscape. He emphasized the transformative potential of this partnership in charting new trajectories of growth and development across the Punjab province.

"This collaboration with China Machinery Engineering Corporation will not only fortify the ongoing projects in Nawaz Sharif IT City and CBD Punjab but also open up new vistas for development and progress," remarked Asif Iqbal, reflecting on the significance of the agreement.

## Dues of retired and deceased railway employees should be paid on an emergency basis: Aurangzeb

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Central General Secretary of All Pakistan Railway Pensioners Association Aurangzeb Tanoli demanded that AGPR should be entrusted with the responsibility of pension of railway employees like other federal departments. The dues of retired and deceased railway employees should be paid on an emergency basis. Our association is in the name of protecting the rights of pensioners. In Shaa Allah, our struggle will continue until the problems are solved.

These views were expressed by the central general secretary of All Pakistan Rail-



way Pensioners Association Aurangzeb Tanoli along with his other colleagues, coordinator Muhammad Younis Jutt

and labor leader Mubarak Hussain on the occasion of the Iftar party given by the Railway Pensioners Association

at Rawalpindi railway station.

Union General Secretary Aurangzeb Tanoli said that Railways is the only federal department where railway pension depends on the approval of the Finance Ministry. While the pension of all other departments is released from AGPR. Therefore, we strongly demand from the platform of the association that approval of pensions be entrusted to AGPR like other federal departments. So that our pension is not delayed every month. Railway pensioners can collect their pension in time without having to beg for their right and in a dignified manner. He said that from May 2021 to the current

year, the dues of pensioners who have retired or who have died should be paid immediately. Labor leader Mubarak Hussain said that the time has come to solve the problems. According to the statement of GM Railways, the railway is earning 80 billion rupees annually and we will store oil for one month. Now they can pay dues and play their role in timely payment of pension and salaries of employees. Younis Jatt and other officials said that railways are working day and night for the rights of pensioners. Our association is working day and night with full integrity for all pensioners. We have the ability to solve any problem quickly.



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: **Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.**  
 Karachi office: **Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.**  
**Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.**  
 Lahore Office: **7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.**  
 Email: **spokesmanislambad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# Digital transformation - a boon or bane

**M Asghar & Adnan Habib**

As human beings are on an endless journey to explore the universe, multi-dimensional research peels off Nature's secrets layer after layer with digitalization and latest gadgets also playing a vital role in societal transformation.

Developed nations have already taken stride in digital arena exploiting it in almost every important field of life with many nations in developing world still striving to match the pace despite resource, equipments and ability constraints. Following the suit, Pakistan also took some initiatives for digitization and enhancing governance, efficiency and transparency, modernizing infrastructures and easy access of people to government services. However, its respective governments faced challenges like Pakistan like sufficient investment opportunities, trained teams of IT experts, IT and software houses, trustworthy internet infrastructure and strict regulations and cyber laws to ensure positive use of digital advancements. "We often observe complaints in public sector facilitation or relief activities through digital modes. This deficiency is generally due to absence of reliable internet infrastructure or digital skills illiteracy that bars users to fully utilize digital tools and platforms," remarked Irfanullah Khan, an IT expert. "Cultural norms and societal attitudes towards technology are other barrier to digital

transformation." He said that preferences for traditional methods and reservations on privacy and security shape their attitudes towards new technologies and a multi-dimensional approach in education, awareness and policy area was direly needed to address these barriers. "Automation may have some demerits as increased dependence on digital systems makes individual or organization more vulnerable to cyber attacks, data breaches and misuse of personal information," Irfanullah said. "Even though, we have to survive with it." Keeping in view modern day requirements, Digital Pakistan Vision was launched to create a knowledge-based economy; e-governance, entrepreneurship, transparency, public service delivery and Digital Payment Systems to reduce reliance on cash transactions. Successive governments focused on broadband expansion; skill development and empowerment of youth and professionals; startup ecosystem to foster innovation and entrepreneurship and measures to strengthen cyber security and safeguard digital assets. Important sectors of economy like health, education, infrastructure, agriculture, finance, trade, communications, defense and above all human development data collection fully employed the digital tools for reliable and speedy dispensation. Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) played pivotal role in implementing various digital initiatives and automation of government processes and digitization of records. The provincial government also developed e-governance platforms

to streamline administrative processes and ensure easy access of people to e-Khidmat Centers to benefit electronically instead of visiting physically. Initiatives like Agricultural Information System, Health Information System and Smart Schools Program also speak volumes of digital transformation. Particularly, the Smart Scholl System helped enhance learning of computer skills in rural areas through internet connectivity and usage of gadgets like tablets and smart phones. The teachers and students are encouraged to benefit from educational apps, online learning and training, jobs and professional opportunities enabling them to integrate technology into teaching practices. "Despite numerous digital initiatives by the governments, lack of basic digital literacy in Pakistan still poses a challenge in utilizing digital tools and platforms by students effectively, hindering their participation in the digital economy and accessing essential services," remarked Prof. Zaffar Iqbal from University of the Punjab. "We can effectively cope with digital transformation challenge by replacing outdated digital/IT regulations with innovative laws consonant to present day requirements and cyber security to secure our businesses and individuals," he stated. With the experts advocating to promote digitization among students both in rural and urban areas, they also emphasized access to digital devices, internet connectivity, integrating digital literacy into curriculum, offering coding and programming classes, organizing workshops and collaboration with tech

companies for internships. Gold Ring Economic Forum's Chairman Meher Kashif Younis pointed out that still there is shortage of skilled professionals in fields like software development, data analytics and cyber security. "Since digitalization provides us as an engine of growth, fully benefiting from these technologies would be a challenge for survival," he said.

"We are far behind from our regional competitors and if we further delay, the professional from India and Bangladesh would shrink international space for our experts and professionals." Use of digital or social media is imperative for surviving in present era. But, its usage must have some principles and ethics. Promoting digital literacy is of no harm since it is exploited or misused by some vested interests as usually done by most of our politicians, opinion makers, v-loggers and even scholars and writers. This misuse of social media to propagate their agenda and misguide students and youth by adulterating their minds for fulfillment of malicious motives and nefarious designs is lethal.

Therefore, it is top most and obligatory duty of our security and cyber crime agencies to stem out those propagating against the state and state institutions awarding exemplary punishments. It is now their duty to make the digital media a 'boon' for the nation and not a 'bane' as any lethargy or obliviousness on parts of our security institutions, the situation would worsen further promoting hatred and intolerance among different segments of society.

## UN Security Council refers Palestinian application for full UN membership to committee

The United Nations Security Council President, Malta's Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, on Monday referred Palestine's application to become a full member of the U. N. to the Committee on the Admission of New Members. Palestine currently has an observer status at the world body.

The 15-member Council's President for April proposed that the committee meet on Monday afternoon to consider the application, adding that deliberation has to take place this month. The Palestinian leadership last week formally asked for renewed consideration by the Security Council of its 2011 application to become a full member of the world body. "We sincerely hope after 12 years since we change our status to an observer state, that the Security Council will elevate itself to implementing the global consensus on the two state solution by admitting the state of Palestine for full membership," Palestinian U. N. Ambassador Riyad Mansour told reporters after the meeting. Ambassador Mansour has repeatedly said in recent months that given Israel's military aggression in the Gaza Strip, UN membership is a priority for the Palestinians.

In a letter to U. N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, he had asked that that application to be reconsidered. Another supporting letter was sent to the Council president by 140 countries, including Pakistan, that have recognized Palestine and support its bid for full membership.

The committee of the 15 members first assesses an application to see if it satisfies requirements for U. N. membership. The application can then either be shelved or put forward for a formal vote in the Security Council. Approval requires at least nine votes in favour and no vetoes by the five permanent members - U. S., Russia, China, France or Britain.

"The committee has to deliberate within the month of April," Ambassador Frazier told reporters ahead of the meeting. The Security Council earlier on Monday met behind closed doors to discuss the letter from the observer state requesting renewed consideration of their application.

The UNSC was already expected to hold its quarterly meeting on April 18, which will be a ministerial level meeting. The Palestinians have targeted this date as one in which they hope the Council will put their application forward for a vote.



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

## Baseless Propaganda Against SIFC Related Activities in AJK - II

Furthermore, the Green Initiative seeks to promote sustainable agricultural practices to bolster food security and livelihoods for rural communities. By advocating for organic farming, agroforestry, and climate-smart agriculture techniques, the program aims to enhance resilience to climate change and improve the productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems.

The Green Initiative under SIFC signifies a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey towards sustainable development and environmental stewardship. By harnessing the potential of public-private partnerships, innovation, and collaboration, the program has the capacity to instigate transformative change and cultivate a greener, more prosperous future for all Pakistanis.

As the world grapples with the urgent imperatives of climate change and environmental degradation, initiatives like the Green Initiative under SIFC serve as beacons of hope and inspiration. By prioritizing sustainability and investing in green solutions, Pakistan is paving the way for a brighter, more sustainable future for generations to come.

In the picturesque landscapes of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), a burgeoning wave of sustainable tourism is taking root, propelled by inno-

native projects spearheaded by green tourism enterprises. These initiatives not only showcase the region's natural splendor but also prioritize environmental preservation, community involvement, and economic advancement. As AJK emerges as a leading tourist destination, these green tourism ventures are leading the charge towards a more sustainable and conscientious approach to travel. One notable endeavor involves the creation of eco-friendly accommodations and resorts seamlessly integrated with AJK's natural environment. These sustainable lodging options employ locally-sourced materials, renewable energy sources, and low-impact design principles to minimize their environmental footprint. Whether it's eco-lodges nestled in forests or riverside campsites with minimal infrastructure, these accommodations provide travelers with an opportunity to reconnect with nature while positively impacting the environment.

Additionally, green tourism companies in AJK prioritize conservation and restoration efforts to safeguard the region's delicate ecosystems and biodiversity. Reforestation projects, habitat restoration initiatives, and wildlife conservation programs are underway to preserve critical habitats and protect endangered species. These endeavors not only enhance AJK's natural beauty but also contribute to climate change

mitigation and adaptation efforts in the region. Community engagement is another focal point for green tourism projects in AJK. Local communities actively participate in the planning, development, and management of tourism initiatives, ensuring cultural sensitivity and social responsibility. By offering training and employment opportunities to local residents, these initiatives empower communities to participate in the tourism industry while preserving their traditional way of life. Adventure tourism is also gaining traction in AJK, with green tourism companies offering various outdoor activities that allow travelers to explore the region's stunning landscapes while minimizing their environmental impact. From trekking in the Himalayan foothills to whitewater rafting on rivers, these eco-friendly adventures promote sustainable tourism practices while providing excitement and thrills. Moreover, educational and experiential tourism programs are being developed to raise awareness about environmental issues and promote sustainable lifestyle choices among travelers. These programs include guided nature walks, wildlife watching tours, and hands-on workshops on sustainable agriculture and conservation practices. By engaging travelers in meaningful experiences, these initiatives foster a deeper appreciation for AJK's natural and cultural heritage while encouraging responsible travel behaviors.

To be continued

## Second phase of refugees' repatriation to start after Eidul Fitr vacations

**Fakhar-e-Alam**

Mohmandan Ali (65), an Afghan refugee living at Nowshera district for nearly four decades, is all set to left for his home country voluntarily in the second phase of repatriation which would be started soon after Eidul Fitr vacations.

Associated with the vegetable and fruit business to support his family at Pabbi Tehsil of Nowshera district, Momandan along with nearly 3.5 million Afghan refugees were migrated to Pakistan after USSR Invasion in Afghanistan and have settled here with whom all facilities including hospitals, schools, transport, houses and hotels were shared by Pakistani brothers. "I had left everything at my war ravaged Afghanistan after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Army invaded Kabul on December 25, 1979 and settled at Pabbi Tehsil of Nowshera district with my family," said Mohmandan, expressing gratitude of Pakistani brothers and sisters for sharing hospitals, schools, colleges, roads and provide free houses to them for stay. Momandan, who is residing at Pabbi after obtaining Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) vowed to return to his home city Kabul after Eidul Fitr, was overwhelmed by the long hospitality and friendship by the people of Pakistan during his 44 years longest stay here in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Like Momandan, nearly one million Afghan ACC holders would be repatriated in the second phase of a repatriation drive to Afghanistan that would formally launch on April 15 this month. Rifaqat Khan, the spokesman of KP Home Department said that all arrangements were finalized for the second phase of the repatriation drive starting from April 15 this month in all four provinces of Pakistan besides AJK and Gilgit Baltistan. "In this special drive, nearly one million ACC holders would be repatriated and deported. "We are encouraging voluntary repatriation. However, those refugees who did not possess legal documents including visas and PORs (proof of registration) and stayed illegally would be held and deported under 14 foreign act." He said Pakistan like other sovereign countries cannot allow illegal stay of foreigners or entry of the undocumented nationals and illegal Afghans have to leave for their country. Dr Ejaz claimed that over four million afghans migrated to Pakistan from the war ravaged country of Afghanistan since the 1979

USSR Invasion who were warmly welcomed by the Pakistani brothers. He said that about 3.5 million afghans' were migrated to Pakistan and nearly two million to Iran after USSR army landed Kabul in 1979 while nearly five million afghans came to Pakistan via Torkham border after civil war broke out in Afghanistan after withdrawal of USSR troops in 1989 and Taliban took over of Kabul in 1994. Dr Ejaz Khan said former Afghan President Hamid Karzai as of 2012 who stayed in Pakistan as humanitarian gesture also returned to his home country after the fall of Taliban reign by Northern Alliance backed by US and Western countries in 2021 and ruled there. He said following the Taliban's return to power in August 2021 after US chaotic withdrawal of troops, which led to the collapse of the neighboring republic, another Afghans influx ranging between 600,000 and 800,000 came to Pakistan for shelter. Syed Akhtar Ali Shah, former IGP KP said that documentation of illegal foreign nationals were inevitable for the security of citizens of Pakistan. He said that unfortunately, despite frequent opportunities to repatriate voluntarily, and multiple government attempts to register those refugees who remain undocumented, a significant number has persistently refused to formalize their status, choosing instead to stay in the shadows, thus leaving with Pakistan with no other option but to launch grand repatriation drive that proved successful. Asked about progress of the first phase of repatriation drive started by the then caretaker Government on November 1, 2023, Rifaqat said that voluntarily repatriation of undocumented refugees including afghans still continued via Torkham, Kharlachi and Angora adda border points of KP. From September 17, 2023 to April 2, 2024, he said that 305,335 undocumented foreigners were voluntarily returned and 6,732 were deported to Afghanistan via KP border points.

The Commissionerate for refugees Peshawar spokesman told the news agency that legal afghan refugees were being facilitated in Pakistan. He said the provincial task force has recently endorsed 38 projects worth Rs960 million under Refugees Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) program for the year 2024-25 for fostering social cohesion between documented refugees and host communities. He said the RAHA program was implemented in 10 refugees affected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where the number of documented refugees was more compare to others to improve social services and provide relief to people.



**Floods in Kazakhstan**

# 75,982 people evacuated, relief efforts ongoing

**Spokesman Report**

ASTANA: According to the latest data from the Ministry of Emergency Situations, 75,982 people, including 18,681 children, have been rescued and evacuated across the country due to massive floods. This was announced by Saipash Erasyl, a senior officer of the Civil Defense and Military Units Committee, during an April 8 briefing at the Central Communications Service.

The Akorda press service said that on April 8, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev spoke by telephone with the akims (mayors) of the Akmola, Aktobe, Kostanai, and North Kazakhstan Regions to learn about the flood situation and the measures taken to contain the natural disaster and mitigate its consequences.

According to officials, the situation is under control, and there are sufficient resources and personnel to combat the natural disaster.

At the President's directive, a government team led by Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov, who also heads the National Headquarters, was dispatched to the regions affected by the flood.

As of today, a state of emergency remains in 10 regions of Kazakhstan: Akmola, Aktobe, Atyrau, Karagandy, Kostanai, Pavlodar, West Kazakhstan, North Kazakhstan, Abai, and Ulytau. Currently, 15% of the country is covered in snow, with nearly 40% of the northern, eastern, and central regions under snow cover.

According to the latest data from the Ministry of Emergency Situations, 75,982 people, including 18,681 children, have been rescued and evacuated from the emergency zones since the floods began.

Approximately 7,203 people, including 2,794 children, are staying in temporary accommodation centers. Over 7 million cubic meters of meltwater were pumped out, and nearly 993,000 sandbags were laid.

Water has been diverted from over 1,739 residential buildings and 1,743 courtyard areas. Rescue efforts involve 16,375 people, more than 1,600 pieces of equipment, 377 water pump-



ing equipment, 81 watercraft, and 15 aircraft.

Today, 3,745 private residential buildings and 421 courtyard areas in seven regions remain flooded: Atyrau, Aktobe, Akmola, Kostanai, East Kazakhstan, North Kazakhstan, and Pavlodar Regions.

Compensation will be paid to affected citizens after the conclusion of an independent audit.

According to the Defense Ministry, from March 27 to April 7, some 2,357 military personnel, 112 units of military equipment, ten helicopters, and four units of military transport aircraft were involved in the efforts.

According to data from the Kazhydromet National Hydrometeorological Service on April 8, the country's northwest, north, and center are expected to experience precipitation at night and rain during the day. Rainless weather is expected only in the southwest and southeast of the country.

Due to the forecast of increased air temperatures and rain, water levels and outflows are expected to increase further in the Aktobe and Akmola Regions from April 7 to April 10.

At the time of writing, the flood situation in the Akmola Region is challenging. Meanwhile, local operational measures prevented the flooding of 2,000 houses in 25 settlements where more than 5,000 people live. Over 18,000 heads of livestock were evacuated.

The situation in the Kostanai Region is stable yet dangerous.



Rescue work continues in Kostanai due to rising water levels in the Tobol River. More than 8,300 people, including nearly 1,700 children, have been evacuated.

In the North Kazakhstan Region, the peak of high water in Petropavlovsk is expected at the end of April. The flood situation is constantly monitored.

The threat of flooding remains in the Aktobe Region, and people

are being evacuated. Work is ongoing to pump out meltwater and place sandbags.

A state of emergency was introduced in the Atyrau Region on April 7. Intense work continues on bank protection with 45,900 bags and 174,300 tons of inert material placed.

The local emergency situation was lifted in the village of Zhalauly in the Pavlodar Region. Local



forces could not drain water from the settlement for almost two weeks.

Owing to preventive measures, the Karagandy Region has managed to avoid the destructive consequences of flooding. Despite the significant volume of incoming water, flooding of populated areas is minimal.

The situation in the East Kazakhstan Region is stable. According to local akimat (administration), the first wave of floods in the region passed

without consequences thanks to preventive measures. However, heavy rains are expected in the region.

More than 25,000 volunteers are involved in addressing the aftermath of floods nationwide. Volunteers provide the affected population with hot food, warm clothing, and sleeping places.

According to the National Volunteer Network, work is underway to provide medications to the affected residents. In addition, volunteers are clearing snow in

populated areas and taking care of elderly people.

To date, more than 550 tons of humanitarian aid have been collected throughout the country. Foreign countries have also expressed support and sent relief supplies.

The Ministry of Emergency Situations has called on citizens to be extremely careful, strictly observe safety measures during the flood period, and only leave their homes and evacuation centers if permitted.

## Pakistan agrees to launch PM Abiy's Green Legacy Initiative in major cities

**PPA**

ISAMABAD: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have agreed to launch the Green Legacy Initiative of H. E. PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed in the major cities including Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi, Quetta, Sialkot and others.

This was agreed upon in a meeting between H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, and Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination H. E. Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam.

The Ambassador lauded the role played by H. E. Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam in initiating a joint collaboration between Ethiopia and Pakistan last year for addressing climate related issues.

He recalled the launch of Green Legacy Initiative in Islamabad last year in the presence of senior ministers, government officials, diplomatic corps, business community, media and civil



society.

The Ambassador stressed the need for enhanced collaboration between the two countries to address climate issues through skills, technology, information

and knowledge sharing.

He said the government of Ethiopia stood ready to work together with the Pakistani government in addressing climate-related issues such as

floods, food insecurity and others.

Ethiopia would extend all-out support to Pakistan on climate mitigation through technological transfer and experience sharing, the ambassador remarked.



He also congratulated H. E. Romina Khurshid Alam on assuming the charge of the Coordinator to the PM on Climate Change.

H. E. Romina Khurshid

Alam expressed keen interest in the launch of the Green Legacy initiative in different cities of her country.

She said the climate change was a global phenomenon and

joint efforts against climate changes were the need of hour.

The government of Pakistan is looking forward to working with Ethiopia to deal with climate change, she added.

## Manchester Council election: Deputy Leader Lutfur Rehman opens campaign

**Arif Chaudhry**

MANCHESTER: On May 2, local body elections of Manchester City Council are being held across the UK. In this regard, Deputy Leader Councilor Lutfur Rehman from Manchester's Longside Ward held an opening ceremony about his election campaign at the Pakistani Community Center in Manchester. Members of Parliament Afzal Khan, Andrew Goin, Leader Manchester City Council Bev Craig and local councilors -Basit Sheikh -Richard -Abid Chauhan -Nasreen Ali -Jawad Amin -Murtaza Iqbal -Aafia Kamal -Dizdra Noor -Manchester business figures

Anil Musrat-Chaudhry Haroon Afzal Khatana-Chaudhry Jameel-Naveed Dean-President of Jhelum Forum Chaudhry Anwar Yaqoob-Chaudhry Ilyas Gondal-Raja Sajjad Hussain-Open Kitchen Founder Mirza Shehzad-Dr. Burney-President of Bangladesh Association-Chief Executive of EZ Home Chaudhry Shahzad Bashir-Syed Khaled Abbas-and the local community participated-on this occasion, the leader of Manchester City Council Bev Craig said that Deputy Leader Lutfur Rahman should be given a message to the ruling Conservative Party by winning a large majority from Livingstone that a general election should be held soon

because Due to the bad policies of the government, the number of homeless people is increasing and the youth are not even getting jobs-Latufur Rehman has completed many projects in Longside and he will serve more people by winning the May elections-Member Parliamentarians Afzal Khan and Andrew Gwynn appealed to all communities living in Longside to vote for the Labor Party on May 2 so that they can serve you more-Prominent British entrepreneur Anil Musrat said that Lutfur Rahman Longside Community should be the first choice so that it can serve the community even more than before-Jhelum Forum President Chaudhry Anwar Yaqoob

and former Judge Chaudhry Ilyas Gondal said that we fully support Deputy Leader Lutfur Rehman in Longside Ward as he always Believes in serving the community-Open Kitchen and Urdu Global Chief Executive Shazad Mirza and Dr. Burney appreciated Lutfur Rehman's performance-Former Lord Mayor Councilor Abid Chauhan-Councilor Basit Sheikh-Councilor Richard-said that the entire country For the people of Greater Manchester, the Labor Party has done a lot for education and health-Councilor Lutfur Rahman has done a lot for the community. I hope the community of Longside will reward him by voting-Bangladesh Association Special Key



to the President and the people for full support for Councilor Lutfur Rehman-Deputy Leader Councilor Lutfur Rahman said that I always offered my services for the community-anyone can contact for their problems 24 hours Inshallah. I will serve

the community more by winning the May 2 with the support of the people-and they will play a full role in creating job opportunities for the young generation who are unemployed-He also appealed for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza -

The intercultural and religious community living in Longside Manchester has reiterated that they will make every effort to get Councilor Lutfur Rehman elected as their representative from Longside Ward, regardless of caste, religion or region.



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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
69,619.98	68,416.78
Day's High	Day's Low
69,720.03	68,710.49
Index Value	Change
10,245,130,008	+1203.20
Percentage	Time
+1.76%	8 Apr, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,943.47	+32.31
Percentage	Time
+0.41%	8 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,931.76	+27.72
Percentage	Time
+0.071%	8 Apr, 3:10 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,347.04	+354.96
Percentage	Time
+0.91%	8 Apr, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.7	184.5
Bahrain Dinar	739.18	746.89
Canadian Dollar	204	206.2
China Yuan	38.5	38.9
Danish Krone	40.48	40.88
Euro	299.5	302
Hong Kong Dollar	35.57	35.92
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	903.91	912.91
Malaysian Ringgit	58.92	59.52
New Zealand \$	167.02	169.02
Norwegians Krone	25.38	25.68
Omani Riyal	721.71	729.71
Qatari Riyal	76.35	77.05
Saudi Riyal	73.3	74.05
Singapore Dollar	206	208
Swedish Korona	25.72	26.02
Swiss Franc	307.13	309.63
Thai Bhat	7.61	7.76
U.A.E Dirham	75.4	76.15
UK Pound Sterling	350	354
US Dollar	277.3	280.4

# Jam Kamal for participation of Pakistan in Expo 2025 Osaka to achieve strategic objectives

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday expressed his desire for Pakistan's maximum participation in the Expo 2025 Osaka to achieve desired goals.

The expo is scheduled to be held from April 13 to October 13 in Japan.

The Minister, earlier, visited the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and took a briefing about the upcoming international exhibitions scheduled to be held in Japan and Pakistan.

While briefing the Minister Jam Kamal, the Regional Director General Islamabad Muhammad Naseer via video link informed the minister that Expo 2025 Osaka is going to be held in Japan under the theme of 'Designing Future Society for Our Lives' from April 13 to October 13, 2025 at Yumeshima, Osaka in Japan.



He said that Pakistan out of three sub-themes of the exhibition had shown its interest to participate in Connecting Lives and Empowering Lives.

Naseer said that Pakistan had applied for participating in the exhibition and expected to get approval from the exhibitors soon. He said that a summary had also been final-

ized and sent for approval to the ministry.

TDAP Director General of Agro and Food Division Pakistan Horticulture and Export Company Athar Hussain Khokhar while briefing the Commerce Minister said that the TDAP is scheduled to organize the second International Food and Agriculture Exhibition from August 9 to 11, 2024 at the Expo Centre Karachi.

He said that the FoodAg is preparing to exhibit food and agricultural products of the country.

He said that delegates from 55 countries have been invited to participate in the exhibition.

The Minister was also briefed about the expected increase in the export of Rice, Maize etc.

He was further informed that Pakistan had an opportunity to grab the market of meat in China.

## Assistance

LAHORE: People stand in a queue for receiving free Roshan at Baghban Pura area during holy month of Ramadan, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## NTDC to ensure uninterrupted power supply on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr



**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: NTDC Headquarters WAPDA House Lahore-April 08, 2024-In compliance with the instructions of Ministry of Energy (Power Division), the National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) has completed all necessary preparations to ensure uninterrupted power supply throughout the country on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

A central control room has been set up to maintain close liaison with National Power Control Center and all distribution companies (DISCOs) which will work round the clock during Eid-ul-Fitr Holidays. Regional control rooms have also been set up in Islamabad, Multan and Hyderabad to deal

with any emergency situation. All control rooms will be connected with each other through video link. These control rooms have been working throughout Ramadan ul Mubarak.

The teams of Asset Management (North) and (South) have also been constituted for immediate response in case of any fault at NTDC grid stations or transmission lines across the country. The concerned officers will remain present at the grid stations all the time during Eid-ul-Fitr Holidays. Managing Director NTDC, Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan has directed the concerned NTDC formations to remain vigilant to ensure smooth power supply throughout the country on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

## ICCI playing its fullest role in reviving business activities in Islamabad: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari has said that business community is playing an imperative role in the development of the economy, emphasizing that it must be provided all-out facilities by the relevant agencies for the growth of the commercial activities.

He said that on its part the ICCI is playing its fullest role in reviving the business activities in the capital city which were badly hurt by COVID-19.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari said this during an interaction with the traders and the customers while visiting the I/8 markaz.

Addressing the traders at Aabpara market, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari said that to accelerate the business activities and attract the customers, the ICCI organized Eid festivals at six markets including Aabpara, I/8 markaz, Blue Area, and F/7 markaz and most importantly sponsored Motorcycles, Washing Machines and other household items to be gifted to customers through lucky draws to be performed



by the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon at all the six markets on Chand Raat.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari also expressed gratitude to the traders for extending complete cooperation with the ICCI for the promotion of trade activities in the capital. In his address President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajraan, Ajmal Baloch fully praised ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari for extending complete cooperation

with the traders for solution of their problems and revitalizing the commercial activities.

He also assured his fullest cooperation with the ICCI for the protection of traders rights and overcoming their problems.

On this occasion, Akhtar Abbasi, General Secretary, Khalid Chaudhry, Secretary Traders Action Committee, Faizan Shahzad, Arshad Abbasi and others were also present.

## National recognition for Banking Visionaries-Trailblazing Leadership in Raqami Islamic Digital

**PPA**

KARACHI: Raqami Islamic Digital Bank Limited is proud to announce that two of its esteemed leaders have been honored with the prestigious awards of Sitara-e-Imtiaz and Sitara-e-Pakistan, by the Government of Pakistan in the prestigious award conferment on auspicious occasion of the National Day.

The awards were conferred at an investiture ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, attended by ministers, members of the diplomatic corps and family members of the recipients of the awards.

Mr. Abdullah Al-Mutairi, Chairman Raqami Islamic Digital Bank Ltd. (RIDBL)

and CEO of EnerTech Holding Company, has been conferred with the Sitara-e-Pakistan in acknowledgment of his exemplary leadership in energy innovation. With prior roles at the National Technology Enterprises Company and Kuwait Investment Authority, Mr. Al-Mutairi's expertise in finance and sustainability is profound.

Under his guidance, RIDBL, one of five aspirants for a digital retail bank license under the SBP's Licensing and Regulatory Framework for Digital Banks, is aiming to provide Shariah compliant accessible and inclusive financial services to all segments of society. Sharing his happiness for the award conferred on Pakistan Day, Mr. Abdullah Al-Mutairi said, "The scope of digitization

in Pakistan is tremendous and I can see the success that it will bring to all sectors of the economy.

Mr. Yasser Malik, Board Director, RIDBL, has been awarded the Sitara-e-Imtiaz in recognition of his exceptional efforts to promote public-private partnerships, contributions to advancing digital innovation, and facilitating significant foreign investment.

Commenting on the recognition received from the Government of Pakistan, Mr. Malik said, "It is a great honor to receive the Sitara-e-Imtiaz, and I am especially happy to celebrate it as Team Raqami and the Board of RIDBL are ready to change the digital financial landscape of Pakistan through innovative products.

## Peshawar traders hail Peshawar Station Commander for his action on Qissa Khawani

**PPA**

PESHAWAR: President of the Peshawar Traders Chamber, Ghulam Bilal Javid, made a telephone call to Station Commander Brigadier Omar Saeed Afridi to arrange a meeting with traders after Eid. The Station Commander assured support to traders during difficult times, earning appreciation from the trader community. Ghulam Bilal Javid praised the services of the Station Commander, stating, "InshaAllah, the issues of the trader community will now be resolved on a priority basis."

stani Army, Alhamdulillah." Additionally, Ghulam Bilal Javid highlighted some issues in Peshawar, prompting Station Commander Omar Saeed Afridi to arrange a meeting with traders after Eid. The Station Commander assured support to traders during difficult times, earning appreciation from the trader community. Ghulam Bilal Javid praised the services of the Station Commander, stating, "InshaAllah, the issues of the trader community will now be resolved on a priority basis."

## BISP beneficiaries to receive financial assistance directly into bank accounts: SBP

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan, Monday, rolled out a facilitation framework to enable Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) beneficiaries receives financial assistance directly into their bank accounts.

The central bank, in a statement issued here, said that the facilitation framework has been developed in consultation with the BISP and banks and under the framework banks accounts of BISP beneficiaries will

be opened in all banks and Microfinance Banks across the country.

The decision has been taken to onboard BISP beneficiaries for receiving the social welfare payment into their accounts and under the framework, about 9.3 million BISP beneficiaries will be able to open a "BISP Sahulat Account" in a single visit to the designated bank branch within their vicinity. The BISP has mapped its beneficiaries with a bank branch in the vicinity of the beneficiaries.

## OGDCL Discovers Tight Gas at Nur West # 01 in Sujawal District of Sindh



**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has discovered gas at its exploratory Well Nur West # 01, situated in the Sujawal district of Sindh province. OGDCL is the sole operator with a 100% stake in Nur Development & Production Lease (D&PL).

The structure of Nur West # 01 was drilled and tested using OGDCL's in-house expertise to a depth of 2975 meters. The well tested 1.24 Million Standard Cubic Feet per Day (MMSCFD) of gas through a 32/64" choke at a wellhead flowing pressure of 150 Pounds per Square Inch (PSI) from the Lower Goru Formation (A Sand). The significant discovery is being evaluated as Tight Gas.

The success at Nur West # 01 is a testament to OGDCL's steadfast commitment to strategic exploration initiatives. It underscores the company's dedication to enhancing the energy landscape of Pakistan and augmenting the hydrocarbon reserve base of both OGDCL and the country.

The breakthrough not only marks a significant milestone in the company's exploration journey but also opens up new avenues for future growth and development. In furtherance of strategic direction, OGDCL has embarked on a fast-track implementation of its tight gas exploration program, underlining its commitment to enhancing energy resources.



# Army Chief Asim Munir hosts Iftar dinner for Pakistan cricket team

## Sports Desk

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir hosted an Iftar dinner for the Pakistan Cricket Team at Army House Rawalpindi, ISPR

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Iftar dinner was also attended by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi along with other PCB officials.

Speaking on the occasion, COAS Asim Munir wished the Pakistan cricket team "all the best in their future endeavours".

Meanwhile, the cricketers thanked the army chief for the 'excellent training' provided to them at Kakul training camp and the role Pakistan Army plays in supporting the games.

A total of 29 cricketers attended the pre-season camp at the historic and iconic Pakistan Military Academy in Kakul from March 26 to April 6, with the training and drills designed by Pakistan Army experts and strategists.

Pakistan Players who took part in the Physical fitness camp in Kakul are: Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan,



Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Sahibzada Farhan, Haseebullah, Saud Shakeel, Usman Khan, Mohammad

Haris, Salman Ali Agha, Azam Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Irfan Khan Niazi, Shadab Khan, Imad Wasim, Usama



Mir, Mohammad Nawaz, Mehran Mumtaz, Abrar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Hasan Ali, Mohammad Ali, Zaman Khan, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Aamir Jamal, Haris Rauf

and Mohammad Amir. Pakistan is all set to face New Zealand in the upcoming five-match T20I series, starting from April 18. Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium will host the first three T20Is between

Pakistan and New Zealand on 18, 20 and 21 April. The two sides will then travel to Lahore to lock horns in the remaining two T20Is on 25 and 27 April, respectively.

## Pakistan's squad for New Zealand T20Is to be announced tomorrow

### Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's squad for the five-match home T20I series against New Zealand will be unveiled on Tuesday, 9th April 2024, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced.

The national selection committee met Pakistan cricketers who featured in Kakul's physical training camp at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Among the 29 players who featured in the camp, only Mohammad Rizwan was not present, as he had left for Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah on Sunday night.

In the meeting, the selection committee took the players in confidence regarding the selection policy, which includes rotation policy and providing opportunities to new players.

The national selection committee members present at the meeting were Abdul Razaq, Asad Shafiq, Bilal Afzal, Hasan Cheema, Mohammad Yousuf and Wahab Riaz. Usman Wahla -



Director International Cricket Operations also attended the meeting.

New Zealand are slated to reach Pakistan on April 14, two days after Pakistan's squad announcement, for the crucial series, leading to the ICC Men's T20I World Cup.

Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium will host the first three T20Is between Pakistan and New Zealand on 18,

20 and 21 April.

The two sides will then travel to Lahore to lock horns in the remaining two T20Is on 25 and 27 April, respectively.

Pakistan Players who took part in the Physical fitness camp in Kakul are:

Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Sahibzada Farhan, Haseebullah, Saud Shakeel, Usman Khan, Moham-

mad Haris, Salman Ali Agha, Azam Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Irfan Khan Niazi, Shadab Khan, Imad Wasim, Usama Mir, Mohammad Nawaz, Mehran Mumtaz, Abrar Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Hasan Ali, Mohammad Ali, Zaman Khan, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Aamir Jamal, Haris Rauf and Mohammad Amir.

## Multan Royal Orchard Women's Cricket Team Reached the Final of The Premier League Cricket Tournament: Kashif Minhas

### Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: In their last league match organized by Royal Orchard and played at DHA Sports Complex Multan, Royal Orchard defeated Star Sargodha by 10 wickets to become the unbeaten team in Pool G. In the match played at DHA Sports Complex, Star Sargodha won the toss and set a target of 88/9 in the allotted 20 overs, which Royal Orchard achieved without any loss. Winning captain Sana Gulzar was declared player of the match for best bowling. In the round league match played earlier, Kirk Addiction DHA Multan defeated their Tarin Academy Lodhran by 7 wickets. Sabaq Mustafa of the winning team was awarded the player of the match award for her excellent all-round performance. Special guests Dr. Muhammad Abdul Saboor Chief Executive Officer Lodhran Pilot Project.

Sports Officer Adnan Naecem and Women University Professor Dr. Diba Adnan Naecem distributed the prizes. League Chief Executive Ali Umar and Managing Director Kashif Minhas said that Royal Orchard Women will face Grounds Up Women in the final.

## Wrestlemania 40: Cody Rhodes finishes story, ends Roman Reigns' historic title run



### Sports Desk

PHILADELPHIA: The American Nightmare, Cody Rhodes on Sunday, finally 'finished his story' by ending Roman Reigns' historic world title run on Night 2 of the Wrestlemania 40.

Reigns had held the world title for an astounding 1,316 days, the third-longest title reign in the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) history and the longest in the modern era.

His enthralling bout with Rhodes was the rematch of the Wrestlemania 39 main event but the outcome turned out different as the latter finally finished his story and became the first from his family to lift the WWE world title.

Roman Reigns and Cody Rhodes went hard at each other and appeared inseparable in a Bloodline Rules match, meaning no holds barred.

The faction soon took advantage of the situation as Jimmy Uso burst onto the scene to aid his cousin Reigns, who was receiving end at that point.

But Jimmy's interference was soon neutralized by his twin brother Jey Uso, who speared him off the stage and through to the table.

Rhodes continued to dominate and had Reigns locked in Cross Rhodes until Solo Siko interfered and took the former out with a Samoan Spike.

He then helped Reigns up on his feet and hit another Samoan Spike in combination with the spear from the champions.

But the move was not enough to Rhodes down as he kicked out on two.

Soon, John Cena's music hit and he marched down to the ring and took out Siko by delivering an Attitude Adjustment on the commentary table.

He entered the ring, presumably to help Rhodes but that was not the case as The Rock took him out with a Rock Bottom.

Then Seth Rollins tried to get The Rock in full Shield gear but Reigns intercepted him.

Cody Rhodes was then at the mercy of The Rock, who looked determined to decimate the challenger but The Undertaker's gong rang and the deadman, after a brief blackout, was standing behind The Rock.

He delivered a ruthless chokeslam to eliminate The Rock from the equation before vanishing in his infamous style.

After all the interferences, it was all down to Cody Rhodes and Roman Reigns.

Reigns looked to settle the score by delivering a spear but Rhodes countered and soon put him away with triple Cross Rhodes.

The enthralling climax of WWE's flagship show Wrestlemania 40 earned massive applaud from the live audience as well as from their fans across the world.

## Azhar Mahmood named Pakistan head coach for New Zealand T20Is

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Former Pakistan fast bowler Azhar Mahmood has been named as the head coach of the Pakistan men's cricket team for the upcoming five-match T20I series against New Zealand.

Azhar represented Pakistan in 164 internationals, taking 162 wickets and scoring 2,421 runs. Azhar's previous assignment with the Pakistan men's cricket team was from 2016-2019 when he was the bowling coach.

Wahab Riaz has been appointed as the senior team manager, while Mohammad Yousuf will be the batting coach.

Saeed Ajmal, who was the bowling coach on the last tours of Australia and New Zealand, will continue as the spin



bowling coach.

Pakistan team player support personnel for New Zealand T20Is:

Wahab Riaz (senior team manager), Mansoor Rana (team manager), Azhar Mahmood (head coach), Mohammad Yousuf (batting coach), Saeed Ajmal (spin bowling coach), Aftab Khan (field coach), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist),

Drikus Saiman (strength and conditioning coach), Talha Butt (analyst), Irtiza Koniail (security manager), Raza Kitchlew (media and digital manager), Zain Maqsood (videographer), Dr Khurram Sarwar (doctor), and Mohammad Imran (masseur).

Earlier on Monday, the national selection committee met Pakistan cricketers who featured in Kakul's physical training camp at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Among the 29 players who featured in the camp, only Mohammad Rizwan was not present, as he had left for Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah on Sunday night.

In the meeting, the selection committee took the players in confidence regarding the selection policy, which includes rotation policy and providing opportunities

to new players.

The national selection committee members present at the meeting were Abdul Razaq, Asad Shafiq, Bilal Afzal, Hasan Cheema, Mohammad Yousuf and Wahab Riaz. Usman Wahla - Director International Cricket Operations also attended the meeting.

New Zealand are slated to reach Pakistan on April 14, two days after Pakistan's squad announcement, for the crucial series, leading to the ICC Men's T20I World Cup.

Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium will host the first three T20Is between Pakistan and New Zealand on 18, 20 and 21 April. The two sides will then travel to Lahore to lock horns in the remaining two T20Is on 25 and 27 April, respectively.

## Jude Bellingham could help Real Madrid turn tables on champions Manchester City

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Jude Bellingham is aiming to give Real Madrid the edge they badly lacked last season in the Champions League quarter-final first leg against Manchester City on Tuesday, as he continues a remarkable first season in Spain.

England star Bellingham will lead Madrid's attack alongside Vinicius Junior as the reigning European and Premier League champions visit the Santiago Bernabeu.

Battered and bruised in a 5-1 aggregate thumping by Pep Guardiola's City at the semi-final stage last year, Real Madrid stumped up 103 million euros (\$112 million) to sign the England star from Borussia Dort-

mund.

Madrid's initial expectations for the 20-year-old were quickly smashed, as he surpassed them at lightning pace. Jude Bellingham began in stunning goalscoring form, with 14 strikes in his first 15 matches for the club, breaking the record of 13 held by Madrid greats Cristiano Ronaldo and Alfredo Di Stefano.

Having arrived at the club as a midfielder but mainly deployed in the attack by Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti, Bellingham quickly established himself as a leader and a fan favourite - "Hey Jude", they serenade in the capital.

Although inevitably his goal flow has slowed in recent weeks, he remains Madrid's top scorer and in addition to 20 across 32 appearances in all competitions,

he also has provided 10 assists.

Madrid, who also seem poised to capture Paris Saint-Germain striker Kylian Mbappe this summer at the end of his contract, hope Bellingham can help them catch up with City.

Guardiola believes Bellingham's presence could be crucial for the record 14-time winners.

"(Bellingham's) impact has been massive," Guardiola told reporters in March.

"It's a different team from last season - his influence is obvious, and we have to try to discover what he does to control it.

"Facing Real Madrid is always a tough challenge, nobody can deny it. They are an exceptional club, and in this competition, they can control many things with the experience they have in

the past."

Madrid have a track record of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat in Europe and did just that against Manchester City in 2022 on the way to glory.

Rodrygo Goes struck in the 90th and 91st minutes against City to force the tie to extra-time and Karim Benzema netted the winner to secure a remarkable 6-5 aggregate triumph for Los Blancos.

However, the following season Benzema was not fully fit, and a Madrid lacking spine crumpled at the Etihad Stadium in a 4-0 second-leg thrashing.

Despite only being at the club for a few months, Bellingham has already shown a penchant for the big occasion.

The midfielder helped Madrid

come from behind to beat Barcelona 2-1, netting a brace in the league match in October including a 92nd-minute winner.

Bellingham's Madrid thrashed Barcelona 4-1 in his second Clasico appearance to claim the Spanish Super Cup in January, his first trophy with Madrid.

Eight points clear in La Liga, a second beckons domestically, but Bellingham understands how much Champions League victory would mean for his club.

"I'd much rather keep scoring in the 90-plus minutes than in the 15th, even though it might take a bit of strain (on) my heart and the fans' hearts," said Bellingham after a 94th-minute winner against Union Berlin in the group stage.

"That's the history of the club,



I'm new... but I've had a TV since I was little and I can't remember from what age I've been watching Madrid complete comebacks where I'm thinking 'there's no chance' and 'it's not possible'."

Bellingham has four Champions League goals in six appearances this season, including netting twice against Serie A champions Napoli.

An ankle sprain and a suspension has disrupted his start to 2024 but the City tie offers Bel-

ingham a chance to get fully back on track, against a club that would have loved to sign him before it became clear he had his heart set on Madrid.

Most would have liked to - even at 20, Bellingham is drawing comparisons to some all-time greats.

"There are things about the way he plays that remind me of (Zinedine) Zidane - it's his extraordinary quality on the ball," declared Ancelotti in February.



## Iftar Dinner

General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) hosted an Iftar Dinner for Pakistan Cricket Team at Army House Rawalpindi.



Photo: ISPR

## Dr Al-Issa

## A global advocate for peace, interfaith dialogue, moderation

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Dr Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa stands as a towering figure in the contemporary Islamic world, renowned for his steadfast commitment to promoting moderate Islam and fostering interfaith harmony on a global scale.

As the Secretary-General of Muslim World League (MWL) and the head of the Intellectual Warfare Center, Dr. Al-Issa has dedicated his life to combatting extremism and advocating for the true message of Islam — empathy, understanding, and cooperation among all people.

Dr. Al-Issa's leadership has been marked by groundbreaking interfaith efforts aimed at fostering understand-



ing and reconciliation among different communities, faiths, and nations. Notable among these initiatives were his historic visit to Auschwitz in January 2020, where he led the most senior Islamic delegation ever to visit the site.

This visit, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the death camp, symbolized Dr. Al-Issa's commitment to combatting anti-Semitism and promoting mutu-

al respect.

He has been honored by various organizations, including the American Jewish Committee and the Combat Anti-Semitism Movement, for his leadership in combating anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and hate speech worldwide. In 2019, Dr. Al-Issa orchestrated an agreement for peace and solidarity among representatives of the Abrahamic religions in France, further demonstrating his dedication to fostering harmony and understanding.

Dr. Al-Issa's efforts have garnered praise from leaders across religious and political spectrums. Cardinal Timothy Dolan hailed him as "the most eloquent spokesman in the Islamic world for reconciliation and

friendship among the religions." United States Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom Sam Brownback commended Dr. Al-Issa as "a constituent of the future" and applauded his partnership in bringing together Abrahamic faiths to combat hate.

Since assuming the role of Secretary-General of the Muslim World League in 2016, Dr. Al-Issa has embarked on a journey to promote dialogue and cooperation globally. He has expanded representation within the MWL to ensure inclusivity of all Muslim communities worldwide. Under his leadership, the MWL has signed numerous cooperation agreements with Jewish institutions, promoting common values and interfaith understanding.

## CM Punjab returns after 3-day visit to Saudi Arabia



## Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif returned home

after completing her 3-day long visit to Saudi Arabia.

The chief minister performed Umrah, and met Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman along with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during her visit to Saudi Arabia.

The CM also had the honor of visiting the Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH) in Madina Munawara, and the Holy Baitullah Sharif in Makkah Mukar-

## Balochistan to use AI technology to identify ghost employees

## Bureau Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has decided to introduce artificial intelligence (AI) technology to detect ghost and absentee employees in the province.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti chaired the first meeting of the reform committee for the formation of effective measures and timeframe for the improvement of governance.

CM Bugti directed the Information Technology (IT) department to launch a pilot project while the government has also decided to hire experts from the private sector for the project.

The provincial government will implement the artificial intelligence system in a phased manner across the province starting from BMC, Civil Sandeman Hospital and the University of Balochistan, CM Sarfraz Bugti said.

He urged the experts included



in the reforms committee to make recommendations regarding the improvement of the relevant sectors for the improvement of governance.

The chief minister highlighted a lack of trust between people and government departments while urging to restore people's trust in the state.

However, he termed corruption the biggest obstacle in the way of good governance in the province.

As part of the reforms, CM Sarfraz Bugti said that as many as 30,000 youths would be given technical education with an aim to make them expert in their fields that would help them get foreign jobs.

## Hamas source: group studying proposal for 6-week Gaza ceasefire

## AFP

GAZA: A source in Hamas said Monday the Islamist group is studying a Gaza ceasefire deal that would see a six-week truce and Israeli women and child hostages freed in exchange for up to 900 Palestinian prisoners.

The first phase of the proposal would also see the return of displaced Palestinian civilians to the north of the Gaza Strip and 400 to 500 trucks of food aid a day delivered to its starving people, according to the source close to the negotiations, asking for anonymity.

The news comes after the White House said negotiators had presented the Palestinian militant group with a proposal after talks in Cairo over the weekend.

The first part of the deal for



the 42 women, children and elderly hostages would include "800 to 900 Palestinian prisoners", 100 of whom are serving life or long sentences in Israeli jails, according to the Hamas source.

The second stage includes

the release of all Israeli prisoners, including soldiers and officers, in exchange for a number of Palestinian prisoners to be agreed upon in the coming days, the source added.

"This phase includes lifting the Israeli military checkpoints

located on the Al-Rashid coastal road in the west of the Gaza Strip and the Salah al-Din road in the east," he said.

The proposal would also keep Israeli forces at a distance of "not less than 500 metres (yards) from the two roads

without interference or any inspections of the displaced", and maintain drones to monitor the passage of armed men on the two roads.

A third part of the deal would involve a permanent ceasefire and a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, the Hamas source said.

The ceasefire talks in the Egyptian capital, which involved CIA chief William Burns, Israel, Hamas and Qatar, were described as "serious" by the White House Monday.

"Now it's going to be up to Hamas to come through," the White House said.

Earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu talked tough, insisting that a date has been set for a ground offensive in Rafah, which Israel says is one of the last Hamas strongholds in Gaza.

## Met Office predicts heavy rains across Pakistan on Eidul Fitr

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted heavy rains and thunderstorms in parts of the country during Eidul Fitr.

According to the Met Office, a westerly wave is likely to enter the upper parts of the country from April 10 followed by another strong westerly wave on April 12 that may grip most parts of the country on April 13 and persist till April 15.

The PMD forecasted a range of weather patterns across the country as Pakistanis prepare for Eidul Fitr festivities.

## 'Online delivery' of arms behind rising street crime in Karachi

## Monitoring Desk

KARACHI: In-charge Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) Raja Umar Khattab Monday claimed about 70 per cent of illegal weapons is being trafficked into Karachi via online channels.

In an exclusive interview with ARY News about rising street crimes in the port city, Raja Umar Khattab said that "70 per cent of illegal weapons are being transported to Karachi from KP after online orders".

"Place an online order for the weapon and get it by morning"

The illegal weapons are being brought into Karachi through passenger busses, and courier services after 50pc



advance payment, he added.

The CTD in-charge said the situation in Karachi is more 'dangerous' as compared to the Katcha area of the province. Mr. Khattab claimed the majority of 'government employees' are part of the weapons supply rackets.

The CTD head further revealed that apart from criminals, students and hobbyists are also ordering online weapons.

Raja Umar Khattab said crime would end when there were no illegal weapons and added to legalise all the 'il-

gal weapons' or seizure of legal weapons.

Read more: KP Policeman arrested in Karachi with smuggled arms in school bag Earlier on Sunday, the Counter Terrorism Department intelligence wing in a raid foiled arms smuggling in a school bag in Karachi.

In-charge CTD Raja Umar Khattab has said that an in-service constable of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police was arrested in the raid. "Weapons recovered from the school bag carried by accused Azharuddin," the CTD official said.

"Arrested suspect has been affiliated with an inter-provincial arm smuggling gang," Raja Umar Khattab said. "This gang used to supply online arms".

## Lawyer sent to jail for misbehaving with judge

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday handed down six months imprisonment to a lawyer for misbehaving with judge.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 100,000 on the lawyer, Advocate Zahid Mahmood Goraya. LHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan pronounced the verdict following which the police took Zahid Mahmood Goraya into custody from the court premises.

The chief justice conducted proceedings for more than three and a half hours on the reference and recorded evidence from three witnesses, with Syed Farhad Ali Shah serving as the prosecutor during the proceedings.

The lawyer requested time and again to adjourn proceedings after Eid holidays, besides tendering an unconditional apology.

Lahore High Court Bar Association President Asad Manzoor Butt also requested to pardon the lawyer, adding that they would pay a visit to Justice Sultan Tanvir Ahmad and seek an apology.

## Ashrafi commends PM's Saudi visit for strengthening economic ties

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Monday lauded Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to Saudi Arabia, highlighting its potential to foster economic cooperation and fortify bilateral relations between the two nations.

In a media talk, he said both the countries are keen in expanding their partnership in various sectors.

Ashrafi emphasized the significance of prime minister's diplomatic outreach, particularly in the realm of economic cooperation adding that the visit holds the promise of unlocking new avenues of economic opportunities for both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Highlighting historical, cultural, and religious bonds, he expressed optimism that the discussions held during the visit would yield tangible results leading to enhance collaboration in diverse fields, including trade, investment, and infrastructure development. He commended the prime minister's proactive approach in exploring avenues for cooperation and advancing bilateral ties to new heights.