



General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu calls on General Sahir Shamsad Mirza
General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, Commander Turkish Land Forces called on General Sahir Shamsad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.



PM, Saudi Crown Prince agree to strengthen broad-based cooperation
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Arab's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud met here Monday and agreed to strengthen broad-based cooperation in various fields. In a meeting held in Riyadh, the two sides expressed satisfaction over the progress with regard to the decisions taken during their earlier meeting in Makkah

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Called on

RAWALPINDI: General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, Commander Turkish Land Forces called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters.



Photo: ISPR

Turkish commander calls on Army chief at GHQ to discuss bilateral defence cooperation

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, Commander Turkish Land Forces called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters, today. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and measures to further enhance bilateral defence cooperation were discussed. Both sides expressed satisfaction over deep-rooted relations between the two countries, based on historic,

cultural and religious affinity. COAS emphasized the need to further strengthen existing military to military cooperation between the two Armed Forces. The visiting dignitary appreciated the role of Pakistan Army in ensuring peace and stability in the region. Earlier on arrival at GHQ, Commander Turkish Land Forces, laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary.

PM meets Bill Gates; urges sustained efforts by partners for polio-free Pakistan

Correspondent

RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday met the founder and co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates, whereas he called for a sustained effort by all the partners to reach the ultimate goal of a

polio-free Pakistan. In the meeting held on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Special Meeting here, the prime minister highlighted that Pakistan was working tirelessly to eradicate polio from the country, a PM Office press release said.

No peace in world without permanent peace in Gaza: PM

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday here said permanent peace in Gaza was imperative for achieving peace in the world. He was speaking at the plenary meeting of the special session of World Economic Forum on the theme of "Rejuvenating Growth". He said, "The world will not be in peace unless there is a permanent peace in Gaza." As he talked about Gaza, the audience in the hall responded with resounding applause. He said the conflict in Ukraine brought to the world skyrocketing commodity prices and Pakistan could not import and procure vital raw materials for industry and agriculture. No peace in world without permanent peace in Gaza: PM "On top of that inflation is breaking the back of developing countries," he said adding coupled with that, Pakistan faced devastation in 2022 due to huge unimaginable floods. The prime minister said, "Pakistan is one of those countries which has nothing to do with the reasons leading to climate change. Our contribution to emis-

sions is not even fraction of one percent." Due to catastrophic floods in Pakistan, large swathes of land were submerged and millions of houses and animals were washed away and stagnant water brought water borne diseases all across the country, he continued. He said his government spent Rs 100 billion from scarce resources for relief and rehabilitation of flood affectees. "We are grateful to the friendly countries including Saudi Arabia, Gulf countries, United Kingdom, the United States and many other countries for their support at a difficult time." Pakistan's economy suffered losses of 30 billion dollars because of floods and then it approached international entities in Geneva and other places and had to borrow loans at expensive rates due to the natural disaster which was not its fault, he mentioned. "Our country was hit in a way which I had not seen in my life time," he remarked. He gave example of his family to express his determination and resolve to put Pakistan on the road to progress and prosperity. No peace in world without permanent peace in Gaza: PM He said his father and



his brothers were sons of a poor farmer in undivided India and they migrated to Lahore, Pakistan at the time of partition. With the sheer dint of hard work, in 1965 his father and family raised the largest steel engineering company in Pakistan but it was

nationalized on January 2, 1972, he said adding his family stood up and accepted the challenge and in next 18 months set up six new small factories to avoid further nationalization. He said global north and south were dependent on each other and had to work together to face the present challenges. The prime minister said after taking over rein of the country early this year, he was determined to put things in order. Talking about issues facing Pakistan, he said the power sector was in shambles due to massive electricity theft and an elitist culture was doling out to those who did not deserve it. He told that for the first time in the history of the country after getting credible input from agencies he removed high level officers who were not functioning well and had grey record. "Our revenue sector is in tatters and what we receive annually in revenue, we lose four times due to leakages in the system. Unless we plug loopholes we will not recover from our problems in revenue collection," he explained. He said there were also problems of inflation and debt trap which was a "death trap".

Dy PM Dar meets the Foreign Minister of Malaysia

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Malaysia Dato Seri Utama Haji Mohamad Bin Haji Hasan, on the sidelines of the Special Meeting on Global Collaboration, Growth and Energy for Development of the World Economic Forum (WEF) being held in Riyadh on 28-29 April 2024.

The two leaders reviewed the broad range of relations with a special focus on enhancing trade and investment ties and agreed to hold the next round of Joint Ministerial Commission meeting in Islamabad during the year. The two sides will study the markets and take full advantage of the opportunities offered in various sectors for tangible economic outcomes. Regular high-level contacts provide a leadership-driven impetus to bilateral trade and

investment relations. In this backdrop, The Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan invited the Malaysian Foreign Minister to undertake a visit to Pakistan, which was graciously accepted. Discussing the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the two sides emphasized the immediate cessation of hostilities and called for providing urgent humanitarian relief to Palestinians. They also underscored closer cooperation within the framework of OIC for finding a peaceful and durable solution to the Palestinian question.

JUI-F chief Fazl endorses PTI's demand for holding rallies

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has endorsed the PTI's demand for holding protests and rallies. He said this in his National Assembly speech on Monday after PTI MNA Asad Qaiser raised the issue before the speaker that his party was not allowed to hold rallies and their leaders were being arrested. "Asad Qaiser's request is fair. Protesting is his [party's] right and I endorse his request," he said and added that the issue was not limited to whether the parties can hold public gathering events or not. The PTI leader had highlighted that it was their constitutional right to hold protests and rallies. According to Fazl, the problem was about the "state of the country". He warned against any attempts to stop his party's protest in Karachi and Peshawar next month which he described as "Million March". "We have decided to fight against slavery and fight under



the Constitution and law. We will have Million March on May 2 in Karachi and next in Peshawar on May 9," he said. "If someone tried to stop us so, they will invite trouble for themselves. They cannot stop sea of people. These effort will continue and we hope that you [NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq] will be with us," he added. Fazl has slammed the results of February 8 general elections and expressed concerns over the state of affairs, stressing the need for people's representation. He has held rallies to press authorities to allow "public representation" in the country while making a veiling reference

to the country's establishment. In his speech, the JUI-F chief also spoke in the same wavelength and urged ruling parties to join him in streets and leave Parliament. Several people were raising questions on Parliament, he said and wondered whether it was represented by the people or the establishment. Fazl said that politicians were blamed for the mistakes of military generals in the past. He went on to add that after the February 8 general elections, defeated candidates were worried and victors were not satisfied with the results. In a veiling reference to the establishment, he said that those who should "have been under you have become your leader [Aq] and you are running on their orders. We cannot even pass a bill." He claimed that the state had no control on Baloch and Pakhtun belts. "Unfortunately, I want to say that Pakistan is an unsafe state and if the state is unsafe then who is responsible. We made a policy against terrorism, but no change seen in terrorism."

ECP summons KP CM Gandapur over asset declaration discrepancies

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has summoned Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Tuesday to clarify discrepancies found in his declaration of assets

and liabilities submitted for the general elections of 2024. The ECP has instructed CM Gandapur to personally appear on Tuesday and provide clarification regarding his assets. Previously, the ECP agreed

Continued on Page 8

UAE Ambassador calls on Shaza Fatima

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja here on Monday. Matters of mutual interest and relating to IT & Telecom sector, digitalization, cybersecurity and innovation were discussed in the meeting, said a news release.



The two sides agreed to increase cooperation in the field of IT & Telecom. The meeting was also attended by Member IT Syed Junaid Imam and DG International Coordination Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi.

Kashmir Committee, Jeddah, Pakistan arrange impressive reception in honor of Fai

Abdul Majeed Tahir

JEDDAH/MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmir Committee, Jeddah and Jammu Kashmir Overseas Community, Jeddah Saudi Arabia along with the Consulate General of Pakistan arranged an impressive reception in honor of Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Secretary General, World Kashmir Awareness Forum, Washington, D. C. which was attended by huge number of Saudi intellectuals, scholars and noted personalities besides the members of Kashmiri and Pakistani community.

Dr. Fai thanked the hosts for inviting him to talk about the situation in Kashmir at a time when the nation of Kashmir is facing an existential threat. He thanked His Majesty's government for its principle stand on the Kashmir dispute which was further articulated only this month by His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman during his meeting with Mian Mohammad Shahbaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan that Kashmir dispute needs to be resolved through peaceful negotiations. Dr. Fai added that His Royal Highness Crown Prince has developed friendly

relations with both India and Pakistan. He can persuade both parties to initiate peace process with which the United Nations as well as the people of Jammu and Kashmir will be associated so as to ensure that settlement arrived at will be based on the principle of justice."

Major General * Abdullah Bin Saeed Alghamdi said, "On August 5, 2019, India moved to alter the disputed status of Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and changed its demographic structure. The illegal and unilateral Indian actions have been rejected by the Kashmiri people, and by the international community for being in violation of International Law, relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and India's own solemn commitments made to the people of Kashmir."

The Consul General Khalid Majeed in his speech welcomed Dr. Fai in Jeddah and paid tribute to the long struggle of the people of Kashmir for their struggle of right to self-determination. The Consul General emphasized that the people and nation of Pakistan will always support diplomatically and politically their brethren in Kashmir.



ren in Kashmir.

Mr. Masud Ahmed Puri, President of Kashmir Committee, Jeddah said that the Committee has been working for the last 40 years to educate our Saudi brethren about the situation

in Kashmir. It was more than thirty years when they received the first high level delegation of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in 1994. Then again veteran Kashmir leader, Syed Ali Geelani

when he came to perform Hajj. Professor (Dr.) Faiz Al-Abideen warned that the deadlock of Kashmir dispute has meant indescribable agony for the people of Kashmir and incalculable loss for both India

and Pakistan. India cannot sweep the facts under the galicha. The truth is too painfully obvious. Isn't it time that world powers ask the people of Kashmir what they really want? Dr.

Mr. Farooq Rehmani, former Convener, All Parties Hurriyat Conference said that the heart of the matter is that Kashmir is an occupied country. Its sovereignty and right to self-determination is being ignored.

Sardar Waqas, President, Jammu Kashmir Overseas Community Jeddah said that the world knows that the central bone of contention regarding tensions between India and Pakistan is the ongoing 76-year conflict over Kashmir. The denial of self-determination to the people of Kashmir has brought both India and Pakistan to the brink of nuclear catastrophe.

Ustaz Salim Al-Qahtani, Saudi businessman urged the OIC to extend tangible support to the people of Kashmir during these difficult times. The situation in Kashmir is no different than that of Gaza, Al-Qahtani added.

The meeting was concluded by offering special Du'a for the martyrs of Jammu and Kashmir.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Qatar biased businessman and General Manager of Metas Trading Company Hafiz Muhammad Talha giving flower bouquet to former Prime Minister and leader of PPP Raja Pervaiz Ashraf during a meeting at his residence.

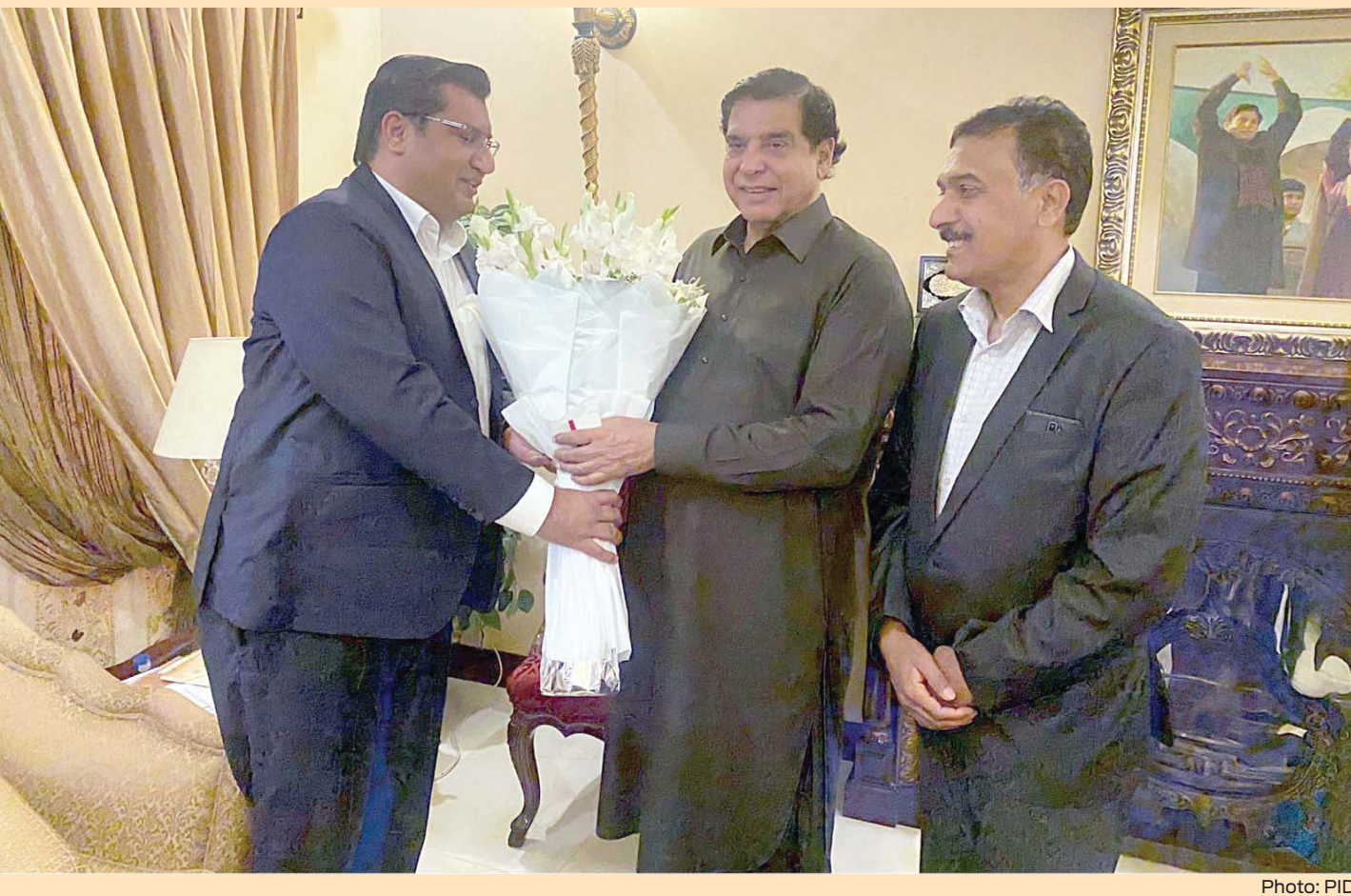


Photo: PID

Commissioner to provide immediate access to justice through open kachehris

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division Ms Maryam Khan has become instrumental in providing immediate access to justice through the establishment of open kachehris (public courts) in the division. Speaking on the matter, Commissioner Maryam Khan stated that the prompt resolution of multiple applications in open court is resulting in an increase in the number of satisfied citizens, which is promising for the future. She emphasized that the welfare and guidance of ordinary citizens are the primary objectives. Efficient handling of revenue matters is the



real duty of revenue officers. She urged the compilation of lists of regular applicants and the creation of blacklists to expedite legitimate work for citizens.

She instructed the Registrar Office and Land Record Center to rectify transactions promptly. Alongside the swift resolution of cases in open kachehris, the provision of justice is also being ensured. Additional Deputy Commissioners Revenue will provide relief to citizens through open kachehris. Immediate completion of pending cases in revenue courts is prioritized. The process of acquiring individual property and inheritance should be made easier for the public. Municipal Corporation, WASA, MDA, Revenue, West Management Company, and relevant officials were present during the proceedings.

Inniserval Club to help poor people in hospitals: Shaheen Langrial

Asim Tanveer

MILTAN: Chairman of Innerval Club District 343, Mrs. Shaheen Langrial has said that our aim is to serve and help the suffering humanity and I am proud that my 9 clubs in the whole of Punjab are doing excellent work for poor patients in hospitals. Provision of medicines, dowry for orphan girls and ration to low income earners All my clubs are top among them and this is the success of all of us in this world and the hereafter. He expressed these views while addressing the annual conference of Innerval Club District 343. Mazhar said that if all philanthropists serve the people in the same way If you move forward with passion, there is no reason why Pakistan should not end poverty and in today's era of inflation, providing medicines, ration, water



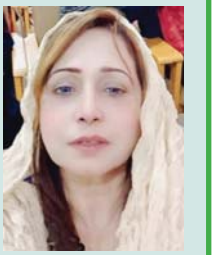
coolers and marriages of orphan girls is no less than a blessing, but all the pres-

idents of Innerval Club District 343 and The secretary and all the members are doing all this work in their personal capacity. The reason is that due to the prayers of the poor people, we are making double and quadruple progress day and night and all the philanthropists are actively participating in the conference. I walk for 30 minutes and avoid fast food and cold drinks and fatty things it is a matter of regret that today young boys and girls of 18 and 20 years are becoming heart patients. By adopting preventive measures, we can avoid heart disease. The presidents presented their club performance which was appreciated by all the members. Iqbal Sadia Kirmani, Zeba Javed, Laiba Khakwani, Dr. Afshan, Rashida Tahir Naz Fatima, Manza, Farah Lodhi, Nizhat Iftikhar and others also spoke.

CM Punjab Maryam Working Day and Night to Control inflation: Maria Ali

Khalid Chaudhry

MULTAN: Senior Vice President of Muslim League (N) Women's Wing Multan Division Maria Ali has said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's action against factories, mills and companies that do not implement labor laws is a good move. The working class will get relief from Ishaq Dar is welcome to be made Deputy Prime Minister initiative, but for the stability of the country's economy, more measures should be ensured on an emergency basis. It was a period in which the economy reached the brink of collapse and the people were desperate. They were left with problems but the current government is ensuring the measures for the stability of the country's economy in the real sense. Maria Ali further said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has given relief to the people by reducing the prices of Chappiti and Naan across Punjab. He further said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is personally monitoring the welfare projects of the people across Punjab. Inshallah, in the coming months, the prices of the people's necessities of life will be further reduced.



A Training Session for Haj Pilgrims Successfully Organized at Sargodha Arts Council

Rana Muhammad Iqbal

SARGODHA: A training session for 1,047 intending pilgrims from across the Sargodha district was held at Sargodha Arts Council, here on Monday. As many as 517 intending pilgrims got training in first session while 530 Hujjaj were imparted pilgrim training belonged to all tehseils of the district in second session. The training was arranged under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. An officer from the ministry, Sanaullah Khan Niazi, discussed administrative matters in reference with performance of Hajj, while Hafiz Abdul Saboor briefed the participants about the purpose of the training session, procedure of performing Hajj. Sanaullah Khan Niazi said the Ministry of Religious Affairs had declared Hajj training mandatory for every pilgrim. At the end of the meeting, a special programme was organised for women Hajj pilgrims in which master trainers provided training to women.



Neelum highway not suitable for travel due to heavy rains: deputy commissioner

Bureau Report

NEELAM: Chairman District Disaster Management Authority Raja Arif Mehmood has said that the Neelum highway is not suitable for travel during the ongoing rains. As a result of heavy rains, the Neelum highway is closed for all traffic from Seemari, Jora, Lawat, Dawarian, Dudhniyal and Sheikh Bela. Deputy Commissioner Raja Arif Mehmood appealed to the public/tourists to refrain from traveling until the weather clears. The staff of the road department is engaged in the complete restoration of the Neelum highway.

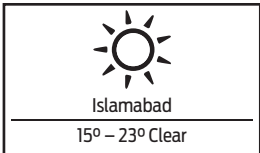
According to reports from Neelum Valley, a car fell into a drain due to landslides at Chamba near Panjigaran during heavy rains, in which a man was injured, who was rescued by rescue teams and shifted to a nearby hospital for medical assistance.

Former PM Kashmir to express condolences on death of Samia Sajid Raja's sister

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MADINAH MUNWARA/ MUZAFFARABAD: Former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan, has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the death of the sister of Ms. Samia Sajid Raja, Chairperson of the Muslim Conference Women's Wing. In his condolence message, the former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that he was saddened by the death of her sister, he prayed for forgiveness for the eternal peace of the deceased and expressed his condolences to the bereaved family. Former President Muslim Conference Shafiq Jaral Advocate Chief Organizer Saqib Majeed Raja and other leaders also expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the death of Ms. Samia Sajid Raja's sister's and expressed their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.





SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:50 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	4:52 pm
Maghrib	6:50 pm
Isha	8:21 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
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
DHO	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79

PRCS strengthens collaborative efforts with UN to advance humanitarian mission

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, held a significant meeting with His Excellency United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mohamed Yahya, at the UN office here on Monday. The meeting marked a pivotal moment in the collaboration between PRCS and the United Nations, reaffirming their shared commitment to alleviating human suffering and advancing humanitarian efforts.

Chairman Laghari congratulated Mohamed Yahya on assuming his new role as the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, emphasizing it as a milestone in the partnership between PRCS and the United Nations. The discussions

at the meeting revolved around matters of mutual interest, particularly focusing on resilience building in communities and effective coordination through collaboration between UN entities and PRCS programs. He also highlighted the PRCS program collaboration with partner organization including, IFRC, ICRC, NorCross, German Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent and different national societies.

In attendance were PRCS Secretary General, Muhammad Abdu-ullah Khan, and UN OCHA Head of Office, Carlos Geha, providing a comprehensive platform for dialogue and collaboration. Chairman Laghari provided insights into the ongoing programs and projects of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, highlighting the historic PRCS



monsoon floods 2022 and the ongoing recovery efforts.

With PRCS boasting the largest

volunteer base in the country, Chairman Laghari emphasized the organization's dedication to serving humanity. He underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships between UN entities and PRCS aligning programs and projects focusing on Disaster Response and Preparedness, Healthcare, Food Security, Water and Sanitation, Gender Equality, Volunteer Engagement, Child Protection, Climate Resilience, Innovation & Technology, and Capacity Building.

He lauded PRCS humanitarian efforts spearheaded by Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, in extending aid to the vulnerable, particularly amid crises. Emphasizing the imperative of collaborative efforts in fortifying community resilience, he voiced a keenness to investigate opportunities for cooperation and exchange of insights and proficiency concern-

ing Search & Rescue and Contingency Planning for disaster preparedness. Yahya underscored the pivotal roles both organizations play in confronting the challenges of climate change and its repercussions.

Mohamed Yahya and UN OCHA Head of Office Carlos Geha pledged to visit the PRCS National Headquarters in the coming days, further solidifying the partnership.

Concluding the meeting, Chairman Laghari presented a commemorative souvenir and PRCS book highlighting the PRCS achievements under the leadership of Chairman Laghari to UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mohamed Yahya, symbolizing the spirit of humanitarian collaboration between PRCS and the United Nations.

Birthday of the Dutch King

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain and Ambassador Henny de Vries of Netherlands cutting the cake on the birthday of the Dutch King Willem-Alexander. This event serves not only as a commemoration of the King's birthday but also as an opportunity to strengthen the enduring relationship between Pakistan and the Netherlands.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Dutch embassy rings in King's Day celebrations

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands hosted a celebration in honor of the birthday of the Dutch King Willem-Alexander. This event serves not only as a commemoration of the King's birthday but also as an opportunity to strengthen the enduring relationship between Pakistan and the Netherlands.

Commenting on the occasion, Ambassador Henny de Vries said "Today, as we gather to commemorate King Willem-Alexander's birthday on King's Day, we emphasize the enduring partnership and friendship between the Netherlands and Pakistan during these turbulent times globally. It is in times like these that it is even more important for us all to stand still and appreciate and celebrate what connects us, rather than what divides us".

Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain graced the event as the Chief Guest.

Throughout the past year, the Embassy, in collaboration with partners in Pakistan, has coordinated a series of successful projects and events spanning various sectors, including on human rights, water management, and climate initiatives. These endeavors emphasize the shared commitment of both nations to address global challenges and promote sustainable development.

Highlighting the cultural diversity and artistic talents of both nations, the event featured a captivating performance by two Dutch artists in collaboration with talented Pakistani local musicians. Together, they played a blend of national anthems and traditional songs, symbolizing the unity and shared values between the two cultures.

ISSI and ISAS conclude first MoU between think-tanks of Pakistan and Singapore

PNP

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), represented by its Director General, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, represented by Director, Dr. Iqbal Singh Sevea, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a virtual ceremony today. This represented the beginning of a new chapter, being the first MoU signed between the think-tanks of Pakistan and Singapore.

In addition to Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and Dr. Iqbal Sevea, the MoU signing ceremony was joined by Ms Rukhsana Afzaal, High Commissioner of Pakistan to Singapore; Mr Muhammad Junaid, Director East Asia & Pacific Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan; Dr Talat Shabbir, Director China Pakistan Study Centre, ISSI;



team India Study Centre, ISSI; and colleagues at ISAS.

In his remarks on the occasion, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood hailed the MoU as a crucial step towards instituting a formal relationship between the two Institutes. He expressed gratitude for the valuable support lent by High Commissioner Rukhsana Afzaal throughout this process. The DG ISSI highlighted the comprehensive scope of the MoU, envisaging mutually-agreed agendas of research, exchanges and dialogue on regional, global and strategic issues of common interest. He also underscored the signifi-

cance that Pakistan attaches to its relations with Singapore, bilaterally and in the context of ASEAN. He termed the signing of the MoU as an important step towards strengthening soft connectivity and people-to-people links between the two sides.

High Commissioner Rukhsana Afzaal expressed gratification over the conclusion of the MoU. She mentioned ISAS as Singapore's prominent think-tank and important in terms of connecting Pakistan with Singaporean researchers and academia. Underlining the High Commissioner's efforts to foster linkages between

research communities of the two countries, she noted seven joint webinars organized earlier in collaboration with ISAS. She said that the goal of these efforts was to generate opportunities for forging better understanding of each other's perspectives.

Dr Iqbal Singh Sevea stated that the MoU between ISAS and ISSI signified an important step towards mutual collaboration. He highlighted the inter-disciplinary nature of research at ISAS in order to better understand the complexities surrounding South Asian security dynamics. In this regard, he underlined Pakistan as an important country, particularly in terms of its role in the Indian Ocean region and Central Asia.

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood congratulated ISAS on their 20th anniversary. The two sides agreed to consult closely to decide on the next steps in this new partnership.

Book launching ceremony at AIOU



PNP

ISLAMABAD: The launching ceremony of the book "Toronto, Dubai and Manchester" by the renowned educationist/former Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Shahid Siddiqui was held yesterday in Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). The event was presided over by the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, while the author of the book, Prof. Dr. Shahid Siddiqui was the chief guest. Renowned Intellectuals, columnists and writers including Muhammad Hameed Shahid, Muhammad Hafeez Khan and Dr. Najiba Arif commented that this book is not a traditional travel book but an aesthetic experience of Shahid Siddiqui in which division of past, present and future is not visible. The speakers mentioned that Shahid Siddiqui expresses romance in such a style where he portray his feelings very strongly. The added that this book is a must read to see Toronto, Dubai and Manchester from the eyes of author.

Shahid Siddiqui, in his short speech, thanked the Urdu department for organizing the event and read an excerpt from his book. VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said in his speech that whenever a new book of Shahid Siddiqui comes out, he wishes to launch it in Allama Iqbal Open University. Dr Nasir said that the story of scholarship in this book is very much relevant with his scholarship journey in Manchester. Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir, expressed his gratitude and said that this new book of Shahid Siddiqui came out two months ago, we wanted to host the first launch ceremony, due to busyness in the convocation, this launch ceremony got late. Chairman, Department of the Urdu, Dr. Arshad Mahmood Nashad addressed the ceremony and highlighted the different colors of the book. Faculty members, officers, staff members and a large number of students bought the book and got it signed by the author.

AKUH's Global Recognition: Pakistan's Healthcare Excellence in the Limelight

PPA

KARACHI: In the latest Brand Finance 2024 Global Top 250 Hospitals report, Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH), Karachi, has been listed in the top 100 Academic Medical Centres (AMCs) worldwide. AKUH is the first and only hospital from Pakistan making to the top 100 on this list.

Meanwhile, four other hospitals from Pakistan, Mayo Hospital, Jinnah Hospital, Combined Military Hospital and University Dental Hospital have scored spots in the 101-250 rank list. Three Indian hospitals are also in the top 100, while one is in the 101-250 list.

According to Joint Commission International (JCI), the world's leading hospital accreditation body considered the gold standard in healthcare quality, an "Academic Medical Centre is a tertiary care hospital that is organizationally and administratively integrated with a medical school." It is important to note that the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, is the only JCI-accredited academic medical centre in Pakistan.

Al-Shifa's Light House rehabilitated 65,000 people in 15 years

PPA

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust said on Monday that blind and visually impaired people can also become productive members of society and lead fruitful lives.

Over the previous 15 years, Light House, an initiative of the Al-Shifa Trust, has assisted sixty-five thousand people in getting back on their feet, it said.

Speaking to media men, the President of Al-Shifa Trust, Maj. Gen. (ret.) Rehmat Khan said we had established a Low Vision Rehabilitation Centre, Light House, Pakistan's first, in 2009. Since then, we have served people from all over Pakistan to become independent.

Light House, a modern rehabilitation center, is dedicated to helping people of all ages and backgrounds overcome the challenges of low vision or blindness, which cannot be further treated with medicine or surgery, he said.

He said the center had become a robust and efficient low-vision service



provider as hundreds of patients with low vision and blindness get support from it to live unaided.

Maj. Gen. (ret.) Rehmat Khan said that the unique facility has enabled people with low vision and blindness to enjoy safe, independent, and productive lives.

He said that twenty-five million people in Pakistan suffer from low vision and blindness, and for them, the

only way forward is to get help from special devices and counseling.

"We are striving to provide the latest facilities for reading, writing, and telecommunication for people representing different age groups with low vision or no vision," he added.

He said Light House has separate sections for people of different age groups, like the senior and junior corners.

The facilities in the senior corner include in-home needs assessments, vision examinations, and the introduction of safe, new ways to cook and take care of the home by providing special tools like custom-made utensils and magnifying lamps.

Besides, desktop electronic video magnifiers are available to help the visually impaired read the newspaper, manage their finances, lead productive lives through mainstream employment, and enjoy hobbies.

The facilities in the Junior Corner include a Parent Centre, which helps parents understand their children's problems. Special electronic and TV



magnifiers and simulators are available for pursuing studies.

Moreover, special computer software is available that helps magnify everything on a computer screen and helps youngsters learn and play.

He said we also have an entertain-

ment corner with unique gadgets for children and a rehabilitation corner where various educational, social, recreational, and job training experiences are offered to help youngsters confidently enter the practical world.

People with difficulty reading, recog-

nizing familiar faces and objects, seeing potential obstacles such as steps, walls, and furniture, problems performing routine tasks like cleaning, cooking, and eating, and those having issues with reading regular fonts can benefit from the services of the Light House.

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Everything is anticlockwise in Pakistan

Ironically, everything in Pakistan seems to be upside down and anticlockwise. The country often experiences the opposite of what is typically needed for sustained and rapid progress and development. Major decisions that heavily impact the country are often made behind closed doors, based on hearsay, opinions, desires and vested interests rather than deep research and thorough analysis. Factors such as considering all pros and cons, anticipating all possible outcomes, identifying stakeholders, and assessing the policy's impact on them are often overlooked. Additionally, there is a lack of measuring benefits versus losses. In a more ideal scenario, policies would be tested on a smaller target population to evaluate outcomes before being implemented nationwide.

In our case, knee-jerk reactions often lead to policies being arbitrarily imposed on the nation without thorough consideration of their implications. Only after these policies fail to produce the desired results do authorities conduct studies to identify their faults, a process that should ideally precede policy implementation.

For instance, the government imposed a policy of telemetry to encourage businesses and households to adopt solar energy. This policy aimed to help produce cost-effective electricity, reduce the burden on the country's fragile distribution system, decrease the import bill of LNG, Furnace Oil, and diesel, fill the demand-supply gap, avoid and reduce load shedding, and add excess energy to the national grid.

All of a sudden, the government decided to reverse this policy, citing illogical, irrational, and outrageous reasons, which even in their hearts they knew had no basis and would hurt people and the country immensely.

The first reason given was that the government is supposedly subsidizing affluent households by paying them Rs.

19, and in some cases Rs. 22, for each unit of electricity transferred to the national grid. However, this claim is inaccurate. In reality, it is the households that are subsidizing the government. The government sells electricity to consumers at the rate of Rs. 65 per unit, while it purchases the electricity from households at Rs. 19, which is 3.4 times less than the selling price.

If the government decides to punish people for generating clean and environmentally friendly energy by either reducing the purchase price or reversing the policy altogether, households may install batteries to store the energy instead of transferring it to the national grid which would deprive the national grid from cost effective and clean source or energy.

Furthermore, the government is unfairly charging affluent households for converting to solar systems, portraying them as if they are committing a heinous crime and making them feel guilty for increasing the burden of electricity charges on the poor segment of society. In reality, the failure of the government to pay back hefty electricity charges to the Independent Power Producers is a major factor contributing to the ballooning electricity circular debt, and the telemetry policy has nothing to do with it.

The government is also unfairly charging affluent households as if they are violating the telemetry policy for converting too fast on solar energy, without realizing that it was the duty and responsibility of the policy makers and the planners to determine the speed of conversion on solar system through automatic check and control system, notwithstanding the fact that the government should encourage fast conversion of households to clean energy instead of terming them some kind

of criminals instead of rewarded them for fast conversion of the country to the clean electricity system.

The government is adamant about shifting the burden of their incompetencies to affluent households without realizing that responsible governments worldwide are encouraging and providing meaningful incentives for households to convert to clean energy sources.

In their eagerness to punish households for the success of their own policy, they overlook many examples of countries where telemetry is encouraged due to its overwhelming benefits.

Successful implementations can be seen in countries like Germany, Australia, and the United States, where households are encouraged to adopt solar energy systems due to numerous benefits. Firstly, at the household level, such systems can significantly reduce electricity bills, providing long-term savings. They offer energy independence, particularly in Pakistan with unreliable grid power, and can serve as a backup power source during outages. Additionally, excess energy generated can be sold back to the grid, further offsetting costs and potentially providing an additional income stream.

On a national or country level, promoting solar energy reduces reliance on fossil fuels, which enhances energy security and reduces the risk of price fluctuations in fossil fuel markets.

Diversifying the energy mix with renewables like solar also helps to mitigate climate change by reducing carbon emissions. This shift toward cleaner energy sources can lead to improvements in air quality and public health while contributing to biodiversity conservation by reducing habitat destruction and pollution asso-

ciated with fossil fuel extraction and use.

Governments worldwide have introduced various incentives to promote solar energy adoption. For instance, Germany's feed-in tariff scheme guaranteed fixed payment rates for renewable energy producers, including households with solar panels, leading to a rapid increase in installations.

In the United States, federal and state-level tax credits, rebates, and other incentives help reduce upfront costs for households and businesses. These incentives not only benefit individual households but also society as a whole by reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, and creating jobs in the renewable energy sector.

Foregoing in view, instead of blaming affluent households for a crime they never committed, the government should devise a plan to subsidize the poor segments of the society to convert their households to solar systems.

The government should also consider phasing out Independent Power Producers (IPPs) that were created due to incompetence, lack of relevant knowledge and foresight by government policy makers, planners, and implementers.

A third viable option is to reduce electricity prices, which would automatically discourage further conversion to solar systems, though this is highly inadvisable.

Furthermore, the government should, in all fairness, bring to justice all those who were responsible for the installation of IPPs, grid losses, electricity theft, making faulty and short-sighted policy decisions, and those who received massive kickbacks in the process. They should desist from victim-blaming, which in this instance is not the government but the people of Pakistan.

Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC

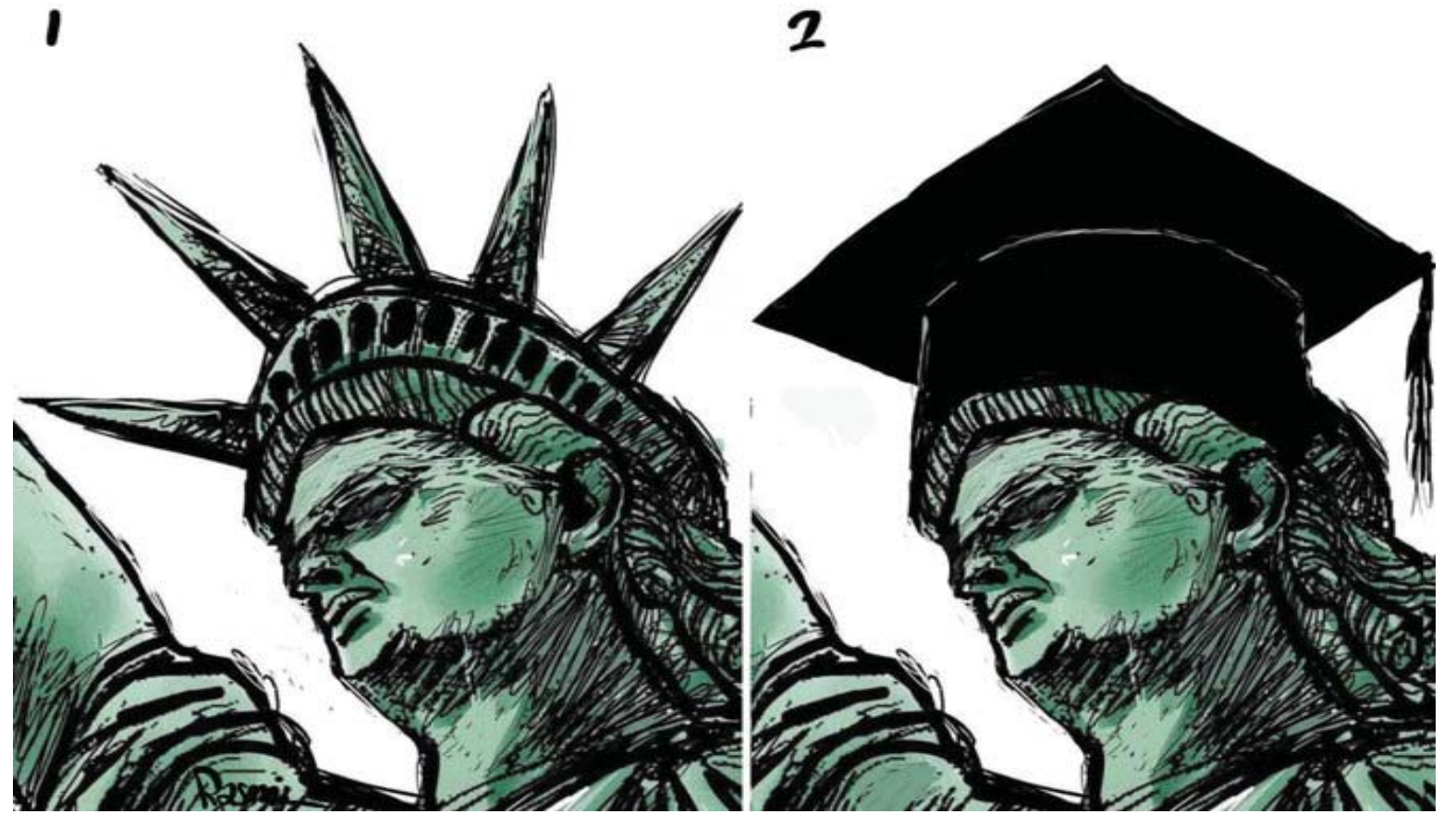


Analysis **Qamar Bashir**

China strongly condemns perpetrators of atrocity in Gaza

China on Monday strongly condemned the perpetrators of atrocity at Nasser Hospital and Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. "We are deeply shocked and strongly condemn the perpetrators of the atrocity," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian said during his regular briefing.

He was responding to a question regarding hundreds of bodies which were found days ago buried deep in the ground at Nasser Hospital and Al-Shifa Hospital. Lin Jian said that vast swaths of Gaza were now left in rubble, with over a million civilians struggling in despair on the brink of death. "The fact that this is even happening in the 21st century is an outrage to the moral conscience of humanity, and tramples on the most fundamental aspect of international justice," he added. The spokesperson said that more than 200 days had passed since October 7, and the conflict in Gaza had caused over 100,000 casualties and displaced over a million. Jin Jian said, "A humanitarian catastrophe that should never have happened continues to unfold before our eyes. The biggest imperative is to put in place a ceasefire as soon as possible. This is the number one overriding priority in Gaza." He said that the relevant country must no longer turn a deaf ear to the call for justice from people with conscience across the world. "It must no longer talk about the need of a ceasefire while pouring weapons into the conflict, and talk about aid while creating obstacles for humanitarian access. "It must immediately implement relevant UN Security Council resolutions, realize unconditional and durable ceasefire, and take concrete action to end this biggest humanitarian tragedy in the 21st century once and for all." He said as Foreign Minister Wang Yi noted in the written interview with Qatar-based Al Jazeera Media Network, the Gaza calamity showed once again that the perpetual denial of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people was the root cause of the Palestinian question, and was also the core issue of the Middle East question. Jin Jian said that China would continue to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with the Middle East countries and the whole international community to firmly support the just cause of the Palestinian people in restoring their legitimate national rights; firmly support internal reconciliation among different factions of Palestine through dialogue; firmly support Palestine's full membership in the United Nations at an early date; and firmly support establishing the independent State of Palestine and realizing "the Palestinians governing Palestine." "We call for a more broad-based, more authoritative and more effective international peace conference to set a timetable and a roadmap for the two-state solution, to promote comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question, and to ultimately realize peaceful co-existence between Israel and Palestine as well as harmony between the Arab and Jewish peoples," he added.



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

Army Audit and Plot Allocations in DHA - II

In the case of Pakistan, there appears to be limited or no provision for Army Personnel despite their remarkable and selfless service to the country. Defense Housing Authority (DHA) plots or military housing flats and houses are not provided free of cost to any Army Officer or Junior Commissioned Officer. DHA acquires land through purchase from the government or private owners. There are instances where landowners have refused to sell their land, resulting in the presence of villages within DHA areas. Officers contribute a portion of their salary over 25 to 30 years for the acquisition of plots, flats, or houses, often facing misconceptions that they receive everything for free. It's important to note that a Provident fund exists in every public or private institution, and military personnel have capital expenditure deducted from their salaries, with the accumulated funds invested in the Army Welfare Trust and other institutions, providing retirement benefits to employees. Additionally, the salaries of approximately one million Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel contribute to the country's economy.

Moreover, there are myths and misconceptions regarding military audits. In the domain of defense and security, where precision and accountability are paramount, military audit serves as a cornerstone in upholding integrity, efficiency, and prudent resource management. Beyond a mere bureau-

cratic exercise, military audit assumes a crucial role in safeguarding national security interests, optimizing operational efficacy, and bolstering public trust.

Military audit assumes a pivotal role in ensuring fiscal responsibility within defense organizations. By scrutinizing budget allocations, expenditures, and financial transactions, auditors furnish assurance that resources are utilized judiciously and in adherence to established protocols. This fosters transparency and accountability, enabling defense establishments to showcase prudent financial management and maintain public confidence in their stewardship of taxpayer funds. Given the sensitive nature of defense operations, the military is susceptible to risks such as fraud, corruption,

and financial mismanagement. Military audit serves as a critical defense against such threats by systematically examining financial records, procurement processes, and internal controls. Through thorough examination, auditors can detect anomalies, irregularities, and instances of misconduct, thereby protecting defense resources and upholding the integrity of defense institutions. Beyond financial considerations, military audit assumes a vital role in optimizing operational efficiency and efficacy. By assessing organizational structures, logistical processes, and resource deployment, auditors pinpoint inefficiencies, redundancies, and areas for enhancement. This empowers defense establishments to streamline operations,

bolster readiness, and optimize the utilization of limited resources, ultimately fortifying national defense capabilities. Military audit ensures adherence to a plethora of regulatory standards, legal obligations, and international commitments. From procurement guidelines to arms control accords, defense organizations navigate a complex array of legal frameworks necessitating meticulous compliance. Auditors offer assurance that these obligations are fulfilled, mitigating legal risks and upholding the reputation of defense establishments on the global stage. In an era of multinational operations and coalition warfare, interoperability and accountability assume paramount importance. Military audit promotes interoperability by verifying that defense organizations adhere to shared standards and protocols, facilitating seamless cooperation among allied forces. Furthermore, audit strengthens accountability by holding military leaders accountable for their decisions and conduct, thereby nurturing a culture characterized by transparency, professionalism, and trust among partner nations. Public trust is fundamental for the legitimacy and efficacy of defense establishments. Military audit assumes a pivotal role in cultivating public trust by furnishing independent assurance regarding the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of defense operations. By exemplifying transparency, accountability, and responsible governance, auditors reinforce public confidence in defense institutions, thus fortifying the defense contract between citizens and the armed forces.

To be continued



Analysis **Abdul Basit Alvi**

Kite Flying: From cultural festival to deadly sport

Muhammad Naeem Khan Niazi

Kite flying is a celebration of the spring season (Basant) which marks the benevolent intervening period between the receding winter and the advancing summer. Once a solace to hearts, kite-flying has turned into a scourge due to human deaths caused by the use of multi-layered heavy string (foreign twine) coated in synthetic materials over the past decades.

Kite flying (commonly known as Patang Bazi) is held between the second and fourth week of February every year. With the advent of February, a new life is breathed into the world of nature and the impact on the physical world is perceptible in many ways. Be it the mating of birds, sprouting of new vegetation in the mustard fields or human yearning for sport and festivity, the month of February liberate the spirit and kite flying is its expression. Kite flying, once celebrated as a festive occasion, had all the ingredients of a festival with a family reunion, music, dance on drum beat, old rivalries on kite battles and traditional food. It provided the human soul the occasion to welcome the warmth in nature and human relationships. Lahore, Gujranwala and Kasur were once considered centers of kite flying while the preparations started months in advance as people got hold of the best 'daur' or 'manjha' (abrasive twine) and hordes of kites. The 'daur' or 'manjha' is a cotton thread coated with crushed glass materials to make it slash other twine. The kite-flying festivities usually began at night under lights on the roof-tops and continued till the next sunset. Paper kites of different hues and colors enveloped the horizon while the deafening music was in consonance with the heated emotions of the kite flyers. The slaying of opponent's twine was celebrated with trumpets, flutes and 'dhol' while some fierce rivalries in kite flying battles ensued for decades. Kite flying is a sport and an art as well which has produced multifarious apprentices and masters over the years and its practitioners are found in all parts of the world. Kite flying is not about mere tossing the paper kite in the air and consigning it to the wind to decide its destiny but it is about dexterity, skill and ken which helps a kite flyer browbeat the opponents through masterful handling of the kite in the sky. A skillful kite flyer may cut the twine of the opponent in one

masterful stroke of his finger and send his supporters into ecstasy. Unfortunately, kite flying, being a popular sport in other parts of the world as well, embraced foreign influence and its practitioners succumbed to the use of foreign twine (multi-layered heavy string) coated in synthetic materials.

The foreign twine is made up of braided polyester as it suited the high-velocity winds in some of the beach countries while it is detrimental to the sport and life in this part of the world. The unusual strength of the foreign twine could cause fatal injuries as it could easily cut through human or animal bone and flesh. By the last decade of the 20th century, fatalities among children, youth and elderly due to the foreign kite string rose with every passing year and so ascended the public outcry against the sport which was turning deadly.

The Punjab government was forced to introduce the Punjab Prohibition of Dangerous Kite Flying Activities Ordinance in 2001 and subsequently imposed a blanket ban on kite flying in 2009 after it failed to sensitize the public and control the supply of deadly kite string. Despite the legislation and ban, thousands of lives have been lost and the number is rising with each passing year. The death of motorcyclist Asif Shafiq (22) in Faisalabad, and another in Islamabad last month are a rude awakening to the throat-slitting by kite string of Aftab Ahmed (30), a lecturer in Chemistry at Dayal Singh College, Lahore some three years back. The police unleashed a relentless crackdown against illegal kite-flying and made 2770 arrests besides recovering 310464 kites under the Anti-Kite Flying Act. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif ordered a zero-tolerance policy against the use of lethal kite strings and violations. Today, there remains only a skeleton of the festivity called kite flying with sporadic illegal kite flying practice snubbed with an iron hand by the law enforcers in the province. Historian Fakir Syed Aijazuddin, said kite-flying was a cultural identity that must be protected from extinction. He, however, said the use of illegal kite string needs to be checked through major penalties. He proposed open spaces like the Greater Iqbal Park and the peripheral city areas should be dedicated to the kite flying festivity. Dr. Azhar Iqbal alias Billa, a renowned kite flyer from Lahore proposed that the government should allow the sale of 9 cord twine only which could lift a maximum weight of half kilogram and ban the production and sale of double-braided kite string to avoid it turning into a deadly sport.

Successful Mauritius

Mauritius celebrates Independence & Republic Day in a cheerful event

By Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Mauritius High Commissioner to Pakistan H. E. Mr. Rashidally Soobadar and his spouse commemorated the 56th anniversary of Independence Day and 32nd Mauritius Republic Day here at a local hotel. The ceremony was attended by Senator Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chairman of the Senate Defence Committee, MNA, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Former Minister of State for Capital Administration and Development of Pakistan, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps H. E. Mr. Atadjan Novlamov, Dean of the African Group, Ambassador of Morocco H. E. Mr. Karmoune, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Pakistan, Mr. Shehryar Akbar Khan of the Africa Desk, Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Charge D' Affairs, and media persons.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Rashidally Soobadar lauded the deeply rooted cordial relations of both countries and said, today Mauritius is a safe and secure country, as it is one of the most peaceful countries on the African continent. He also thanked prominent personalities, diplomats, and excellencies. He paid special thanks to the Deputy Head of Mission and staff for peacefully organizing the event. The high commissioner also highlighted the significance of independence and cherished the value of freedom. Mauritius has changed the whole destiny of the island in a short period, he added.

He also shed light on the achievements since independence on 12th March 1968. Mauritius values peace, security, law and order, good governance, accountability, accessibility, and the rule of law. He said Mauritius offers tourism expertise to exploit the untapped potential of the sector, saying he believed it can significantly contribute to the national economy. Mauritius has a strong road infrastructure, standard hotels, quality transport, and all the allied facilities to facilitate and attract tourists. He said the entire world was facing a difficult time and despite severe lockdowns due to Covid-19, Mauritius' economy was recovering gradually from these financial constraints because of tourism.

H. E. Mr. Rashidally Soobadar said in his speech that the first European power to colonize the Island was the Dutch (Lahollande) in 1595 they brought slaves and cultivated sugarcane and they named the island Mauritius in honour of their Prince Maurice Vanddenassau. The Dutch too failed to colonize it properly and they left the Island. In 1710 the French came and they started up to 1810. Britain took over in 1810 after defeating the French in a naval battle. The British stayed until 1968. Mauritius took over in 1968 and we retain the name Mauritius.

The ambassador said that the country was in very bad shape with high unemployment and the prevalence of poverty there was only one economic activity on the Island: sugarcane cultivation. Two British economists condemned the Island at a time when there was no hope and no future as it was indeed a period of gloom.

The early measures taken by the Mauritius government in 1968 were focused on addressing the daunting challenges of that period. It was a struggle against the odds. Amongst the early measures taken, the first was to build a welfare state of Mauritius while the rest of the five pillars were Free education from pre-primary to university, free transport for students, free textbooks, and examination fees paid by the government. Our whole education system is linked with Cambridge UK. We spend 4 to 5 % of our GDP on education. The second pillar is health service which is free for all Mauritians. The third pillar is the construction of houses for low-income citizens. There are 95% of Mauritians are house owners. The fourth pillar is basic retirement allowances for Mauritians of age 60. The fifth pillar is transport-free for all Mauritians 60 and above. The Mauritius government instead of spending elsewhere, invests in the welfare of the people. He said we have no army, no air force, and no military. After 56 years

of freedom, when the world was moving towards neo-liberalism and a free market, Mauritius has been investing in the welfare state. We diversified the economy from one cropped economy to seven or eight economic pillars. Our economic diversification is being used by the World Bank as a model in Sub-Saharan Africa.

He said we built a modern and very sophisticated hospitality sector and recently built a cruise terminal for cruise ships. He added we built a solid financial sector based on global business. We are exploring a blue economy and developed a very strong ICT sector. Mauritius has become a strong secular state. He shared we built a Mauritian identity and character despite, we people came from different continents. He said people of various faiths are living together in perfect harmony and they are growing, working, building, and sharing together as we have learned to build bridges only and not walls. We raised our income per capita from 160 USD to 13,500 USD. Talking about the socio-economic indicators by world bodies he shared a few facts including ease of doing business by the World Bank, Mauritius ranks 18th out of 200 countries Human Development Index, and Mauritius ranks 60 in 2022. In the Corrup-



tion Index, Mauritius ranks 55 out of nearly 200 countries. In the Peaceful Index, Mauritius ranks 23rd out of 200 countries, and in the Democratic Index, Mauritius ranks 20th among the most democratic countries in the World.

Press freedom index by Reporters Without Borders Mauritius ranks 63rd out of 180 countries. For good governance and the rule of law, the Ibrahim Awards an African institution based in the UK always awards 1st or 2nd positions to Mauritius. The recent index of World

Economics, a UK-based institution in Mauritius as the best-governed country in Africa.

In 56 years of freedom, Mauritius has led to peaceful co-existence and also the creation of a Mauritian society based on the welfare of the nation. This is indeed a Mauritian miracle (Lemiracle Mauritian). He said there were too many problems including Drugs, Aging, and Climate Change which were addressed by the government. Talking about Mauritius and Pakistan Relationships, he said we have special ties with Pakistan

and we established our diplomatic Mission in Islamabad in 1970 while Pakistan opened its High Commission in Mauritius in 1969.

Almost 55 years have passed since then we have been working together on an array of projects for the uplift of the living conditions of our respective populations. There are very few countries in the World with whom Mauritius has special ties. Our people emanate from three continents (i) Africa (ii) Europe (iii) Asia.

The ambassador said Mauri-

tians of African Descent came mainly from Mozambique, Madagascar, Seashell, and Senegal. With these countries, we have very special ties as a large portion of our population is of African descent. From Europe we have two countries with whom we have very special ties: France and the UK we have a francophone community that is Mauritian of European origin. We have also an Anglophone community and with these countries too we have blood ties. From

the Asian Continent, we have 3 countries that share Mauritius namely: China, India, and Pakistan. With all these three countries, Mauritius has very special ties and as members of the Global South, we work very closely with them.

Mauritians are very fond of languages. Urdu is one of them. We teach Urdu from Primary to Tertiary level and Urdu Language is very musical to the ears. Mauritians are very fond of Qawali, Ghazal, Sher-o-Shayari,

mushaira, and Pakistani dramas. In this context, we are working on a bilateral project to build an Urdu House in Mauritius for the promotion of the Urdu language and associated cultures. The ambassador said we can work together with Pakistan on a host of priority sectors like disaster risk reduction, Health matters, the ICT sector, the hospitality sector, and the promotion of ancestral cultures and traditions.

Photos: Sultan Bashir

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
71,695.03	72,742.74
Day's High	Day's Low
73,300.75	71,602.94
Index Value	Change
16,325,126,563	-1047.71
Percentage	Time
-1.44%	29 Apr, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,147.03	+7.20
Percentage	Time
+0.088%	29 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,346.03	+106.37
Percentage	Time
+0.28%	29 Apr, 1:06 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
37,934.76	+306.28
Percentage	Time
+0.81%	26 Apr, 3:15 pm GMT+

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	178.5	180
Bahrain Dinar	740.37	748.37
Canadian Dollar	200.8	203
China Yuan	38.47	38.87
Danish Krone	40.02	40.42
Euro	294.5	297.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.56	35.91
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	903.19	912.19
Malaysian Ringgit	58.28	58.88
New Zealand \$	165.38	167.38
Norwegians Krone	25.35	25.65
Omani Riyal	723.13	731.13
Qatari Riyal	76.48	77.18
Saudi Riyal	73.35	74
Singapore Dollar	204.5	206.5
Swedish Korona	25.53	25.83
Swiss Franc	305.76	308.26
Thai Bhat	7.52	7.67
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.75
UK Pound Sterling	344	348.2
US Dollar	277.25	279.85

Pakistan lost Rs800 billion due to IPR violations last year: OICCI

PPA

KARACHI: Effective protection of intellectual property rights [IPR] is essential for attracting and retaining FDI [Foreign Direct Investment]. According to the OICCI IPR Survey 2023, infringements resulted in a loss of up to Rs800 billion to the national exchequer last year alone. Companies too reported a total loss of 20% of their turnover due to these infringements. These views were expressed by Mr. M Abdul Aleem, CE/Secretary General of the OICCI at the launch ceremony of second edition of its IPR Manual 'Evolution of Intellectual Property Rights in Pakistan: OICCI Perspective (Edition 2)' on Monday.

Speaking at the event, Farukh Amil, Chairman of the Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPOP), stated that "Intellectual Property is directly linked to development in numerous ways and is a critical tool

for empowerment." He emphasized the necessity for grassroots awareness of the potential of IP, starting as early as at the school level. "The younger generation absolutely must be in step with global knowledge and standards."

The objective of the publication is to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of IPR laws in Pakistan for the facilitation of investors and innovators. The manual will benefit foreign and local investors understanding of the IPR regime in Pakistan, providing useful IPR related guidelines for law students and practitioners, regulators and people interested in fostering the culture of innovation and inventions.

Usman Javed Altaf, group director (Legal & Intellectual Property), Martin Dow, added that, "These infringements also harm consumers, who may be unknowingly purchasing counterfeit or substandard products, posing risks to their health and safety." He noted that



the Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPOP) must engage with law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to bolster enforcement efforts.

The OICCI members believe that while there is comprehensive IPR legislation in place, there is a need for a more robust enforcement of IPR, where IPOP could play a key role in ensuring that the LEAs ensure strict IPR enforcement.

Besides speedy court trials, harsh penal-

ties are needed to create a deterrent amongst IPR violators. Moreover, it is recommended to improve the IPR capability of LEAs and judiciary and create an awareness in the society using the media effectively.

Aman Ghanchi, Executive Director Legal and Company Secretary Unilever Pakistan, added that "Effective use of media is crucial to raise mass awareness and protect both customer interests and government revenue streams."

Its latest publication is an updated edition of similar last publication released in February 2019. OICCI has added two new chapters on Plant Breeders Rights and Geographical Indications in this 2023-2024 edition of the OICCI IPR Manual. The Chamber has also updated chapters relating to Trademarks, Patents, Copyrights, Designs and Enforcement of IPR to respect latest developments in these critical areas.

Launching Ceremony

ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam in a group photo during a launching ceremony of WEF's National Plastic Action Partnership held at COMSATS wherein more than 12 countries ambassadors participated on Monday.



Photo: PID

Ghazanfar Azzam steps down as CEO of Mobilink Bank

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ghazanfar Azzam has decided to step down as the President and CEO of Mobilink Bank after 12 years of service. Under his leadership, Mobilink Bank has experienced remarkable growth and solidified its position as a leader in the Microfinance sector. He helped the Bank undergo rapid digital transformation to strengthen its financial stability, business resilience, and future readiness.

The Board of Directors (BoD) has appointed Mobilink Bank's current Chief Operating Officer (COO), Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, as the Interim CEO, effective April 29, 2024. This appointment is subject to approval from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).



The Board has commenced the search for the upcoming CEO who will continue to drive the Bank's mission forward and ensure long-term success. Chairman BoD, Mobilink Bank and CEO Jazz, Aamir Ibrahim stated, "We thank Ghazanfar for his valuable service over the years and wish him luck. We are committed to a seamless transition and to maintaining the high standards of service and integrity that our customers have come to expect from Mobilink Bank."

Focus on innovation, creativity & efficiency needed to promote exports: Ahsan Bakhtawari

PPA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that we have to focus on innovation and creativity to boost foreign exchange earnings and putting the country on road to progress.

Addressing the oath taking ceremony of Islamabad Association of Printing and Graphic Arts Industry's newly elected office bearer as chief guest Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will fully coordinate with the IAPGAI for ease of business and smooth sail.

He said that businessmen are playing a significant role in the development of national economy by promoting businesses, creating jobs and paying taxes, therefore they should be given due representation in policy making and decision making in government entities for the formulation of business friendly policies. Earlier he took oath from the office bearers.

Newly elected President Islamabad Association of Printing and Graphic Arts Industry Sher Mohammad said that IAPGAI is determined to coordinate with Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the promotion of trade



at home and abroad for the benefit of the community and the country.

President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajraan Ajmal Baloch said that traders community is united under the leadership of ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari who is working day and night for the cause of the community.

Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari impressed upon the traders to join Islamabad Chamber of

Commerce and Industry in maximum to get resolved their problems.

President Traders Welfare Association G 8/1 Nasir Chaudhry, General Secretary IAPGAI Asif Bhatti and others addressed the ceremony, attended by a large number of traders.

Former SVP ICCI Khalid Chaudhry, Babar Chaudhry, Imtiaz Abbasi, Malik Nadeem and Azher Iqbal Malik were also present on the occasion.

Chamber of Small Traders, Industries laud SC's edict to end encroachments

PPA

HYDERABAD: Muhammad Farooq Shaikhani, President Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry, expressed appreciation for the Supreme Court of Pakistan's directive to eradicate all encroachments, highlighting their detrimental impact on business operations. Notably, he underscored the perceived limitations of the municipal corporation, provincial and federal authorities in addressing this issue.

With Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa clear mandate, Shaikhani urged decisive action from the municipal commission-

er and the anti-encroachment department to eliminate encroachments city-wide. Emphasizing urgency, he stressed the immediate cessation of encroachments along vital highways, residential areas of Latifabad, Qasimabad and Hyderabad city, including the government lands of the municipality to swiftly restore unimpeded traffic flow.

Farooq Shaikhani lamented the apparent inefficiency of the anti-encroachment department, which has allowed mafias to brazenly seize main highways and residential zones across Latifabad, Qasimabad and Hyderabad, even encroaching upon government lands.

NBP continues to empower Farmers, Women in Agriculture with Discounted Loans

PPA

KARACHI: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) is proudly expanding its Agricultural Loan Program and encourages women in the agricultural sector.

NBP understands the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in agriculture and offers a comprehensive package of benefits to eliminate financial barriers and encourage greater female participation.

To empower women in agriculture, NBP offers discounted markup rates on loans, eliminates minimum earning requirements, provides flexible terms, and prioritizes swift loan processing, ensuring women have timely access to financing for long-term investments

in equipment and resources. The NBP Agricultural Loan Program offers a significant advantage to all farmers through its competitive 7% markup rate.

The loan can be used to finance a range of agricultural needs, including warehouse, solar tube-well, fisheries, new tractors, agriculture baler, seeds, soil, pesticides, etc.

To promote cutting-edge agricultural technology, like High-Efficiency Irrigation Systems, NBP partners with Agriculture Universities, Tractors & Implements Businesses, and Punjab & Sindh Agriculture Departments.

This translates to more accessible and affordable financing, empowering farmers to invest in essential resources and optimize their agricultural operations.

FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Limited announces Q1, 2024 results

PPA

KARACHI: FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL) announced its financial results for Q1, 2024, delivering a strong topline growth of 21% (PKR 27.5 billion compared to PKR 22.7 billion in the same period last year) despite the challenging operating environment and economic slowdown. This increase was fueled by volume growth and relevant consumer offerings.

The Company witnessed a gross profit growth of 1%, while gross margin declined by 320 bps due to currency devaluation and inflationary pressure on commodities and energy prices.

Profit after tax (as a percentage of sales) declined by 200



bps over LY (Rs. 0.67 billion vs. Rs. 0.99 billion in the same period last year) due to an increase in interest rates.

Dairy-Based Products Segment
The segment reported a revenue of Rs. 26.1 billion, reflecting a growth of 15% compared to the same period last year. The growth was led by our flagship brand Olper's, through consistent brand building and trade activities.

Olper's continued to expand the reach of its 1 1/2 Pao Bachat Pack Campaign through TV and Digital channels. The Olper's 1 1/2 Pao Bachat Pack, an ideal size for a single breakfast occasion, provides the right milk quantity needed for a family's daily breakfast needs.

Our value-added brands like Olper's Cream, Olper's Cheese, Dobala, and Tarka have continued to gain volume despite

competition from established players.

Frozen Desserts Segment

The segment reported a revenue of Rs. 1.36 billion compared to Rs. 1.44 billion period last year. The recent challenging times and a delayed summer onset, coupled with an unexpected rainy season across the Country, impacted the expected growth. However, the Company anticipates a quick recovery in Q2 as the season fully commences.

The Company's Annual General Meeting was held on April 26th, 2023 at the Royal Rodale in Karachi, where the shareholders and the Board of Directors discussed the Company's performance in 2023.

FFC Announces First Quarterly Results for Year 2024



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) has announced its financial results for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024 in its Board of Directors' meeting held on April 29, 2024.

Sona Urea production by the Company stood at 654 thousand tonnes, whereas, sales were recorded at 661 thousand tonnes 5% higher than 2023. The Company also marketed 94 thousand tonnes urea imported by the Government for steady supply of urea to the farmers. Aggregate urea sales of the Company thus stood at 755 thousand tonnes compared to 631 thousand tonnes of same period last year.

Higher sales volume besides increase in selling prices due to significant escalation in gas prices towards close of last year resulted in higher sales revenue of Rs 58.4 billion compared to Rs 36.4 billion same period last year.

High cost of imported urea, inflation and higher gas prices caused the cost of sales to increase by 88% to Rs 41.1 billion. Distribution cost also surged by 70% to Rs 5.2 billion mainly due to the implementation of Axle Weight Regulation and impact of inflation. The increase in Super tax levy by Finance Act 2023 led to higher effective tax rate of 42% compared to 35% same period last year.

The highlight of the performance is record return on investments and dividend income aggregating to Rs 10.3 billion. As a result, net profitability of FFC stood at Rs 10.5 billion with earnings per share of Rs 8.27 compared to Rs 6.08 per share same period last year. Profitability in dollar terms at USD 38 million, however, remained static at the level of 2021.

The Board of Directors of FFC has announced first interim dividend of Rs 5.5 per share, for the first quarter of 2024.

CM Maryam Nawaz will inaugurate First CM Punjab Pink Games

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar announced that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz will inaugurate First CM Punjab Pink Games 2024 on May 2. The first CM Punjab Pink Games will be held from May 2 to 5.

The Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs made this announcement at the logo unveiling ceremony in the presence of a large number of media personnel at the National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial, Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal, Deputy Director Zahoor Ahmed and other officials were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the press conference, Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar said that 1,300 female athletes from 19 universities of the Punjab province will participate in the Pink Games. "A hefty prize money of Rs 50 lakh will be distributed among the participating players in the first Chief Minister Punjab Pink Games," he added.



Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar announced that all the participating female athletes will be given best facilities including playing kits and allowances during the first Chief Minister Punjab Pink Games. "Our monitoring committees will observe the performance of all athletes minutely for the merit based selection of female athletes. We will hold more such events in future to give maximum playing opportunities to our female athletes."

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar further said that the first Chief Minister Punjab Pink Games is a mega sports event for female athletes who will be seen in action in seven sports disciplines such as badminton, table tennis, archery, basketball, athletics, hockey and cricket (tape ball) competitions. "Sports Board Punjab will select the best 100 players from Pink Games and prepare them for inter-provincial games," he added.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar informed the media that two major sports events—Punjab League and Punjab Games will be organized in near future. "The competitions of Punjab League will be staged in phased manner from union council level to tehsil district, divisional and provincial level," he elaborated.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has completely focused on women's sports events. "The female athletes were not given much importance in sports in the past but Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz is playing an active role for the development of sports culture particularly female sports across the province," he added.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayyub Khokhar said that 500 top performing talented male and female athletes will be groomed as per requirements of international sports competitions. "The talented athletes of different games will be retained for one year and during this period they will be provided with the best training facilities," he added.

Kabaddi

FAISALABAD: A view of the Kabaddi match played between FESCO Kabaddi team and MEPCO Kabaddi team during 49 WAPDA Inter Unit Kabaddi Circle Tournament 2024 at FESCO Sports Ground.



Government committed to promoting hockey: Hanif Abbasi



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Leader, Hanif Abbasi on Monday said the national game hockey was top priority of the government, and efforts were being made to promote sport across the country. In the previous PML-N government's tenure, over 20 hockey stadiums were constructed and astro turfs were laid across the country. This year would see a significant boost in sports promotion, he added.

Abbasi expressed these views during a visit to Viqar-un-Nisa Post Graduate College, where he also announced the establishment of a hockey academy. He promised to provide all necessary facilities and coaching to the academy, with the help of Olympian Khawaja Junaid. Abbasi said the PML-N government had always supported sports and athletes, and this initiative was also part of that commitment. Khawaja Junaid, who was also present on the occasion, lauded Abbasi's efforts in constructing hockey grounds across the country and expressed his full support for the hockey academy. The hockey academy will start functioning within the next 10 days. A cricket academy has already been established in Viqar-un-Nisa Post Graduate College in collaboration with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). The college will provide the necessary infrastructure and players, while Khawaja Junaid's hockey academy will provide the necessary equipment, including hockey sticks, balls, goalkeepers' kits, and qualified coaches. This initiative was a significant step towards promoting hockey and providing opportunities to young athletes to excel in the sport.

Trophy of First CM Punjab Pink Games was unveiled at Punjab University

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The trophy of First CM Punjab Pink Games was unveiled at Punjab University and Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) in the presence of hundreds of female athletes of different universities on Monday.

The tour of First CM Punjab Pink Games trophy began at Nation Hockey Stadium on a decorated vehicle amid loud drum beats and national songs. The trophy of First CM Punjab Pink Games first reached Punjab University and then travelled to LCWU.

Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Vice Chancellor



Lahore College for Women University Professor Shagufta Naz, University of Lahore Sports Director Sumaira Sattar, Punjab University Sports Director Zubair Butt and Additional Director Tahira Saleem, District Sports Officer Lahore Tanveer Shah and Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti participated in the

trophy unveiling ceremonies. National and international women players and coaches also participated in the events.

Vice Chancellor Lahore College For Women University Professor Shagufta Naz and Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar and Punjab University Sports Directors Sumaira Sattar addressed the trophy

unveiling ceremonies. The participants also took out a rally on bikes to highlight the significance of First CM Punjab Pink Games.

Vice Chancellor Lahore College for Women University Prof Dr Shagufta Naz said that the organization of the first Chief Minister Punjab Pink Games from Sports Board Punjab is a welcome sign for the future of female athletes. "Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has won hearts by organizing this great event for women," she added.

University of Lahore Sports Director Sumaira Sattar said that such games will encourage women athletes to a great extent.

Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar win 6th round matches of National Women's One-Day Tournament

Spots Desk

FAISALABAD: Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar won their 6th round matches of the National Women's One-Day Tournament held here on Monday.

In the match between Peshawar and Rawalpindi, Sidra Nawaz's unbeaten 80 off 109 balls, which included six four helped Peshawar beat Rawalpindi by two wickets with 16 balls to spare.

Batting first at the Jawad Sports Complex Ground, Rawalpindi managed to score 151 for nine in 50 overs. For Peshawar, Captain Mahnoor Aftab picked three wickets for 18 runs in 10 overs.

In the second match of the day, a half-century by Yusra Amir and seven wickets between left-

arm spinners Anosha Nasir and Maham Manzoor led Karachi to a six-wicket win over Quetta at the Bohranwali Ground.

Opting to bat first, Quetta were bowled out for 156 in 49 overs, with Khadija Chishti scoring 50 off 77 balls, which included nine boundaries. Karachi's left-arm spinners Maham and Anosha were the pick of the bowlers, with the former bagging four wickets for 33 and the latter clinched three scalps for 21 runs from 10 overs.

In reply, wicketkeeper-batter Yusra (64 not out, 92b, 6x4s) helped her side chase down the target with 17 overs to spare.

At the Iqbal Stadium, in a low scoring contest, Lahore overcame Multan by four wickets courtesy of a half century by Iram Javed and

three wickets each by Ayesha Bilal and Qurat-ul-Ain.

Batting first, Multan was bundled out for 123 in 39 overs. Opening batter Sadaf Shamas was the only batter to score in double figures and returned undefeated on 81 off 112 balls, hitting 11 fours and a six.

In turn, Lahore achieved the target in the 28th over, losing six wickets in the process. Iram (54, 81b, 5x4s, 2x6s) added 63 runs for the fifth wicket with Noreen Yaqoob (33, 43b, 4x4s) to take her side home.

Scores in brief:

Peshawar beat Rawalpindi by two wickets at Jawad Sports Complex Ground. Rawalpindi 151-9, 50 overs (Aqsa Yousuf 28, Aima Saleem 26, Waheeda Akhtar 22, Fajar Naved 20;

Mahnoor Aftab 3-18, Aleena Shah 2-38).

Peshawar 152-8, 47.2 overs (Sidra Nawaz 80 not out; Tania Saeed 3-23, Fatima Zahra 2-28).

Player of the match - Sidra Nawaz (Peshawar).

Lahore beat Multan by four wickets at Iqbal Stadium.

Multan 123 all out, 39 overs (Sadaf Shamas 81 not out; Qurat-ul-Ain 3-22, Ayesha Bilal 3-23, Zunash Sattar 2-15).

Lahore 124-6, 27.4 overs (Iram Javed 54, Noreen Yaqoob 33, Samiya Afsar 20; Shameer Rajput 2-20).

Player of the match- Iram Javed and Noreen Yaqoob (Lahore).

Karachi beat Quetta by six wickets at Bohranwali Ground.

Quetta 156 all out, 49 overs (Khadija Chishti 50; Maham



Manzoor 4-33, Anosha Nasir 3-21).

Karachi 158-4, 33 overs (Yusra Amir 64 not out, Omaima Sohail 39; Kinza Wahab 2-20).

Asian Ju-Jitsu Championship will be held in Abu Dhabi

Spots Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Ju-Jitsu Championship will be held in Abu Dhabi from May 1 to May 8, 2024. Top Pakistani athletes will represent Pakistan in the championship.

According to details provided by the Pakistan Jiu-Jitsu Federation, the national team has been announced for the Asian Jiu-Jitsu Championship 2024, including senior team members Muhammad Ammar, Isra Waseem, and Kainat Arif, along with junior members under 18 Muhammad Yousaf Ali, Umar Yasin, and Hamad Baloch will be under 16 category. Additionally, Dalwar Khan Sannan and Abu Hurrara will participate in the Asian Referee Seminar and Exam. Tariq Ali, the General Secretary of the Pakistan Jiu-Jitsu Federation, will be the head national team and represent Pakistan at the General Assembly of the Jiu-Jitsu Asian Union.

The President of the Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation expressed hope that the national team would demonstrate excellent performance in the championship, building on their success in the 2023 Asian Jiu-Jitsu Championship in Thailand. He also emphasized the federation's commitment to providing ample opportunities for junior athletes and ensuring the best possible preparation with the support of the Pakistan Sports Board.

Punjab Minister for Sports announces a cash prize of Rs five lakh for the karate star

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan karate star Rizwan Ali, who outplayed India's Pawan Gupta in the Karate Combat 45 competition in Dubai, called on Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar at National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar announced a cash prize of Rs five lakh for the karate star. He also congratulated Rizwan Ali for winning memorable encounter against strong Indian opponent Pawan Gupta.

Talking on this occasion, Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that international coach will be invited to Pakistan for world class training of Rizwan. "Besides this, best sports facilities will be provided to Rizwan for his future international karate competitions".

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that Sports Board Punjab is taking effective measures for the development of sports and the sports competitions will be organised from the union council level to the provincial level to provide maximum playing opportunities to potential youth of the province.

Karate star Rizwan Ali on this occasion thanked Provincial Sports Minister Punjab Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar and Punjab Government for awarding cash prize and encouraging him.

Pakistan's Ashab wins Rochester Proam Squash



Spots Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan emerging squash player Muhammad Ashab Irfan has made the country proud by winning the US 9000\$ Rochester Proam Squash Tournament.

He downed Gomez Dominguez of Mexico by 3-1 in the final held at Huston squash club, USA. According to details, after months of hard work and dedication with special support from Huston Squash Club Ashab won his first PSA title as his achievement was even more notable as he is only the second Pakistani player to win a PSA title outside of Pakistan in recent years, cementing his position as a rising star in the sport.

The second seed and world number 112 from Pakistan looked very energetic and aggressive during the final match of the tournament, Ashab squared off against Gomez Dominguez in a thrilling encounter as young Ashab emerged triumphant with a 3-1 victory, securing the title with set scores of 12-10, 11-4, 9-11, and 11-9 during 60 minutes decisive game.

As the stakes heightened in the semi-final, Ashab Irfan faced a formidable opponent in Ronald Palamino of Columbia. Despite dropping two sets, Ashab displayed resilience and determination, ultimately prevailing with a hard-fought 3-2 victory. The set scores reflected the intensity of the match, with Irfan claiming victory with scores of 9-11, 11-9, 11-2, 4-11, and 11-4.

Jahanzeb Khan, owner of Huston Squash Club said Ashab was the second Pakistani player who win the PSA title in abroad is being supported by Huston Squash Club and we were very happy that young squash players are making Pakistan's name outshine at the international level.

Meeting

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with Prime Minister of Malaysia H.E. Anwar Ibrahim on Monday.



Photo: PID

PM, Malaysian counterpart reaffirm to broaden bilateral cooperation in diverse fields

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on Monday recalled the historical ties between Pakistan and Malaysia, especially in the fields of education, science and technology and trade and under-

took to further enhance the cooperation in the future. The prime minister invited a trade and business delegation from Malaysia to Pakistan to discuss enhancing trade and investment relations between the two countries.

PM, Malaysian counterpart reaffirm to broaden bilateral cooperation in diverse fields

The prime minister met the Malaysian counterpart on the sidelines of the Special Meeting of the World Economic Forum, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. This was the first in person meeting between both leaders since Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was re-elected in March. The two leaders

have, however, spoken twice on telephone, i.e. on March 4 when the Prime Minister took office as well as on April 10, this year on Eid ul Fitr. Following up on their warm conversations on telephone, the prime minister appreciated the leadership of Malaysian premier and also commended his knowledge of art and

literature - particularly about the national poet of Pakistan Allama Iqbal. The two sides also agreed to have the next meeting of Joint Ministerial Commission in Islamabad soon. Prime Minister Sharif reiterated his invitation to Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to undertake an official visit to Pakistan later this year.

President confers Nishan-i-Imtiaz (M) upon Commander of Turkish Land Forces



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari conferred the award of Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, Commander of Turkish Land Forces, during a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. He conferred the award in recognition of his services in promoting and strengthening defence relations between Pakistan and Turkiye.

Later, the visiting Commander of Turkish Land Forces, General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, also called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The meeting was also attended by the Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir.

The meeting discussed matters pertaining to defence cooperation between the two brotherly countries. Both sides emphasised the need for further expanding bilateral ties for the mutual benefit of Pakistan and

Turkiye.

Talking to the Commander of Turkish Land Forces, the President said that Pakistan was proud of its relations with Turkiye, which had always supported Pakistan on core issues. He expressed satisfaction over the collaboration between Pakistan and Turkiye on a number of projects that would further strengthen bilateral ties.

Commander of Turkish Land Forces, General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, reiterated the desire to further improve defence cooperation with Pakistan. He said that both countries could significantly contribute to the promotion of regional peace and stability.

The President congratulated the Commander of Turkish Land Forces on receiving the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) and hoped that he would continue to play his role to further strengthen defence cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

PML-N ready to sit with PTI, says Rana Sanaullah

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A still shows PML-N leader Rana Sanaullah an interview with Off the Record with Kashif Abbasi aired on ARY News on April 29, 2024. Screengrab via ARY News

The PML-N was ready to sit with the PTI, party leader Rana Sanaullah said as Imran Khan's expresses its readiness to hold negotiations with "real stakeholders".

"We are ready to sit with them as a political force," he said in an interview with Off the Record with Kashif Abbasi aired on ARY News on Monday. On Sunday, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Shibli Faraz said that the terms of reference would be decided before talks with the establishment and political parties.

When asked if the PML-N was to sit with the PTI if the former's committee approaches latter, Sanaullah said: "Yes, of course. Even if they say approach us, we will approach them."

He went on to add that the N-league was even ready to talk with the PTI when the party was abusing them and ruling the government.

The PML-N leader added that they even waited for more than one hour for former prime minister Imran Khan when a briefing was called after Pulwama attack. He added that all top leaders of political parties attended the meeting.

Audio leak case: Justice Babar Sattar imposes hefty fines on FIA, PTA and Pemra

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court Justice Babar Sattar rejected pleas from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) in the Bushra Bibi audio leaks case and imposed fines of Rs 500,000 on each of the institutions.

The Islamabad High Court also sought a response from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) regarding the matter.

Justice Babar Sattar is heading petitions filed by Bushra Bibi's lawyer Latif Khosa and Najam Saqib, the son of former CJP Justice Saqib Nisar, against a notification of the parliamentary committee formed on the audio leaks. The parliamentary committee is probing the leaks and has summoned Najam Saqib and Bushra Bibi.

PEMRA, PTI, FIA, and IB had filed separate applications in the audio leaks case, seeking the recusal of Justice Babar Sattar from the case.

The leaked audio allegedly involving Bushra Bibi and Najam Saqib surfaced in April 2023 and it was claimed that Saqib Nisar could be heard demanding a "reward" for job done for a PTI ticket candidate.

Narowal Science Fair-2024 inspires young students to become scientists

Bureau Report

NAROWAL: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday participated as a special guest in the ongoing science fair at University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Narowal Campus. The students of different departments of the university presented their final year projects for exhibition at the Innovation Center of the University of Engineering and Technology sub-campus Narowal.

The projects exhibited by the students of various departments including electrical, mechanical, civil, bio-medical engineering, computer engineering were inspected by the minister. Students of various universities including Agriculture University Faisalabad, UMT Sialkot Campus, ITU University of Narowal, Veterinary University Narowal Campus participated in the ongoing Science Fair at UET Narowal Campus. Later, Ahsan Iqbal handed over the new buses provided to the University of Engineering and Technology Narowal Campus, besides planting a sapling in the university. The minister also participated in the prize distribution ceremony in the seminar hall of UET Narowal Campus. Speaking on this occasion, he said "UET Narowal Campus was my dream for which I have worked hard to achieve."

Intelligence operation in Tank district, four terrorists killed in 'hell'

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On night 28/29 April 2024, security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in Tank district on reported presence of terrorists.

Own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location as a result of which four terrorists were sent to hell. These terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from them.

Locals of the area appreciated the operation by the Security Forces, who remain determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country.

Dar will boost economic diplomacy as Deputy PM: Mian Zahid Hussain

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that Mian Nawaz Sharif is set to resume the presidency of PML-N after a seven-year gap.

He said this shift will be a significant development and a welcome change in the country's politics.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the business community anticipates that political and economic conditions will improve rapidly under the guidance of Nawaz Sharif. At the same time, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will work hard to promote economic

diplomacy.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the false cases against Nawaz Sharif have met their fate and that his presidency will give the party more public recognition and a new lease of life.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the position of the PML-N on various vital issues will become more apparent, positively impacting the country's politics.

Along with this, the country's economic affairs will improve rapidly, and cooperation with friendly countries, especially Saudi Arabia and China, will increase.

Mian Zahid Hussain said there currently needs to be more consensus on various issues in the PML-N, which will be a test for the leadership



of Mian Nawaz Sharif. He noted that currently, the economy is suffering, inflation is rising, electricity, gas, and oil prices have increased poverty, public unrest is skyrocketing, and politics is going through a period of uncertainty.

In these circumstances, Mian Nawaz Sharif is responsible for playing an active role in getting the country out of these problems.

He must also balance the

relationship with other political parties and improve the civil-military relationship.

Mian Zahid Hussain also stated that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had appointed Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar as Deputy Prime Minister, which is welcome. He will be the second politician after Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to become Deputy Prime Minister.

Ishaq Dar is considered very close to Nawaz Sharif, and his competence in economic matters is respected.

The business community is optimistic that, as Deputy Prime Minister, he will strengthen economic diplomacy, which will help manage the country's economy. The business community is confident that his abilities will be fully utilised in economic matters.

FM Dar meets Saudi Energy Minister

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed Ishaq Dar on Monday met with Saudi Minister for Energy Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, ARAMCO CEO Amin H. Nasir and ACWA Chairman Mohammed A. Abunayyan on the sidelines of the meeting for Global Collaboration, Growth and Energy for Development of the World Economic Forum in Riyadh.

"There is great potential for enhanced energy cooperation between Pakistan and the King-



dom of Saudi Arabia," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a post on X.

PTI to join farmers' protest against wheat procurement policy

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf would take part in farmers' protest in Punjab against the wheat procurement policy of the provincial government, party MNA Asad Qaiser said on Monday.

"I ask all leaders to take part in the protest," he said in his speech on the floor of the house.

Farmers in different parts of Punjab took to streets as what they say the Punjab government and the Agriculture Department failed to enforce the wheat support price in the open market.

Punjab contributes more than 75% of the total wheat harvest, according to media reports and this year the market crashed and growers are forced to sell the staple food crop much below the support price set by the government.

Qaiser's announcement came as the provincial government placed blockades at different places to block the farmers protest outside the Punjab Assembly.

Without naming the PTI, Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari claimed that a particular party wanted to politicise the matter.

ECP summons KP CM...

Continued from Page 1

to hold a hearing on a petition seeking the disqualification of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

A two-member bench issued a brief order on the petition, noting that Ali Amin Gandapur had failed to submit his assets to the election commission.

Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) Kafeel Nizami filed a petition to disqualify Gandapur, alleging that he made false statements about his property in the nomination papers, consequently

questioning his integrity. The petition urged the ECP to remove Gandapur from the position of chief minister.

In the petition, Kafeel Nizami, informed the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that 735 kanals of land in DI Khan were temporarily transferred to Ali Amin Gandapur, despite Asif Khan being the original owner.

His acquisition of a Land Cruiser vehicle through the sale of the same land disqualifies him from holding a Provincial Assembly seat due to providing false information.