



'Suo motu scuppered country's boat', Sanullah on delay in May 9 trials

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanullah has said that the authority of the superior courts taking suo motu notices has worsened matters in the country, as he lamented the delay in trials of the May 9 accused.



Holding the Pakistan Investment Conference in Jeddah will start a new era: Jam Kamal

Founder Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas met Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal in his office. Chairman Khurshid Barlas briefed about the arrangements for the Pakistan Investment Conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on May 11, 2024. (Details on Page 6)

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Salute

Lahore: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir pays tribute to the martyrs by laying a floral wreath at the Martyrs' Monument during his visit to Lahore Garrison on Thursday.

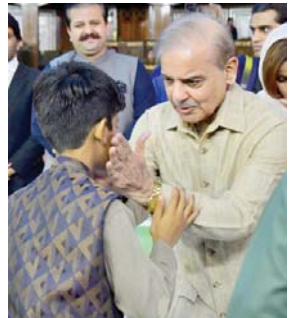


Photo: ISPR

No reprieve for perpetrators of May 9 arson attacks: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that the government would definitely go after the culprits of May 9 violent arson attacks with strict punishments through courts so that such unfortunate incidents must not recur in the future.



"There is no reprieve for the culprits of May 9 incidents. I assure you that the law will take its due course and that no such incident will recur in the country," he said while addressing the families of martyrs at the Convention Centre.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to mark the first anniversary of the May 9 (2023) violent incidents and to express solidarity with the martyrs and their families.

The prime minister said that the martyrs had rendered the supreme sacrifices for the safety of the people and the country.

He expressed the dismay that an organized group with a negative mindset had vandalized the martyrs' memorials on that day last year.

He said that the perpetrators of the treasonous act,

who attempted to create a gulf between the state institutions and the nation, would ultimately face the consequences.

Such elements must get exemplary punishment so that they should not dare to indulge such a heinous activity in the future, he added.

The prime minister, while paying tribute to the martyrs, said that they did sacrifice their lives to ensure a safe future for hundreds of thousands of children without becoming orphans.

"The whole nation is proud of its heroes for their utmost love for the motherland."

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, cabinet members, and political figures also attended the event.

No compromise or deal with May 9 planners and architects: COAS

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir said that there can be no compromise or deal with the planners and architects of the May 9 tragedy, terming it the 'dark chapter in our history'.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Army Chief passed these remarks while addressing the Garrison officers and soldiers at Corps Headquarters in Lahore.

General Syed Asim Munir said that 9th May 2023 will undoubtedly remain a black day in the history of Pakistan when 'deliberately indoctrinated and insidiously guided miscreants' attacked the symbols of the state

and national unity, disgracefully desecrating the Shuhada monuments.

"Due to these deplorable acts of criminally orchestrated violence, enemies of Pakistan were provided the opportunity to mock the state and the nation. COAS deplored that now the same plotters were brazenly and shamelessly trying to twist the narrative and implicate the state in this despicable endeavour," he added.

General Syed Asim Munir said that those gullible elements—who did not understand the real motive behind this criminal enterprise and were used as cannon fodder for the political ambitions of the masterminds—have already been accorded

reasonable benefit of doubt on the direction of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

However, the Army Chief made it clear that the 'real leaders' who present themselves as victims now will be held accountable for their actions, particularly when there is irrefutable evidence of their involvement and complicity in organised violence and sabotage.

The COAS reassured the officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army that no one would be allowed to disrespect Shuhada, their families or the institution. Planners, abettors, facilitators, and culprits of 9th May will be brought to justice according to the law.

"Our patience not to respond,

to daily provocations in this regard made in brazen violation of the constitution, has limits and it must never be misconstrued as weakness," the Army Chief said.

The COAS lauded the troops for their services to the nation and appreciated their professionalism. He underscored that inimical forces and their abettors have unleashed digital terrorism and are trying hard to create division between the armed forces and the people of Pakistan by peddling lies, fake news, and propaganda. "The designs of all these forces will be defeated with the support of the nation," he vowed.

General Syed Asim Munir asserted that every soldier and officer of the Pakistan Army puts his duties and responsibilities

first, regardless of any other affiliations or preferences, and continue to render extreme sacrifices on daily basis.

Earlier on arrival, the COAS was received by Commander Lahore Corps. He also laid floral wreath at Martyrs' Monument and paid solemn tribute to the Shuhada who sacrificed their lives for the motherland.

The COAS was also given detailed briefing on the operational preparedness of the formation. The Army Chief while inaugurating Jinnah Library at Lahore Garrison stated that we being the constructive forces have rekindled the memory of Quaid by building this public library over the piles of ash and rubble created by the destructive forces.



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal ministers said on Thursday that the nation should be aware of the sponsors of the May 9 riots when protesters vandalised state buildings and military installations following former prime minister Imran Khan's arrest.

At a press conference in Islamabad, Asif said the accountability of the perpetrators of May 9 mayhem would reach to its logical conclusion as it was a matter

of "sanctity of the martyrs' and 240 million Pakistanis' pride" in their armed forces.

He was accompanied by Information Minister Attaullah Tarar. The defence minister termed the attacks on military installations as tantamount to country enmity. "The armed forces and civil law enforcement agencies are fighting the war for the country's survival and rendering sacrifices every day during the ongoing war on terror."

He accused the Pakistan

Nation should know about May 9 sponsors: Khawaja Asif

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of deliberately damaging the prestige of the state institution under its "inimical" motive. The defence minister alleged that the PTI made the army chief's appointment controversial whereas the appointment was the only prerogative of the prime minister.

"I have been four times part of the process as the defence minister which was never influenced by any entity as it was the then PML-N government's vision to appoint the most decorated soldier as the Army Chief," he said.

According to Asif, the PTI former chairman orchestrated a new narrative of "absolutely not, and no to slavery" but his party leaders were meeting with the US ambassador and hiring lobbyists to beseech them for

relief. The defence minister also lambasted the PTI lawmakers for obstructing proceedings of the House under their political motives to benefit their detained party founder.

He accused the PTI for hatching out the conspiracy against the state institutions in the past years and termed it as a planned activity and not an abrupt or new move.

"The PTI is a political force in Parliament and they claim that forced statements were made by deflected PTI leaders whereas the latter categorically stated Imran Khan was not listening to them. January 6, Capitol Hill attack perpetrators and rioters were charged with penalties under special legislation, whereas the facilitators and the leaders were also taken to task in

the United States of America," he added.

When asked, he said the political parties would have to hold dialogue with each other whereas the state institution has decided to stay away from politics then it should not be dragged by any party into the process.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar urged the judiciary to take May 9 cases to a logical end.

He said that the evidence in the May 9 cases was "clear and the identity" of the attackers was known. Even it was clear who entered inside various buildings and who stood outside and gave instructions, he the minister added.

Tarar alleged that Imran Khan's three sisters were involved in the May 9 attacks but none of them was booked.

9th May; The Darkest Day in History of Nation, says NA Speaker

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Honourable Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan has said that 9th May will always be remembered as the darkest day in the history of Pakistan when the very foundations of the country were attacked by the miscreant elements, compromising the integrity and prestige of martyrs.



He also said that every patriotic Pakistani has categorically denounced the conspiracy to create a wedge between the nation and its armed forces. He further added, "Pakistan owes its existence and integrity to the sacrifices rendered by brave personnel of our security agencies". He expressed these views while denouncing the nefarious designs and mayhem perpetrated by anti-state elements, involved in the riots on 9th May 2023.

While strongly denounc-

ing the nefarious activities of rioters of 9th May, the Speaker also reiterated that every Pakistani would continue to safeguard the integrity and respect of martyrs who had rendered their lives for the honour and integrity of the Motherland. He also said that the rouge elements had committed such heinous crimes which were not only unimaginable for every peace-loving and patriotic Pakistani but which even the enemies of Pakistan could never have dared. While referring on the blatant attacks on the symbols of national pride and honour such as the

Continued on Page 8

Sialkot police deny arresting Rehana Dar

Bureau Report

SIALKOT: Sialkot police have not arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Rehana Dar instead she sat in the mobile van 'herself', District Police Officer (DPO) said on Thursday.

In a statement issued here, the DPO said that the police took action against an 'illegal' rally, adding that some women themselves tried to sit in the mobile van.

He said that Rehana Dar and Ruba Dar had been dropped to their residence by the police.

Pakistan, Qatar discuss bilateral ties as part of broader effort to cement ties

CITY DESK

ISLAMABAD: the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar received the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi accompanied by

senior delegates from the Qatar Investment Authority.

The two sides reviewed Pakistan-Qatar bilateral relations and trade and investment ties with particular focus on cooperation in sectors including energy, mining and aviation.

The two sides also exchanged

views on regional and global developments especially the dire situation in Gaza. The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister admired Qatar's active role as a mediator with regard to the Palestine Israel conflict and emphasized that peace in the region could only be ensured

through the establishment of a viable, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

The Minister of State conveyed message from the Prime Minister & Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar, His Highness Moham-

med bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, reiterating steadfast support for Pakistan.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister underscored the significance of economic diplomacy towards transforming bilateral ties into a mutually beneficial economic partnership.



Protection of life and property responsibility of the government: AJK Minister

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Kashmir Interior Minister and Most Senior Minister Colonel Retired Waqar Ahmed Noor, Local Government Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and Education Minister Dewan Ali Khan Chaghtai have said that the protection of life and property of the people is the responsibility of the government, the government has full capacity to fulfill its responsibility. Yes, attempts to disturb the peace and spread disorder will be dealt with with iron hands. Peaceful citizens are requested to stay away from such actions that lead to chaos and unrest.

The government has always shown seriousness, the government definitely does not want to clash nor has any such intention. A state officer was held hostage for four hours today and an official vehicle was burnt in Didiyal. Limited action was taken there only to maintain peace and order. Meanwhile, miscreants picked up a shell and



threw it at a nearby school. It was propagated that a school The girl died but by the grace of Allah no such incident happened. The government formed a committee to negotiate with the action committees and ten to twelve negotiation sessions were held. Issued a notification, 70 years old problems cannot be solved in seven or eight months. The government ministers were talking to the media at the PID complex. Secretary Information and Forests Ansari Yaqub Khan and Director Public

Relations Raja Shahid Hussain were also present on this occasion. Interior Minister Colonel Retired Waqar Ahmed Noor said that baseless propaganda was done against the government regarding the appointment of FC and PC and an attempt was made to spread chaos, while FC and PC were only called to protect foreigners, public order. Azad Kashmir Police has been deployed to maintain it, if any FC or PC jawan is seen anywhere, it should be reported. Municipalities Minis-

ter Faisal Mumtaz Rathore said that the government is always ready for meaningful negotiations. The negotiations were going on smoothly when suddenly a letter was received from the Action Committees on April 26 announcing the strike on May 11 and announcing the protest by overshadowing the matters agreed in the negotiation sessions. The Action Committee agreed with the Government Negotiation Committee on the targeted subsidy of flour and later defected.

All kinds of protest ban in effect in Muzaffarabad Division to prevent unrest

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: In order to protect the life and property of the people, to maintain public peace and to keep normal life going on, the District Magistrate/Deputy Commissioners have implemented Section 144 in the three districts of Neelum, Muzaffarabad and Jhelum Valley of Muzaffarabad Division. A ban has been imposed on rallies, gatherings and strikes, in case of violation, action will be taken as per the rules. Commissioner Muzaffarabad Division Masoodul Rehman and DIG Police Yasin Qureshi have appealed to the citizens not to be a part of any protest activity. Don't be, it is the responsibility of the administration to protect the life and property of the people and maintain public order, in view of which Section 144 has been implemented in Muzaffarabad Division to avoid any possible unrest.



order to implement them. According to the spokesman of the district administration, no one should try to take the law into their hands There will be no gathering/rally even regarding 9th May.

Police Magistrates will patrol to maintain law and order. Any kind of corner meeting/meeting/procession or release will be banned for 2 months. Violation will be dealt with as per rules.

The spokesperson of the Deputy Commissioner Office Mirpur has explained that while dispersing the

protesters in Tehsil Dadyal on Thursday, the local administration and the police have taken action and not the FC. When action was taken, the protestors pelted stones on the administration and the police, in response to which the police used tear gas to disperse the protestors.

In view of the anticipated wheel jam and shutdown strike of the Jammu and Kashmir Joint Public Action Committee, all public and private educational institutions of the capital

Muzaffarabad have been closed. Deputy Commissioner Muzaffarabad issued a formal order. According to the order issued by District Magistrate Muzaffarabad, Jammu and Kashmir Joint Public Action Committee Azad Kashmir has announced a wheel jam and shutter down strike on May 11, 2024. Therefore, in view of security concerns and to keep the public peace situation out of balance.

All public and private educational institutions of Muzaffarabad district, including universities, colleges, schools, and academics, will be closed for 02 days on Friday and Saturday on May 10-11, 2024.

District Magistrate Mirpur Yasir Riaz has called for a protest/long march by the Public Action Committees of SSP Mirpur to maintain the existing law and order situation and damage public and private property during the expected strike in Mirpur district. Under Section 144, gathering of two or more persons at any place throughout the district to hold a rally against the law, to protest, to vandalize, to damage public and private property, to disturb public peace.

Asif Rijwana Express Solidarity with Martyrs & Pakistani Security Forces

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Under the leadership of Engineer Malik Asif Rafiq Rajwana, Usman Khan Babar, Divisional Secretary General Sheikh Tariq Rasheed, Chaudhary Abdul Waheed Arain, Mian Shahzad Maqbool Bhutta, Sheikh Athar Mumtaz, Information Secretary Umar Farooq Bhatti at Chowk Kachari Multan organized by Pakistan Zindabad Rally. Activists Of Muslim League (Nawaz), Malik Ejaz Rajwana, Akhtar Alam Qureshi, Syed Jafar Shah and others Muslim League (N) Local Leaders expressed solidarity with the martyrs of Pakistan Army and the forces of Pakistan against the tragedy of May 9, the Muslim League Multan rally which was held at Kachari. Senior leader Engineer Malik Asif Rafiq Rajwana and Advocate Usman Khan Babar said that we express our



solidarity with the martyrs of Pakistan and Pakistani Security forces and we are taking out this rally against the May 9 tragedy.

On the occasion Usman Khan Babar and Umar Farooq Bhatti, Sheikh Tariq

Rasheed, Sheikh Athar Mumtaz and Malik Aslam Dogar said that Pakistan Army is the protector of our borders and the martyrs of Pakistan Army are like our soul. We will not allow anyone to insult our forces, Pakistan

is our pride.

On this occasion Bilal Butt, Shahid Mukhtiar Lodhi, Munir Akhtar Langa, Akhtar Rasool Faridi, Haji Liaquat Abbasi, Paul Abbasi, Qasur Bhatti, Sajid Qureshi, Malik Tayyab Arain, Shehzad Waraich, who created a gap between the forces of Pakistan and the people, Shahzad Karim Bhatti, Malik Nasir Kamboh, Adeel Yusuf Chatai, Malik Latif Maitla, Malik Shahid Advocate, Malik Tahir Rajwana Advocate, Malik Aslam Dogar, Rumi Butt, Rizwan, Mian Razaq, Wasim Gardizi, Khurram Langra, A Ijaz, Riaz Nizami, Rao Zia, Muzaffar Rana, Sadiq, Farhan Ansari, Qamar Abbas, Malik Rizwan, Rana Nano, Sheikh Shahid Siddique Rahmani, Mehr Jahanzeb, Naem Kasuri, Maher Waseem Joya, Sabir Qureshi, Jameel Abbasi, Usman Hashmi, Sajawal Bhatti and others participated in the rally.

Effects of Stress on Economic Wellbeing

Sadaf Aftab, (BS. Economics)

Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable wealthy and happy, where as stress is "the non specified response of body to any demand placed upon it." Stress can significantly impact and performance at work. When were stresses, it's challenging to focus, and we may miss deadlines, make mi stakes, and struggle to meet our goals. This can lead to missed opportunities for promotions and raises, ultimately affecting our income and financial stability.

Stress can also influence our financial decision, often leading to impulsive and risky choices. We might spend excessively, make unwise investments

or accumulate debt. Additionally stress can distract us from saving for the future, leaving us unprepared for unexpected express or long term financial goals.

Continuous stress have severe physical and mental. Health consequences, including headaches, stomach issues, anxiety and depression. This can resolution miss work days, lost income, and significant medical expenses. Moreover stress can weaken our immune system making us more affected to illnesses and financial burdens.

Stress can also strain our personal relationships, leading conflicts, divorce and legal fees. This can result in lost income, divided assets, emotional pain. Furthermore stress can make us more likely to quite our jobs or get fired leading to lost income, financial instability

and damaged career.

However there is hope by prioritizing stress management and mental health, we can mitigate these risks and build a more stable financial future. By taking care of over selves, we can reduce stress, get enough sleep, exercise regularly, connected with love ones, do activities that bring joy, and seek support when needs like all these activities, faith also plays a very important role in reducing stress level. Reduce stress by praying and meditating, trusting in a divine plan, seeking spiritual guidance, practicing forgiveness, cultivating gratitude, finding comfort in scripture, and joining a faith community, remember, investigating in our mental wellbeing is crucial for our overall health and financial stability.

Flight operations at Lahore airport 'resumed' after fire incident at immigration section

LAHORE: Domestic and international flight operations have been resumed at Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport which was disrupted after a fire broke out at the immigration counter on Thursday morning, according to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) sources.

They said the immigration system hit by the blaze had also been restored.

Federal Minister for Aviation Khawaja Asif visited the Lahore airport today and inspected the affected portion hit by the blaze and received a briefing from the officers concerned.

Zindabad rally to express solidarity with Pakistan Army after May 9 tragedy



Syed Nadeem Kazmi

MULTAN: On the direction of Deputy Commissioner Captain Retired Rizwan Qadir And Ctiy Police Officer Sadiq Ali Dogar, the Rally of Pakistan Army Zindabad was organized by the district council to Chock Kachheri Multan. Pakistan Zindabad Rally express solidarity with the national institutions organized by the district administration. The administration and the police gathered under one flag. The central rally organized by the district administration to express solidarity with the national institutions was led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Faizan Ahmad Riaz while CPO Sadiq Ali Dogar, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Muhammad Saif, Assistant Commissioner City Seemal Mushtaq and Assistant Commissioner President Amir Ifkhar

Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Faizan. Addressing the rally, Ahmad Riaz said that on May 9, 2023, the statues and monuments of martyrs were damaged by miscreants.

While on May 9, 2023, people and institutions were tried to fight each other. Faizan Ahmad Riaz said that the security forces, the police failed every attempt of the evil elements and today the whole nation is covered with their forces like a wall. Later, the rally was concluded at Chowk Kachari, on this occasion songs were also sung by the participants and prayers were also asked for the safety of the country.

Violence and Lawlessness must be eradicated from Pakistan's politics: Sheikh Gahis

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Pakistan Zindabad Rally Organized by People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab, a Pakistan Zindabad rally held from High Court Multan to SP Chowk under the leadership of President of People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab Sheikh Ghais ul Haq Advocate. against the events of May 9 tragedy.

A large number of lawyers participated in the Pakistan Zindabad rally. The participants in the Pakistan Zindabad rally paid tribute to the endless sacrifices of the Pakistan Army. On this occasion, President of People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab, Sheikh Ghais ul Haq said that on May 9, 2023, as part of a conspiracy, Tehreek-e-Insaf miscreants set fire to the property of the Pakistan Army and destroyed the memorials of the martyrs.

Pakistani patriots strongly condemn it. He further said that if the judiciary of Pakistan had punished the miscreants involved in the events of May 9 in time, the element of lawlessness and revenge would have been removed from politics in Pakistan today. Officials of People's Lawyers Forum Women's Wing Syeda Zille Fatima Advocate. Nagina Haraj Advocate. Firdous Jamal Advocate and PLF leader Arshad Gujjar Advocate said that violence and lawlessness must be eradicated from Pakistan's politics.

The biggest example of which is after the martyrdom of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the Pakistan People's Party workers under the leadership of Mrs. Benazir Bhutto fought peacefully for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan and abroad, due to which elections were held again in Pakistan.

Plight of Child Labourers

Shanza Mumtaz

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the pervasive issue of child labour in our society. It pains me to see innocent children being deprived of their childhood and forced into laborious tasks that should be far from their responsibilities. Child labour not only robs children of their right to education and play but also subjects them to exploitation and abuse. These children are often forced to work in hazardous conditions, compromising their physical and mental well-being. It is imperative that we, as a society, take decisive action to eradicate this social evil. Government intervention, strict enforcement of child labour laws, and initiatives aimed at providing education and opportunities for vulnerable children are essential steps in addressing this issue.

Furthermore, raising awareness and fostering a culture of empathy and compassion towards child labourers are crucial in building a more inclusive and just society.

Every child deserves a childhood filled with laughter, learning, and love, not one marred by exploitation and hardship. Let us unite in our efforts to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive and realize their full potential.

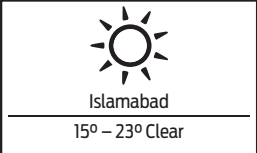
Azad Kashmir rally: salutes sacrifices of Pak Army

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: A rally was organized to pay homage to the Pakistan forces under the organization of Azad Kashmir Refugee Youth Alliance.

The speakers appreciated the sacrifices of the martyrs of Pakistan forces and saluted their national heroes.

The participants of the rally raised slogans in favor of martyrs of Pakistan, Azadi Kashmir, martyrs of Kashmir and their unsung heroes. The participants chanted "Long live Pak Army, Long live Pakistan, Long live the martyrs of Pakistan Army", General Asim Munir step forward, we are with you, "Long live Pakistan", "Long live the heirs of the martyrs", "Long live Pakistan's relationship, La Allah Il Allah" etc. They were shouting slogans. In the rally, Chairman Muhajir Youth Union Azad Kashmir Aamir Abbasi, Chief Organizer Sardar Khurshed Awan, Chairman Union Council Muzaffarabad Iqbal Yasin Awan, Hurriyat leader Mushtaq Salam, President Muhajir Camp Zero Point Chaudhry Shah Wali, MD Burhan College Hamza Shaheen, Chairman Refugee Youth Siddique. Dawood, Leader of Refugees Master Riyaz, Mansoor Mir, President of Majlis-e-Shoora Muhajireen Muhammad Younis Mir, Youth Leader Waleed Zaman, General Secretary of Refugee Care Council Muhammad Ashfaq, General Secretary of Majlis Shura Tanzeer Iqbal, President Shabab Muslim Students Wing Riaz Awan, Waqar Organizer Shabab Muslimeen Naseer Mir, Peoples Party leader Javed Mashwani, businessman leader Faisal Abbasi, Mahmood Shah, Intiaz Awan, Nazir, Saqib Awan, Abdullah Mir, Asad Khan, Saqib Shah, Dilawar Shah, Raja Usama, Mohammad Nadeem, Haider, Khawaja Yasir., Sira-juddin, Chaudhry Ghafoor, Adeel Kayani, Raja Naseem, Khawaja Bilal, Talib Awan, Muhammad Arif, Shabbir Ahmad, Chaudhry Mashkoor, Waqar Chaudhry, Arshad Awan, Waqar Abbasi, Danesh Awan, Junaid Ahmed, Rameez Awan, Raja Nauman, Abdullah Mir, Muhammad Aslam Kashmiri, Shah Jahan, Raja Dildar, Rashid Khan and others participated in a vigorous manner.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:37 am
Zohr	12:04 pm
Asr	4:56 pm
Maghrib	6:57 pm
Isha	8:32 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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

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CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

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

All Pakistan Librarians visit Pastic

PPA

ISLAMABAD: NCRD (National Center for Rural Development) A week-long training program (May 6 to May 10) was conducted for librarians in the NCRD library of Islamabad, titled Modern Library Services in Digital Environment. Various senior librarians, researchers and students from all over Pakistan participated.

Syed Habib Jafari (Principal Librarian) invited all the participants to Pastic Library Islamabad keeping his previous traditions. About 45 library professionals visited Pakistan Scientific and Technological Center Islamabad. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Akram Shaikh, DG Pastic welcomed to all the participants wholeheartedly and engaged library professionals on a variety of topics, including the role of librarians in today's digital environment. DG Pastic listened carefully, the problems faced by the library professionals in the digital environment and proposed their solutions to the extent possible, made aware about the digital resources available in the library and also allowed the libraries to take advantage from library resources. online cloud library service was also introduced. At the end of the program, high tea was served to all the participants. Huma Khan Media Coordinator PASTIC Islamabad.

Unveiling Chef's Garden Café

A New Organic Experience at Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban, one of the country's most picturesque resorts, is thrilled to unveil the new Chef's Garden Café, a scenic organic herb garden perfect for nature enthusiasts and food connoisseurs. The garden covers over 28,000 square feet of the Hotel's hillside and grows more than 40 varieties of vegetables and herbs, making it Pakistan's most extensive organic garden.

The opening ceremony welcomed esteemed guests, including the General Officer Commanding 12 Division, Commanding Officers, Hashoo Group associates, nature enthusiasts, and hotel guests. Delicious hors d'oeuvres made

with produce from the garden, refreshing herbal teas, and colorful mocktails were also served during the event, complementing the vibrant atmosphere.

Chef's Garden Café offers an impressive array of ingredients for its culinary creations. From basil-infused bruschetta to rosemary-roasted chicken, the menu promises a celebration of wholesome goodness. Homegrown fruits and vegetables, organic eggs, and free-range chickens take center stage, ensuring each dish is nutritious and delicious.

Nadeem Riaz Chaudhry, Cluster General Manager of Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban, praised the efforts of the concerned teams, especially the horticulture department led by Muhammad Yaqoob, Cluster Horticulture Manager of

Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban. "This garden will be the most sought-after spot at Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban this summer, with its unobstructed views of the Himalayan range, aromatic herbs, swings, library, the fantastic herb-infused food and the birds that visit this beautiful sanctuary, adding to its tranquil ambience," he remarked.

The opening of Chef's Garden Cafe on May 6th coincided with World Herb Day, underscoring its dedication to organic and sustainable practices.

With rejuvenating mountainside escapes and unique farm-to-fork dishes, Chef's Garden Cafe beckons with its scenic charm and organic delights, promising an unforgettable experience for all who visit Pakistan's most beautiful resort.



Dancing fountain

ISLAMABAD: People are watching musical dancing fountain at a private housing society in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Religious affairs ministry awards top talent in hif-z-o-qirat competition



PNP

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs awarded cash prizes and appreciation certificates to the top three winners of the hif-z-o-qirat competition concluded here on Thursday.

The winners of first position received Rs.80,000, the second received Rs. 60,000 and 3rd received Rs. 40,000 respectively with certificates.

Senior Joint Secretary of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Alamgir Ahmad Khan distributed the prizes among the participants of the competition

The two-day 39th annual Hif-z-o-Qirat competition that concluded today was attended by total 59 candidates from all over the country including all provinces, Gilgit Baltistan, Islamabad Capital Territory, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The winners will now represent Pakistan at international competitions to be held in Saudi Arabia, Unites Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bangladesh and Turkey respectively.

WPJP demands Banned IOM illegal activities in Diplomatic enclave Islamabad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: County Head, WPJP Sadia Khan (Khan Bibi) Demands WPJP reiterates its concern regarding the growing illegal activities within Islamabad and the diplomatic enclave. In light of recent developments, During the previous press conference on 22nd April, WPJP emphasized the urgent need to safeguard Islamabad and called for the prohibition of unlawful activities within the diplomatic enclave. A formal letter was dispatched to the Interior Ministry, urging action to address these pressing issues. Regrettably, despite the letter dated 5th January 2024 (ref letter no F.No.2/38/2021-ICT-2) forwarded to key authorities, including the Chief Commissioner ICT Islamabad, Chairman CDA, and Inspector General of Police, no substantial measures have been taken thus far. The presence of Afghan nationals associated with IOM activities within the diplomatic enclave continues unabated. WPJP remains resolute in its commitment to preserving the sanctity of Islamabad and will pursue legal recourse if necessary, including approaching the Supreme Court if required.

Israel is violating international law of war: Imam of Al-Aqsa Mosque

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Imam of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Member of Palestinian Parliament Memon Al-Asad Tamimi and President of Jamiat Ahl Hadith Pakistan Allama Hisham Elahi Zaheer while talking to media representatives said that Al-Aqsa Mosque is the land of Prophets and the first Qibla of Muslims. Israel is calling against the cruelty and brutality that is happening under the auspices of the US. It is brutalizing innocent women, children and the elderly and openly violating the international laws of war. So far, there have been more than 40,000 testimonies of these ideas. He expressed this yesterday while speaking on the occasion of the All-Party National Palestine Conference under the auspices of Jamiat Ahl-Hadith in Jamia Masjid Subhani Ahl-Hadith Razaabad. Sahibzada Zahid Mahmood Qasmi, Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Prof. Mehboobul-Zaman Butt, Central Secretary General of Pakistan Ulama Council Allama Tahir-ul-Hasan, Hakeem Saeed Ahmed Saeed, Prof. Asadullah Kahlon, Rana Munir Ahmad Khan, Maulana Sikandar Hayat Zaki of Muttahida Jamaat Ahl-Hadith, Khalid Mahmood Azamabadi, Qari Muhammad Yunus Khaliq, Maulana Abdul Razzaq, Maulana Muhammad Tayyab Rabbani, Sheikh Salim Rahman, Sheikh Shahid Qayyum, Haji Siddique Madanpuri, Muhammad Amin Farooqui, Sheikh Abdul Hafeez Subhani, Abdul Majeed Rahmani, Mirza Younis, Mian Maqbool Ahmed, Sheikh Hanza, Yahya. Madani, Chaudhry Abdul Hafeez Anjum, Chaudhry Tariq Cheema, Maulana Mansha Salik, Hafiz Muhammad Usman, Sheikh Abdul Rasheed, Maulana Awais Qarni, and others were also participants. The whole nation of Pakistan demands the government of the time and the Muslim rulers of the whole world to take the strictest measures against Israel. They are sleeping, why do they not see the massacre of thousands of innocent children, women and weak elderly people in Palestine? The United Nations, OIC and international human rights organizations have all turned blind, to wake up the Imam of the Palestinian mosque. Present in Pakistan today.

Call for tobacco tax increase to safeguard child rights and public health



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Health activists have called for an immediate increase in tobacco taxes in Pakistan to protect the rights and health of children and the general public. In a press release issued by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), this call has been made at a time when the nation faces a severe public health crisis.

Malik Imran Ahmed, Country head Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK), shared that recent statistics reveal alarming figures regarding tobacco use in Pakistan. With approximately 31.6 million adults, constituting about 19.9% of the adult population, currently using tobacco, tobacco-related illnesses claim more than 160,000 lives annually, imposing a significant burden on the healthcare system and costing the economy at least 1.4% of its GDP every year.

Imran shared in detail that the recent Feder-

al Excise Duty (FED) reforms on tobacco have demonstrated promising results in terms of revenue generation. Collections from July 2023 to January 2024 have already surpassed PKR 122 billion, with projections for the full year exceeding PKR 200 billion, marking a substantial increase compared to previous fiscal years.

Imran added that in addition to the financial benefits, these reforms play a crucial role in promoting public health by reducing tobacco consumption and potentially recovering 17.8% of the total healthcare costs associated with smoking in Pakistan. However, maintaining the current rate could result in a decrease in health cost recovery, highlighting the urgent need for further action.

Dr. Khalil Ahmad Dogar, Program Manager at SPARC, echoed these sentiments, stating, "The devastating impact of tobacco use extends far beyond individual health, affecting families, communities, and the economy at large. We cannot afford to overlook the urgency of implementing effective measures to address this crisis."

Dr. Khalil said that contrary to misconceptions, research evidence strongly refutes the argument that a tax increase may promote illicit trade, highlighting the manipulative tactics employed by tobacco firms to influence tax policies and evade taxes. Acknowledging the urgency of the situation, Dr. Khalil emphasized that it's imperative that we take decisive action to curb tobacco use in Pakistan to safeguard the health and well-being of our citizens, particularly our children.

PTI held public gathering, took out rally about 9 May in Waziristan

Adam Khan Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: PTI organized a public gathering in Wana bazar regarding May 9 in Lower South Waziristan District. On the other hand, PTI workers took out a rally about 9 May in Azamwarsak bazar. A large number of tribal elders and PTI workers participated in the public gathering and rally. The Public gathering and rally was led by MNA Zubair Wazir and MPA Ajab Gul Wazir.

On this occasion, both the representatives said to the workers in their respective addresses, that this country cannot develop without cleaning the institutions in which crocodiles are sitting.

They said thieves are sitting in assemblies, sitting with them does not make us beautiful. They said that one day the Prime Minister of Pakistan will be Imran Khan.

Both representatives said that the entire year of the 9 May incident has been completed, and our party leaders and workers suffered hardships throughout the year.

NIMA concludes three-day training workshop on Inter'l Maritime and Humanitarian Laws

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), concluded a three-day training workshop on International Maritime and Humanitarian Laws. It was attended by naval practitioners, researchers, and law graduates.

The interactive sessions provided deep insight into the genesis of law of armed conflicts, internal frictions, legal instruments to govern naval warfare, maritime law enforcement, and the prosecution of international crimes.

The workshop highlighted the need for collaborative approach to address these challenges.

At the end, the chief guest V Adm Ahmed Saeed HI(M) President NIMA distributed the certificates and addressed the participants.



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**
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 (mszk786@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
 Email: spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

9th May inferno: A 360° view

The recent unprecedented press conference held by the DG, ISPR two days ago has set the tone and agenda for commemorating the first anniversary of the May 9 inferno. This has prompted both federal and provincial governments, along with their respective departments, to launch comprehensive paid advertisement campaigns across all forms of media. Additionally, they have organized high-value events, rallies, walks, talks, and candlelight vigils, utilizing various public relations and media management tools to ensure extensive coverage aimed at conveying the message that the incident of May 9 "will not be forgiven or forgotten." knowing that it would dash all hopes of dialogue between the government and the PTI, as well as between the PTI and the establishment.

The incident on 9th May, as described by former President Dr. Alvi during one of his media interactions almost a year ago, was abhorrent and condemnable. He emphasized that those found involved must be subjected to due process of law in a fair, transparent, and judicious manner, based on concrete evidence and under a judicial dispensation characterized by fairness and transparency. He reiterated his stand yet again in one of his recent media interactions.

Interestingly, all parties involved in the incident, including the alleged victims (the army), the alleged aggressors (the PTI), and all bystanders (the governments, opposition parties, intelligence agencies, and civil society), have equally condemned the events of 9th May.

However, they diverge on various aspects, including the motives behind the incident, the characters instigating, fomenting, and turning apparently a peaceful rally into an alleged act of violence, the nature of evidences, interpretations of speeches made during the heat of the moment, as well as visual and graphic

recordings of the incident.

They also differ on the methods and procedures for adjudicating the incident. One perspective asserts that the planners, abettors, and facilitators are already known with concrete evidence, therefore, there is no need for further investigation or the establishment of a commission. On the other hand, another perspective suggests that the May 9th incident was masterminded by the sitting government to tarnish the reputation of the PTI and provide a pretext to incarcerate its leaders, dismantle the PTI, and undermine its public support.

The pressing question being raised across various sectors, including the army, government, political parties like PTI, and civil society, pertains to the apparent failure of the state to deliver justice in the May 9 incident, despite having full authority to do so.

Additionally, there's widespread inquiry into why the state has been unable to substantiate the alleged involvement of PTI in a court of law, despite claiming to possess incontrovertible evidence. Is it justifiable to solely attribute blame to the judiciary for its inability to administer exemplary punishment to those responsible for violence against the state, or does some responsibility also lie with the state for its failure to construct a compelling case against the perpetrators?

Furthermore, there are queries regarding how certain political figures, initially apprehended and purportedly implicated, were subsequently released and even rewarded without undergoing due judicial process, while others who resisted compliance remain incarcerated.

Another significant question revolves around the legality of the allegations leveled by the DG-ISPR and the army chief against

the judiciary for alleged incompetence and systemic deficiencies in dispensing justice while there exists an established principle that victims should not exert pressure or issue threats to the judiciary to secure convictions according to their narrative. Instead, they are urged to build robust cases based on evidence and legal reasoning, rather than mere dissatisfaction with court proceedings.

Questions have also been raised regarding why the state failed to prevent the attacks in the first place, and what were the underlying reasons and constraints behind the executive's failure at all levels to prevent rally participants from reaching, entering, and damaging the Corps Commander's house without encountering resistance. This is especially pertinent considering that the PTI chairman had warned the government of severe public reaction if he was arrested, yet neither the state desisted from arresting him nor put in place mechanisms to prevent the highly likely backlash by the public.

Additionally, inquiries have been made about the charges against army personnel, including high-ranking officers, who were scrutinized and punished in relation to the May 9 incident. Were the charges against them solely due to complacency, or were they also suspected of being part of a larger conspiracy against the sitting army leadership?

Analysts and jurists are also raising questions about the legality of the politically tainted press conferences by the DG ISPR and the legality of his offer to forgive the aggressors if such forgiveness is sought. This is particularly concerning considering that such crimes are against the state, matters of public concern, and national security. Therefore, individuals or political

parties involved should be held accountable for such offenses through transparent legal proceedings to ensure a fair trial and due process, while also maintaining public accountability.

Questions have also been raised on the motive, purpose, legality, and justification of the use of public funds—whether utilized or not—for running expensive advertising campaigns on all forms of media by both federal and provincial governments, soon after May 9, 2023, and continuing thereafter. These emotionally charged ads are termed as a tool to create a biased environment that may directly or indirectly impede the judiciary's ability to dispense justice fairly and impartially.

Analysts and jurists believe that these divergent views demand an independent investigation or constitution of a judicial commission to thoroughly examine the entire event by factoring in the role, part and versions of all stakeholders including the PTI, the Army, the governments, the interior ministries, the police, the Corps Commander, and intelligence agencies.

The Commission will on its part may develop an agreed-upon terms of reference, develop the scope and mechanism of the investigation, dilate upon motives, purpose and reasons for committing the act, identify all role and part played by state and nonstate actors, analyze videos and audio evidence and take a holistic approach to identifying the victims, the aggressors and the bystanders who failed to perform their mandated duty. The findings should then be submitted to the superior judiciary for further adjudication in accordance with the constitution and laws of the land to apportion blame and recommend exemplary punishments.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Pakistan, China fully committed to move forward CPEC Phase-2

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal said on Thursday that Pakistan and China are fully committed to moving forward with the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the new government through its engagements with the Chinese leadership at senior level is trying to crystallize and define its parameters.

This is our first engagement after the election in Pakistan with Chinese leadership at the senior level. Through this engagement, we are trying to crystallize and define the parameters of CPEC on which the Chinese side has indicated its willingness to move forward. And Pakistan is also very committed to moving forward, he said in his interaction with Chinese media at the Pakistan Embassy, in Beijing during his three-day visit to China.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that during his meetings, both sides have discussed some high-priority and low-hanging projects which can be immediately started to give a jumpstart to the second phase of CPEC and broaden the cooperation from phase one to phase two.

He said that agriculture, industrial cooperation, and the transfer of technology are very important for us. We want to expand our cooperation to bring new technology into the agriculture sector to enhance the productivity of Pakistan's agriculture sector.

Second, we intend to enhance industrial cooperation. Particularly, there is a strong case for relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan, where labor costs in China have increased and Pakistan offers a very attractive environment for relocation to the SEZs that we are setting up. And that will also help us to move from agricultural economy to industrial economy, he added.

The minister said that one of the key and future goals for us is to take Pakistan from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy as fast as possible. And in this industrialization, we want to focus on exports and how to have export-led growth in Pakistan.

So, China will also help us not only with relocation, but we are also seeking technical assistance that Chinese expertise in terms of developing its own exports and special economic zones that know how we would like to benefit from. There will be more cooperation at the level of experts to help Pakistan develop its exports and special economic zones.

He said that the third area is technology because China has leadership and many new industrial revolution technologies, particularly artificial intelligence as well as IT sectors which are very important.

Pakistan's IT sector is growing very fast and it could also contribute towards China's digital programs. Likewise, China's progress in artificial intelligence is very important because that is the new platform for future and digital economies.

He informed that Pakistan is also preparing its national action plan for the adoption of artificial intelligence, and we will also benefit greatly in this area from China.

Lastly, we also want to expand educational and technical exchange programs. Almost close to 27,000 students are studying in China. China has become a major destination for Pakistani students for higher education.

We would like this cooperation to further expand and also to have greater partnership or twinning arrangements between Pakistani universities and Chinese universities so that they can undertake joint research in Pakistan, he added.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan also needs to have a greater understanding of Chinese markets. China imports almost 2.7 trillion dollars worth of goods from the world. Pakistan's share is just a meager 3 billion dollars. I think we can easily expand Pakistan's market share in China from \$3 to \$30 billion.



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

9 May Black Day - II

In the turbulent realm of politics, the allure of negativity often eclipses the necessity to deliver tangible results. However, in a world beset by challenges and intricacies, true leadership lies not in rhetoric or mudslinging but in concrete action and genuine accomplishments. Hence, it falls upon politicians to prioritize performance over negativity, as this not only enhances governance but also fortifies democracy and nurtures public trust.

In an age dominated by soundbites and sensationalism, the prevalence of negativity in politics has reached concerning levels. From personal attacks to partisan squabbles, the discourse frequently lacks substance, leaving citizens disillusioned and disheartened. Nevertheless, by shifting the focus from divisive rhetoric to substantive policy proposals and tangible actions, politicians can re-engage the electorate and restore confidence in the democratic process. Trust forms the foundation of effective governance, and it is earned through actions, not merely words. While negative campaigning might yield immediate advantages, it erodes trust over time by perpetuating cynicism and division. Conversely, when politicians demonstrate a dedication to addressing pressing issues and delivering meaningful results, they inspire confidence and cultivate goodwill among the electorate. By prioritizing performance, politicians can establish genuine connections with constituents and foster a collective sense of purpose. The urgent challenges confronting society today, ranging

from economic disparity to climate crisis, demand attention that surpasses mere political drama. Though resorting to negative campaigning may offer short-term gains, it does little to address the substantive issues affecting people's lives. By directing their efforts and resources towards resolving real-world problems, politicians can effect meaningful change in the lives of their constituents and establish a legacy of positive impact. Leading by example serves as a potent catalyst for change, affording politicians

a unique opportunity to inspire the next generation of leaders. Through exhibiting integrity, foresight, and a dedication to public service, politicians can establish a standard for future leaders to follow. Additionally, by giving precedence to performance over negativity, politicians can cultivate an environment more conducive for budding leaders to prosper and make meaningful contributions to society.

In 2018, Imran Khan surged to power in Pakistan, promising sweeping reforms, economic revitalization, and an end to corruption. He campaigned on a platform of transformation, presenting himself as a beacon of hope for a nation grappling with multifaceted challenges. However as Prime Minister, the reality behind Imran Khan's political rhetoric paints a contrasting picture between pledges made and commitments fulfilled.

Imran Khan's rise to power was fueled by his portrayal as a charismatic leader, unblemished by the corruption that had plagued Pakistani politics for decades. He captured the electorate's imagination with visions of a "New Pakistan," characterized

by transparency, accountability, and prosperity for all. His commitments to revamp the economy, fortify institutions, and prioritize the welfare of ordinary citizens struck a chord with a populace fatigued by the prevailing status quo. Central to Imran Khan's agenda was the pledge of economic rejuvenation and poverty alleviation. He promised to generate millions of jobs, attract foreign investment, and inaugurate a period of prosperity for Pakistan. However, the actuality was fallen short of the rhetoric. Under his leadership, the economy was faltered, grappled with soaring inflation, mounting debt, and sluggish growth. Despite grand assurances, unemployment persisted as a pressing concern, and millions of Pakistanis endured the throes of poverty.

Another pillar of Imran Khan's platform was the commitment to reform Pakistan's institutions and purge corruption. He vowed to construct a merit-based society, where nepotism and favoritism held no sway. Nonetheless, his administration has been tarnished by accusations of cronyism, with detractors alleged his appointment of allies to influential positions and his failure to fulfill his anti-corruption promises. Furthermore, institutions such as the judiciary and the media faced mounting pressures, sparking apprehensions regarding the erosion of democratic norms.

Despite his pledge to serve as a unifying force for Pakistan, Imran Khan's tenure was characterized by polarization and discord. His confrontational political approach alienated opposition factions and stoked tensions within society. Instead of nurturing consensus and dialogue, he has frequently resorted to scapegoating and vilifying his critics, exacerbating political rifts.

To be continued

Remembering 9th May: A Reflection of Tragedy and Resilience II

Was Imran Khan implicated as a militant or an agent of foreign provenance? What accounted for the absence of security measures at the Corps Commander House on the aforementioned date? The conspicuous absence of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) recordings of the incidents raises further scrutiny. Moreover, why have the law enforcement officials responsible for overseeing the barricades not faced disciplinary action? Whose dereliction of duty precipitated these lapses in security?

Numerous individuals, particularly women, were apprehended under suspicion surrounding the May 9 tragedy. Among them were Khadija Shah, Sanam Javed, Alia Hamza, Fauzia Siddiqui, Tayyaba Raja, Dr. Rubina Akhtar, and numerous other women who found themselves incarcerated, notwithstanding their lack of association with any terrorist activities, all while maintaining their fervent patriotism towards Pakistan. Despite their unwavering faith in Pakistan's judicial system, they willingly submitted themselves to legal proceedings. Despite being granted bail, these innocent women languished in confinement for many months, with the ordeal impacting their families profoundly. What was their transgression? They never opposed the state apparatus, nor did they engage in any acts of vandalism against government property. Their lives underwent profound transformations following their detention. Perhaps their sole offense lay in their vocal support for Khan, exercising their constitutional right to elect their preferred government.

The apex of the iniquity transpired when those in attendance with Khadija convened a press conference, assuming leadership roles within the IPP, while Khadija Shah languished in incarceration for a period spanning nine months. Notably, she faced allegations

across six distinct cities. The charges encompassed allegations of inciting conflagrations concurrently in six cities, leading to her subsequent vindication. However, her exoneration did not deter the persistence of legal persecution, as an additional four cases were promptly instigated against her.

The roster for May 9 encompassed even adolescents as young as thirteen. The demonstrators faced direct gunfire, resulting in the demise of twenty-five Pakistani citizens, with over seven hundred sustaining direct chest injuries. The confinement of over ten thousand innocent Pakistanis ensued, subjecting them to deplorable conditions. Furthermore, military tribunals were convened for over a hundred innocent civilians, marked by ruthless torture and the degradation of their dignity. The plight and eventual demise of the innocent Ibad Farooq epitomized this suffering. Notably, the central leadership of PTI, including individuals absent from the scene like Shah Mahmood Qureshi, faced legal ramifications across disparate cities, despite his physical absence. Even Children were subjected to direct bombardment.

Protest constitutes an inherent entitlement enshrined within the constitutional framework of Pakistan, obligating all individuals to adhere to its provisions. The enforcement of punitive measures becomes imperative in upholding the sanctity of constitutional order. Therefore, recourse to the rule of law emerges as the sole recourse for rectification and progress.

The lamentable events of May 9th have inflicted a collective wound upon the fabric of Pakistani society. Presently, an exhaustive investigation into this grievous occurrence is imperative. Those found culpable, irrespective of their institutional affiliations or political allegiances, must face severe retribution as a deterrent measure.



Analysis

Kiran Asim



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Chairman PRCs makes recommendations for 34th Int'l Conference in Geneva

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari participated in the inaugural session of the preparatory meeting for the 34th International Conference convened by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva. He presented recommendations on behalf of Pakistan Red Crescent for the upcoming international conference, highlighting the organization's commitment to implementing actions in accordance with global humanitarian laws, the Geneva Conventions, climate change adaptation, and disaster preparedness.

During his visit, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also had a meeting with the newly elected President of IFRC, Ms. Kate Forbes. Both leaders discussed the arrangements for the



34th International Conference, focusing on the recommendations put forth by Pakistan Red Crescent Society. President Forbes praised Sardar

Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership in alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people in Pakistan through the Red Crescent Society and expressed a commitment to enhancing cooperation for advancing humanitarian services in innovative ways in the future.

Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari extended congratulations to the President IFRC on the successful completion of her first 100 days in office. Ms. Forbes acknowledged that in her initial days, her priorities encompassed national society development, climate change, youth engagement, equitable resource allocation, governance and leadership, accountability and transparency.

The visit underscores the commitment of both institutions to bolster cooperation in humanitarian endeavors and signifies a significant step towards strengthening bilateral relations.

1st Pakistani Hajj flight of 2024 Hajj season lands in Saudi Arabia



Noorulhassan Gujjar

MADINA MUNAWWARAH: The first Pakistani Hajj flight arrived at Prince Mohammad bin Abdul Aziz International Airport in Madina Munawwarah today. Pakistan's Ambassador in KSA Mr. Ahmad Farooq, Consul General of Pakistan in Jeddah, Mr. Khalid Majid, DG Hajj Mr. Abdul Wahab Soomro, Director Hajj Makkah, Faheem Afridi, Director Hajj Madina Zia ur Rehman, were present at the airport along with senior Saudi Ministry of Hajj & Umrah officials to receive the Pakistani pilgrims who were presented with bouquets and complimentary gifts upon arrival at Madina Al Munawwarah.

It is noteworthy that the total number of Pakistani pilgrims for this Hajj season is approximately 179,210 pilgrims. About 50% of the total pilgrims are performing Hajj under government Hajj scheme while the rest through private Hajj tour companies. The Pakistani Hajj delegation has prepared the necessary housing for all its pilgrims, provided the necessary facilities and equipped service personnel, including a Medical Mission comprising of 500 medical staff, doctors and specialists and 550 moavineen and officials of Ministry of Religious Affairs who have joined the Hajj mission in KSA to assist in Hajj operations and services throughout the Holy Capital of Makkah Mukarramah and the city of Madina Al-Munawwarah.

IPAK Raises PKR 1.77 billion in Book Building Process!

PPA

KARACHI: The book-building process of International Packaging Films Limited's (IPAK) Initial Public Offer (IPO) has concluded with an oversubscription of 1.73 times, the company said today.

"The IPO received an overwhelming response from institutional investors and high-net worth individuals as the strike price clocked in at Rs 25.2 per share, higher than the floor price of Rs 21 the leading flexible packaging films manufacturer of the country said in a statement.

Naveed Godil, CEO International Packaging Films Limited, in his message thanked investors for their overwhelming response.

Muhammed Amin, Chairman of International Packaging Films Limited expressed his gratitude for the confidence of investors in the company. He said "There is a tremendous potential to increase shareholders' value. The Board and the management is fully committed to the plan and has a clear strategy of increasing market share, driving growth of domestic market through import substitution and increasing specialized films export". "As we grow, a wider number of shareholders will reap the benefits post IPO," He further said.

International Packaging Films Limited recorded net sales of PKR 19.9 billion in the year 2023 while its gross margin for the financial year 2023 remained 27%. Its profit before tax for year 2023 was 2.9 billion while its net profit after tax was 1.6 billion. The company's 3-year revenue CGAR remained at 41%.

The group collectively offers a complete portfolio of packaging solutions, producing BOPP, CPP, and BOPET films, making it the first-ever group in Pakistan to provide one-window flexible packaging solutions, located at two strategically important locations in the country.

Economy's pain points tightening noose around tax-compliant cigarette industry

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ipsos Pakistan, launched its research study titled, 'Pakistan Cigarette Market Assessment 2024' in Islamabad. The report represented a comprehensive survey of over 1,000 retail outlets across all four provinces of Pakistan, thoroughly covering both urban and rural areas.

Key findings highlight a significant shift in market dynamics, including a projected decline in the market share of legitimate cigarette brands and an increase in the presence of illicit brands, posing severe implications to the national revenue and sustainability of legitimate business.

Easy availability of low-priced smuggled and tax-non-paid cigarettes all across Pakistan, non-compliance of Track & Trace system, cigarette sales below the minimum legal price (MLP), price disparities and numerous other crises had not only put down the compliant cigarette industry to its knees but was also denting national exchequer with an annual loss of Rs300b.

While visiting retail outlets in these areas, Ipsos checked the availability and prices of tax-non-paid and smuggled cigarette brands and estimated the market shares, compliance of Track & Trace (T&T) and minimum legal price (MLP), price disparities and new phenomena in the market. Later Ipsos also presented analysis of the information collected from the markets of these areas. Furthermore, in wake of increased enforcement, an observation study was also conducted across the sample to corroborate the findings.

Donald Trump's youngest son Barron to make political debut

Former United States president Donald Trump's youngest son Barron is set to make his political debut as he joins his father's presidential campaign, ABC News reported.

According to a list of delegates obtained by ABC News, the 18-year-old son of the 77-year-old Republican presidential candidate has been chosen as one of Florida's at-large delegates for the Republican National Convention (RNC).

The news was confirmed by a Trump campaign official who also told ABC News that the youngest Trump sibling is "very interested" in the political process.

"Yes, he's on the delegation roster and Barron is very interested in our nation's political process," the campaign official said.

Barron will join other Trump family members including his older siblings Eric, Don Jr, Tiffany and Don's girlfriend, Kimberly Guilfoyle who will also serve as at-large delegates.

The report revealed that Eric will serve as delegation chair while Guilfoyle serves on the Platform Committee.

Barron was recently the centre of media attention amid news of his father potentially missing out on the teen's graduation on May 17 due to the ongoing hush money trial.



Souvenir

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting a souvenir to Ambassador of China HE Jiang Zaidong on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Australian city building new £2.8bn airport to deal with overtourism

One of Australia's most famous cities, Sydney, is set to undergo a significant overhaul of its transport infrastructure to accommodate the increasing number of foreign visitors.

Sydney is a popular tourist destination, attracting millions of domestic and foreign visitors annually, Express UK reported.

The city is home to Australia's most renowned cultural icon, the Sydney Opera House, and beautiful beaches such as Bondi Beach.

To cater to the growing number of tourists, local authorities are planning to build a second airport since the current one is facing capacity issues.

According to Express UK, the new Western Sydney International Airport will cost £2.8 billion and cover an area of 1,780 hectares, and will be built in two principal phases over several years.

Descon Engineering Leverages SAS Technology to Level Up Data Analytics and Business Decisioning

PPA

ISLAMABAD/DUBAI: SAS, the leader in analytics, further fosters its long-standing relationship with the multinational engineering company Descon Engineering Limited. Descon has chosen SAS as its trusted partner to develop an innovative and highly customized solution that enables qualified analysis and decision-making based on reliable data.

Recognized globally for its quality, safety and on-time delivery of projects and products, Descon provides comprehensive solutions ranging from project conception to the establishment of fully operational facilities in industries such as oil and gas, petrochemicals, and power, among others. In accordance with worldwide stand-

ards and regulatory requirements, the company has implemented sustainability related frameworks, such as Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), Lessons Learnt, and Health Safety Environment (HSE). For Descon to evaluate the effectiveness of these frameworks and to continue progress towards its sustainability and operational goals, accurate and transparent reporting was essential.

"Since multiple business management and monitoring activities were mostly carried out using semi-automated spreadsheets that required a significant amount of manual effort, human mistakes and delayed reporting were unavoidable," said Tahir Mehmood,

Head Digitalization at Descon. "Through the implementation of SAS Governance and Compliance Manager (GCM), we were able to create a tailored solution that precisely met our unique needs, ensuring interoperability with our proprietary business processes developed over many decades of operation. This allowed us to make qualified analyses and decisions based on reliable data."

Salem AbouFakhr, Senior Customer Success Manager at SAS Middle East stated: "As organizations strive to digitally transform with agility and speed while maintaining regulatory compliance, analytically driven decision making is becoming a critical



Cotton mafia is ruining the textile sector, says Dr. Murtaza

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Thursday said that Pakistan's most important industrial and export sector of textiles should be saved from the clutches of the influential cotton mafia.

He said that during the last cotton harvest, the powerful mafia bought large quantities of raw cotton from ginners, after which it reduced its market supply.

Following the shortage, the prices started rising, and the textile mill owners only learned about it when they had missed the boat, he added.

In a statement issued here today, Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the millers had to buy raw cotton at a much higher price than the actual price, which increased their business costs.

He added that the surge in business costs also affected their production and exports, leading to the closure of many factories.

The textile mill owners had to pay more than usual, which benefited the mafia, but the farmer got nothing, he observed.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that cotton production in Pakistan is continuously declining, and the area under cotton cultivation in Sindh and Punjab is decreasing.



However, since the country's sugar production already exceeds its needs and the government must provide significant subsidies to export excess sugar, the uncontrolled cultivation of sugarcane must stop.

He said that the Punjab government's decision not to buy wheat this time is correct.

The Punjab government has 22 lakh, 70 thousand tonnes of wheat, so why should it buy more?

The Punjab government also has to return the loan of 355 billion rupees taken last year to buy wheat. Moreover, 125 billion rupees in interest is also given every year on the purchase of wheat, while it takes more than one billion rupees to store and handle it.

He said that buying wheat would not benefit the farmers but the hoarders therefore the provincial government should not change its decision under pressure.

Dr. Mughal said that, with almost 23% of the country's GDP coming from agriculture, it is one of the most

important sources of income. The country had terrible floods in 2022, which hurt wheat production and led to a wheat shortage in early 2023.

Pakistan needs about 30 million tonnes of wheat annually, but only 26.2 million tonnes were produced in 2022. This caused prices to rise and caused long lines of people to try to buy wheat in cities prompting imports.

From September 2023 to March 2024, more than 3.5 million metric tonnes of wheat were brought into Pakistan, leaving little room for new purchases from local farmers, which has dented the expected profit margin, resulting in protests.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
72,658.05	72,601.81
Day's High	Day's Low
72,889.78	72,325.34
Index Value	Change
11,818,486,305	+56.24
Percentage	Time
+0.08%	9 May, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,381.35	+27.30
Percentage	Time
+0.33%	9 May, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,304.97	+248.58
Percentage	Time
+0.64%	9 May, 1:57 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,073.98	-128.39
Percentage	Time
-0.34%	9 May, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	180.5	182.2
Bahrain Dinar	739.61	747.61
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.43	38.83
Danish Krone	40.16	40.56
Euro	295.25	298.2
Hong Kong Dollar	35.6	35.95
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	904.67	913.67
Malaysian Ringgit	58.71	59.31
New Zealand \$	166.93	168.93
Norwegians Krone	25.69	25.99
Omani Riyal	722.52	730.52
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	73.3	74
Singapore Dollar	204	206
Swedish Korona	25.79	26.09
Swiss Franc	306.4	308.9
Thai Bhat	7.56	7.71
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.75
UK Pound Sterling	344	347.5
US Dollar	277	279.8

Tax targets should not be increased rapidly: Dr. Shahid

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, the former president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), stated on Tuesday that rapidly raising tax targets is damaging the masses and the unsteady economy. He claimed that raising taxes without taking into account local conditions encourages tax evasion and smuggling. In a statement issued today, Shahid Rasheed Butt stated that taxes are also impacting the industrial sector's export competitiveness; therefore, taxes should not be increased and expenses should be reduced. The business leader claimed that because tax targets are rising more quickly than the nation's economic growth, the size of the

undocumented economy is growing. Instead of finding new taxpayers, the burden on existing taxpayers is increasing, affecting business activities. He noted that we must take into account that decreasing inflation will also hinder the realisation of tax targets. Although the economy is growing at a negligible rate, Shahid Rashid Butt noted that the tax target for the upcoming financial year will increase from Rs 9.41 trillion to Rs 11.005 trillion, requiring the FBR to collect an additional Rs 1.59 billion. He noted that the government had planned to register 3.2 million traders by April 30 under the Tajar Dost scheme, in which just 75 shopkeepers had expressed interest, which proved to be a failure as expected.



Increased sales tax is one of the reasons for the increase in tax revenue, but inflation

has also played a part. Now that inflation is down, tax revenue will also be reduced. He noted that raising the sales tax has a greater impact on the poor, so we should reduce non-developmental spending instead of raising it further. He stated that the government's policy of continuous tax increases is increasing tax evasion and smuggling, which is affecting the export capacity of local industries. Currently, 30 percent of the diesel sold in the country is smuggled from Iran, causing Pakistan to lose 17 billion rupees per month. In addition, smuggling damages the national treasury by bringing in gas, food-stuffs, dairy products, medicines, juices, and many other items. He demanded that all targets be realistic and aligned with the ground realities.

Poverty

RAWALPINDI: A labourer is sitting in sunshine (Dhoop) alongside a road, waiting for customer during hot weather in the city.



Photo: Online

ICCI organizes ceremony to express solidarity with Armed Forces of Pakistan

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry has said that May 9 2023 catastrophic incidents were the conspiracy to disrupt country's development and inflict harm to its defense as well as its integrity. He said that attacks on military installations and defiling of martyrs' memorials were the ugliest acts and the day will be remembered as the darkest day in the history of Pakistan, when a politically instigated mob resorted to destruction across the country, damaging public property and military installations. Addressing a well-attended ceremony held at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry auditorium to express solidarity with the armed forces of Pakistan and to condemn the incidents of May 9, 2023 Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said that one year has passed but neither the Nation has forgotten nor will forget the criminals who committed this offence adding that such a tragedy had never been witnessed which was actually meant to weaken and malign the defenders of Pakistan. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari while condemning the May 9 vandalism said that entire business



community is standing shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces of Pakistan, adding that priority of each and every citizen is Pakistan and its armed forces and that we are well aware of those of May 28 and also well aware of those of May 9. In his address Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that the ICCI ceremony has given a message to the world that entire Pakistani nation is united and no one will be allowed to cast a jaundiced eye upon it. The ceremony was also addressed by Traders leaders Yousuf Rajput, Akhtar Abbasi, Malik Shabbir Ahmed, Raja Hassan Akhtar, Jamshid Akhtar Sheikh and Chaudhry Mumtaz. Those who were present include Maqsood Tabish, Ch. Mohammad Ali, Irfan Chaudhry and others.

Alibaba.com and TDAP Bolster Pakistani Exporters with Introduction of Training Initiatives

PPA

LAHORE: Alibaba.com, a leading platform for global business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce, and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) today announced a series of training programs designed to equip Pakistani businesses, particularly small and medium-sized exporters, with essential knowledge, tools and methodologies to achieve success in the global market. In conjunction with this announcement, Alibaba.com has unveiled its intelligent tool suite, Smart Assistant, as its latest offering to help boost the international trade capacity of Pakistani exporters operating on its platform.



The announcement was made at the 2024 Global B2B Digital Export Summit, held under the theme "Smart Up Your Trade, Leading Your Way" on May 8, 2024, at the Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore. The summit featured a host of B2B e-commerce and export experts, including Shahzad Ahmed Khan, Director General of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Rocky Lu, Head of Pakistan Business at Alibaba.com, alongside other guests such as Kashif Anwar, President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Adil Mukhtar, Assistant Director at TDAP, Berry Ma, Marketing Director of Southeast Asia at Alibaba.com. Commenting on the collaboration, Shahzad Ahmed Khan, Director General at TDAP, stated, "Our joint effort with Alibaba.com to plan a series of training programs is a significant move towards the digital empowerment of Pakistani SMEs. By combining our resources, we are equipping local businesses with advanced B2B e-commerce skills and strategic vision for their success on the global stage. Together, we're fostering an environment conducive to innovation, sustainability and success."

Nepra conducted hearing on KE's Provisional FCA of 9 Months

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) conducted a public hearing on May 9, 2024, on the petition submitted by K-Electric (KE) regarding provisional monthly fuel charge adjustments (FCA) for the period of July 2023 to March 2024. The expected impact of proposed FCA will be between PKR 1.6 to 2 per month as compared to the average FCA of PKR 2.89 applied to customers of other power distribution compa-

nies for the same period. KE has filed FCA based on three scenarios and has requested NEPRA for approval of any of the three scenarios. The Authority will provide guidelines for the per unit cost and period of recovery of the relevant FCAs and issue a subsequent notification clarifying the specific method implemented and its impact on customer bills. During the interactive hearing conducted in-person and online customers raised questions concerning various aspects of the provisional FCA.

FPCCI's Pakistan-Ethiopia Business Council Holds Maiden Meeting to Mobilize Businesspersons



PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan-Ethiopia Business Council of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has convened its maiden meeting to mobilize the business community of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the 2nd Business and Trade Delegation to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) scheduled for May 26th to May 31st, 2024. H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, presided over the first meeting of the council along with FPCCI Senior Vice President Mr. Saquib Fayyaz. The meeting was convened on the request of Ibrahim Tawab, Honorary Consul of Ethiopia in Karachi, who is also Chairman of the Council of the FPCCI. The meeting was attended by high-profile business persons from diverse sectors including agriculture and agro processing, manufacturing, tourism and ICT. Addressing the maiden meeting, Ambassador Jemal Beker Abdula asked the business community of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to connect and build their network in Africa through Ethiopia which was a gateway to the African continent which is a future and hub of business, trade and investment opportunities. According to the Ambassador, the 2nd Business and Trade Delegation to Ethiopia included business forums, meetings with ministers concerned and high officials, visits to the industrial parks and top notch tourist sites, and on top of that cultural nights in Addis Ababa.

Holding the Pakistan Investment Conference in Jeddah will start a new era: Jam Kamal

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Founder Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas met Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal in his office. Chairman Khurshid Barlas briefed about the arrangements for the Pakistan Investment Conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on May 11, 2024. A large number of different business community related to tourism, minerals, medical, civil aviation industry, construction material, private developer, education and other sectors will participate in the conference. Invitations have been sent to more than 2500 delegates who will be part of this conference. The efforts of the Consul General of Pakistan Khalid

Majeed posted in Saudi Arabia in organizing the Pakistan Investment Conference are commendable. He has a very positive attitude towards the Pakistani economy and is playing an active role in strengthening Pakistan-Saudi relations. Discussion Federal Minister Jam Kamal said that more than 30 investors from Saudi companies visited Pakistan under the leadership of Saudi Arabia's Deputy Investment Minister Ibrahim Al Mubarak. The bilateral relations and economic partnership between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are getting stronger and stronger and the visit has marked the beginning of a new era in the relations between the two brotherly countries. Cooperation from Saudi Arabia at the govern-

mental and private levels will be increased, said Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz. Shairif has appointed me as the focal person on matters with Saudi Arabia so that investment matters cannot be stopped under any circumstances. Khurshid Barlas said during the conversation that the Pakistan Investment Conference is a link in this chain. Having this conference in bilateral relations will be beneficial for Pakistan. Our business community will benefit greatly from the partnership with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan's economy will be strengthened. Finally, Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas also presented the shield to Federal Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal.



Pakistan takes on Ireland in inaugural T20I series today

Sports Desk

LAHORE/DUBLIN: The Pakistan Men's cricket team will take on Irish cricket team in the first-ever three-match T20I series between the two countries which is expected to provide both the teams an opportunity to put final touches to their preparations for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in West Indies an USA next month.

The first T20I of the series will be played on May 10 (Friday) while the next two matches will take place at the Castle Avenue on May 12 (Sunday) and May 14 (Tuesday). All the matches are scheduled to be played in Dublin.

The series marks the first time Ireland will host Pakistan for a T20I series. The two sides have previously met only once in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2009 where Pakistan won by 39 runs with Kamran Akmal receiving the player of the match award for his 51-ball 57 and two stumpings.

Both teams are in the same group for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 and will face each other in Florida on 16 June. Apart from the two sides, India, USA, and Canada are also in the same group, with the top two teams advancing to the second stage.

On the importance of the series, Paki-



stan Head Coach Azhar Mahmood said that Pakistan only played Ireland once, so they were a relatively new opponent for us, adding that any team in T20 cricket can be dangerous as the match can swing in one over.

"The three T20Is will provide us with good information about their players and how they approach T20 cricket," Azhar said.

On the preparations for the upcoming

ICC T20 World Cup, he said the preparations for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 began with the home series against New Zealand and now it is all about putting the final touches on those preparations. "We have clarity on our game plans, strategies and combinations. It's about bringing everything together before we arrive in the United States," the Head Coach added.

On the other hand, fast bowler

Mohammad Amir has been issued visa for Ireland and he is expected to be available for selection for the second and third T20Is of the three-match series.

After the three-match series against Ireland, Pakistan are due to leave for England for a four-match T20I series with the matches scheduled at Headingley (22 May), Birmingham (25 May), Cardiff (28 May), and The Oval, London (30 May), both England and Pakistan will head to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024. England will face Scotland in Barbados on 4 June in their opening match, while Pakistan will launch their campaign against the USA in Dallas on 6 June.

Squads (to be selected from):

Ireland: Paul Stirling (captain), Mark Adair, Ross Adair, Andrew Balbirnie, Curtis Campher, Gareth Delany, George Dockrell, Graham Hume, Barry McCarthy, Neil Rock, Harry Tector, Lorcan Tucker, Ben White, Craig Young

Pakistan: Babar Azam (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Amir (unavailable for first T20I), Mohammad Rizwan, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Usman Khan.

Kamran, Abdullah hit tons as SNGPL crush SBP to reach President's Cup final

A Sports

LAHORE: Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) beat State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to seal a berth in the final of President's Cup Grade-I 2023-24, at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore on Thursday.

SNGPL cruised to the 279-run target comfortably with eight wickets in hand and 24 balls to spare.

Kamran Ghulam (110 not out, 97b, 9x4s, 2x6s) and Abdullah Shafique (101, 102b, 10x4s, 1x6) starred with brilliant centuries keeping SBP bowlers at bay throughout the chase.

The duo also shared a 116-run second-wicket partnership.

Meanwhile, Omaid Bin



Yousuf stayed undefeated with 40 off 38 balls comprising four boundaries and also shared a solid 97-run unbeaten stand with Kamran.

Earlier, after opting to bat first under the scorching sun, SBP lost their in-form opening batter Mohammad Faizan (10, 8b, 1x6) early,

who fell prey to Shah Nawaz Dahani.

Zain Abbas, who struck a crafty century (108, 101b, 17x4s), joined forces with skipper Usman Salahuddin (44, 75b, 4x4s) to stitch a 144-run second-wicket partnership before the former was dismissed by Mohammad Ali.

Zain's

departure in the 32nd over initiated a collapse as SBP lost the last seven wickets for just 81 runs.

Mohammad Mohsin, batting at five, helped his team post 278 all out, with a brisk half-century laced with six fours and three maximums returning for 62 off 48 balls.

Ali was the pick of the SNGPL bowlers, dismissing three batters while left-arm spinner Mehran Mumtaz and Dahani picked up two wickets apiece.

SNGPL will now face either the Higher Education Commission (HEC) or Ghani Glass in the President's Cup final, scheduled to take place at Gaddafi Stadium on Sunday.

Sri Lanka announce squad for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024

A Sports

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Thursday, announced a strong 15-member squad for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, scheduled to take place in the United States of America (USA) and the West Indies.

The squad features a blend of experienced and young players and will be led by star all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga, while middle-order batter Charith Asalanka has been named as his deputy.

Sri Lanka opted to rely on the experience of veteran Angelo Mathews, who made his T20I comeback in January after being



away from the setup for nearly three years.

Notably, this will be Mathews' sixth T20 World Cup appear-

ance. He was also a part of Sri Lanka's victorious campaign in 2014.

Besides the experience, Sri

Lanka emphasised on the team balance and thus picked multiple all-rounders in their squad for the T20 World Cup 2024.

Skipper Hasaranga is one of the spin-bowling all-rounders beside Dunith Wellalage, Dhananjaya de Silva, and Kamindu Mendis. Whereas, Mathews and Dasun Shanaka are the pace-bowling all-rounders. Right-arm pacer Dushantha Chameera will spearhead Sri Lanka's pace bowling attack which features Dilshan Madushanka, Matheesha Pathirana and Nuwan Thushara.

Sri Lanka are placed in Group D of the T20 World Cup 2024 alongside South Africa, Bang-

ladesh, Netherlands and Nepal.

The former champions will kick start their campaign on June 3 against South Africa in New York.

Sri Lanka squad: Wanindu Hasaranga (c), Charith Asalanka (vc), Kusal Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Kamindu Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Dasun Shanaka, Dhananjaya De Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Wellalage, Dushantha Chameera, Nuwan Thushara, Matheesha Pathirana, and Dilshan Madushanka

Traveling Reserves: Asitha Fernando, Vijayakanth Viyasanthi, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, and Janith Liyanage.

Joselu earns Madrid incredible Bayern comeback to reach Champions League final

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Real Madrid produced a spectacular comeback against Bayern Munich to reach the Champions League final on Wednesday with Joselu striking twice in the dying minutes, earning them a 2-1 win to progress 4-3 on aggregate.

Alfonso Davies smashed the visiting German giants ahead in the second half but record 14-time winners Madrid produced a sensational comeback with Joselu netting in the 88th and 91st minutes.

Spanish champions Real Madrid face another German side, Borussia Dortmund, in the Wembley final on June 1, after they stunned the team they call their "black beast".

Journeymen striker and backup option Joselu, on as a late substitute, wrote his name in Madrid's history books with his last-gasp brace, giving Europe's comeback kings another night to remember.

"There have been a lot of times we have looked dead and buried, but we have that mentality of never say die," said Real midfielder Jude Bellingham. "Joselu deserves it all, he has been an amazing squad member this season."

Madrid had enjoyed the better of the match but it seemed Davies' superb strike had set up a repeat of the 2013 all-German Champions League final in London.

Instead Joselu consigned Bayern Munich to a first trophyless season since 2012, his first goal coming after a handling error from

Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who had superbly kept Madrid at bay until that point.

"(Before that) there were world class saves after world class saves, but that can happen, it's football," said Bayern defender Matthijs de Ligt. Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel made three changes from the first leg, benching veteran Thomas Mueller and Leon Goretzka.

Dani Carvajal started for Madrid after missing the first leg suspended and was heavily involved as the hosts dominated the opening stages.

Rodrygo Goes was inches away from converting Carvajal's low cross and the Spain defender then cleverly set up Vinicius Junior with a pass nutmegging a defender, and Manuel Neuer tipped the Brazilian's shot against the post.

The rebound fell to Rodrygo but his effort was weak and with a desperate arm Neuer was able to claw it out to complete a fine double save. Bayern's Serge Gnabry limped off injured with Davies replacing him before England captain Harry Kane's first flash of danger.

Madrid goalkeeper Andriy Lunin was alert to push Kane's vicious long-range volley around the post. Neuer palmed away a Vinicius free-kick as the teams ended a high-intensity, relentlessly frantic first half level.

The second period was just as fraught, with Davies' cross deflecting onto the roof of Lunin's goal.

Vinicius was unplayable down Madrid's left and Rodrygo prodded his low cross agonisingly wide of the far post.

The 38-year-old Neuer made superb saves to deny both Brazilian forwards again before the hour mark as Madrid controlled the game and ratcheted up the pressure.

However just as in Munich, when Los Blancos were at their strongest, Bayern pounced.

Kane fed Davies and the Canada international cut inside from the left and smashed a shot beyond Lunin into the far top corner after 68 minutes.

Madrid thought they had levelled moments later through Nacho but after a VAR review the strike was ruled out as the defender had grabbed Joshua Kimmich's face before shooting.

Tuchel took off Kane in the final stages to try and hold on to victory but it slipped through his fingers as

Rafael Nadal squeezes past qualifier Zizou Bergs in Rome opener



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Rafael Nadal battled into the second round of the Rome Open on Thursday after bouncing back from a set down to beat qualifier Zizou Bergs 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Clay court icon Nadal will face world number nine Hubert Hurkacz next as he continued his comeback from injury with a punishing match against his Belgian opponent which lasted nearly three hours.

Also on Nadal's side of the draw are last year's winner, world number four Daniil Medvedev, and the beaten finalist Holger Rune.

Nadal has in recent times been a shadow of the player who has won 22 Grand Slams in a storied career which has also brought a record 10 titles in Rome, his most recent in 2021.

The 37-year-old has struggled with injury, dropping down to 305 in the world rankings after missing almost all of last year.

He returned in April from another three-month lay-off with a second-round exit in Barcelona before reaching the last 16 in Madrid last week.

He showed glimpses of his old self against Bergs who is ranked 108 in the world and is an eight-time title winner on the Challenger tour.

Outsider Bergs, 24, had in previous tournaments taken sets off high-profile players like Stefanos Tsitsipas and last year's losing Rome Open finalist Holger Rune, and he pushed his illustrious rival all the way.

The big-hitting Belgian briefly looked like he might win the biggest match of his career to date before Rafael Nadal fought back to take a hard-fought victory.

Mohammad Amir receives visa for Ireland tour



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Left-arm Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir, on Thursday, finally received his visa for Ireland to participate in the three-match T20I series.

According to the details, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials are currently engaged in arranging Mohammad Amir's flight to Dublin at the earliest.

The left-arm pacer, due to a delay in the issuance of the visa will miss the first T20I and is expected to link up with the side on Friday.

"Fast bowler Mohammad Amir will miss the first T20I due to delays in the issuance of his visa. He is expected to join the side on Friday," stated PCB in a press release.

On the contrary, the national men's cricket team reached Dublin, Ireland on Wednesday morning via Dubai.

Pakistan squad, led by captain Babar Azam, travelled without Shadab Khan and Hasan Ali, who linked up with the team in Dublin after participating in the County Championship.

Notably, Mohammad Amir faced a similar situation during the tours of Ireland and England in 2018.

Amir recently made his comeback to international cricket during the home T20I series against New Zealand after he took back his retirement before the series.

Pakistan is scheduled to play three T20Is at Clontarf in Dublin on 10, 12, and 14 May 2024. All three matches will start at 3 PM local time.

The three-match away series, followed by four T20Is in England, will serve as a stepping stone for the Green Shirts to boost their preparations for this year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in the West Indies and the United States of America (USA).

Pakistan squad for Ireland and England T20Is

Babar Azam (c), Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Agha, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Afridi, Usman Khan.



Madrid produced more indelible European memories.

Neuer, who had been sublime to this point, fumbled what appeared a simple Vinicius strike and Jose-lu gratefully bundled home from close range.

With Bayern reeling Madrid struck again, decisively. It was Jose-lu once more, the striker on loan from second division side Espanyol, turning home after Antonio Rudiger cut the ball back to him.

The goal was ruled offside but officials overturned the decision

after review, and after nearly 15 minutes of stoppage time, Madrid earned the chance to go for their 15th Champions League trophy.

Bayern were left raging at full-time after De Ligt netted but play had been stopped beforehand for an offside flag against Noussair Mazraoui.

"I don't want to say that it's always the referee's mistake with Real Madrid, but that made the difference today," grumbled De Ligt, saying play should have been allowed to continue.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Mr Bakhtiyor Saidov, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Toppling democracy, installing dictatorship, causing social unrest among core aims of May 9 attacks: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday calling the May 9 incidents a revolt against the state and its institutions, said the real objective of the attacks was to topple democracy, bury the constitution, and bring dictatorship in the country besides undermining the national unity to cause social unrest. The prime minister, chairing a special meeting of the federal cabinet held at the Parliament House, said May 9 was a black day in Pakistan's history when the rioters attacked the defence institutions and the monuments of martyrs and Ghazis.

The evil plan of May 9 was not merely a conspiracy against Pakistan but also the state, Pakistan Army, and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir. But thanks to Allah Almighty that design



was thwarted. However, the nation wants to know as why despite a year, the culprits were not yet punished," he remarked. He said holding the cabinet meeting at the Parliament House aimed to give a message of unity and express solidarity with the nation's martyrs and heroes. The prime minister viewed that the May 9 attacks were carried out to undermine that time PDM government's efforts to stabilise the economy, impede

normalisation of strained ties with friendly countries, and cover up the foreign funding, Toshakhana, and 190 million pound corruption scams, and ensure the appointments on key posts without merit. Exemplifying the riots in the UK and USA, the prime minister said no country could tolerate such heinous crimes against the state institutions. He said except May 9, the politicians in the country's history, despite facing tough

circumstances, played role in pacifying the situation either through the slogan of "Pakistan Khappay" or tolerated the hardships without uttering a single word against Pakistan. He said those behind the May 9 attacks had also hurled the allegations of "35 punctures" (a reference to the allegation of polls rigging) and made contradictory statements in cipher case, also undermining Pakistan's ties with the United States which the incum-

ment government was trying to improve. He said the nation had witnessed the May 9 riots and also those who orchestrated and executed the anti-state conspiracy with some people also confessing the same in videos. He said even today, the anti-Pakistan propaganda was being carried out from abroad, and letters were written by some elements to destabilise the national economy. He told the cabinet members that the government had already put the country's economy on the course to stability and thanked the political parties for extending their support. He also expressed gratitude to the Chief Justice of Pakistan for assuring his support to expedite the disposal of tax-related cases involving Rs 2700 billion. Appraising the members of his recent Saudi visit, he called it the "most productive and useful" visit of his life.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister receives the Ambassador of Switzerland

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar received the Ambassador of Switzerland, Georg Steiner, today for a courtesy call.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dar said that Pakistan attaches high importance to its ties with Switzerland and the two sides have the potential to expand cooperation in trade and investment, climate, tourism and



migration. He appreciated Swiss companies doing busi-

ness in Pakistan and invited more Swiss companies to invest in Pakistan, particularly in the renewable energy and IT sectors. Referring to the MoU on Disaster Management signed between the two countries last year, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister hoped that it would foster greater cooperation between the two sides, enabling them to utilize technology and expertise to address natural calamities in the future.

Regional dynamics and multilateral issues were also discussed. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister also appreciated Switzerland's role in the multilateral arena as well as the country's contributions to humanitarian and peace-building efforts.

Pakistan and Switzerland have close relations marked by regular interactions. The Swiss Foreign Minister visited Pakistan last July and Bilateral Political Consultations were held in January this year.

AIOU holds first session of 68th BASR meeting

ISLAMABAD: The first session of 68th meeting of the Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) was held at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, presided over the meeting. The Directorate of BASR organized the meeting and the Director BASR, Prof. Dr. Syed Amir Shah, presented a detailed report on the implementation of the decisions made during the previous meeting and the agenda for the current session. All four Deans, prominent scholars, subject specialists, supervisors, heads of departments attended the meeting.

56 PhD synopses were on the agenda but due to time constraints, agenda was split into three sessions. The first session took place yesterday and a total of 15 students from

different departments including Early Childhood Education and Elementary Teacher Education, Statistics, Physics, Business Administration and Mass Communication presented synopses. Some synopses were approved with minor changes, while others were directed to be refined and presented again in 15 days. Additionally, some scholars were asked to present their synopses at the next meeting.

VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood advised scholars to use simple and common words instead of complex language in their research proposals. The second and third sessions of the meeting are scheduled for May 15 and May 28, respectively. In the second session, 19 scholars will present their synopses, while 22 students will present theirs in the third session.

Minister Finance meets with the Chief Economist in Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chief Economist and Director for Economics and Evaluation Directorate in the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Professor Adnan Qadir Khan accompanied by British High Commissioner to Pakistan H. E. Ms. Jane Marriot CMG OBE called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The Finance Minister extended a warm welcome to both guests. The Minister highlighted the government's efforts to stabilize the economy, including achievements such as increased forex reserves, stable currency, decreasing inflation, and a flourishing stock market.

Prof. Adnan Qadir Khan informed the Minister that the FCDO has successfully concluded work on several pivotal initiatives and extended support for a domesti-



cally driven reform program aimed at fostering economic growth and sustainability in Pakistan.

H. E. Ms. Jane Marriot expressed the British government's commitment to support Pakistan in its socio-economic development endeavors and expressed confidence in the potential for deeper collaboration in the future.

CENTCOM chief, COAS Munir reiterate need for enhancing training interactions



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and General Michael Erik Kurilla, the US Central Command (Centcom), have reiterated the need for enhancing training interactions between Centcom and the Pakistan Army.

Centcom General Kurilla called on COAS Gen Munir at GHQ on Thursday, the military's media wing said.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations said that matters of shared interests, particularly cooperation in regional security matters came under discussion during the meeting.

Both sides discussed avenues of joint training.

"The visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan Army's successes in the fight against terrorism and Pakistan's continued efforts for brining peace and stability in the region.

Naval forces from Pakistan and the United States completed a four-day bilateral training exercise, 'Inspired Union 2024', in Karachi, Pakistan, on May 2.

Inspired Union focused on maritime interdiction operations, explosive ordinance disposal mine countermeasures tactics, techniques, and procedures, and harbor security, according to a Centcom statement. The exercise created opportunities

for improving readiness, enhancing maritime security and stability, and promoting the freedom of navigation in the US 5th Fleet area of operations.

"Exercises like Inspired Union continue to improve our readiness and interoperability in the maritime domain," said CAPT Robert 'Paco' Porter, Commodore of Task Force 52. "Pakistan is an important partner and we are honoured for their hospitality both during this exercise and the lead-up to it. We look forward to future opportunities to work with an important partner like Pakistan."

A US Coast Guard maritime engagement team, a US Marine Corps fleet anti-terrorism security team, a civil affairs team, and an expeditionary mine countermeasures and diving team, took part in Inspired Union.

As a capstone bilateral exercise, Inspired Union fosters collaboration between Pakistan and the US armed forces, in an effort to uphold the rules-based international order that supports the free flow of commerce in strategically important waters in the region.

The US 5th Fleet's area of operations encompasses nearly 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Bab al-Mandeb.

IMF Resident Representative meets CCP Chairman

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Esther Pérez Ruiz, the IMF Resident Representative in Pakistan, visited the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and met with Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, Chairman CCP, to discuss matters of mutual interest.

During the meeting, Dr. Sidhu briefed Ms. Ruiz on CCP's ongoing initiatives aimed at policing cartels to enhance competition, aligning with the Government of Pakistan's policies for sustainable economic growth.

The Chairman emphasized the critical role of taxation, remittances, and exports in attracting foreign direct investment, noting that market competition plays a vital role in this regard. He pointed out that for Pakistani products and services to compete effectively in international markets, a competitive environment is essential. The Chairman also highlighted that inefficiencies arise



when there is a mismatch between demand and supply, and it is society that ultimately bears the cost of such inefficiencies.

Ms. Ruiz underscored the significance of competition in driving exports and attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). The IMF representative further assured support for capacity building for enabling economic growth.

The meeting between Ms. Ruiz and Dr. Sidhu signifies a continued dialogue between international organizations and Pakistani authorities to promote economic stability and growth through fair competition practices.

'Cheezious donates Rs 25 million from their Every Order Counts campaign to PIMA for Gaza'

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Cheezious, a proud Pakistani brand, partnered with PIMA in a collaborative effort to support families in Palestine earlier this Ramadan. As a testament to this enduring collaboration, Cheezious is pleased to present a cheque of 25 million PKR to PIMA, dedicated to supporting relief efforts for the people of Gaza.

The ongoing crisis in Gaza has deeply affected countless lives, prompting Cheezious to step forward with empathy and solidarity. This

substantial contribution underscores Cheezious' dedication to alleviating suffering and fostering hope in communities facing adversity.

Head of Marketing at Cheezious Zohaib Hassan said "We are honored to deepen our partnership with PIMA and contribute to the vital efforts aimed at bringing hope to the people of Gaza. At Cheezious, we believe in the power of collective action to create positive change. Our donation reflects our commitment to standing alongside those in need and making a tangible difference in their lives."

9th May; The Darkest Day..

Continued from Page 1

Jinnah House, monuments of the martyrs, military installations and state institutions, the Speaker regretted that no one had ever dared to cast evil eye on these sacred icons of national pride. He reaffirmed the pledge to restore and protect the state assets, adding that Pakistan owed its development and prosperity to sacrifices of brave personnel of Pakistan Security Forces.

He also said that exemplar-

ry punishment was essential to discourage the propagandists and their handlers involved in 9th May riots.

He also said that People and Parliament of Pakistan stood shoulder to shoulder with its security forces especially in the war against terrorism. He also expressed his firm belief that Pakistani security agencies would eliminate terrorism and extremism from the soil of Pakistan once and for all and Pakistan would again be on the path to progress and prosperity.