



Melinda French Gates resigns as co-chair from Gates Foundation

Melinda French Gates, the former wife of Microsoft founder Bill Gates, announced Monday that she was resigning from the position of co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, three years after parting ways with the 68-year-old philanthropist. In a statement posted on X, formerly Twitter, Melinda French Gates said that it was a "critical moment" to protect and advance women's rights around the world.



Dr. Ola Awad, reviews the conditions of the Palestinian people via statistical figures and findings

On the 76th Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba, Number of Palestinians Worldwide Doubled about 10 Times H. E. Dr. Ola Awad, President of the PCBS, via figures, historical and current data, reviewed the geographical, demographical and economic situation of the Palestinian People on the 76th Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba... (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Ceremony

RAWALPINDI: General Asim addressed the families of the martyrs in a ceremony held at the COAS General Headquarters.



Photo: ISPR

Army chief confers military awards upon officers at GHQ Investiture ceremony

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Monday conferred military awards upon Army personnel for their acts of gallantry during operations and meritorious services rendered to the nation during an Investiture ceremony held here at General Headquarters. A large number of senior Army officers and families of awardees attended the ceremony. The officers & soldiers were awarded medals including Sitara-I-Imtiaz (Military) and Tamgha-I- Basalat. Medals of Shuhada were received by their family members, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news

release said.

Paying tributes to Shuhada (martyrs) and Ghazis, the COAS said, "There is nothing more noble than laying one's life for defence of motherland and the sacrifices of our martyrs strengthen our resolve to fight with utmost dedication and spirit of sacrifice."

The Army Chief also lauded brave families of Shuhada for their high spirits and sacrifices rendered by them.

The COAS said, "Shuhada and Ghazis are our national heroes and the nation owes its independence and security to the sacrifices of its valiant warriors. Our Shuhada are, indeed, the beacons of hope and resilience for the nation."

PM approves immediate release of Rs 23b to resolve AJK people's issues

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered an immediate release of Rs 23 billion to resolve the issues confronting the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).



The prime minister decided to provide funds after thoroughly examining the situation of the territory, in a special meeting chaired by him on the subject, a PM Office press release said. Different parts of the AJK witnessed protest demonstra-

tions during the last coupe of days with the people seeking reduced electricity bills and taxes as well as subsidized wheat flour.

Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, AJK cabinet members, and senior leadership attended the meet-

ing besides the federal ministers and leaders of the coalition parties.

The Kashmiri leadership and other participants of the meeting thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz for his decision to provide funds.

IHC seeks report regarding registration of Al-Qadir University Trust

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday again sought report from chief commissioner office in plea seeking registration of Al-Qadir University Trust under Islamabad Trust Act.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the petition filed by PTT's founder. The petitioner's lawyer adopted the stance that the Al-Qadir University was not being registered and prayed the court to issue directives to the chief commissioner office in that regard.

The court expressed displeasure over non submission of report by the chief commissioner office. The court again sought report from the respondents and adjourned the case.

Meeting of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister with Vice President of Minmetals & Chairman of MCC

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with Vice President of Minmetals and Chairman of Metallurgical Cooperation of China, Chen Jianguang, today in Beijing, China. He appreciated the longstanding partnership of Pakistan with Minmetal and MCC and their contributions in executing important mining projects in Balochistan.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister underlined that export of copper to China from Pakistan has increased exponentially reaching US\$ 1.22 billion in 2022 from US\$ 132 million in 2018.

Deputy Prime Minister Dar also invited the companies to establish processing plants in Balochistan to produce value-added mineral products for domestic consumption and exports to China. He underscored



that the second phase of the CPEC aims at enhancing B2B collaboration between the private enterprises of the two countries. He added that CPEC provides Minmetals

and MCC with access to modern transport infrastructure to enhance logistical efficiency and reduce transportation costs for both raw materials and finished products.

CP suspends membership of 77 lawmakers elected on reserved seats

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday suspended the membership of 77 lawmakers who were elected on reserved seats previously denied to the Sunni Ittehad Council, (SIC) in compliance with the Supreme Court's order. Last week, the apex court suspended the decisions of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) and the ECP of allocating the reserved seats meant for the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) to other parties.

The lawmakers whose membership was suspended included 44 from the PML-N, 15 from the PPP, 13 from Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), and one each from MQM-P, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, Awami National Party, Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians. In the KP Assembly, 21 lawmakers on reserved seats for women and 4 for minorities were de-notified. Similarly in the Punjab Assembly 24 women lawmakers and three minority MPAs got suspended their membership. According to a notification, in the National Assembly, 19 women members were suspended, comprising 11 from Punjab and eight from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This included the suspension of four women's seats belonging to the PML-N, two each from the JUI and the PPP. Furthermore, the membership of three minority members in the National Assembly was suspended.

NA Speaker summons parliamentary leaders' meetings on Monday

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has called for meetings with parliamentary leaders on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at Parliament House to discuss issues related to scheduling the first parliamentary year of the 5th session of 16th National Assembly. The speaker has invited parliamentary leaders and chief whips from various political parties, including Federal Minister for Law and Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Azam Nazir Tarar, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain, and Members of the National Assembly such as Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Malik Amir Dogar, Ijaz Hussain



Jakharani, Syed Aminul Haque, Noor Alam Khan, Gul Asghar Khan, and Khalid Hussain Magsi.

The forum will discuss the scheduling of the motion of thanks for the President's address, as well as discuss the forthcoming budget meeting. It's important to mention that President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned a session of the National Assembly on Monday, May 13, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at the Parliament House.

Joint Statement of Pakistan-U. S. Counterterrorism Dialogue

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON DC: Additional Foreign Secretary for the UN and OIC, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah, and US Department of State Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Ambassador Elizabeth Richard, co-chaired Pakistan-U. S. Counterterrorism Dialogue on 10 May 2024 in Washington DC.

The Counterterrorism Dialogue underscores the cooperation between Pakistan and the United States in addressing the most pressing challenges to regional and global security, including Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and ISIS-Khorasan. Discussions centered on the counterterrorism landscape in the region, with a focus on areas of mutual interest. Pakistani and U. S. senior officials emphasized the importance of expanded counterterrorism collaboration and capacity building, including exchanges of technical expertise and best practices, investigative and prosecutorial assistance, provision of border security infrastructure and training, including the United States training



of more than 300 police and frontline responders since the last Pakistan-U. S. Counterterrorism Dialogue in March 2023, and strengthening multilateral engagement such as in the UN and the Global Counterterrorism Forum.

Pakistan and the United States recognize that a partnership to counter ISIS-Khorasan, TTP, and other terrorist organizations will advance security in the region and serve as a model of bilateral and regional cooperation to address transnational terrorism threats. Both governments resolved to increase communication on these topics and continue collaboration to detect and deter violent extremism through whole-of-government approaches. The Counterterrorism Dialogue reaffirms Pakistan's and the United States' shared determination to contribute to both regional and global security and stability.

Minister Finance and Revenue meets with the delegation of IMF mission

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The IMF mission led by Mr. Nathan Porter, IMF Mission Chief called on the Finance Minister on 13th May, 2024 at the Finance Ministry to kickstart the discussions on further engagement with the Fund. The meeting was attended by Governor-State Bank of Pakistan, Chairman-Federal Board of Revenue, and senior officers of the Finance Ministry.

The Finance Minister welcomed the IMF team and thanked them for the successful completion of the Standby Arrangement (SBA). The Finance Minister apprised the IMF



team of the improvement in the macro-economic indicators over

the course of the SBA and underscored the government's commit-

ment to continue with and expand upon the reform agenda.

FCCI to launch Cyberabad project to help train students in artificial intelligence

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is very soon launching the Cyberabad project, under which creative artificial intelligence will be imparted to students of local universities with the help of international standard faculty to make Faisalabad a hub of technology from textiles in the next ten years. Practical training will be given. Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Dr. Khurram Tariq said this today while addressing the first awareness session for the students of Government College Women University Faisalabad. He said that the coming era of artificial intelligence is the global era and if we do not use this technology in time, we will be far behind the world in the race of development and other nations will not only help us economically through artificial intelligence.

He said that Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the



first and only chamber in the country which has taken this key step to develop industries on modern lines. He said that in the first semester, the students will be taught the basic skills of artificial intelligence, but in the last semester, there will be separate courses for them in finance, medical, economics and other fields so that they can meet

the specific needs of these fields with creative artificial intelligence. He said that the students of other universities will also have separate seminars to make them aware of the usefulness of this project and it is expected that the course will be started as soon as the registration process is completed. He further informed that the services of the

faculty have been hired for this purpose, but now the students and their parents should register as soon as possible for this international standard training course in Faisalabad. On this occasion, the executive member of Faisalabad Chamber and the spirit of this program, Mohammad Azhar Chaudhry, also highlighted the various aspects of artificial intelligence and this program and said that we will be able to open new avenues for the development of Faisalabad with the use of artificial intelligence. He said that President Dr. Khurram Tariq had identified the Cyberabad project as soon as he assumed the office of the Chamber's chairmanship, which is now being implemented. Vice Chancellor of Women's University Prof. Dr. Zal Huma Nazli also spoke and termed this project of Faisalabad Chamber as a game changer and assured all possible support for its success. In the end, he also presented Dr. Khurram Tariq with the shield of honor of the Women's University.

CM Punjab Provide Modern Machinery and Equipment to the Multan Municipal Corporation

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Secretary Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan Muslim League-Nun, Multan District Umar Farooq Bhatti and Focal Person District Multan met Chief Officer Municipal Corporation Chaudhry Farmaish Ali in his office and congratulated him on performing Umrah. Umar Farooq Bhatti Vision of Punjab Chief Minister Mrs. Maryam Nawaz Sharif regarding clean Punjab, Umar Farooq Bhatti appreciated the steps taken by the Municipal Corporation to eliminate encroachments. To end illegal encroachments from Multan city What has happened day and night is admirable. The anti-encroachment action in Multan city supervised by Superintendent Encroachments Mazhar Khan and Arshad Pahlwan is unprecedented in the history of Multan. Illegal encroachments in the short period of three months. The amount of fine deposited in the coffers of Municipal Corporation Multan by imposing a fine of Rs. 1.25 million against Happened to all the staff of the Municipal Corporation Prizes and shields should be given.



RIPHAH and RIHIS organized 7th International Conference on Patient Safety

CITY DESK

ISLAMABAD: Riphah International University and Riphah Institute of Healthcare Improvement & Safety (RIHIS) organized the 7th International Conference on Patient Safety (ICPS) at Jinnah Convention Center Islamabad. For the past eight years, RIHIS has been the driving force behind the region's largest annual gathering on patient safety, attracting prominent figures in the healthcare sector such as key opinion leaders, domain experts, regulators, academia, and stakeholders from around the globe. ICPS provides a platform to allow experts in Patient Safety to come together to create momentum in the advancement of Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety in Pakistan and the region. This year the conference spotlighted the theme of "Diagnostic Safety," highlighting the fundamental importance of accurate and timely diagnoses in effective healthcare delivery.

The event featured esteemed figures including Mr. Hassan Muhammad Khan Chancellor Riphah International University and Patron ICPS, Mr. Asadullah Khan Executive Director Riphah and Co Patron ICPS alongside Dr. Zakiuddin Ahmed Chairman ICPS and renowned international speakers: Mr. Murat Soner Kucukkaya, Managing Director, JCI Middle East & Africa, Ms. Leslee Thompson, CEO, Accreditation Canada, Prof. Dr. Seval Akgun, Chief Quality Officer Baskent University Hospital Network Turkey, Dr. Mohamed Syahid bin Hassan, SingHealth Duke-NUS Institute for Patient Safety and Quality, Singapore.

SECP issues manual for complying with regulatory framework for Modarabas

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has released a comprehensive guide to facilitate Modaraba Companies and Modarabas in complying with requirements of the Modaraba Ordinance 1980, Modaraba Rules 1981, Modaraba Regulations 2021, and related directions and circulars.

The guide consolidates all reporting obligations and summarizes required approvals under the Modaraba Law in order to assist the industry in achieving effective compliance. Furthermore, it emphasizes critical provisions of Modaraba Law and refers to common violations, urging stakeholders to be aware of potential pitfalls.

However, the guide does not cover the legal and regulatory obligations of Modaraba Companies and Modarabas, including provisions of the Companies Act 2017 and the Securities Act 2015, subsidiary legislation, and obligations under PSX listing regulations.

Alif Holdings Breaks Ground on Waterfall Eastern Tower

PPA

LAHORE: Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd, a beacon of excellence and innovation in Pakistan's real estate development landscape, proudly commenced the construction work on the highly anticipated Waterfall Eastern Tower, marking the final phase of the prestigious Waterfall Towers development by Alif Holdings. Set to redefine luxurious living in Lahore, Waterfall Eastern Tower promises to offer residents an unparalleled living experience with its world-class amenities and breathtaking design.

Waterfall Eastern Tower is the third and final tower of the Waterfall Towers project, offering a selection of 1 and 2-bedroom apartments. With prices starting from 8.2 million, these apartments provide an affordable yet luxurious living option for residents.

Featuring over 230+ apartments combined, Waterfall Eastern Tower boasts a community designed to exceed expectations. Residents can enjoy a wide range of world-class amenities, including a balcony with every apartment, a rooftop health club, 24-hour security staff, RFID access control, CCTV cameras, a mosque, valet parking, a coffee shop, etc.

Traffic jam

KARACHI: A view of traffic jam on Faisal highway in the evening.



Photo: Online

RPO issues directions on arrest of drug dealers in district Toba Tek Singh

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Regional Police Officer Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan visited District Toba Tek Singh. DPO Toba Tek Singh Ibadat Nisar welcomed him RPO Faisalabad Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan held a crime meeting at DPO office. DPO Toba Ibadat Nisar, DSP and SHO participated in the meeting, RPO Faisalabad Dr. Mohammad Abid Khan issued instructions regarding serious cases such as murder, act of murder, robbery and robbery. In the cases of murder and resistance, the accused should be arrested as soon as possible and the cases should be investigated. The district officers will review the progress of serious cases on a daily basis and send progress reports in the cases. By controlling the crime rate. There-



fore, the patrolling system should be improved. Attention should be paid to

the recovery rate of the property against the cases. The patrolling system should

be made effective to make it safe. Orders have been issued to speed up the grade operation against drug dealers. The active gang should be arrested as soon as possible. The process of questioning the previously recorded accused should be continued. Abad Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan took a briefing from DPO Toba regarding the welfare project and issued orders to identify the project as soon as possible until completion. He issued orders to take action without delay on the requests of the center. So that services can be ensured for the citizens as well as security. RPO Faisalabad Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan of the Meesaq center and the DPO office. Visited various offices, reviewed the facilities provided at the Meesaq Center and issued orders to provide easy and quick facilities to the citizens.

Monal, French embassy jointly introduce French Cuisine taste for Pakistani foodies

Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Grande cuisine, the classic cuisine of France as it evolved from its beginnings in the 16th century to its fullest flowering in the lavish banquets of the 19th century. The classic cuisine prizes richness, suavity, balance, and elegant presentation.

French cuisine has influenced numerous cultures through colonization, migration, and cultural exchange. Many countries have incorporated French techniques, ingredients, and flavor profiles into their own culinary traditions, resulting in delightful fusions and unique dishes.

In order to expose the Pakistani people to this unique taste, Luqman Ali Afzal, the CEO and Founder of the Monal Group, (well-known tourist destination) graciously hosted a sumptuous dinner to inaugurate a three-day celebration of French cuisine at the



enchanting Monal's Tree House. This culinary extravaganza, held in collaboration with the esteemed French Embassy, was a testament to the rich cultural exchange between Pakistan and France.

The distinguished presence of His Excellency, French Ambassador Nicolas Gale, alongside his esteemed family, lent an air of elegance to



the evening. Their attendance was complemented by the esteemed presence of Ambassadors from Poland,

Japan, Palestine, Italy, the European Union, and Jordan, symbolizing the unity and camaraderie among nations.



Adding to the diplomatic charm of the occasion, the Chief of Protocol from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs graced the event with his presence, further highlighting the significance of this cultural rendezvous.

In the serene ambiance of Monal's Tree House, amidst delectable French delicacies and warm camaraderie, bonds were forged and memories created, fostering enduring ties between nations.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:33 am
Zohr 12:04 pm
Asr 4:57 pm
Maghrib 7:00 pm
Isha 8:36 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Central Spokesperson of Railway Workers Union and others met the Governor Punjab



PNP

RAWALPINDI: Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan said that the manifesto of the People's Party is to serve the poor, laborers and the downtrodden. We will fulfill the basic needs of the common man. Quaid Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto always gave the workers their rights. President Asif Ali Zardari increased the salaries by 50% during his previous tenure. In every era, we did the proceedings of the subjugated class. These views were expressed by Punjab Governor Sardar Salim Haider Khan on the occasion of meeting with Railway Workers Union Central Spokesperson Mubarak Hussain and others.

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan further said that we will continue the mission of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to Shaheed. The workers are happy with my elected position, for which I am very grateful to everyone. Serving people is our legacy. I will always struggle for my party like a loyal worker. I will solve the problems of employees of all institutions, labor organizations and labor leaders. On this occasion, labor leader and Central Spokesperson of Railway Workers Union Tara Nishan Mubarak Hussain and others said that all the leaders of Railway Workers Union Open Line Tara Nishan and Al-Pakistan Effective Apply Action Committee and the Central Patron General Qadir Khan Mandukhel congratulate you. Employees' problems will be solved with your patronage.

Civil Society urged government to prioritize public health over corporate interest

Amjad Mehmood

Civil Society, Health Professionals, Nutritionist and Dietician jointly organized a large rally at National Press Club Islamabad urging policy makers to prioritize public health over corporate interest, and increase excise tax on all sugary drinks including juices to minimum of 50 percent of the retail price. The rally applauded the imposition of excise duty on the juices and sugary drinks through supplementary finance bill 2023 and Finance Bill 2023-24, but declared that these taxes are not enough and must be increased during finance bill 2024-25. The rally stated that the several research studies confirmed that the regular consumption of juices (including fruit juices), sodas and other sugary drinks are among the major causes of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart diseases, several types of cancer, and liver and kidney diseases.

"Pakistan has turned to top country globally with nearly 31 percent adults aged from 20 -79 years living with diabetes. The estimated annual cost of managing diabetes was 2640 million USD in Pakistan in 2021, as per estimates by International Diabetic



Association said Sana Ullah Ghuman, General Secretary, Pakistan National Heart Association. "This is seriously hitting our economy and health care sector. International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Finance Ministry should consider increasing excise tax on all type of sugary drinks which would be a triple win for Pakistan. This smart policy will reduce hospital expenditure, generate revenue and it will

not cost anything to government" he added. The rally was jointly organized by Pakistan National Heart Association, Diabetic Association of Pakistan, Heartfile, Pakistan Kidney Patients Welfare Association, Pak Korea Nutrition Center, Pakistan Medical Association and several other civil society organizations. The rally urged increasing taxes on juices (including fruit juices), carbonated beverages,

squashes, syrups, energy drinks, iced tea and flavored milk.

"It is pertinent to mention that Juices (including fruit juices) and drinks with artificial sweeteners are equally harmful for health as the other sugary drinks like carbonated beverages, squashes, syrups and other sweet drinks. The regular consumption of sugary drinks is putting serious threat to public health and economy of the country", said Dr. Saba

professionals rally also highlighted that the national opinion poll conducted by Pakistan Health Research Council in 2021 confirmed that 78 percent Pakistani adults supported increasing tax on sugary drinks to control obesity and other non-communicable disease.

Keeping in view of this potential and strategic nature of the intervention, the participants of the rally urged the Federal Board of Revenue and Finance Minister to increase excise tax to 50 percent of retail price of all types of sugary drinks including juices, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, squashes, syrups, flavored milk and iced teas etc.



Amjad, Chief Executive Officer of Heartfile. "As per IDF, more than 1100 people are dying daily due to diabetes and its complication in Pakistan. This is serious blow for the health sector of Pakistan" she added. The speakers at rally referred a modelling study conducted by the world bank in 2022, which confirmed that raising FED on sugar drinks in Pakistan is very likely to improve population's health particularly the prevention of overweight/obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. There are substantial financial benefits both in form of tax revenue and added value of keeping people alive and healthy. The civil society and health

professionals rally also highlighted that the national opinion poll conducted by Pakistan Health Research Council in 2021 confirmed that 78 percent Pakistani adults supported increasing tax on sugary drinks to control obesity and other non-communicable disease. Keeping in view of this potential and strategic nature of the intervention, the participants of the rally urged the Federal Board of Revenue and Finance Minister to increase excise tax to 50 percent of retail price of all types of sugary drinks including juices, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, squashes, syrups, flavored milk and iced teas etc.

Photo by Raja Farid

Safety first

ISLAMABAD: A vendor arranging mosquito nets to attract customers alongside a road in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Sameen Khawaja and REHMA featured as Spotify's EQUAL Pakistan Ambassadors

PNP



KARACHI: The amplification of women artists from the local music scene continues as Spotify announced Sameen Khawaja and REHMA as the EQUAL Pakistan Ambassadors for April and May respectively. As part of Spotify's ongoing program that brings to light some of the most aspiring female voices from the country, REHMA's song, "HYPNOTIC", will be prominently featured on the EQUAL Pakistan playlist throughout this month.

REHMA, a Los Angeles-based R&B and alternative pop artist, has been captivating listeners with her dreamy and reflective music for over eight years. With major releases predominantly in English or a mix of Urdu and English, REHMA has garnered a dedicated following, with 66% of her listeners being female. Her top markets include the US, India, UK, Canada, and Australia.

Rutaba Yaqub, Senior Editor for Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh at Spotify, expressed enthusiasm about adding REHMA to the EQUAL program in May, stating, "REHMA's music embodies the spirit of exploration and authenticity that we value at Spotify. In our efforts to also shine a light on the Pakistani diaspora, we first discovered REHMA through our Fresh Finds program in September 2023, and we are thrilled to continue supporting her journey as an artist."

NIMA hosts farewell lunch for former Presidents of IRS, CASS



PPA

ISLAMABAD: NIMA hosted a farewell lunch in the honour of former Presidents of Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Ambassador Nadeem Riaz & Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan HI(M), S. Bt (Retd). Heads of various think tanks, media personnel, and academicians graced the occasion. President NIMA Vice Admiral Ahmed Saeed HI(M), while presenting vote of thanks, highlighted their valuable contributions. He wished them well in their future endeavours and welcomed the incoming presidents as well.

All the honourable guests, including the heads of various think tanks, while expressing their feelings, paid rich tribute to both dignitaries. Everyone appreciated the NIMA's efforts to start healthy traditions in this community.

Wing Commander meets DC, DPO, discusses measures to prevent smuggling

Adam Khan Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: Local FC Wing Commander in Toi Khullah area of South Waziristan Lower District met Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan (Lower) Muhammad Nasir Khan and District Police Officer South Waziristan (Lower) Farman Ullah Wardag on Monday.

In the meeting, they discussed the installation of mobile towers in Samarbagh, Toi Khullah and joint actions of police and FC to increase capacity against smuggling including non-custom paid (NCP) vehicles. On this occasion, the three officials agreed that prevention of smuggling will be ensured at all costs.

Apart from this, Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer also visited Gul Kutch Check Point, where arrangements were made regarding the establishment of Peace and order situation.

On this visit the Duty commissioner and District Police Officer expressed satisfaction over the arrangements and appreciated the efforts of the security forces and police force.

Emirates Group announces 2023-24 results

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Emirates Group today released its 2023-24 Annual Report, hitting new record profit, revenue, and cash balance levels.

Both Emirates and dnata saw significant profit and revenue increases in 2023-24, as the Group expanded its operations around the world to meet strong customer demand for its high-quality products and services.

For the financial year ended 31 March 2024, the Emirates Group posted a record profit of AED 18.7 billion (US\$ 5.1 billion), up 71% compared with an AED 10.9 billion (US\$ 3.0 billion) profit for last year. The Group's revenue was AED 137.3 billion (US\$ 37.4 billion), an increase of 15% over last year's results. The Group's cash balance was AED 47.1 billion (US\$ 12.8 billion), the highest ever reported, up 11% from last year.

Combined Group profits for the last 2 years, at AED 29.6 billion, surpass pandemic losses of AED 25.9 billion during 2020-2022.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates airline and Group said: "The Emirates Group has once again raised the bar to deliver a new record performance. Throughout the year, we saw high demand for air transport and travel related services around the world, and because we were able to move quickly to deliver what customers want, we achieved tremendous results. We are reaping the benefit of years of non-stop investments in our products and services, in building strong partnerships, and in the capabilities of our talented people.

"Huge credit is also due to the UAE's visionary leaders, especially HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. It is thanks to their leadership and the nation's progressive policies that the Emirates Group is able to flourish. Both Emirates and dnata have forged successful business models leveraging Dubai's unique advantages, in turn gener-



ating enormous value for Dubai and the communities they serve around the world."

HH Sheikh Ahmed added: "The Group's excellent financial standing today places us in a strong position for future growth and success. It enables us to invest to deliver even better products, services, and more value to our customers and stakeholders."

Many major projects are already underway, including: a multibillion-dollar aircraft fleet and cabin renewal programme; new catering, cargo, and ground handling capabilities; advanced technologies to support the Group's operations; expanded training and people development programmes; and initiatives to progress the Group's sustainability agenda.

Sheikh Ahmed said: "We enter our 2024-25 financial year on strong foundations for continued growth. Emirates will receive delivery of 10 new A350 aircraft in 2024-25, adding to our fleet mix and supporting the next phase of its network growth. dnata will continue to leverage synergies and scale across its business divisions to grow its footprint and capabilities.

In tandem, we are investing resources to minimise our environmental impact, develop our people, look after our customers and the communities we serve."

"The business outlook is positive, and we expect customer demand for air transport and travel to remain strong in the coming months. As always, we will keep a close watch on costs and external factors such as oil prices, currency fluctuations, and volatile environments caused by socio-political changes. Our business model has been tested before, and I am confident in our resilience and ability to respond quickly to opportunities and challenges."

He added: "Looking further ahead, the Dubai government has announced plans to start the next phase of expansion at Al Maktoum International Airport, which will eventually be the new hub for Emirates and dnata's operations. This AED 128 billion (US\$ 35 billion) investment will significantly expand and enhance Dubai's aviation and logistics infrastructure, supporting the city's growth, and Emirates' and dnata's growth.

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

MBS, IMF and Political Instability..

The euphoria surrounding the first anniversary of May 9 came at a significant cost to the government. It resulted in the cancellation of the scheduled visit of Mohammad Bin Salman, the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which could have bolstered the government's image and standing. Additionally, it elicited a demand from the IMF for political stability, deemed a prerequisite for financial and economic stability. This has delivered a serious blow to the already challenged government.

Drawing from my experience working in diplomatic missions abroad, first in Malaysia for four years and later in France for another four-year term, I understand that governments take into account political feedback obtained from their ambassadors overseas. Similarly, the IMF formulates its policies based on input from their local representatives.

The Ambassador of Saudi Arabia and the IMF focal person in Pakistan received numerous signals indicating a new wave of political instability and volatility, particularly following a highly charged and angry press conference by the Director General of ISPR. The PTI leadership's total defiance in response to his demand for PTI to seek forgiveness in front of the nation, or face a refusal of dialogue, intensified the situation. This demand was seen as a direct reference to PTI and its leadership, portraying them as disruptive anarchists.

However, the press conference failed to gain the intended media reaction. Its content was forcefully refuted and rebutted by PTI, led by Dr. Arif Alvi, who had now assumed a central role and, in a way, had been declared the ambassa-

dor-at-large for PTI, tasked with clearing the path to achieve its political objectives. The resulting anti-establishment charged environment contributed to the success of countrywide rallies organized by PTI. While these rallies remained peaceful, they added to the perception of political instability.

The wheat crisis has escalated, with disillusioned farmers taking to the streets and burning their crops in protest against the Federal and Punjab Governments. They accuse authorities of reneging on promises to purchase wheat at Rs. 3900 per maund, citing a lack of funds despite lavish spending on initiatives such as distributing laptops, electric bicycles, setting up mobile clinics, and running expensive advertisements.

Adding to the unrest, the Punjab government mishandled a lawyers' agitation, resulting in the arrest of over 50 lawyers. In response, legal organizations across Pakistan launched a nationwide strike, condemning the actions of the Punjab police and abstaining from court appearances while holding protest meetings, marches, and rallies.

Meanwhile, Azad Kashmir faced its own turmoil as protests against electricity price hikes, high flour prices, and taxes entered their third day, resulting in clashes that left at least one police official dead in Mirpur and over 90 others injured across the region. The violence also caused damage to multiple vehicles, including a magistrate's car on the Poonch-Kotli road. Markets, trade centers, offices, schools, and restaurants remained closed, while mobile phone and internet services were

suspended in various parts of Azad Kashmir, including Bhimber, Bagh, Mirpur, and Muzaffarabad.

The feedback provided by the KSA ambassador to his government back home was substantial enough for MBS to delay his promised visit until the situation calmed down. Similarly, the information from the local point person to the IMF headquarters provided ample justification for demanding the resolution of political issues before proceeding with the IMF's next three-year program.

Both the IMF and KSA were likely troubled by the allegations from PTI, election watchdog organizations, analysts in traditional media, and social media activists that the incumbent governments in the center and Punjab are illegitimate, lacking a mandate from the people and allegedly imposed by the establishment through artificial and brutal manipulation of election results on Form 47, contradicting the outcomes reported on Form 45 where they had purportedly lost. Similar claims were made by JUI, Jamaat-e-Islami, and other political parties that faced defeat in the elections. All affected parties expressed their determination to persist until the alleged electoral malpractice was rectified and the actual winners were reinstated. Should this occur, the incumbent government would be compelled to resign in total indignation.

Furthermore, the sitting government faced another damaging allegation: that since establishment is the sole factor which brought these governments in power, consequently, these governments

were perceived and expected to remain under the control of the establishment, with decision-making authority stripped away from them.

Out of the two, the remarks from the IMF are more detrimental as entering into the next three-year IMF plan would unlock bilateral, multilateral, and financial institutional aid, funds, and loans to Pakistan, crucial for the country's financial stability. Failure to do so could jeopardize even the rolling of deposits by KSA, Abu Dhabi, and China, placing immense pressure on the government's ability to manage its balance of payments and potentially pushing it back to a position where it was faced with the looming threat of default during the previous coalition government of Shahbaz Sharif.

We all must understand that political stability is indispensable for consistent policy implementation, investor confidence, reform continuity, credibility, and social cohesion. It ensures that economic policies are executed reliably, fostering trust among domestic and foreign investors vital for economic growth and stability and continuity of structural reforms outlined in IMF programs, preventing disruptions that could derail progress and to achieve sustainable economic development.

Without question, rather than confronting the IMF, all stakeholders in Pakistan must set aside their petty differences and inflated egos. They should engage in purposeful and sincere dialogues, aiming for sustained political stability in the country.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Third edition of Global AI Summit

Third edition of the Global AI Summit is set to take place from September 10 to 12, this year at the King Abdulaziz International Conference Center under the patronage of Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA). According to SPA, SDAIA President Dr. Abdullah bin Sharaf Al-Ghamdi, expressed gratitude to the Crown Prince for his unwavering support for the Global AI Summit, and emphasized the pivotal role Mohammed bin Salman plays in advancing the national data and AI agenda, maximizing the benefits of cutting-edge technologies, and improving the Kingdom's global standing and reinforcing its leadership position in the field.

Al-Ghamdi said, "This summit builds upon the remarkable achievements of its previous editions, in 2020 and 2022, under the gracious patronage of the Crown Prince. The third edition of the summit distinguishes itself through its extensive range of topics covering diverse areas of global interest in data and AI. This is particularly significant considering the rapid progress of these technologies and their profound impact on individuals and institutions." The summit will cover key topics in the field of AI, such as innovation and industry trends, shaping a brighter future for AI, and cultivating an enabling environment for human talent. Sub-themes will delve into various aspects, including local and global AI applications, the integral relationship between humans and AI, business leadership in AI, the correlation between data and applications, generative AI, AI ethics, AI processing and infrastructure, and the role of AI in smart cities. Al-Ghamdi extended an invitation to leading AI policymakers and individuals passionate about data and innovation to participate in the upcoming summit. The gathering aims to tackle critical issues surrounding AI development and establish a framework for its responsible use. According to Al-Ghamdi, the summit is expected to have a positive impact both locally and internationally. It aims to strengthen the Kingdom's role in supporting the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, thus contributing to a better future for all. Al-Ghamdi emphasized the summit's significance to Saudi Vision 2030, led by the Crown Prince, and said that it aspires to make Riyadh a global compass for AI advancements, fostering collaboration on responsible AI development that benefits humanity as a whole. Attendees will gain insights from prominent international decision makers, ministers, heads of organizations, and tech CEOs. The summit will facilitate interaction with leading data scientists and AI researchers, offering a global perspective on cutting-edge developments. The event is expected to witness local and international agreements, which will form the foundation of future international initiatives in AI led by Saudi Arabia. Al-Ghamdi said that this third edition of the Global AI Summit underscores the Kingdom's ambition, as envisioned by the Crown Prince, to become a leading global model in the AI field.



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

Failed Indian Attempts to conduct peaceful and open elections in IIOJK - II

Measures such as the imposition of central rule, crack-downs on protests, and the presence of security forces have led to allegations of human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, and the use of pellet guns resulting in severe injuries among civilians. Moreover, the erosion of democratic institutions and the restriction of civil liberties under the guise of upholding law and order have intensified sentiments of disenfranchisement among Kashmiris. The revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, which conferred special autonomous status upon Jammu and Kashmir, and the subsequent division of the state into two union territories without the consent of its inhabitants, were perceived as grave infringements upon their political rights and identity. Socio-cultural factors also contribute to the prevailing sense of alienation experienced by numerous Kashmiris. The region's unique cultural heritage and predominantly Muslim population distinguish it from the rest of India, fostering a strong sense of identity among its people. However, the perceived neglect of Kashmiri language, culture, and

traditions within mainstream Indian society exacerbates feelings of cultural alienation and estrangement from the Indian government. Economic disparities and a lack of development have worsened grievances, especially in rural and marginalized communities. Despite its natural beauty and resources, Occupied Jammu and Kashmir lags behind in socio-economic indicators, with high levels of unemployment, poverty, and inadequate infrastructure. This lack of inclusive development policies and fair resource distribution deepens feelings of marginalization and resentment toward the Indian authorities.

IIOJK, plagued by decades of conflict and political instability, faces allegations of human rights abuses that loom large over its populace. The region's disputed status, coupled with a heavy Indian military presence and strict security measures, has led to reports of widespread violence, extrajudicial killings, and systemic oppression, drawing condemnation on the international stage. Notably, there are accusations of excessive force by Indian security forces against civilians, particularly during protests, resulting in numerous casualties. Reports of severe injuries from pellet guns and allegations

of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances further darken the region's landscape.

The use of draconian laws like the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and the Public Safety Act (PSA) compounds the challenges faced by civilians in IIOJK, granting broad powers to security forces with minimal accountability. Moreover, reports of arbitrary detentions, torture, and ill-treatment of detainees, including children, underscore the need for independent investigations and accountability mechanisms. These alleged atrocities not only affect individual victims but also corrode the socio-economic fabric of the entire region. The prolonged conflict and security challenges have severely disrupted the daily lives of millions, hindering access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Additionally, the enduring psychological and collective trauma resulting from years of violence and instability has deeply impacted the Kashmiri populace, fostering ongoing cycles of fear, resentment, and distrust.

The people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir express a strong desire to disassociate from India, driven by a lengthy history of alleged atrocities committed by the Indian government and its armed forces.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Gaza Under Siege: Jamat-e-Islami KP Million March

Indeed, the believers are like brothers to one another. They are a single hand against their enemies." (Hadith) In the ancient land of Palestine, where the echoes of history intertwine with the cries of the oppressed, Gaza stands as a testament to resilience in the face of relentless brutality. The ongoing massacre in Gaza, marked by the loss of over fifty thousand (50000) lives, almost eighty thousand injured and the displacement of thousands more, predominantly innocent children and women, is a stark reminder of the grave injustice inflicted upon its people. The sacred words of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) resonate with profound relevance as we witness the plight of our brothers and sisters in Gaza. In addition, the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of Masjid al-Aqsa, stating, "Do not undertake a journey except to three mosques: this mosque of mine, the Sacred Mosque (in Makkah), and the Mosque of Aqsa (in Jerusalem)."

This hadith highlights the significance of Masjid AL-Aqsa in the hearts of Muslims worldwide and underscores the need to protect its sanctity. The perpetrators of this heinous crime, led by Israel and supported by its allies, notably the United States, have unleashed a wave of violence and destruction upon Gaza, violating the most fundamental principles of humanity and justice. Amidst the darkness, there are beacons of hope—individuals and organizations committed to alleviating the suffering of the people of Gaza. Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan and his spouse, Humaira Tayyiba, through their tireless efforts with the Save Gaza Forum, exemplify the spirit of compassion and activism in the face of adversity. Similarly, organizations like Jamaat-e-Islami and Alkhidmat Foundation have played a pivotal role in providing assistance and support to the beleaguered inhabitants of Gaza. Through their tireless work, Alkhidmat Foundation has delivered millions of tons of food, healthcare supplies, and essential items to the people of Gaza, providing much-needed relief in the midst of this crisis. Under the leadership of Engr Hafiz Naem Ul

Rahman (Ameer Jamaat e islami pakistan), JI has organized solidarity marches across Pakistan, amplifying the voices of the voiceless and demanding justice for Gaza.

The resonance of this humanitarian crisis extends far beyond borders, with European students and civilians joining the chorus of condemnation against the atrocities perpetrated in Gaza.

Their solidarity underscores the universal demand for justice and compassion in the face of oppression. As we bear witness to the horrors unfolding in Gaza, there is an urgent appeal to the United Nations and human rights institutions to intervene and halt this massacre. Israel's flagrant disregard for international law and human rights principles demands swift and decisive action from the international community. In the spirit of our shared humanity and the sanctity of Masjid al-Aqsa, let us stand united against injustice and oppression, echoing the prophetic call for compassion and solidarity. Gaza, besieged yet resilient, deserves nothing less than our unwavering commitment to justice and humanity. Furthermore, on 19th May, Jamaat-e-Islami Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be organizing the Gaza Million March, a demonstration of solidarity and support for the people of Gaza.

This march symbolizes the collective voice of the Pakistani people standing in solidarity with their oppressed brothers and sisters in Gaza. In the heart of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar where the spirit of compassion and solidarity runs deep, a call to action resonates louder than ever. The people of KP are known for their generosity and unwavering support for those in need, and now, as our brothers and sisters in Gaza face unimaginable suffering, it is our duty to stand with them in their time of need. I urge the people of KP to come forward and join this demonstration of solidarity and support for the people of Gaza. Let us raise our voices together, demanding justice and an end to the atrocities being committed in Gaza. At least we can raise our voice for the people of Gaza and I hope Allah will reward us as the Holy prophet said "Whoever relieves a believer's distress, Allah will relieve his distress on the Day of Resurrection."



Analysis

Sohail Ahmad Baber

76th Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba

Dr. Ola Awad, reviews the conditions of the Palestinian people via statistical figures and findings

Spokesman Report

On the 76th Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba, Number of Palestinians Worldwide Doubled about 10 Times

H. E. Dr. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), via figures, historical and current data, reviewed the geographical, demographical and economic situation of the Palestinian People on the 76th Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba, which occur takes place on May, 15th; and those figures and data run as the following:

The Nakba: Continuous Ethnic cleansing, displacement of Palestinians, colonialism and taking over Palestinian Lands

Nakba in Palestine describes a process of ethnic cleansing in which an unarmed native nation was destroyed and its population displaced systematically to be replaced by Jewish occupiers from all over the world. The Nakba resulted in the displacement of more than 1 million Palestinians out of the 1.4 million Palestinians who were living in historical Palestine in 1948 in 1,300 villages and towns. The majority of the displaced Palestinians ended up in neighboring Arab countries, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and other countries in the world. Furthermore, thousands of Palestinians – who stayed in the land controlled by Israeli occupation in 1948 – were driven out of their homes and lands which were seized.

According to the historical documentary evidence, Israeli occupation controlled 774 towns and villages and destroyed 531 Palestinian towns and villages during the Nakba. The atrocities of Zionist forces also included more than 70 massacres in which more than 15 thousand Palestinians were martyred. The Israeli occupation has been waging its aggression since the Nakba, and has escalated it sharply during the current aggression against Gaza Strip since October 7th, 2023.

More than 134 Thousand Martyrs since the Nakba, 1948

The number of Palestinian and Arab martyrs killed since the Nakba in 1948 and until this



H.E. Dr. Ola Awad
President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

day (inside and outside Palestine) reached more than 134 thousand martyrs. Moreover, the number of martyrs killed in Al-Aqsa Intifada on September 29th, 2000 until April 30th, 2024 was about 46,500. The number of martyrs in Palestine since the start of the Israeli occupation aggression against Gaza Strip on October 7th, 2023 until May 7th, 2024 reached about 35 thousand martyrs; more than 14,873 children and more than 9,801 women, in addition to more than 141 journalists were martyred according to the records of the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza Strip. In addition to the loss of more than 7,000 citizens, most of whom were women and children. While the number of martyrs reached 492 martyrs in the West Bank since the start of the Israeli occupation aggression on October 7th, 2023.

Israeli Settlements: Continuous Expansion

By the end of 2022, there were 483 Israeli occupation sites and military bases in the West Bank, including 151 settlements and

25 inhabited outposts that were considered as neighborhoods following established settlements, in addition to 163 settlement outposts, and 144 classified as other sites (industrial, tourists, service areas and Israeli army bases).

As for the number of settlers in the West Bank, it reached 745,467 settlers by the end of 2022, data showed that around 45.1% of settlers live in Jerusalem Governorate, where their number reached about 336,272 settlers; out of which 246,990 settlers live in East Jerusalem (J1) "includes those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israeli occupation in 1967", followed by Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate with 149,143 settlers, 98,384 settlers in Bethlehem Governorate, and 53,455 settlers in Salfit Governorate. Tubas & the Northern Valleys Governorate has the lowest number of settlers that reached 2,717 settlers.

In regards to demographics, the proportion of settlers to Palestinian population in the West Bank is about 23 settlers per 100 Palestinians. It was the

highest in Jerusalem Governorate, where there were 69 settlers per 100 Palestinians. Accordingly, 2023 witnessed a significant increase in the pace of construction and expansion of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank, where the Israeli occupation approved the construction of more than 18,000 new settlement housing units in the West Bank, including Jerusalem Governorate.

USD 30 billion the initial direct losses due to the Israeli occupation aggression against Gaza Strip.

Since the Israeli occupation aggression against Gaza Strip on October 7th, 2023, the Israeli occupation has destroyed more than 31 thousand buildings, 17 thousand severely damaged buildings and 41 thousand moderately damaged buildings, with a total of about 89 thousand damaged buildings, where 104 buildings of which belong to the United Nations. Data showed that the number of housing units that have been completely destroyed is estimated to be 86 thousand, in addition to the partially destruction of more than 294 thousand housing units, constituting about 70% of the total housing units in Gaza Strip.

In addition to the destruction of schools, universities, hospitals, mosques, churches, and government headquarters, as well as the destruction of thousands of economic establishments and agricultural areas, and the destruction of all aspects of infrastructure, including streets, water lines, electricity, and sewage lines, making Gaza Strip an uninhabitable place to survive in. The initial direct losses due to the Israeli occupation aggression against Gaza Strip were estimated at approximately USD 30 billion according to the government information office.

Numbers of damaged buildings in Gaza Strip since October 7th, 2023, by type of building and type of damage

Type of Damage	Type of Building	
Partially Damaged	Completely Damaged	
58,000	31,000	Buildings
294,000	86,000	Housing Units
25	32	Hospitals
311	103	Schools & Universities
321	243	Mosques
-	3	Churches
-	181	Government Headquarters

During 2023, the Israeli occupation demolished and destroyed more than 659 buildings and facilities, completely or partially in the West Bank, including 70 self-demolition operations in Jerusalem, according to data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in addition to issuing 1,333 demolition orders for Palestinian facilities under the pretext of not having



a license.

Self-Demolitions in Jerusalem Governorate 2008–2023

Continuous Confiscation of Land

The Israeli occupation is still imposing its control over more Palestinian lands in the West Bank under various pretexts and names, as the confiscated areas doubled during 2023 (50,526) dunums, compared to 2022, which was (26,000) dunums. During 2023, 32 sequestration orders were issued regarding about 619 dunums, four expropriation orders for approximately 433 dunums, two orders declaring state land for approximately 515 dunums, in addition to four orders amending the boundaries of natural reserves through which 48,959 dunums were confiscated. All of such were part of the systematic and ongoing policy to control all Palestinian lands and deprive the Palestinians from utilizing their natural resources.

A severe water and famine crisis threatens the lives of the population of Gaza Strip

The population of Gaza Strip are lacking the basic essentials of

nutritional deficiencies, and more than 30 Palestinians lost their lives due to hunger and dehydration, most of them children.

Gaza Strip suffers from a severe crisis in accessing water, where under normal conditions in times before October 7th, 2023, the average per capita consumption of water in Gaza Strip was estimated at approximately 84.6 liters/person/day. However and since the beginning of the Israeli occupation aggression, this figure has dropped to only 3-15 (l/c/d).

The Demographic Reality: Palestinian population has doubled about 10 times since the Nakba, 1948

The population of Palestine in 1914 was around 690 thousand; of whom only 8% were Jewish. In 1948, the number of Palestinians in Palestine exceeded 2 million; 31.5% of them were Jews. Between 1932 and 1939, the largest number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine reached 225 thousand Jews. Between 1940 and 1947, more than 93 thousand Jews poured into Palestine. Thus, Palestine received around 318 thousand Jews between 1932 and 1947 and more than 3.3 million from 1948 to 2023.

Despite the displacement of more than one million Palestinians in 1948, and the displacement of more than 200 thousand Palestinians (majority of them to Jordan) after the 1967 war, the Palestinian world population was 14.63 million by the end of 2023, which means that the number of Palestinians in the world has doubled about 10 times since the Nakba. Thus, the number of Palestinians in historical Palestine reached about 7.3 million, while the number of Israelis reached 7.2 million by the end of 2023, which means that the number of Palestinians exceeds the number of Israelis in historical Palestine, that Palestinians represented 50.3% of the population living in historical Palestine, while Jews constituted 49.7% by the end of 2023. However, the Israeli occupation exploits more than 85% of the total land in historical Palestine (27,000 km2).

Percentage of Palestinians and Jews in Historical Palestine in Various Years

Gaza Strip has one of the highest population densities in the world

The population density in the State of Palestine by the end of 2023 was 921 individuals per square kilometer (km2): 582 individuals/km2 in the West Bank and 6,185 individuals/km2 in Gaza Strip, noting that 66% of the total population of Gaza Strip are refugees. The flux of refugees turned Gaza Strip into one of the highest population densities in the world. Especially after the displacement of hundreds of thousands of residents to Rafah Governorate, in which more than 1.5 million people lived in an area not exceeding 65 km2 during the Israeli occupation aggression against Gaza Strip since October 7th, 2023.

More than 1 Million Detention Cases since 1967

More than 9,400 detainees in Israeli occupation prisons

According to the data of Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs the number of detainees in the Israeli occupation prisons reached more than 9,400 by the end of April 2024, including (3,600) administrative detainees (detained without charge), and (849) classified by Israeli occupation as (unlawful combatants). There are (80) female detainees in the Israeli occupation prisons, and the number of detained children in the Israeli occupation prisons reached (229), while the number of arrest cases reached (the number includes those are still detained as well those released) More than 8,520 in the West Bank since the beginning of the Israeli occupation aggression on October 7th, 2023 until March 25th, 2024, these data do not include cases of arrest in Gaza Strip during the Israeli occupation aggression since October 7th, 2023, knowing that their number is estimated to be thousands.

More than 12,000 attacks by settlers

In 2023, settlers, under the protection of the Israeli occupation army, carried out about 12,161 attacks against Palestinian citizens and their property; the attacks included 3,808 attacks on property and religious places, 707 attacks on lands and natural resources, and 7,646 attacks on individuals. These attacks also caused the uprooting, damage, and bulldozing of more than 21,700 trees, including about 18,964 olive trees.



Empowering Women in the 21st Century: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities

The 21st century has witnessed a profound shift in the status and role of women globally. From advancements in education and employment to the rise of women in leadership positions, significant strides have been made towards gender equality. However, amidst these achievements, challenges persist, highlighting the ongoing need for empowerment and advocacy. This article explores the journey of women in the 21st century, examining progress, challenges, and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Education: A Foundation for Empowerment

Education serves as a cornerstone for women's empowerment in the 21st century. Access to quality education has expanded, enabling women to acquire knowledge, skills, and opportunities

previously out of reach. Initiatives like girls' education campaigns and scholarships for women in STEM fields have contributed to narrowing the gender gap in education. Yet, barriers such as cultural norms, poverty, and lack of infrastructure continue to hinder access to education for many women, particularly in developing regions. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to ensure equal access to education for all women, regardless of their socio-economic background or geographic location.

Employment and Economic Empowerment

The 21st century has seen significant progress in women's participation in the workforce. Women now occupy roles in traditionally male-dominated industries, breaking glass ceilings and challenging gender stereotypes. However, gender pay gaps persist, with women earning less than their male

counterparts for equal work. Additionally, women continue to face barriers to career advancement, including workplace discrimination and lack of access to leadership positions. To achieve true economic empowerment, systemic changes are needed to promote equal pay, provide support for working mothers, and foster inclusive work environments that value diversity and gender equality.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful avenue for women's empowerment in the 21st century. Women-owned businesses are on the rise, driving economic growth and social change in communities around the world. From small-scale enterprises to tech

startups, women entrepreneurs are harnessing innovation and creativity to address pressing social issues and create sustainable solutions. However, women entrepreneurs still face obstacles such as limited access to funding, mentorship, and networks. By investing in women-led ventures and providing resources for entrepreneurship education and support, we can unlock the full potential of women as drivers of innovation and economic development.

Leadership and Political Representation

Women's leadership and political representation have seen significant gains in the 21st century, with more women holding positions of power and influence in government, business, and civil society. Yet, women remain

underrepresented in leadership roles, particularly in politics and corporate boardrooms. Structural barriers such as gender bias, lack of support networks, and cultural norms continue to impede women's advancement into leadership positions. Increasing women's political participation and leadership requires comprehensive strategies, including quota systems, mentorship programs, and policies that promote gender equality in decision-making processes.

Challenges and Opportunities Ahead

While progress has been made, significant challenges remain on the path to gender equality in the 21st century. Gender-based violence, discrimination, and unequal access to resources continue to undermine women's rights and opportunities worldwide. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes legal reforms, public

awareness campaigns, and investment in women's health and well-being. Additionally, advancing gender equality requires engaging men and boys as allies in the fight for women's rights and promoting a culture of respect and equality for all.

As we reflect on the journey of women in the 21st century, it is clear that progress has been made, but there is still much work to be done. Empowering women requires concerted efforts at the individual, community, and global levels to address the root causes of gender inequality and create a more just and equitable world for future generations. By investing in education, economic opportunities, and leadership development for women, we can unlock their full potential and build a brighter future for all.

Writer is Educationist. She can be reached at sabahat.ali.pk47@gmail.com



Sabahat Ali

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
73,799.11	73,085.50
Day's High	Day's Low
74,114.22	73,109.76
Index Value	Change
16,028,776,839	+713.61
Percentage	Time
+0.98%	13 May, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,414.99	-18.77
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	13 May, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,447.11	-65.73
Percentage	Time
-0.17%	13 May, 1:19 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,179.46	-49.65
Percentage	Time
-0.13%	13 May, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	180.5	182.2
Bahrain Dinar	739.75	747.75
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.49	38.89
Danish Krone	40.16	40.56
Euro	296.25	299
Hong Kong Dollar	35.6	35.95
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	902.5	911.5
Malaysian Ringgit	58.69	59.29
New Zealand \$	167.45	169.45
Norwegians Krone	25.66	25.96
Omani Riyal	722.65	730.65
Qatari Riyal	76.41	77.11
Saudi Riyal	73.4	74.1
Singapore Dollar	203	205
Swedish Korona	25.67	25.97
Swiss Franc	306.59	309.09
Thai Bhat	7.57	7.72
U.A.E Dirham	75.1	75.85
UK Pound Sterling	344	347.5
US Dollar	277.5	280

PM reduced disappointment of IMF and friendly countries, says Mian Zahid Hussain

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that every government in Pakistan has prioritized loans and aid over investment.

He said that the entire nation is suffering because policymakers have the wrong priorities, and now the country cannot survive without begging.

Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader stated that every government has always relied on tall claims instead of practical work.

He said that most of the world's countries consider Pakistan a beggar, while creditors are also tightening their terms due to negative perception.

However, the current government is prioritizing investment during a period of significant economic damage.

The majority of the business community still thinks that improvements are still possible, which calls for actions in the right direction.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that with the actions of the current government, the frustration of the business community, stock market, IMF, and friendly countries is decreasing.

We should take advantage of Saudi investors' commendable interest in Pakistan. Saudi investors want to invest in their favorite sectors, but



it is our policymakers' job to attract them to the sectors that Pakistan needs most.

The Saudi Crown Prince is also upset with Pakistan's red tape obstacles and has expressed this at the highest level, so SIFC should not allow any hindrance to investment.

Mian Zahid Hussain added that the country's economic condition is neither able to withstand the shocks of the mafia nor stable enough to withstand failed experiments; therefore, there is a need to work very carefully in the shortest possible time.

He demanded that those who are sacrificing the economy for their personal gains must face such severe consequences that no one can consider similar actions in the future, thereby enhancing the country's reputation and providing relief to the populace.

Meeting

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ambassador Zhang Ming on Monday.



Photo: PID

Business community is real face of capital city: Chairman CDA

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority Mohammad Ali Randhawa has said that business community is the real face of the capital city which has been playing an important role in its development, therefore it would be taken on board in the decision makings.

The Chairman CDA said this while talking to a big delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry which called on him under the leadership of its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari here on Monday.

He expressed the hope that by adopting the best practices, coming out of comfort zones and adhering to the practical approach we will be able to overcome all the problems relating to the development of the city adding that he along with his team will soon visit the Chamber House to get firsthand knowledge of the problems facing the business community.

Earlier, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry by welcoming the Chairman on assuming the



charge, introduced his team members and highlighted the key issues of the business community. He said that by sensing the seriousness of the issue of clean drinking water he himself has taken the initiative of installing filtration plants in different markets from his own pocket.

Group leader Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Khalid Iqbal Malik

lauded the Chairman for enhancing the timings of the 'One Window' from 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. by saying that it will certainly go a long way in facilitating the visitors.

Former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari assured the Chairman that he will always found the business community with him in his efforts to resolve its problems.

ICCI Vice President Eng. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, former President Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajraan Ajmal Baloch, Mian Shaukat Masood, Zahid Qureshi, Raja Hassan Akhtar, Naem Akhtar Awan, Nasir Mahmood, Imtiaz Abbasi, Akhtar Abbasi, Ch. Irfan Gujar, Khalid Chaudhry and other also extended greetings to the CDA Chairman.

White Paper Summits (WPS) announces ISEM Pakistan Solar Exhibition & Conference

Tahir Malik

LAHORE: White Paper Summits, a leading events management company, is proud to announce the upcoming ISEM (International Solar Energy Meet) Pakistan Solar Exhibition and Conference to be held from May 17th to May 19th, 2024, at the Expo Centre Lahore.

This three-day event promises to be a pivotal gathering for professionals, stakeholders, and enthusiasts within the solar energy industry in Pakistan and globally.

The ISEM Pakistan Solar Exhibition and Conference aims to spotlight Pakistan's growing prominence in the renewable energy sector; particularly solar power. With increasing global awareness towards sustainable energy solutions, this event becomes a crucial platform for exploring opportunities, fostering

collaborations, and advancing discussions on the latest innovations and trends in solar energy.

"We are excited to host the ISEM Pakistan Solar Exhibition and Conference in Lahore," said Managing Director of White Paper Summits. "Pakistan's solar energy sector is experiencing rapid growth, and this event provides a unique opportunity for industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders to come together, exchange insights, and chart the path towards a sustainable energy future."

Attendees can expect a comprehensive showcase of solar technologies, products, services, and solutions from leading local and international exhibitors. The exhibition segment will provide a hands-on experience with the latest advancements in solar panels, inverters, energy storage systems, monitoring devices, and more.

FPCCI demands immediate reopening of Chaman border

Atif Ikram Sheikh

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the Chaman border has been closed once again for the past one week; and, thousands of trucks and other vehicles have been stuck under vulnerable, uncertain and hostile circumstances. It is complete chaos once again on the important and indispensable trade route between Pakistan and Afghanistan, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, henceforth, demanded that Chaman border should be opened immediately to alleviate the sufferings and financial losses of the traders - and, allow essential supplies like food and medicines to get through the border. It is a human-

itarian and socioeconomic crisis as well, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh explained that Chaman border nestled in the heart of the region's complex geopolitical landscape; and, has long been a significant point of interaction between Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly as a hub for cross-border trade between the two neighboring countries.

This situation highlights the challenges faced by the government in maintaining control and writ of the government to ensure the smooth flow of goods and services in the region. The frequent closures of the Chaman border has significant financial, economic and humanitarian implications, particularly for the people of Balochistan.

Dawlance launches 'Dawlance Prima Line' - a premium range of home-appliances

PPA

LAHORE: Dawlance, Pakistan's leading home appliances manufacturer, has launched a new range of premium products, under the umbrella of "Dawlance Prima Line-Designed for Better". Catering specifically to the Pakistani market, this ground-breaking product range is a continuation of the company's legacy of providing cutting-edge solutions, to meet the evolving needs of the consumers. Dawlance is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Arcelik, flagship of Türkiye's Koc Group - largest manufacturer in Europe, which is providing investments and technological expertise to create innovative technologies in

Pakistan.

Mr. Can Dinçer added: "Pakistan stands out with the potential of its young population. We see Pakistan as a key developing market for local manufacturing, R&D and future export hubs. We believe in the potential of Pakistan. We will further invest in production, technology, retail and customer experience in the country. I believe that our position as the no. 1 white goods manufacturer in Europe will further add value for our business and customers in Pakistan."

The Chief Executive Officer of Dawlance - Mr. Umar Ahsan Khan stated: "It is a proud moment for us to achieve this great milestone in elevating the quality of home-appliances in



Pakistan, with the 'Dawlance Prima' line. No Frost Refrigerator is the first product category being introduced in this revolutionary lineup. This new product-range will feature a wide range of high-end products, with state-of-the-art technologies and sophisticated designs to meet the specific needs of the discerning consumers, who seek premium quality, with a higher lifestyle."

The introduction of Dawlance Prima Line marks a new era of advancement, reflecting the company's vision to exceed customer expectations and redefine standards of quality and sophistication. As Dawlance Prima Line expands into various product categories, Dawlance remains committed to elevating the standard of living for consumers across Pakistan.

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YADEA Inaugurates Grand Opening of Gujranwala Showroom



PPA

GUJRANWALA: Yadea (Eiffel Industries Ltd), the globally renowned leader in electric vehicles, celebrated the grand opening of its newest showroom in Gujranwala with a spectacular ceremony on May 06, 2024. Located on GT Road Near DC Colony, the expansive 2200 sqft store boasts a complete range of products available in all colors, providing customers with a premium shopping experience.

At the heart of the grand opening is the unveiling of Yadea's flagship models, showcasing cutting-edge technology and unparalleled performance. Among the highlights are the Yadea T5 featuring TTEAR technology, the Ruibin with an impressive mileage of 100 km, and the G5 equipped with 12-inch tires and front and rear disc brakes, a favorite among European and American riders.

"We are thrilled to bring Yadea's world-class electric vehicles to Gujranwala," said Mr. Muhammad Salman, Managing Director of Yadea Pakistan. "Our showroom is not just a place to shop; it's an immersive experience where customers can discover the future of mobility firsthand."

The grand opening ceremony was graced by the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Mr. Alex Zhao, Director Sales South Asia, and Mr. Muhammad Adeel Usman, Director of Eiffel Industries Ltd. Speaking at the event, Mr. Zhao expressed his enthusiasm for Yadea's expansion in Pakistan, stating, "We are excited to witness the growing demand for electric vehicles in Pakistan and are committed to providing innovative and sustainable mobility solutions to meet the needs of consumers."

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Korea H.E. Mr. Park Ki Jun called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday.



Photo: PID

Govt pursuing economic progress agenda through massive reforms, structural changes: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday, reiterating government's sharp focus on economic advancement, said it was pursuing its agenda of growth through massive reforms and structural changes.

"My government is totally committed to bringing huge reforms and huge structural changes. We are inching towards that direction, as otherwise, it will be a futile exercise and will not produce proportionate results. We are absolutely focused on the agenda of reforms," he said in an interview with Saudi state-owned television channel Al Arabiya.

The prime minister informed the interviewer that Pakistan was faced with huge challenges at the macroeconomic level like GDP growth ratio, huge loans, energy shortage, weak power transmission system, line losses and expensive power generation. Other challenges include revenue generation, corruption, less utilisation of technology, and lack of monitoring and supervision, he added.

The prime minister spoke high of the Saudi leadership and their cooperation with Pakistan, saying that the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relations went back to centuries and there was no parallel of this relationship on the globe.

"We are brothers. We under-

stand each other and share each other's grief and happiness. We are partners in progress and prosperity, not only in the two countries but also in the region," he remarked while explaining to a question as to why every Pakistani leader opted to pay the first foreign visit to the Kingdom after assuming office.

Referring to recent high-level interactions between the two countries, he mentioned his two meetings with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Kingdom, the visit of Saudi foreign minister and a huge Saudi business delegation to Pakistan recently. "This shows that the Saudi leadership is very serious and sincere to enhance relations with Pakistan not only in diplo-

macy but investment, trade, culture and between the youth of two countries," he added. Shehbaz Sharif said that during his Saudi visit, he had the "most intense and comprehensive" discussion with Saudi authorities wherein two sides had agreed to cooperate in multiple sectors.

He applauded the progress achieved by the Kingdom under the Saudi crown prince's leadership, and his Vision 2030, calling it a role model for many countries.

Asked about the outcome of recent interactions, the prime minister said: "We have achieved great progress. We have identified areas of cooperation—both B2B and G2G. Now there is a clear-cut way

forward for mutual cooperation in investment, mines, minerals and renewable energy."

He said Pakistan was still an agrarian economy and by using modern technologies, both countries could enhance cooperation to produce fruits, vegetables, wheat, sugarcane, and sunflower to convert them into value-added products and export to Gulf region and other countries. Similarly, Pakistan could help provide its skilled IT manpower to the Kingdom to help grow both economies.

He said other countries like Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Turkey and China could also become partners in this fields and help bring an economic revolution in the country.

President for promoting business, trade ties with Bosnia & Herzegovina



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday underlined the need to promote business and trade ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina by opening banks, trading in local currencies, and promoting barter trade between the two countries. The president expressed these views while talking to Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Emin Cohodarevic, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Welcoming the ambassador, the president said that Pakistan's ties with Bosnia & Herzegovina were based on historic and friendly relations spanning over almost three decades. He added that both countries should continue bilateral engagements and interactions to further explore the avenues of cooperation in the areas of mutual interest. The ambassador said that his country wanted to deepen ties

with Pakistan in the fields of economy, security, and culture. He highlighted that there was a vast scope for economic cooperation for Pakistani businesses in different industries in Bosnia & Herzegovina, including food, tourism, and textile. The ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Pakistan for their support to Bosnia & Herzegovina during the war in the 1990s. He also solicited Pakistan's support for Bosnia and Herzegovina's draft resolution on Srebrenica in the United Nations General Assembly. The president said that Pakistan would favourably examine Bosnia's request, adding that Pakistan stood in solidarity with the victims of the 1995 tragedy in Srebrenica. The ambassador also extended the invitation to the president to visit Bosnia & Herzegovina to strengthen economic cooperation between the two countries.

Pakistan offers lucrative manufacturing, processing opportunities to foreign investors: Deputy PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday, outlining the investor friendly policies of the government, invited the Chinese companies to set up manufacturing and processing units in Pakistan. He was talking to Mayor of Shouguang, Zhao Tianbao who called on him in Beijing, China.

The Deputy PM highlighted Government of Pakistan's reform agenda in the economic domain and shared an overview of the opportunities for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in diverse sectors of Pakistan including infrastructure develop-

ment, renewable energy, textiles, agriculture, IT and mining, according to a press release issued by the Foreign Office. Mayor Zhao Tianbao expressed its gratitude to the Deputy PM for providing them the opportunity to engage in a fruitful exchange of views and share ideas, and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the trade and economic ties between China and Pakistan. He also emphasized the determination to continue exploring new avenues of cooperation in the fields of agriculture, mining and energy, through investments aimed at achieving shared prosperity and development of the two countries.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa meets with Chairman Senate

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi met former Prime Minister and Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani at his residence. Earlier, the Chairman Senate gave Hi-Tea in honor of Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed the current economic and political situation of the country. On this occasion, both the leaders emphasized the need for political stability in the context of the current situation of the country and said

that this will create economic stability in the country. He said that everyone should play their role in this regard. Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani while mentioning the party affairs said that Pakistan People's Party has always worked for the welfare of indigent and poor women. The biggest example of this is Benazir Income Support Program. The objective of this program is to strengthen women economically on a permanent basis. We are trying to arrange employment for other unemployed members of their household.



People's Party has always played a role in providing employment and will continue to play this role in the future as it is also a part of our manifesto. On this occasion, the two

leaders also discussed various measures to make the party more active and stable. In Asraane, former district nazim of Multan Mian Faisal Mukhtar, well-known indus-

trialist and ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Tanveer A Sheikh, well-known industrialists Mian Zulfiqar Anjum, Mian Amir Naseem, MPA Syed Ali Haider Gilani, Senior Vice President Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab Khawaja Rizwan Alam, General Secretary Peoples Party South Punjab Dr. Javed Siddiqui, Mehr Mohammad Ashraf Sial Director Air Sial, Syed Zaghaf Gillani, Mehr Asad Sial, Dr. Javed Siddiqui, Naeem Ahmed Khan, and Malik Riaz Hussain participated.

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 companies 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. Responding to a question about inducting cheaper generation sources, CEO of K-Electric said that "KE has planned to induct 640 MW of affordable power from wind and solar," further saying, "KE is pursuing these projects on a fast-track basis and trying in earnest to have them commissioned by the next two years. At the same time the company is looking to induct cheap and indigenous fuel sources to further reduce the basket price."

Condolence Message from Foreign Secretary Syrus Sajjad Qazi



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Service fraternity is today mourning Dr. Diyar Khan. A distinguished diplomat, Dr. Khan served the nation for over 28 years. He was Pakistan's Ambassador to Argentina and Consul General in Guangzhou, China. He also served at Pakistan's Missions in Beijing, Kabul, Sana'a, Rome and the United Nations, New York. His professionalism, impeccable integrity and dedication to public service were truly admirable. He will be dearly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time. Rest in Peace, Dr. Diyar Khan.

PTA-GSMA training workshop held on Evolution of Radio Access Networks

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A one-day International Training Course on "Evolution of Radio Access Networks: Disaggregation, Open RAN and 6G" was held under PTA-GSMA Centre of Excellence program.

The training covered technical concepts like OpenRAN, disaggregated networks, innovative connectivity solutions, fostering interoperability and hardware flexibility.

The event was attended by regulatory experts from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Iran in addition to representatives from USE, F&B, PEMRA, SUPARCO and PTA, said a news release. Dr. Khawar Siddique

Khokhar, Member Compliance and Enforcement PTA welcomed all the participants and highlighted the significance of knowledge sharing for professional development.

The Secretary-General of Asia Pacific Telecommunity Masanori Kondo addressed the audience and appreciated this collaboration between PTA and GSMA, and assured APT's continued support for sub-regional cooperation.

At the closing ceremony of the workshop, Chairman PTA, Maj. General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman appreciated GSMA's collaboration program and the relevance of the training with PTA's progressive approach towards telecom modernization.

Pakistan to teach students about climate change during upcoming summer camps: Romina Khurshid

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PM's coordinator on climate change & environmental coordination Romina Khurshid Alam said that during upcoming summer camps, students will be taught about climate change to educate them on this sensitive subject. She said this during a meeting with UNICEF country director for Pakistan Mr. Abdullah A. Fadil at her office today. Romina Khurshid Alam apprised him that with the collaboration of Secretary Federal Education & Professional Training & Chairman Higher Education Commission climate change related contents were being incorporated in the curriculum. She also added that ministry of climate change was



going to establish a COP cell to swiftly work on climate actions, climate risks which Pakistan would present in upcoming UNFCCC COP29.

The both sides discussed different ideas to promote climate tourism, climate entertainment, climate sports, climate economy. UNICEF representative vowed to further strengthen their support for these ambitious tasks besides collaborating on COP29.

NA budget session to commence on June 6

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Monday chaired a meeting to discuss the current and upcoming budget sessions of the National Assembly and it was decided that the budget session would commence on June 6. The meeting was attended by parliamentary leaders representing various parties in the house.

It was further decided that the current session of the Nation-

al Assembly would continue until May 17. The meeting focused on the formation of standing committees and the finance committee of the assembly. Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, along with members including Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Aijaz Hussain Jakh-rani, Malik Aamir Dogar, Syed Amin-ul-Haque, Noor Alam Khan, Gul Asghar Khan, Riaz Fatyana, Khalid Hussain Magsi, Bilal Azhar Kayani, and others were present in the meeting.