

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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نے یہاں کیا کہ کسی ایسا نہیں ہوا کہ رسول اللہ  
صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے کسی نے کوئی چیز مانگی ہو  
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## Vietnam's culture, art give message of peace, love to world: envoy

Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Nguyen Tien Phong on Monday said that Vietnam is enriched in culture and literature and its culture and art give the message of peace and love to the rest of the world. The Ambassador said that film, art and literature connect hearts... (Details on Page 3)



## Dr. A. Q. Khan: The Real Hero Who Saved Pakistan Twice

The 28th of May is a memorable day in the history of Pakistan and is celebrated as a National Day known as Youm-e-Takbeer to commemorate the contribution of unsung heroes in making Pakistan the first Muslim and seventh nation in the world to become a Nuclear State. On this day Pakistan launched a series of nuclear tests in Chagai Balochistan in response to India's threats and atomic tests. (Special Edition on Page 5)

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## Martyrdom

Five Pakistani army soldiers were martyred in an exchange of fire with terrorists during an operation in the general area of Bagh, Khyber district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday.



Photo: ISPR

## Five soldiers martyred in Khyber gun battle: ISPR

Military's media wing says 23 terrorists killed in three separate KP operations

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Five Pakistani army soldiers were martyred in an exchange of fire with terrorists during an operation in the general area of Bagh, Khyber district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday, the military's media wing said.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations said that Naik Muhammad Ashfaq Butt, 32, a Kahuta resident, Lance Naik Syed Danish Afkar, 30, a Poonch resident, Sepoy Taimoor Malik, 32, a Layyah resident, Sepoy Nadir Sageer, 22, a Bagh resident, and Sepoy Muahmmad Yasin, 23, Khushab resident, were the martyred army men.

Seven terrorists were killed while two others were wounded in the operation, the ISPR said and added that sanitisation operations were being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

"Security forces are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve."

On Sunday, an army captain and a soldier were martyred during an exchange of fire with terrorists during an intelligence based operation in the general area Hassan Khel of Peshawar district. At least five terrorists were killed while three terrorists got injured.

In another operation in KP's Tank district, 10 terrorists were killed.

At least twenty three terrorists were in above mentioned three operations.

"A large quantity of Weapons, ammunition & explosives was also recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as the innocent civilians."

# PM pays tribute to Pak Army's officers, soldiers for successful operations against terrorists

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday paid tribute to the officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army for carrying out successful operations against the terrorists in Tank, Dera Ismail Khan and Bagh, Khyber district.

The prime minister also paid tribute to five soldiers Naek Muhammad Ashfaq Butt, Lance Naek Syed Danish



Afkar, Sepoy Taimoor Malik, Sepoy Nadir Sageer and Sepoy Muhammad Yaseen who embraced martyrdom during the operation in Bagh.

He said the Pakistan Army soldiers took part in the operations against the terrorist elements by putting their lives at risk.

"May Allah Almighty elevate the ranks of the martyrs in the paradise and grant courage to the bereaved family members to bear this loss with patience," he said in a message issued by the PM House.

PM Shehbaz said the entire nation including himself paid tribute to the family members of the martyrs.

He emphasized that the officers and soldiers of Pakistan Armed Forces always preferred the country's integrity and solidarity over their lives.

"We will continue the war till complete elimination of the menace of terrorism from the country," he resolved.

He said the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its armed forces

## 26th anniversary of 'Youm-e-Takbeer' felicitations to the nation: CJCSC

### Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs of Pakistan, Extended warm felicitations to the nation on the 26th anniversary of "Youm-e-Takbeer".

This momentous occasion commemorates the historic achievement of Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998, which successfully established credible minimum deterrence and restored the balance of power in the region.

The Armed Forces and the nation pay tribute to the unwa-

vering dedication and selfless sacrifices of all those who contributed to this remarkable feat, achieved against overwhelming odds. The scientists, engineers, and officials who devoted their lives to realizing this dream rightly deserve the gratitude and admiration of the nation and its Armed Forces.

On this important day in Pakistan's history, the Armed Forces of Pakistan reaffirm their unwavering resolve to defend the motherland, protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and ensure the nation's security at all times and at any cost, InshaAllah.

## Pakistan strongly condemns the Israeli attack on a refugee camp in Rafah

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemns in the strongest terms Israeli bombardment and targeting of an UNRWA refugee camp in Rafah in Gaza Strip that has resulted in multiple casualties. Targeting of individuals who were displaced earlier because of Israeli bombardment and were sheltered in a refugee camp, is yet another breach of international humanitarian law by the Israeli occupation forces.

The attack is also a blatant defiance of the additional provisional measures of 24 May 2024 by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordering Israel to immediately halt its military offensive in Rafah in conformity with its obligations under the Genocide Convention and the worsening humanitarian conditions faced by civilians.

With its latest actions, Israeli occupation forces have once again demonstrated their contempt for international law and the basic tenets of decency and acceptable international behaviour.

## U. S. Ambassador Blome hails 'transformational' Fineship reforms in Pakistan

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan H. E. Donald Blome called on Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at the Finance Division today.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb welcomed Ambassador Blome and underscored the long-term mutual relations between Pakistan and the USA. He informed the Ambassador about successful completion of the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and that the Government of Pakistan is engaged with the fund to build upon the reforms under the SBA.



Senator Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted the priority reform areas of the Government including increasing the tax-to-GDP ratio through end-to-end digitization, bringing the under-taxed sectors into the tax net, and tax administrative reforms.

The Federal Minister reiterated the Prime Minister's commitment

to privatizing State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), which has sparked interest from local and foreign investors in the case of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). On the energy sector reforms, he mentioned steps being taken to bring private sector experts to enhance efficiency. He also apprised the Ambassador of the potential investments from investors in the Agriculture, Mining, and IT sectors.

Ambassador Mr. Blome appreciated the Pakistani government's efforts and initiatives to improve macroeconomic indicators. He assured the support of the United States in helping Pakistan achieve economic stability and sustainable growth.

## Pakistan, Netherlands strengthen trade ties, eye new investment opportunities



### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Netherlands Ambassador to Pakistan, Ms. Henny Fokel De Vries called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday. Both discussed to deepen the trade relations.

The Ambassador appreciated the role of MoC in coordinating and support for resolving the

Continued on Page 8

## China to continue to work with Pakistan to strengthen security cooperation: Mao Ning

### News Desk

BELJING: China will continue to work with Pakistan to strengthen security cooperation and ensure safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and installations in the country, Chinese Foreign

Ministry Spokesperson, Mao Ning said on Monday.

Pakistani authorities held a press conference on Sunday and released the investigation results of the terrorist attack on the vehicle and Chinese personnel of the Dasu hydropower project.

In response to a question in this regard during a regular press conference, she said, "We attach great importance to the important press conference made by Pakistan."

Mao Ning said that China will support Pakistan in getting to the bottom of what happened and

hunting down and punishing the perpetrators.

Terming terrorism a common enemy of humanity and a tumor for regional development and stability, she said that China calls on countries in the region to strengthen

Continued on Page 8

## A convicted person can't acknowledge Gov't diplomatic achievements: Tarar

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said that a convicted person in prison could not digest and acknowledge multiple achievements of current government on diplomatic front and initiatives for the development of the country.

"Definitely, there is a sinister plan to compare the current situation with that of 1971 but these tactics are doomed to fail; InshaAllah, Pakistan will remain on the map of the world and make march towards progress and prosperity", he said while addressing a press conference.

He said during the tenure of the present elected government, by the grace of Allah Almighty, Pakistan had achieved many milestones on the diplomatic front.

"The Prime Minister had a telephonic conversation with the Prime Ministers of Norway and Ireland in the backdrop of their strong stance on Middle East situation", he remarked.

He said Prime Minister Sheh-



baz Sharif had telephonically contacted the prime ministers of Norway and Ireland who had condemned the ongoing atrocities in Gaza and Rafah and called for immediate for ceasefire.

The minister said that PM Shehbaz Sharif informed the two Prime Ministers about Pakistan's position on the situation.

"Pakistan has always raised its voice for the rights of Palestinians", he said adding PM Shehbaz Sharif during his address to UN General Assembly had stated categorically that Pakistan will continue to raise its voice for the cause of Palestinians.

During World Economic Forum meeting in Riyadh, the PM remarked that there could not be peace in the world without peace in Gaza.

# Minister of Information says media should play its important role for national unity and integrity of country

Abdul Majeed Tahir.

MUZAFFARABAD: The Information Minister of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah has said that the media should play its important role for national unity and integrity of country. We are ready to talk, we should not engage in a war of words, but we have to promote the narrative of national unity and national security. Rather, we have to walk with the honors, it is our honor to be the servant of Allah and the ummah of the Prophet of Mercy. The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, has ordered to abandon the slogans of anger and has forbidden the unclean and smelly slogans of linguistics and nationality. As the Information Minister, I will be the voice of the media and play every possible role for

the welfare of journalists. Worship is banned in Occupied Kashmir and civil liberties are curtailed. We have a soul and heart relationship with Pakistan, a bright Pakistan is our destination, I am convinced not only to join Pakistan but also to join the Ummah, our ideological borders are meeting with Madinah. Our land borders should meet Madinah.

These views were expressed by the Minister of Information of the Independent Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, while addressing a function organized in his honor during his visit to the Central Press Club, Muzaffarabad. Information Secretary Ansari Yaqub Khan and Public Relations Coordinator Raja Shahid Hussain were also present in the ceremony. President Central Press Club Wahid Iqbal

Butt, Secretary General AKNS Zaheer Ahmed Jagwal, Senior Journalist Zulfikar Butt, Secretary Central Union of Journalists Tahir Ahmed Farooqui, President TV journalists Association Asif Raza Mir, Imtiaz Awan, Arif Arfi, Raja Ifkhar were present at the event. And Naeem Chaghtai also addressed and congratulated Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah on taking over the portfolio of the Ministry of Information and welcomed him to the press club. President Central Press Club and other speakers drew the attention of the Information Minister to other issues including the construction of Generalists Colony.

Earlier, the information minister was welcomed by the president of the Central Press Club and other officials on his arrival at the Central Press Club. Speaking at the event, Informa-



tion Minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah said, "The purpose of establishing the base camp is Kashmir Azadi Movement. After 2019, 867 innocent Kashmiris have been martyred in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. We will

not deviate from our goal. First is our defense and other matters are after that. The Information Minister said that no one can stop speaking the truth, it is important to keep civility and ethics in mind, if the government is doing

good work, it should be praised, it is very important to have punishment and punishment in the society, if we praise good work and not bad work. If they say, they cannot move forward.

The independent government under the leadership of Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Haq established an endowment fund of 09 billion for the first time in Azad Kashmir for the needy people of the society. Less than half of the budget was spent, the process of accountability was started, direct payments from the Zakat Fund through the Prime Minister's Secretariat were abolished and direct payments were made to hospitals and educational institutions so that deserving people could benefit. The Information Minister said that he is grateful to the old journalistic institution of the capital for the love shown.

## Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan unveiling the plaque at Superior University Lahore on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Yasin hails sacrifices of Pakistan Army in war against terrorism

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The President of Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of six soldiers including a captain of the Pakistan Army in the war against terrorists and has paid tribute to the martyrs in strong words and said that the Kingdom of God The sacrifices of the Pakistan Army for the safety and integrity of Pakistan are eternal. In every difficult time, the Pakistan Army has not only fought the enemy but also wiped them out, but the current wave of terrorism is alarming, he said. The enemy is trying unsuccessfully to demoralize the nation and the Pakistan Army by such cowardly attacks. Such actions have been bravely fought by the Pakistan Army in the past. Once again, the Pakistan Army will root out the monster of terrorism. He said that in the defense of the homeland and the war against terrorism, the children of the nation are standing on the back of the Pakistan Army like a leaden wall. There is a need for national consensus and unity. The soldiers of Pakistan are sacrificing their lives in the defense of the homeland and in the war against terrorism. will do

## Muslim Conference pays tribute to martyred Shafiqullah in Poonch



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/ RAWALKOT: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has paid rich tribute to Martyred Shafiqullah. The nation will never forget his sacrifices during the defend innings of country frontiers. Expressing heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families of the martyrs, he prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs and patience for the bereaved. Martyred while fighting the terrorists. The family members are equal participants in the grief. These views were expressed at Nikah ceremony of the chairperson of the Muslim Conference Students' Wing in Ms. Maimoona Kayani, Advocate, sister's while talking to the Muslim Conference workers after participating in Hamsheera's marriage ceremony. He said that against terrorism. The security forces have made unprecedented sacrifices in the war, these sacrifices of the security forces will not go in vain. The whole nation is with the security forces in the war against Pakistan. He said that after the magnificent "Kashmir Banega Pakistan rally" under the auspices of the Muslim Conference in Muzaffarabad division to express solidarity with the Pakistan Army, the second phase will be held in Poonch division Rawalkot on June 13. Preparations for which have been started.

## Delegation of Mehsud Press Club SW meets KP Governor



Adam Khan Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: A delegation of Mehsud Press Club, South Waziristan Upper on Monday called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Khan Kundi and discussed in detail the regional situation including the problems being faced by journalists.

The delegation consisted of President Farooq Mehsud, General Secretary Sikandar Hayat, Senior Journalists Anwar Mehsud, Muhammad Shoab and including Aslam.

The delegation congratulated Faisal Karim Khan Kundi on assuming the charge of the Governor KP and apprised him about the public issues in the tribal districts, especially South Waziristan Upper and Lower districts.

During the meeting, the governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was specially informed about the compensation of the destroyed houses of Mehsud tribes, which had not been paid even after many years.

The delay of the Waziristan Education City approved by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was also discussed.

President Mehsud Press Club Farooq Mehsud informed the Governor about the problems faced by journalists in tribal districts.

Senior Journalist Jafar Zakori and Central Leader of Pakistan People's Party Akhuzada Chhattan were also present during the meeting.

President Farooq Mehsud invited the Governor to visit Mehsud Press Club South Waziristan, Upper, Governor accepted the invitation and said soon he will visit Mehsud Press Club at Ladha South Waziristan.

## Dr. Rubina Akhtar says govt not yet achieving its goal

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Tehreek-e-Insaf's candidate for NA-148 Constituency Dr. Rubina Akhtar has said that the government which is promoting economic development is still failing in its goal. He has said that the People's Party, which said not to accept ministries, is now talking about ministries, Maulana Fazlur Rehman's words also seem to be about increasing their constituency in the government. Those who call for sacrifice should always tell the people directly that they should divide the Chappatti into six parts and eat it. In exchange of 10 rupees relief in petrol, the electricity rate has been increased, the govern-



ment should provide relief to the common man in daily necessities so that the poor man can breathe a sigh of relief, which is not the talk of the present government. Until the elected represen-

tatives sitting in the House do not reduce their expenses, then the poor man will continue to commit suicide at the hands of inflation, he added that there are talks of increasing the expenses of the

Parliament and the people are being pressed under the burden of heavy taxes. If the situation remains the same, the people will rise in the form of a movement as if membership will become difficult

## Grand Launch of Ramza EV Bike



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN/ BAHAWALPUR: The launch of Ramza EV Bike took place today at Ramza Multan Motors in Gulgasht and Ramza Bahawalpur Motors in Model Town A. The event was attended by CEO of New Asia Group of Companies, Haji Ramzan, Directors Muhammad Hussain, Muhammad Ali, Riaz Chaudhry, Mushtaq Chaudhry, Khalid Hussain Chaudhry, and other prominent figures. Automotive industry dealers, members and officials of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the general public also participated enthusiastically.

## Commissioner Multan emphasizes need for extensive tree plantation in Multan

Quaratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Commissioner of Multan Division Ms Maryam Khan, held a meeting with Businessmen at the Chamber of Commerce and Multan. The meeting, attended by Chamber President Mian Rashid Iqbal and other Businessmen focused on discussing various issues faced by the Multan city.

During the meeting, Commissioner Multan Division Ms Maryam Khan emphasized the crucial role of the business community in the economy, referring to them as the "backbone" of the economy. She assured the Businessmen that the administration is committed to resolving their legitimate concerns, stating, "The doors of the Commissioner's office are open to everyone."

Commissioner Ms Mariam Khan stressed the need for extensive tree



plantation in the Multan city and Multan Division, particularly focusing on fruit-bearing trees, which she listed as one of her priorities. She announced that a ban on plastic shopping bags would be enforced starting June 6 and urged traders to make their plazas and factories plastic-free

In attendance at the meeting were

Vice President Sheikh Asim Saeed, President of the Women's Wing Romana Tanveer Sheikh, former Chamber President Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, General Secretary Multan Chamber Muhammad Shafiq, and other industrialists. The traders expressed their commitment to the country's economic stability and strength.



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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:20 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	5:03 pm
Maghrib	7:10 pm
Isha	8:51 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	926170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

2-Day Hackathon by SoLF and IoU, Supported by the U.S. Embassy Islamabad

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A two-day Hackathon titled 'Water-Wise Urban Future: Co-Creating Solutions for Water Conservation in Cities of Pakistan' was jointly organized by the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF) the Institute of Urbanism (IoU), with support of the U. S. Embassy Islamabad from 25 to 26 May 2024. During the hackathon, representatives from the government, media, academia, civil society and youth discussed ways to promote water conservation in cities.

The speakers at the forum highlighted that various solutions, including rainwater harvesting, underground recharge and storage wells, constructed wetlands, and wastewater treatment plants that have been implemented in different urban areas of the country. However, for these initiatives to effectively address water challenges in cities, there is a need for up-scale such solutions through collaborative efforts involving public, private, and community stakeholders. Efforts should also be targeted towards increasing the adoption of conservation practices by the city dwellers and communities.

Mr. Kelly Ryan, Public Diplomacy Officer, U. S. Embassy Islamabad, highlighting the importance of water conservation said "when we talk about conserving water, it is more than just limiting water usage. In fact, it also encompasses treating wastewater, improving urban permeability, and protecting the existing water resources."

Ms. Mariyam Irfan, Managing Director of the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF), emphasized the critical role of collaborative efforts in scaling effective water conservation solutions. She highlighted the importance of integrating community participation with public and private sector initiatives to achieve sustainable urban water management.

Dr. Ejaz Ahmad, Senior Program Fellow at IoU, emphasized the importance of grassroots environmental education for sustainable water consumption in communities.

Mr. Sardar Khan Zimri, Director General Water Management, CDA said "if rainwater harvesting systems and underground recharge wells are implemented at household level in Islamabad,

Vietnamese art film screening

# Vietnam's culture, art give message of peace, love to world: envoy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Nguyen Tien Phong on Monday said that Vietnam is enriched in culture and literature and its culture and art give the message of peace and love to the rest of the world.

The Ambassador said that film, art and literature connect hearts and minds in the world communities and teach humanity and tolerance and also bring people's hearts closer to each other.

The Vietnamese envoy said this while addressing the Vietnamese art film screening organized by the Embassy of Vietnam in Islamabad.

Ambassadors of different countries, including the, Chairperson ASEAN Committee Islamabad, Ambassador of Philippines, Maria Agnes M. Cervantes, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps, Atadjan Movlamov, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Ambassador of Belgium, Charles DELOGNE and Charge d'Affairs Indonesia in Islamabad, Rahmat Hindiarta and families of diplomats, writers and journalists from different walks of life participated and enjoyed the movie.

The Ambassador of Vietnam said that those great literary and academic personalities came to the fore in Vietnam and filmmakers played an important role in revealing the real identity of Vietnam and brought the local culture to the international level.

He said that today's event is part of the vision in which ASEAN countries have been given an opportunity to promote their culture.

The ambassador said that the film



"Yellow flowers and green grass" is an art film that highlights the lifestyle of the people of Vietnam and their cultural colors.

He said that Pakistan and Vietnam are also working to promote mutual culture and the Embassy of Vietnam is playing its full role in this regard.

Meanwhile, student Ayesha Anwar who came to watch the movie said that it was an art movie in which the true colors of Vietnamese culture have been revealed. She said that after watching this film, she got the opportunity to know the culture of Vietnam and there is a lot of similarity between the culture of Pakistan and Vietnam.

Meanwhile, a writer Mazhar Shahid, who participated in the event said that the ASEAN Committee Islamabad wants to continue this series to promote the culture of ASEAN countries.

He said that the ambassador of the

Chairperson ASEAN Committee in Islamabad and the ambassador of Vietnam certainly deserve congratulations for organizing this event today.

It is pertinent to mention that the Vietnamese art Movie "Yellow Flowers on the Green Grass" is a 2015 Vietnamese drama, which was directed by Victor Vu. Vietnam enrich culture gives a message of peace, love to world: Ambassador of Vietnam

It is adapted from the novel of the same name by 'Nguyen Nhat Anh'.

The film stars Thinh Vinh and Trong Khang. The film is about the childhood of the brothers Thieu (Thinh Vinh) and Tuong (Trong Khang) in a poor rural village in central Vietnam in the 1980s.

They share and do everything together. However, when their friend next door, Man (Thanh My), comes to stay with them and a big flood hits their village, there is a big misunderstanding that leads



to Tuong's back injury.

The film has an open ending with

scene of Thieu and Tuong studying in their house.

## Meezan Bank Strengthens Foothold in Forex Services, Launches

PPA

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank has officially commenced operations of Meezan Exchange Company Limited (MECL), its wholly-owned subsidiary in Karachi. MECL will offer remittance and forex services to all customers. As an initial step in its journey, MECL will expand to 10 outlets nationwide within the first month of its launch with accelerated plans to launch 50 outlets within a year.

The first Meezan Exchange branch, located at the Trade Tower, Karachi, was recently inaugurated by Mr. Irfan Siddiqui, Founding President & CEO of Meezan Bank, along with Mr. Zia Ul Hassan, Chairman of the Board MECL, Mr. Faisal Sarwar, CEO MECL, and senior management from Meezan Bank and Meezan Exchange.

Meezan Exchange's rapid roll out comes with the State Bank of Pakistan's structural reforms in the exchange sector that aim



to create local forex powerhouses with licenses to operate in the country. MECL has joined the country's growing list of exchange companies and specializes in offering transparency and cost-effectiveness in every transaction, building upon its core strengths of offering efficient currency exchange rates, swift service, and a superior customer experience.

Mr. Irfan Siddiqui remarked, "The launch of Meezan Exchange

reinforces our commitment to delivering seamless financial solutions. We are on the path to building best-in-class financial solutions based on our Core Values of Shariah-compliance, Integrity, and Service Excellence. Meezan Exchange is a testament to the rapid strides we want to make in providing outclass remittance and multi-currency exchange services to both our corporate and individual customers."

## Restaurant owners provide excellent services to their customers: Chaudhry Farooq

PNP

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Restaurant, Caterers, Sweets and Bakers Association has rejected the district administration's decision to fix uniform rates for tandoor owners and restaurant owners at same basis. And said that we supported the institutions in every difficult time, but unnecessary fines by the magistrates are not acceptable in any case. The district administration should listen to our position and decide the rates. Placing additional burden on the business community without consultation is not a good move which we strongly condemn.

The members of Rawalpindi Restaurant, Caterers, Sweets and Bakers Association under the leadership of President Chaudhry Farooq and Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed met Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema and presented their recommendations. On this occasion, President of Rawalpindi Restaurant,

Caters, Sweets and Bakers Association, Chaudhry Farooq, Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed, General Secretary Raja Adnan Mehmood, Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zahid Mehmood, Senior Vice President Sheikh Mohammad Muneer, Shakir Sharif, Malik Aftab, Chaudhry Nasir, Chaudhry Hafeez, Sheikh Imran Elahi, Vice President Sardar Ejaz



Wilayat, Information Secretary Tariq Khan, Chaudhry Shafaq Ali Awan, Sheikh Nair Feroze informed Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema about his reservations on the issue of Roti rate and said that if you want to check the rate of Roti at the restaurants, then the restaurants should be given the rate of the Roti first. While the admin-

istration is fining the restaurants on the rate of Roti taken out for the Tandoors. Tandoor is given Rs 700 per MMBTU, while restaurants pay Rs 3900 per MMBTU for sui gas.

Restaurant owners provide excellent services to their customers. While the Roti from the tandoor has to be taken standing on the road and the customer goes home and eats the Roti.

The government is increasing the prices of its products daily. In which the price of sui gas has been increased from 400% to 1100%. The price of electricity is also being increased day by day, the water bill was increased by 1000%. Everyone has hopes from Chief

Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz that she will solve our problems. She should use their powers to eliminate illegal encroachments. Restaurants cannot sell Roti at the rate of tandoors. Roti with all expenses costs Rs 18.50 at small hotels and more than Rs 25 at big restaurants. The series of baseless fines on traders by the magistrate should be stopped.

## Pakistan's construction industry adopting sustainable, modern construction materials, says IAP

PPA

KARACHI: Keeping in mind the global trends and commitment to climate action, the construction industry of Pakistan is moving towards the adoption of modern and sustainable construction materials, according to an Institute of Architects Pakistan (IAP) official.

To showcase the construction sector's potential and create awareness about these modern construction materials, such as value-added PVC products, the IAP recently organized three-day LAPEX 2024. The event attracted a strong footfall of architects, interior designers, students, experts, and industry players.

Mishaal Merchant, Chairman of IAP highlighted that the construction sector plays a pivotal role in the overall economic development of any country. According to a report by the Pakistan Credit Rating Agency (PACRA), in IQFY24, the sector contributed -11.5% in industrial activities and around -2.7% to the GDP. The destructive floods of 2022 and changing global trends have necessitated the local construction industry to embrace international standards



and promote the use of sustainable materials.

Talking about the much-needed change to modernize Pakistan's construction sector, Muhammad Idrees, Chief Commercial Officer at EPCL said, "Resolving the urban housing crisis demands a balanced approach — enhancing existing housing, while also embracing modern, sustainable materials for new construction. ThinkPVC offers innovative and cutting-edge solutions that not only surpass aesthetically but also offer cost-effectiveness, while meeting evolving climate demands. We work closely with

architects and developers to ensure our products uphold our commitment to sustainability, thus elevating the construction landscape."

He added that PVC is the material of choice by architects and developers across the world due to its longevity against the changing climate needs, as well as aesthetics and cost-effectiveness compared to other materials. ThinkPVC also unveiled Vero, a new and advanced range of kitchens and vanities, at the IAPEX with the aim to redefine the benchmarks of quality and craftsmanship in the Pakistani market.

## PAAPAM Proposes Budgetary Recommendations to Revitalize Auto Parts Industry

PNP

LAHORE: The Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts and Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) has urged the government to implement essential measures in the upcoming budget to rescue the struggling auto parts industry, which supports millions of families across the nation. In the Budget proposals, submitted to the government, PAAPAM emphasized the urgent need for government action in this regard.

PAAPAM Chairman Abdul Rehman Aizaz, Senior Vice Chairman Mumshad Ali, and Vice Chairman Taufiq Sherwani, stated that the PAAPAM has presented key budgetary recommendations to revitalize the industry, focusing on boosting exports and encouraging the localization of engineering activities, particularly within the auto parts sector. They highlighted the critical importance of conserv-



ing and earning foreign exchange to address the economic crisis, as well as the potential for job creation and economic growth through these initiatives.

To achieve these objectives, PAAPAM proposed several long-term suggestions, including a ten-year plan to support the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) alongside localization

efforts, shifting the import assessment of new auto parts from a weight-based to a unit-based custom tariff and ensuring that imported used auto parts are not reused for safety reasons.

The PAAPAM also stressed the need for a consistent AIDEP policy, under which all 13 assemblers are regulated, to enhance production volumes.

Former PAAPAM Chairman Syed Nabeel Hashmi criticized the import of used cars under flexible terms, noting that over 90% of locally produced models, including tractors and motorbikes, have achieved significant localization rates (over 95%).

PAAPAM is committed to working closely with the government to implement these measures and ensure the sustainable growth and development of Pakistan's auto parts industry. They stand ready to provide any necessary support and expertise to make these proposals a reality.

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# Calls for Divine Intervention by a President and a Tycoon

There are two statements on X, one by Dr. Arif Alvi, former President, and the other from real estate tycoon Malik Riaz. Incidentally, I know both of them very closely. I served Dr. Alvi as his Press Secretary and Media Advisor for ten months, and I had a very close association with Malik Riaz during my time at the newly constructed Bilawal House in Lahore as Director of Media with President Asif Ali Zardari, where we often engaged in healthy conversations. I found both of them extremely committed to their causes, very wise, good leaders, innovators, and excellent managers and doers.

Both of them, with many successes and achievements behind them, in their recent statements, perhaps due to their age, deep experience of worldly affairs, and their closeness to religion and Almighty Allah, called for divine intervention and refused to yield to worldly gains, speaking what they believed was correct, truthful, and good for the country and its people.

President Alvi, having led all three pillars of the state—the executive, the judiciary, and the parliament—and being the supreme commander of the armed forces, has perhaps realized that the solution to the country's woes does not only lie in mundane and worldly power dynamics but rests with the will, intervention, and blessing of Almighty Allah for those who are on the right path. He suggests that divine anger and retribution will come for those who, allegedly consumed with the toxicity of brute power, have unleashed a reign of terror on the innocent, righteous, and hardworking people of Pakistan.

The aim of this statement and its warning is addressed to the alleged supra executive and those who are allegedly occupying the parliament, the provincial assemblies, the senate, and the government after the 2024 elections, not because of their merit but because of the blessing of the supra executive, which allegedly, by a swirl of a magic wand, changed the election results in their favor, thus imposing an illegitimate government in the center and in Punjab.

Having said this, the president paused and raised a very pertinent question: if this lava bursts, it would burn anyone in its destructive path. Many innocent and well-intentioned people, whose past, present, and future are tied to this country, may also suffer.

But those in power, sensing the danger, would soon flee the country and take refuge in their safe havens, which they have created out of allegedly looted wealth in different parts of the world. However, he adds that Allah would make the world difficult for them.

He then takes a turn and gives hope that all loyal Pakistanis, who have their fate tied to this country and will live and die here, will finally defeat them. He warns the mafia not to take this warning lightly and to be aware that we will save Pakistan, build and develop this country, and ensure that our people regain their lost honor and that the country gets its rightful place in the community of nations.

He does not rest here but adds that

we will build our homeland on the ashes of the ongoing looting under this false, brutal, illegal, and oppressive government. All this will be possible only with the grace of Allah through a very brave, proud son of this soil, the supreme commander of the hearts of the people of Pakistan, who will lead and will die only after reaching the destination.

This statement seems full of rhetoric, predictions, and hopes and desires for a better future, though it falls short of any mundane plan or strategy for how these desires would materialize in reality when the PTI is in shambles and its leader has been incarcerated for almost a year with little hope of release.

However, since these words are coming from a former president, who has seen the country's inner workings with his own eyes, they should not be brushed aside but taken as a legitimate warning and a sincere effort to put things right to avoid an imminent catastrophe where the ultimate victims would be common people and the country.

The second powerful statement, which places all faith in divine mercy, was made on X by none other than the most powerful, resourceful, and creative real estate tycoon who has created dream housing societies unparalleled in the country and around the world, where millions of people live with dignity and honor.

Malik Riaz vowed to stand by his principles under divine guidance, and while

remaining apolitical, refused to be used by one party against another. He sustained immense pressure with divine help, remained steadfast, and, in the face of imminent adversity, did not succumb to pressure and refused to be used as a pawn for political motives. He said he has been facing these pressures with grit and tenacity and will continue to do so even today, yielding to pressure "over his dead body."

The reference to Mr. Malik Riaz is also allegedly aimed at the all-powerful supra executive, as the current lot of politicians and civil bureaucracy lack the grit or courage to challenge Malik Riaz, who has given decent living conditions of the millions and through his philanthropic work, which benefits thousands of down-trodden people every day.

These statements reflect significant concerns and warnings that should not be taken lightly by either the supra executive or civilian government. Both figures emphasize the need for divine intervention, suggesting that the current state of affairs requires moral and spiritual rectification rather than merely political or military solutions. This appeal to divine will resonates deeply in a society where religion plays a central role in everyday life. By invoking divine intervention and standing firm on principles, both Alvi and Riaz position themselves as morally upright leaders, which can sway public opinion and reduce the legitimacy of those perceived as oppressors.

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

## 'Pak Hajj App'

The innovative approach adopted to bring together all the wings and departments of the Pakistan Hajj Mission under the DG Facilitation Cell and Complaint Management System seems to be effectively working in the overall Hajj operation for 2024.

The 'Pak Hajj App,' through which online monitoring of all Hajj-related activities is performed, has received an overwhelming response in a short span of time, with over 70,000 active intending Pakistani Hajj pilgrims registered so far.

Through this online service, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has received more than 20,000 suggestions/queries/complaints, which have been responded/resolved and disposed of in an efficient manner.

The Pak Hajj App provides all the required information, including personal details of Hujjaj, group information, Mehram details, helper information, additional facilities, Hajj dues, nominee information, bank account details, and training schedules.

Commenting on the role of the DG Facilitation Cell and Complaint Management System, its in-charge Muhammad Ahmed Usmani told APP that it was established this year for improved coordination among all wings and departments of the Pakistan Hajj Mission to extend maximum facilities to intending Pakistani pilgrims.

"It is greatly helping in the timely redressal of complaints of pilgrims and their proper guidance to minimize any inconvenience to them," he said.

The Facilitation Cell, he added, has a three-member National Information Technology Board (NITB) team of software engineers, mandated with removing technical glitches faced at the Hajj portal and improving system efficiency and quality as per requirements.

Moreover, Usmani mentioned that a five-member team was available at the call center to deal with the complaints received on the portal, under a robust system of redressing grievances of the pilgrims.

He explained that complaints could be lodged through the Pak Hajj App and WhatsApp, or by calling the Pakistan Hajj Mission's helpline toll-free numbers: 00923376510003, 00923376510004, 00923376510005, and 0092306332555.

Answering a question, he said the nature of complaints mostly related to accommodation, split families, room maintenance, lack of amenities, misplaced luggage, and lost and found.

Deputy Director/In-charge NITB Development Team Makah, Muhammad Awais, said the Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony and the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication have jointly launched an online Pak Hajj App, containing centralized data of all Pakistani pilgrims. "It is a huge success for the Pakistan government. We have more than 70,000 active users on it and 80,000 downloads."

He said all Hajj pilgrims from both government and private Hajj schemes could log in to the app, which has as one of its salient features the "Complaint Management and Monitoring System."

Under the Complaint Management and Monitoring System, he noted, all Hujjaj are just a click away from registering any kind of complaint, adding that all complaints are handled under a vibrant ecosystem, routing them in real-time to the concerned officers. "As soon as a complaint is lodged, it appears on the dashboard/mobile phone screen within no time, with the proper zone officer concerned monitoring it live."



Analysis

Qamar Bashir



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

## Significance of Youm e Takbeer - I

Since conducting its inaugural nuclear tests in 1974, India has progressively expanded its nuclear capabilities. The Indian nuclear program exhibits several vulnerabilities, and India has yet to demonstrate itself as a mature and responsible nuclear state. Primarily, the program seems geared not towards peaceful objectives but towards asserting regional dominance and exerting pressure on weaker neighboring nations. Indian politicians, including Modi and other top leaders, have been known to issue threats, particularly towards Pakistan, regarding the use of atomic weapons, as evidenced by their recorded statements and speeches. Furthermore, India's safety and security measures appear inadequate, as evidenced by numerous reported incidents of uranium surfacing in open markets and among individuals within the country.

In response to India's nuclear advancements, Pakistan developed its own nuclear weapons program. Despite facing economic challenges, Pakistan has pursued a policy of maintaining a credible deterrent in relation to its larger neighbor. Islamabad's nuclear doctrine prioritizes deterring potential aggression and ensuring national security. Israel neither confirms nor denies its possession of nuclear weapons, but it is widely believed to maintain a covert nuclear arsenal. North Korea's quest for nuclear weapons has raised considerable alarm within the international community. Despite diplomatic endeavors and economic sanctions, Pyongyang has persisted in its nuclear program, conducting numerous nuclear tests and making strides in missile technology. North Korea's pursuit of nuclear capabilities presents intricate obstacles to both regional stability and global efforts to curb proliferation.

Positioned within a geopolitically complex area, Pakistan confronts a multitude of secu-

rity hurdles, spanning from internal unrest to external pressures. Within this intricate security milieu, the significance of a robust military presence and a reliable nuclear deterrent becomes paramount. Pakistan's geographical placement, bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the west, and Iran to the southwest, accentuates the necessity of safeguarding its territorial integrity.

Historical conflicts and ongoing tensions with neighboring India, marked by three major wars and numerous border skirmishes, underscore the imperative for a strong military posture to dissuade potential aggression and uphold national sovereignty. A proficient army acts as a shield against external threats, guaranteeing the defense of Pakistan's borders and territorial integrity. Internally, security challenges such as terrorism, extremism, and insurgencies jeopardize Pakistan's stability and societal cohesion. The Pakistan Army assumes a central role in counter-insurgency efforts, combating militant factions, and maintaining law and order in volatile regions like the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan.

In South Asia, characterized by persistent rivalries and strategic competition, Pakistan's military capabilities and nuclear deterrence are of critical importance. As India continues to enhance its military prowess and expand its conventional and nuclear arsenals, Pakistan must ensure strategic equilibrium to prevent any regional power imbalances. A credible nuclear deterrent serves as a crucial equalizer, deterring potential aggression and preserving stability through the principle of mutual assured destruction (MAD). The possession of nuclear armaments lies at the core of Pakistan's national security doctrine, founded on the principle of maintaining a credible minimum deterrence.

In a volatile security landscape, a robust nuclear deterrent provides Pakistan with the means to

deter threats and defend its core interests. Maintaining a formidable military and possessing nuclear capabilities confer strategic autonomy upon Pakistan, enabling it to pursue an independent foreign policy and safeguard its national interests without relying extensively on external assistance. This self-reliance fosters resilience and adaptability in addressing evolving security challenges and geopolitical dynamics.

Pakistan's nuclear program was a direct response to India's nuclear aspirations, which came to a head with its nuclear test in 1974. This event drastically shifted the security landscape in South Asia, prompting Pakistan to confront its strategic vulnerability and the imperative of deterrence against its larger and conventionally superior neighbor. Faced with the reality of a nuclear-armed adversary, Pakistan embarked on a journey to develop its own atomic arsenal to address its security concerns and maintain stability in the region. India's acquisition of nuclear weapons underscored the critical role of deterrence in Pakistan's national security strategy. Pakistan perceived nuclear armaments as crucial for deterring potential aggression and safeguarding its sovereignty against external threats. Guided by the principle of credible minimum deterrence, Pakistan's nuclear doctrine emphasized the need for a robust arsenal to dissuade adversaries from considering military action. By acquiring nuclear capabilities, Pakistan aimed to achieve strategic parity with India, thereby ensuring mutual vulnerability and preventing any unilateral use of nuclear weapons.

The nuclearization of South Asia raised fears of nuclear escalation and instability, prompting Pakistan's pursuit of atomic weapons as a means to prevent India from monopolizing nuclear capabilities and to uphold the principle of strategic equilibrium. Through possessing a credible nuclear deterrent, Pakistan sought to promote stability, deterrence, and conflict resolution in the region.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

## 'Guiding Light; Wisdom from a Young Achiever'

Our educated youth can contribute to the development of the country by working hard and smart work. The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and it is their responsibility to take the reins of the country's progress in their hands. With the right education, skills, and mindset, they can make a significant impact on the nation's growth and development. Hard work is essential for achieving success in any field. It requires dedication, perseverance, and a strong work ethic. Our educated youth should be willing to put in the effort required to excel in their chosen fields, whether it is in business, technology, healthcare, or any other sector. Hard work not only leads to personal growth but also contributes to the growth of the organization and the country as a whole.

Smart work, on the other hand, is about being efficient, innovative, and strategic in one's approach. It involves finding solutions to problems, identifying opportunities, and making the most of available resources. Our educated youth should be encouraged to think outside the box, come up with creative ideas, and develop innovative solutions to the challenges facing the country. Smart work is not just about working hard but also about working intelligently, using technology and data to drive decision-making, and being adaptable to changing circumstances. By combining hard work and smart work, our educated youth can make a significant contribution to the development of the country. They can:

Embracing Smart Work Strategies: In addition to diligence, the concept of smart work is essential for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness. Educated youth can leverage technology, strategic planning, and innovative

approaches to optimize their efforts and achieve greater outcomes in less time.

Drive Economic Growth: By starting their own businesses, creating jobs, and contributing to the GDP, our educated youth can play a crucial role in driving economic growth.

Improve Healthcare: By pursuing careers in healthcare, our educated youth can improve the quality of healthcare services, develop new treatments, and work towards eradicating diseases.

Enhance Education: By becoming teachers, educators, and policymakers, our educated youth can improve the quality of education, make it more accessible, and ensure that every child has the opportunity to receive a good education.

Protect the Environment: By pursuing careers in environmental science, our educated youth can work towards reducing pollution, conserving natural resources, and promoting sustainable development.

Strengthen Governance: By entering politics, our educated youth can bring about positive change, promote transparency, and ensure that the government is accountable to the people.

In shorts, our educated youth have the power to shape the future of the country. By working hard and smart, they can make a significant contribution to the development of the country, improve the quality of life for its citizens, and create a better tomorrow for themselves and future generations. The educated youth of a nation represent a valuable asset, possessing the knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm to drive progress and innovation. Their education equips them with the tools necessary to tackle complex challenges and contribute to the country's economic, social, and technological advancement.

Writer is CEO, Volka Food International



Analysis

Ch. Saim Zulfiqar

## Dr. A. Q. Khan: The Real Hero Who Saved Pakistan Twice

Special Report



Amjad Mehmood

The 28th of May is a memorable day in the history of Pakistan and is celebrated as a National Day known as Youm-e-Takbeer to commemorate the contribution of unsung heroes in making Pakistan the first Muslim and seventh nation in the world to become a Nuclear state. On this day Pakistan launched a series of nuclear tests in Chagai Balochistan in response to India's threats and atomic tests.

This day recalls the nation's resolve and commitment to national security and minimum deterrence for self-defense and to keep away the enemies from any provocations or misadventures. An undoubted character who made this dream a reality is a real national hero who has sacrificed a lot to make national defense impregnable known as Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan (Dr. A. Q. Khan). He is colloquially known as the father of Pakistan's atomic weapons program.

Conventionally, a collective achievement is attributed to the whole team members who make every bit of contribution but there is always one person in the team who contributes more than his share being selfless. Dr. A. Q. Khan is the central character of this achievement who sacrificed his lucrative life and promising future for the sake of Pakistan when he shifted back in December 1975 to Pakistan with his family to work on the mission of the atomic bomb. In 1976, he founded Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL) and served as Chief Scientist for many years and developed the maiden highly enriched uranium (HEU) in 1982. During an interview, Dr. Khan claimed that Pakistan had developed its capacity to test nuclear devices in 1984.

The capital city of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, which was once the princely state of British India, was the place of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan's birth on April 1, 1936. He was a Pashtun Muhajir of Urdu-speaking descent. The Tirah Valley, which is today in the Khyber District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, was the home of his maternal grandparents, while his paternal lineage dates back to an Uzbek soldier who traveled to India with the 12th-century conqueror Muhammad of

Ghor. He was raised by a devout mother, Zulekha, and a school-teacher father, Abdul Ghafoor, who had previously worked for the Ministry of Education. Dr. A. Q. Khan earned a master's degree from Delft University of Technology, Netherlands, and a Ph. D. in metallurgical engineering from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. In 1972, Dr. Khan went to work at URENCO, which is an international supplier of enrichment services and fuel cycle products for the civil nuclear industry in the Netherlands. After India tested its first atomic bomb in 1974, Dr. Khan was contacted by Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to engage his services for the Pakistani nuclear program.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) acclaim the political credit for launching nuclear program and tests under stern pressure from world powers but the forfeits of real heroes are never disclosed for public information. Dr. A. Q. Khan returned to Pakistan knowing well the setbacks of this mission at national and international levels just to safeguard the motherland from international hostilities and to bring the country up to par with neighboring India in the atomic field.

India launched its nuclear test series "Pokhran-II" in 1998 and in response Pakistan detonated its nuclear devices on May 28, 1998, in Chagai, Balochistan, and declared as world's 7th nuclear power. Dr. A. Q. Khan emerged as a national hero and earned massive public applause for his unmatched services to Pakistan's nuclear program.

The aura of Dr. Khan started to fade in March 2001 when he was demoted as chairman of Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL) and appointed as a special adviser by then-President Pervez Musharraf, purportedly due to pressure from the United States. Later on, he found himself in the crosshairs of controversy when he was accused of unlawfully proliferating nuclear technology in Iran, Libya, and North Korea. Dr. Khan admitted to managing a proliferation ring and sending technology to Iran between 1989 and 1991, as well as to North Korea and Libya between 1991 and 1997, during his appearance on Pakistan Television (PTV) on February 4, 2004. He was placed under house arrest in Islamabad in 2004 after he admitted publicly to running a proliferation network in the three countries. President General Pervez Musharraf pardoned Dr. A. Q. Khan on February 5, 2004, fearing that his political opponents would politicize the matter.

In 2008, Dr. A. Q. Khan during an interview with AFP said, "I saved the country for the



first time when I made Pakistan a nuclear nation and saved it again when I confessed and took the whole blame on myself". In February 2009, Islamabad High Court overturned his house imprisonment; however, he continued to be closely monitored and required intelligence

officials' presence whenever he left his residence in Islamabad.

While working on the atomic bomb project, Dr. A. Q. Khan co-authored research articles on the chemical reactions of extremely unstable isotope particles in controlled physical systems and pioneered research

in thermal quantum field theory and condensed matter physics. He persisted in advocating the employment of contentious technology solutions—including the application of military technologies for civilian welfare—to address issues facing the military and the civilian world.

Dr. A. Q. Khan attempted his hand at politics in July 2012, establishing Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Pakistan (Save Pakistan Movement) as a party in the hopes of garnering support based on his standing in Pakistan. However, after all 111 of his party's candidates failed to secure a seat in the

national assembly, he disbanded it a year later. He routinely penned opinion pieces for Pakistan's national newspapers and was heard advocating for the importance of scientific education in the country for a more advanced and prosperous future. In 2006, he was found to have prostate cancer; however, he recovered following surgery. His enormous services to Pakistan are recognized by the nation through the numerous schools, universities, institutes, and charitable hospitals bearing his name throughout the country.

Dr. A. Q. Khan was taken to KRL Hospital in Islamabad in August 2021 following a positive COVID-19 test and significant pulmonary complications. At the age of 85, he passed away on October 10, 2021. He was buried in the H-8 graveyard in Islamabad after receiving a state funeral at the Faisal Mosque.

In summing up the illustrious career and profound impact of Dr. A. Q. Khan, it is imperative to distinguish the indelible mark he has left on Pakistan's scientific and defense landscape. His pioneering efforts in advancing the nation's nuclear capabilities have not only fortified national security but also instilled a sense of pride and self-reliance within the country. Beyond his scientific achievements, Dr. Khan's dedication to education and research has inspired countless young minds to pursue excellence in science and technology. As we pay tribute to this visionary scientist, let us remember his legacy as a testament to the power of determination, innovation, and unwavering patriotism. Dr. A. Q. Khan's contributions will continue to resonate for generations, ensuring his place in history as one of Pakistan's most revered figures.



A Pakistani-made Shaheen-III missile, that is capable of carrying nuclear warheads, is carried on a trailer during a military parade in connection with Pakistan National Day celebrations, in Islamabad.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
75,517.48	75,983.03	
Day's High	Day's Low	
76,187.44	75,485.62	
Index Value	Change	
9,620,835,959	-465.55	
Percentage	Time	
-0.61%	27 May, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
8,317.59	-21.64	
Percentage	Time	
-0.26%	24 May, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
39,124.74	+59.48	
Percentage	Time	
+0.15%	24 May, 1:59 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
38,900.02	+253.91	
Percentage	Time	
+0.66%	27 May, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	184.8
Bahrain Dinar	740.03	748.03
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.42	38.82
Danish Krone	40.44	40.84
Euro	298	301
Hong Kong Dollar	35.62	35.97
Indian Rupee	3.35	3.46
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	904.07	913.07
Malaysian Ringgit	59.05	59.65
New Zealand \$	170.03	172.03
Norwegians Krone	25.92	26.22
Omani Riyal	723.64	731.64
Qatari Riyal	76.42	77.12
Saudi Riyal	73.45	74.2
Singapore Dollar	203	205
Swedish Korona	26.02	26.32
Swiss Franc	304.75	307.25
Thai Bhat	7.6	7.75
U.A.E Dirham	75.25	75.9
UK Pound Sterling	349.5	353
US Dollar	277.5	280.1

# KP Govt should assist centre for a successful IMF deal: Mian Zahid Hussain

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has once again started efforts to spoil the relationship between the IMF and Pakistan, which will not succeed.

He said some elements have tried their best to bankrupt Pakistan several times before, but they have failed and will fail again.

Mian Zahid Hussain said rulers should take strict action because the country's interests cannot be sacrificed for someone's political wishes.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the government had improved the economic situation with great difficulty, for which the people had

to make huge sacrifices. Still, some unscrupulous elements want to frustrate these efforts for cheap fame.

He added that conspiracies are being hatched in this regard; therefore, authorities should remain vigilant and cautious.

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur's participation in the SIFC meeting and assurance of cooperation on national issues are welcome. Still, it is inappropriate for the provincial government to present the budget before the federal government.

To get the country out of its difficult economic situation, the IMF needs to provide a long-term package. The IMF wants to guarantee the implementation of its policies and ensure that the whole country is on the same page.

Implementing the IMF's preconditions fully is necessary to demonstrate goodwill and allow PTI to return to the national mainstream.

He stated that further aggravating the situation would not yield any benefits, and added



that the provincial government of KPK can secure facilities for PTI leadership by making positive contributions to national affairs.

According to Mian Zahid Hussain, 70 to 80 percent of the KP province's expenses are

dependent on the funds received from the federation. How can the province estimate its ongoing expenses and development costs before the federation makes its final financial decision?

According to Mian Zahid Hussain, these circumstances could jeopardise the staff-level agreement with the IMF, as the government must implement several conditions before concluding the agreement.

Because our rulers repeatedly fail to deliver on their promises, lenders also impose preconditions.

Now, the IMF is not ready to work with us on formal assurances. It wants the provinces to implement its conditions, and if any province obstructs them, the whole country will have to pay the price.

Mian Zahid Hussain stated that it would be a great national service if the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government sent a message to the people in power that they are no longer associated with the May 9 events.

## Hot day

ISLAMABAD: A view of smoke rising during a fire erupted on Margalla Hills due to rising temperatures on a hot summer day near Saidpur village, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Proper track and trace system needed to achieve taxation targets: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Speakers at a pre-budget consultative session on Monday demanded the government to ensure a dedicated track and trace system to bring the retailers, and businesses from the informal sectors into the tax net to generate revenue from untaxed sectors. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) organized the consultative discussion titled "Pre-Budget Seminar: Tax Reforms in Agriculture, Retail and Real Estate Sectors". Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI underlined that it was imperative to unearth the bottlenecks in paying taxes. He added that these sectors were willing to pay taxes and it was necessary to consider their suggestions in the policy-making processes.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, and Industry (ICCI) said the retail sector was paying



taxes in the country, but it was crucial to integrate the retailers who were not part of the system. He demanded the government to develop a proper track and trace system that could identify the non-tax paying retailers who were doing billions of rupees annual business but did not pay taxes.

Afaq Tiwana, CEO Farmers Association of Pakistan said the under discussion three sectors shared a common challenge of bringing the informal sector into the tax regime. He mentioned

that the agriculture sector was paying taxes in three tiers that also included a tax return issued from the patwari that levies a cumulative 15% tax. He added that although it was an informal sector, its land records were digitized and were digitally documented.

Ahsan Malik, Senior Real Estate Analyst said there was a trust deficit between the regulators and the sectors not paying taxes which needed to be bridged through a fair and progressive tax regime.

Sumera Abbasi, Executive Director TIE said there was a need to bring clarity among the startups and small businesses with proper categories of retailers to ensure an inclusive tax regime. She said many retailers, particularly poor women, avoid paying taxes due to laborious paperwork that makes women entrepreneurs not interested in taxation.

"Compliance costs need to be reduced and made fair for local masses, whereas women in startups are not discussed during the budget which should be discussed more clearly," Sumera Abbasi noted.

Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI mentioned that due to the informal nature of the agriculture sector, calculating and collecting the actual tax liability in the sector has proven challenging. He added that tech-based solutions were offering promising solutions for improved accuracy.

## Multiple Sclerosis (MS): Act now to stop disability among affected patients



PPA

ISLAMABAD: In recognition of World Multiple Sclerosis Day, Roche Pakistan Limited held a panel discussion to raise awareness about Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in Pakistan, and to emphasize the unmet needs of patients especially when it comes to awareness, diagnosis, and government funding support. The panel comprised MD Roche Pakistan, Ms. Hafsa Shamsie, Roche's Head of Medical, Dr. Yasir Adnan as well as neurologists Dr. Shahid Mustafa (Consultant Neurologist, AKUH), Dr. Mohammad Wasay (Consultant Neurologist, AKUH).

Dr. Yasir Adnan shared that every 5 minutes, someone, somewhere in the world is diagnosed with MS. Currently, there are more than 2.8 million people living with MS around the world. Although, there is no MS registry in Pakistan, it is estimated that there are more than 10,000 MS sufferers nationwide.

Dr. Shahid Mustafa acknowledged that while it can take time for someone to even get an MS diagnosis, it was critical to get a diagnosis and subsequent treatment as early as possible. He stated that MS was not only a disabling disease, but also a stigmatizing disease leading to social isolation and exclusion.

## Panda Mart plans to expand nationwide



PPA

KARACHI: Panda Mart has expressed its intention to expand Panda Marts across the country this year. Currently, there are 37 Panda Marts in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Hyderabad. During the visit of journalists to Panda Mart in Karachi, it was told that with the expansion of Panda Marts across the country, new employment opportunities will also be created, at this time Panda Mart is providing direct and indirect employment opportu-

nities to hundreds of people. Panda Mart is a one-stop shop, where all the favorite brands of the customers are available. Panda Mart provides customers with free delivery of daily necessities, pharmacy, electronics, fresh milk, fruits and vegetables and other items. But attractive discount is also provided on daily basis. The nationwide network of Panda Mart stores caters to the majority of the urban population. All Panda Mart orders can also be paid online with credit or debit cards, which is playing a role in financial inclusion.

## CCP approves merger of two brokerage houses



PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved a Scheme of Arrangement for the merger of M/s. Intermarket Securities Limited (IMS) with M/s. EFG Hermes Pakistan Limited (EFG).

M/s. Intermarket Securities Limited (IMS) is a public unlisted company providing brokerage services in Pakistan, while EFG Hermes Pakistan Limited (EFG) is a registered public listed company focused on offering brokerage services in stocks, along with financial brokerage, corporate finance, and financial research.

The Phase-I competition assessment by the CCP identified 'Brokerage Services' as the relevant product market. The assessment further revealed that post-transaction, IMS will dissolve without winding up, and EFG will be the surviving entity. Under the Scheme of Arrangements, the agreed swap ratio for the transaction is 2.16:1, whereby, for every 1 share of IMS, EFG will issue 2.16 shares to the shareholders of IMS.

The assessment further confirmed that post-transaction, the merger will lead to a slight increase in EFG's market share, which will not result in EFG attaining dominance in the brokerage market.

The merger signifies a strategic consolidation aimed at enhancing service offerings and market reach, ultimately benefiting clients with improved financial services and research capabilities.

Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said that this approval underscores the CCP's commitment to fostering competitive markets while ensuring that mergers and acquisitions do not adversely affect market dynamics and consumer interests.

## Meethaq Islamic Banking Elevates its Services in Collaboration with Temenos & Systems Limited

PPA

KARACHI: Meethaq Islamic banking, from Bank Muscat—the leading Islamic banking institution in the Sultanate of Oman, has achieved a groundbreaking digital transformation by seamlessly migrating from a legacy Core banking system to Temenos Core for Retail and Corporate banking, with the support of Systems Limited, a global system integrator.

Meethaq stands as the largest Islamic Banking window in Oman, offering a full suite of Shari'a compliant Islamic banking products and services, including deposit products, consumer financing, credit cards, corporate banking, internet

banking, mobile banking and 24x7 Contact Center for valued customers and corporate clients. Meethaq provides Shari'a compliant financial solutions to its partner companies, supporting the economy of Sultanate of Oman.

The strategic partnership between Bank Muscat, Temenos, and Systems Limited spans over 15 years, showcasing Bank Muscat's commitment to technological innovation and trust in the capabilities of Systems Limited and Temenos. The project's size and scope were substantial, involving several Islamic Module implementations on Temenos Core for Retail and Corporate banking, retrofitting of conventional to Islamic banking, end-to-end data migration, custom-

ization of Interfaces and functionalities, development of Islamic consumer financing and liability products on AA module, front-end mobile banking implementation, and the establishment of a Centre of Excellence by Systems Limited.

The implementation of Temenos Core for Retail and Corporate banking empowers Meethaq to offer exceptional Islamic banking services without downtime on the customer layer, significantly reducing operational costs by 20-30% and enhancing time-to-market capabilities. This achievement sets the stage for Meethaq's expansion plans, with the scalable system supporting the establishment of 30+ branches and further solidifying their presence in the



Islamic banking landscape. "Meethaq's transformation is a monumental leap towards redefining the landscape of Islamic banking in Oman. This strategic shift to the latest Temenos Core banking platform, orchestrated with the unwavering support of Systems Limited, marks a significant milestone in our journey and aligns perfectly with our long-term objectives. Our vision for

Meethaq goes beyond traditional banking; we aspire to be the beacon of Shari'a-compliant financial services, setting industry benchmarks and fostering economic growth in Oman. We are confident that the scalability of the system will support our ambitious expansion plans, enhance our portfolio of Islamic banking offerings, and further solidify our presence in the Islamic banking landscape."

# Mohsin Naqvi rewards Wheelchair cricketers for Asia Cup triumph

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Mohsin Naqvi on Monday presented a cheque worth rupees 1.5 million to the Pakistan Wheelchair cricket team on winning the Asia Cup 2024.

The Pakistan Wheelchair cricket team had overcome Sri Lanka in the final of the Asia Cup Wheelchair championship 2023 in Nepal last year. It was Wheelchair cricketers consecutive title.

In order to the team's achievement, Chairman PCB invited members of the Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket team to the PCB Headquarters at Gaddafi stadium

and congratulated them on their triumph.

Mohsin Naqvi lauded the team's efforts and expressed best wishes for the team's continued success. He also assured PCB's support for the Wheelchair Cricket Team in its future endeavours.

Members of the Wheelchair Cricket Team expressed their gratitude to the PCB for hosting them and offering them encouragement.

Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Council Chairperson Ruksana Rajput, Wheelchair Cricket Team captain Mohammad Zeeshan, vice-captain Imran Arain, batter Syed Arsalan Ahmed, wicket-



keeper-batter Muazzam Nawaz and bowler Mohammad Fayyaz were present on the occasion.

PCB Chief Operating Officer Salman Naseer, Director - Domestic Cricket Operations Abdullah Khurram Niazi, Senior General Manager Domestic Junaid Zia and other PCB officials attended the ceremony.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Wheelchair cricketers have been appreciated twice by the PCB for this achievement. Former Chairman Zaka Ashraf had also awarded a cash prize of 3.6 million rupees to these wheelchair cricketers for the same feat in December last year.

## Secretary IPC and Secretary Sports chairs meeting to review preparations of South Asian Games



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Nadeem Irshad Kayani and Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial presided over an important meeting to review preparations of South Asian Games and Lahore venues of 19 games at Punjab Stadium on Monday.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal, DG Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Zahoor Ahmed, Secretary Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) Khalid Mahmood, Secretary Punjab Olympic Association (PbOA) Idris Haider Khawaja and Director

Sports Yasmeen Akhtar also participated in the key meeting.

Besides them top officials of several sports organisations including President Pakistan Tennis Federation Aisamul Haq, Fauzi Khawaja from Rugby Federation, Shaukat Javed and Fakhar Shah from Baseball Federation, Arshad Sattar from Wrestling Federation, Hafiz Imran Butt, Wajid Ali Shah, Dr Auj-e-Zahoor, Haji Shafiq and others were also present in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Nadeem Irshad Kayani said that Sports Board Punjab is making best arrangements for the South Asian

Games event to be held in Lahore. "Top standard arrangements are being made for the South Asian Games".

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial said that Punjab Sports Department has world class stadiums and sports venues. "Punjab Sports Department will provide world standard facilities to the participants of South Asian Games," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal, on this occasion said that sports venues are being upgraded ahead of the South Asian Games. "Sports Board Punjab will utilize all of its resources to make the South Asian Games a success," he maintained.

## All Pakistan Memorial Basketball kicks off Tuesday



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) was holding All-Pakistan Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament (PBBF) at the Siddique Memon Sports Complex Karachi from Tuesday.

According to the Associate Secretary of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) and Tournament Director Muhammad Yaqoob Qadry, top teams were taking part in the tournament. Teams of Pakistan Air Force, Wapda, Police, Rangers, Islamabad, Sindh Green, Balochistan and Sindh White will compete in the six-day event to conclude on June 2, he said.

He said Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui would inaugurate the event while Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori will be the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the tournament who will distribute prizes among the players. Four matches will be played daily in the tournament, the semi-finals will be held on June 1, while final will be played on June 2, he said.

## First Summer Games 2024 will start from May 28: Malik Faisal

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar announced the organization of First Summer Games 2024 from May 28 (Tuesday) at a crowded press conference held at the National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

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

Addressing the press conference, Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar informed that around 500 players will participate in the Inter-Divisional competitions of three games-volleyball, hockey and kabaddi during the Summer Games. "The volleyball matches will be played from May 28 to 30, hockey competitions will be held from June 4 to June 6 while the kabaddi competi-



tions will be held from June 12 to 14 at different venues of Nishtar Park Sports Complex".

Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar further informed that about Rs 25 lakh will be distributed among the top position holders of all the above mentioned three games. "Each player and official of the winning team will be given 30 thousand rupees while 15 thousand rupees will be awarded to each player and officials of the runner-up team".

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth

Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that our professional teams will be present in the competitions of Summer Games to keep an eye on the performance of players. "The best players of the event will be provided multiple facilities under the Sports Endowment Fund".

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar informed that we are likely to hold the South Asian Games after 20 years in February next year. "19 out of 27 sports disciplines in the South Asian Games will be held in Lahore while 14 games

will be conducted by Sports Department Punjab. Talks are underway with PCB regarding South Asian Games and the South Asian Games will be organized by consulting with the PCB on security issues," he added.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar further said that under the annual development programme we will provide sports facilities in those areas which were deprived from such sports facilities in the past. "Working on Players Development is under way as per Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's Khelta Punjab vision".

He said that the work of the squash complex was stopped for two decades but it will be completed in the shortest possible time. "We will try to conduct inter-provincial competitions between parliamentarians of all the provinces. Besides this, Punjab Leagues will also be organized in which 16 sports competitions will be conducted," he added.

## Saudi Arabia team to arrive on June 5 for FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Arabian football team was set to arrive in Islamabad on June 5 for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers match against Pakistan.

According to details, the team would travel from Riyadh to Islamabad on a chartered flight.

The highly anticipated match between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was scheduled to take place on June 6 here at the Jinnah Football Stadium of Pakistan Sports Complex.

This would be Pakistan's final home match in the FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers Round 2.

Pakistan would play their last away match on June 11 against hosts Tajikistan. Both teams were expected to give their best performance in the game. The FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers have generated immense excitement among football enthusiasts who would be waiting to witness the encounter at the Jinnah Stadium.



## Pakistan to host Australia in historic Volleyball Series

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF) has announced a historic three-match volleyball series against Australia, marking their first time to Pakistan. In a press conference here at a local hotel on Monday, PVF Chairman Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob expressed his delight for hosting the Australian team, saying it would be a great opportunity for Pakistani volleyball fans to witness top-class game. The series is being held on the request of the Australian Volleyball Federation, he said.



The first match of the series would be played on May 28 at the Liaquat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex. Yaqoob said the series would help Pakistani team prepare for international events and will be an important step towards developing volleyball in the country. He added that the matches would start at 6:30pm daily at the Liaquat Gymnasium. The Australian coach, Daniel Iltot said volleyball is a minor sport in Australia, but the team is excited to play against Pakistan. He praised the Pakistani team's recent performance in the Central Asian Volleyball League, saying they have been playing excellent volleyball. The Pakistani team captain, Murad Jehan said Australia was a tough team, but Pakistan has a blend of young and experienced players who were ready for the challenge. He expressed his happiness at hosting the Australian team and said that the series would be a great opportunity for both teams to showcase their skills. The Australian captain, Nehemiah Mote, said Pakistan has improved significantly since their last encounter in 2019 and will provide a tough challenge. He expressed his team was ready for the series and said that they were looking forward to a great competition. The first match of the three-match series would be held on May 28 while second on May 29. The third match of the series would be played on May 30. Murad Jehan would lead the Green-shirts in the series along with Muhammad Kashif Naveed appointed as Vice-Captain while Waleed Khan, Murad Khan, Aimal Khan, Usman Faryad Ali, Fakhar Ud Din, Afaq Khan, Abdul Zaheer, Musawer Khan, Muhammad Hamad, Haider Ali, Nasir Ali and Muhammad Yaseen will be part of fourteen members Pakistan squad. Nehemiah Mote is leading the Australian Squad along with Luke Perry, Arshdeep Dosanjh, Jackson Holland, Trent O'lea, Matthew Aubrey, Max Senica, Beau Graham, Thomas Heptinstall, Sam Flowerday, Nicholas Butler, Ethan Garrett, William Darcy Miles, Jacob Baird members of the playing squad.

## Teams reaching Peshawar to participate in KP U23 Inter-Region Men, women games

PESHAWAR: Teams are reaching Peshawar to participate in the forthcoming Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U23 Inter-Region Women, Men Games, Additional Director Sports and Chairperson of the Organizing Committee of Games, Rashida Ghaznavi told on Monday.



Rashida Ghanavi said that women Games would be played in Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex, Charsadda, BISE Sports Peshawar and Peshawar Sports Complex. Rashida Ghaznavi said that all arrangements have been completed to organize the women's games in the best way as 770 players from all seven regions of the province will compete in nine different games.

The official inauguration will be held on Tuesday at Hayatabad Sports Complex Peshawar with Chief Minister KP Ali Amin Gandapur formally inaugurate.

Cricket, Athletics and Taekwondo would be organized in BISE Peshawar Sports Complex, Squash at Qamar Zaman Squash Complex and the rest of five Games of women would be played at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda, she informed.

Before the trials of women players of all regions have been conducted very smoothly and the selection of various teams across the province have been made on the basis of merit. The trials were held in Chitral in which Chitral Lower and Chitral Upper women players participated.

## Rafael Nadal defeated in likely French Open farewell

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Rafael Nadal's record-breaking French Open career came to its likely end on Monday when the 14-time champion slumped to a demoralising first-round defeat against Alexander Zverev.

Nadal, who turns 38 on June 3, went down 6-3, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 to world number four Zverev, suffering only his fourth loss in 116 matches at Roland Garros since his 2005 title-winning debut.

It was the first time he had been defeated in Paris in the opening round and will again lead to questions over his long-term future in the sport.

"I don't know if this is the last time I will be here, I am not 100% sure but if it is then I wanted to enjoy it," said Nadal. "The feelings today are difficult to describe in words."

Plagued by injuries, which had limited him to just four events since Janu-

ary last year, former world number one Nadal is now 275 in the rankings and was unseeded in Paris.

However, he insisted on the eve of the tournament that he was "100% keeping the door open" on his future in a sport which has brought him 22 Grand Slam titles.

In a repeat of the 2022 French Open semi-final, which Rafael Nadal won when Zverev quit with ankle ligament damage, the Spaniard had his chances.

He was a break of serve up in the second and third sets, only to be pinned back on both occasions by his in-form 27-year-old opponent.

Chants of "Rafa, Rafa" had loudly echoed under the roof of Court Philippe Chatrier which was shut tight against the torrential rain sweeping across the grounds and bringing havoc to the schedule.

They subsided to silence when Nadal was broken to love in his opening service game and he was left to regret his inability

to convert two break points in the fourth game.

Rafael Nadal saved two set points in the ninth game but surrendered the opener after 50 minutes when he buried a loose forehand into the net.

It was only the fourth opening set he had lost at Roland Garros.

Nadal broke for the first time in the match to lead 3-2 in the second set but couldn't back up the advantage and handed the break back to three-time semi-finalist Zverev as he served for the set.

A tense tie-breaker followed which the German claimed, buoyed by stretching to 5/3 on the back of a gruelling 19-shot rally.

Nadal dug deep and with the likes of Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz and Iga Swiatek having watched from the packed stands, he broke and held for 2-0 in the third set.

However, Zverev again roared back to level at 2-2 before a besieged Nadal had



to save four break points in a 13-minute fifth game to stay in contention.

The effort was too much and a composed Zverev was soon 4-3 up and

the match was over when Rafael Nadal fired a forehand wide and long.

## ECC meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb presiding over a meeting of Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Monday.



Photo: Online

## Finance minister chairs the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet at Finance Division today.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Commerce Mr. Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Mr. Musadik Masood Malik, Minister for Industries & Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Economic Affairs Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister of State

for Finance & Revenue Mr. Ali Pervez Malik, Governor SBP, Chairman SECP, Federal Secretaries, and other senior officials of the relevant ministries.

The Cabinet Committee gave approval of the following Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) to various Ministries/Divisions:

The ECC approved the request of the Ministry of Interior for the provision of Rs. 2.363 million for the payment of troops costs / subsistence allowance.

The request of the Intelligence Bureau Division for the provision of funds to the tune of Rs. 200 million was approved.

The request of the Ministry of Law &

Justice for the provision of Rs. 19.373 million was approved by the ECC.

The Committee approved the request of Strategic Plans Division / SUPARCO for the provision of Rs. 4,050.686 million to meet the requirements of the project titled "Pakistan Multi-Mission Communication Satellite System".

Furthermore, the proposal of the Ministry of Industries & Production to allow SNGPL based plants to operate for a period of 6 months starting from 31st March, 2024 till 30th September, 2024 was approved by the committee, to ensure smooth supply of urea fertilizer for Kharif season.

## PTC launches 'Made in Pakistan 3.0' initiative of exports to Japan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited (PTC) announced the launch of its 'Made in Pakistan 3.0' initiative, marking a significant milestone in the company's journey of innovation and economic contribution.

The initiative will see the export of PTC's modern oral tobacco-free nicotine pouches, Velo, to Japan, expanding Pakistan's footprint in the global market and bringing in potential foreign exchange earnings to the tune of USD 100 Million annually through all its exports.

The launch event was graced by Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce, alongside distinguished guests from the public and private sectors, as well as members of the media.

PTC, recognized as Pakistan's first



multinational company, has been a cornerstone of the nation's economy. Over the past five years, PTC has contributed over PKR 680 billion to the national exchequer, earning the prestigious 'Highest Taxpayers Award' in 2024 in recognition of its substantial fiscal contributions.

In April 2019, PTC embarked on its 'Made in Pakistan' initiative, in line with Government of Pakistan's export's ambitions, focusing on the export of cigarettes and processed tobacco to

various countries. This venture has generated over USD 157 million since then, significantly bolstering the Pakistani economy.

Building on this success, the 'Made in Pakistan 3.0' initiative aims to further enhance Pakistan's economic standing. The introduction of nicotine pouches to the Japanese market represents a pivotal step in PTC's commitment to innovation and growth and on its journey of creating A Better Tomorrow™. This unlocks the potential to add additional USD 50 million annually through foreign exchange earnings.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal said, "Today marks a new chapter in PTC's history. The 'Made in Pakistan 3.0' initiative not only exemplifies PTC's dedication to economic progress but also showcases Pakistan's capability to produce high-quality, innovative products for the global market."

## Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum held in Addis Ababa with 500 Businesspersons' Participation

Spokesman Report

ADDISABABA: A productive and fruitful Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Tuesday in presence of more than 500 businesspersons from diverse economic sectors including agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, mining, tourism and ICT.

Key Ministers from the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia including H. E. Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, State Minister of Foreign Affairs and H. E. Gebremeskel Chala, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration and H. E. Akilu Tadesse CEO of Industrial parks graced the forum as the guest of honors.



The senior officials from the Ethiopian Investment Commission, Ethiopian Investment Holding and Industrial Parks Development Corporation also attended the forum.

From Pakistani side, H. E. Zubari Motiwala, Chairman of the Trade and Development Authority of Pakistan

(TDAP), H. E. Dr. Khurram Tariq, President of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, H. E. Dr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, H. E. Malik Azhar Ali President of Sundar Industry and Trade Association, H. E. Fazal Jillani, Chief Executive Officer

of AirSial and other big businesspersons including investors and industrialists attended the Business Forum.

Addressing the Business Forum, H. E. Ambassador Birtukan Ayano, State Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed her gratitude for the delegates who became part of the 2nd Business and Trade Delegation from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Lauding the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad's performance, she said the Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum would be instrumental in giving the first-hand information to the business community of Pakistan on the business, trade and investment opportunities in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

## PM directs urgent action to extinguish Margalla Hills fire

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed to utilize all available resources to immediately extinguish the fire that had erupted in the Margalla Hills of the Federal Capital.

Following his orders, helicopters were deployed to assist in the fire-fighting operation, a PM House press release said.

The prime minister emphasized the need to control the fire as soon as possible and ensure the safety of human lives.

## Gandapur says 'breakthrough' achieved in meeting with ministers

City Desk

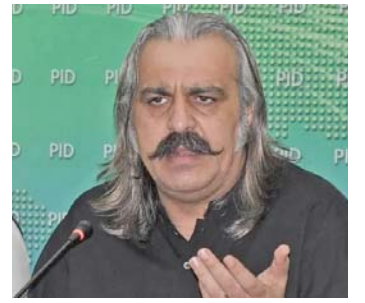
ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur met Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Energy Minister Awaiz Leghari in Islamabad on Monday to discuss loadshedding issues in the province.

After the meeting, the three leaders held a joint press conference, in which the CM Gandapur said that load shedding is a major problem of the people, a way has been found which will give relief to the people.

Ali Amin Gandapur said that they will work together on the causes of line losses, due to loadshedding there is also a problem of law and order.

However, Gandapur said that a breakthrough had been achieved which would help ease the situation. Insider accounts revealed that Gandapur complained about load shedding of electricity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Gandapur threatens to take over grid station if load shedding persists



Gandapur says KP will take over WAPDA offices if federal govt does not cooperate

According to sources, Chief Minister KP complained that upto 18 hours of unannounced load shedding is happening in the province.

He further said that routine life and business are being badly affected. Leghari replied that electricity worth billions of rupees is stolen in KPK.

Leghari clarified that the government is ready to provide 24 hours electricity to the people of the province if the provincial government stops electricity theft in the province.

## China to continue to...

Continued from Page 1

counter terrorism cooperation, root out terrorist organizations, remove their breeding ground and protect common security and development interests of all countries.

Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi and Counter Terrorism Chief Rao Tahir announced the arrest of 11 militants linked to the deadly suicide bombing in March, which claimed the lives of five Chinese engineers in the country's north, near the Afghan border.

## Pakistan, Netherlands...

Continued from Page 1

issues of Dutch companies.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan requested to renew the technical programs like CBI and PUM for benefits of SMEs in Pakistan.

He also extended an invitation to the Dutch Minister for Trade to visit Pakistan along with a business delegation as many Dutch companies are operating in Pakistan.

Minister highlighted Pakistan's significant potential in various sectors, including renewable energy, services, agriculture, IT, human resources, fisheries, and textiles.

The Minister emphasized the need for value addition in the food sector and advocated for increased B2B interactions to foster mutual trade.

## OGRA Chairman Masroor Ahmed did a great job to inviting all stakeholders in a Seminar to discuss their issues directly with OGRA.



Dr. Muhammad Imran Taj, President Fire Industry of Pakistan.



Dr. Muhammad Imran Taj with Engineer Sultan, Rescue 1122.



OGRA Chairman Mansoor Ahmed OGRA is giving the shield to Dr. Muhammad Imran Taj, President Fire Industry of Pakistan.



### How do you see the role of OGRA regarding safety protection?

A: As oil and gas are a blessing when controlled and handled safely, but a worst enemy when they catch fire, the role of OGRA regarding safety is very essential. To protect lives and ensure safety, OGRA is responsible for enforcing safety parameters and compliance with safety standard practices in all areas under its authority.

### How do you see the event organized by OGRA? Was it effective for stakeholders?

A: This event was very effective for all stakeholders. Fire safety experts, including those from the Explosive Department, OMAP Fire Life Safety Advisor, and others, were on the panel and provided one-on-one answers, which helped break the ice on safety culture.

OGRA Chairman Mansoor Ahmed appreciated the efforts of stakeholders. What do you think? Do you think such OGRA programs are more effective for fire and safety?

A: As OGRA Chairman Masroor Ahmad did a great

job of inviting all stakeholders to discuss their issues directly with OGRA, the Explosive Department, OMAP, and others, which created a safety culture. These types of seminars will educate society, and such programs must be done more frequently.

### What will be OMAP's step towards fire safety?

A: OMAP is launching a fire safety training and fire protection compliance certification program for all its members, so they can all be facilitated with international standard fire safety. \*\*\*\*\*