

Azad Kashmir consumer court to examine rate hike of food and beverages

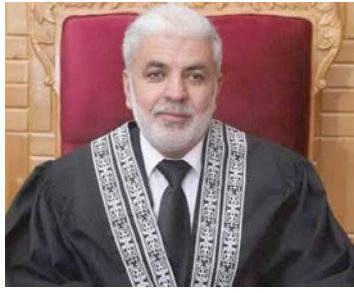
Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: A consumer court should be established in Azad Kashmir, the order of the High Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, it cannot be under any circumstances that the administration continues to blackmail the traders and we remain spectators, the administration cannot issue the rate list at the request of the traders.

During the action committee's strike in the last few days, the state became a hostage, the capital region became non-existent, the awareness of the law was weak. Since then, the administration cannot implement the government's request, but the court will implement it 100%, however, the

government should file its response at the next hearing.

A hearing was held in the High Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir against the non-implementation of the government price hike of food and beverages in Azad Kashmir. Remarks, asked Assistant Advocate General Sajjad Peerzada whether the traders in the state will fix the rate now? Is the government in the state by businessmen? DC Sir, the price of flour has been reduced, the government has fixed the rate of bread at 12 rupees per unit, but you are blackmailing and giving the rate of 16 and 17 rupees. Why is this? Electricity became 3 rupees per unit and no one including tailors reduced the rates. Why is



this? Is the state helpless in front of the businessmen?

On the remarks of the Chief Justice of the High Court Sadaqat Hussain Raja there was silence in the courtroom, the Assistant Advocate General, and the Deputy Commissioner were

present. It should be remembered that this petition is the Secretary General of the Central Bar Association Muzaffarabad and petitioner Waqar Farooq Abbasi against the Azad Government, which was heard on Monday. Deputy Commissioner Nadeem Ahmed Janjua, Chairman Price Control Committee and ADC General Hafiz Muhammad Ali and other administrative officers were present.

There was a double bench, the hearing of the larger bench will be held on Monday, June 3, 2024, for which the commissioners of the three divisions, the deputy commissioners of all ten districts, and the chairman of the Price Control Committee have been summoned.

Nuclear Day on May 28 Celebrated in Mansehra



Nasir Ali Tanoli

MANSEHRA: The people of Mansehra celebrated Pakistan's Nuclear Day on May 28 with great enthusiasm.

Hundreds of people participated in the big rally in Mansehra regarding May 28. Today, the enemy is afraid of the name of Pakistan.

On May 28 Takbeer Day, rallies were held in Mansehra like the whole country. The biggest rally was taken out by the former provincial forest minister Haji Abrar Tanoli who came from Township Chowk to Khatme Nabubat Chowk Mansehra Hundreds of people and dozens of vehicles The participants of the rally carried placards and Pakistani flags, while slogans were raised in favor of the Pakistan Army and institutions. After the walk, the speakers addressed and said that today we are talking eye to eye with the enemy, today we are a nuclear power and this is a matter of pride in the whole world. He said that Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan has made Pakistan a nuclear power, today Pakistan is the pride of the Islamic world.

Muzaffarabad Press Club holds ceremony on Takbeer Day to mark Kashmir's independence

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Under the auspices of Burhan Wani Shaheed District Press Club, a ceremony was held on the occasion of Takbeer Day. In the ceremony, Patron Ali Raja Zafar, President Press Club Sardar Younis Khan Niazi, Senior Vice President Gulshad Ahmed Butt, Syed Barkat Hussain Shah, General Secretary Itikhar Abbasi, Abdul Majeed Tahir Sardar Safid Abbasi, Siyaqat Abbasi, Raja Shahzad Khan, Baniyad Hussain Kazmi, Kaniza Batul, Rana Muhammad Ilyas, Fayyaz Khan, Raja Bashirullah Khan, Saiqa Awan, Jamila Qazi, Arif Awan, Sheikh Manzoor, Hafiz Ahmed Obaid, Salim Qureshi, Arbab Mughal, Syed Waqarat Kazmi, Naem Khan Hafiz Tufail Butt and others participated in this occasion. But the speakers said that May 28 is the golden day of Pakistan's history, on that day, Pakistan warned the enemy country by making 6 nuclear explosions. There is an urgent need to work with unity and consensus to make the country's defense invincible. Speakers said that May 28 is the day of renewal of allegiance and the entire nation stands like a rock with the forces of Pakistan. Kashmiri people are fighting the defense war of Pakistan, the child of Kashmir is the unpaid soldier of Pakistan. The evil elements cannot separate Pakistan from Kashmir and they will die after defeating every conspiracy of the enemy elements. The speakers said that Pakistan is a strong nuclear country and the successful test of nuclear missiles has shown that no power in the world can weaken Pakistan. Sakti, the speakers paid tribute to Pakistan's national hero Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and all the scientists who worked with him and paid tribute to the deceased in the best words. At the end of the ceremony, a special prayer will be offered for the martyrs of Pakistan Army, the martyrs of Kashmir and the martyrs of Palestine.

Kuniz Batul Burhan Wani Shaheed District Press Club Muzaffarabad elected information secretary. According to the details, an important meeting of Burhan Wani Shaheed District Press Club Muzaffarabad was held. After his resignation, Sardar Younis Khan Niazi, the president of Press Club, gave Kiniza Batul the charge of Information Secretary through mutual consultation. Qazi Tanveer will be approved as a member of Press Club after checking in the meeting.

Nuclear power gave Pakistan ability to counter India: Sardar Attique

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that on Takbeer Day, the world should not misunderstand Pakistan's nuclear program and display its capabilities and should not make any adventures against Pakistan. In his message on the occasion of Yom Takbeer, he said that Pakistan achieved nuclear power despite extremely unfavorable conditions. Qadir Khan's role will remain prominent. He said that India's conspiracies against Pakistan have not ended even today. After crushing the Muslims of Occupied Kashmir and violating human rights, India is now doing terrorism in Pakistan, but India has not forgotten this. It should be said that Pakistan is a nuclear power and it did not acquire this power for display. Pakistan can use this capability if necessary. He said that on the occasion of Yom Takbeer, the people of Pakistan should pledge unity and give thanks to Allah. That it gave Pakistan the ability and power to acquire nuclear power to counter the enemy.



All Parties Alliance demands urgent attention of federal, Azad Kashmir governments to urgent need of Lipa Tunnel

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: All Parties Alliance demanded again to restore the mega project of construction of Lipa Tunnel, establishment of Lipa Valley Development Authority, additional seat in the assembly, construction of 50-bed hospital, 20 km defense road on Birthwar Gali, promotion of tourism and In case of non-implementation of the 16-point charter of demand, including basic infrastructure, education, health and bypass road from Lipa Valley to Batlian Bijalhar, completion of incomplete educational institutions, office building of all departments, announced hunger strike for life. President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff General Asim Muneer appealed to them to play an eternal role in the style of May 11 due to wider public interests, invincible defense, specific geographical and weather conditions. These views were expressed by Shaukat Javed Mir, Chairman of All Parties Alliance, candidate for Assembly Constituency Seven, yesterday while talking to the media to draw the attention of the federal and Azad Kashmir governments to the communal issues and demands. He said that the budgets of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir The preparations have reached the peak, but despite this, no plans are being included for construction of Lipa Tunnel, defense importance and construction of roads to promote tourism, after which the people will be forced to travel to and fro, and We will start a hunger strike till death immediately after Eid-ul-Dahhi in consultation with the people, spending 25% of the income from forests on the construction and development of Lipa is also one of the basic demands of our struggle, Shaukat Javed said. That Rishiyan, the Daokhan Khan road construction has reached its logical end in two years, which will cause a major human accident anytime during the rains as the entire road from Midway to Moji Camp has been washed away.

Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain alongwith Srilankan Minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Buddhasana, Vidura Wickremanayake inaugurating the Gandhara Symposium and exhibition of Pakistan's Gandhara heritage on the occasion of Vesak Day 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Office at Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Bhutto hanged for making Pakistan a nuclear power: Khawaja Rizwan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan People's Party South Punjab President and former Punjab Governor Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mehmood, Senior Vice President Khawaja Rizwan Alam, South Punjab Chief Coordinator Abdul Qadir Shaheen and South Punjab Media Coordinator Muhammad Saleem Mughal said Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the prime minister-elect, was hanged for his mission to make Pakistan a nuclear power on the occasion of Takbeer Day. It has been said that the memory of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is strongly remembered, but various leaders claim this day as their achievement, although it is not so.

He said that history does not forgive those who distort history, it is a proven fact that the atomic bomb was the achievement of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, due to which Pakistan became strong, but Bhutto Shaheed not only lost his life but also his lovely daughter. And the lives of the Two sons Shahnaz Bhutto and Meer Murtaza Bhutto also had to be sacrificed, the Bhutto family held 5 (Cofans) funerals for this feat, we can never forget the name of Dr. Qadir Khan Fakhare Pakistan along with other silent Mujahideen who made Pakistan a nuclear power. Salutations and greetings to all, but no one was killed like the Bhutto family, and no funerals were held at anyone's house, because basically this idea was Bhutto's, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made all the plans and Some patriotic and honorable people supported Bhutto Shaheed. Therefore, despite the strong opposition and threats of the United



States, this program continued. Party Provincial President Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood said that Pakistan was a poor country. But when Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto held an Islamic summit in Lahore in 1974 and told all the Islamic countries that they wanted to make atomic bombs for the strength of Islamic countries, but there was no money, then King Shah Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Colonel Gaddafi of Libya, and Palestine The heads of all Islamic countries, including Yasir Arafat, gave full support to Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and also gave money, which boosted the morale of Bhutto Shaheed and he continued this work rapidly and till his last days he worked hard on it.

ICMA has dedicated it self to promoting the highest standards in the accounting profession

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Chairman of the Institute of Cost Management and Accountants Multan Branch Muhammad Sajjad Aheer has said that no one can deny the usefulness of accounting education, education is such a jewel without which the development of any nation is impossible ICM Since its inception in 1951, Pakistan has established itself as a major force in the field of cost management accounting and over seven decades, ICMA has dedicated itself to promoting the highest standards in the accounting profession. Integrity, expertise and ethical behavior within the organization is continuing its journey towards formal recognition and excellence, he said while addressing a function organized on the occasion of ICMA's 74th Char-



tered Management Accountants Day yesterday.

Samina Khan Kayani said ICMA members are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of the

modern accounting landscape, which is why it has numerous branches in over 40 developed countries apart from Pakistan and are teaching international standards. Here, highly qualified teach-

ers are teaching students according to modern requirements and research. ICMA is nothing less than a blessing for the students of South Punjab because a strong team of faculty members here is imparting quality education and training to thousands of students which is the best example of the development of Pakistan.

"Today we are proud of our professionalism, expertise, integrity, ethical behavior and high standards, which is possible only because of ICMA," said MA graduates who hold senior positions in various institutions today. We got education from here which we are proud of. Muhammad Rafiq, Shehbaz Ahmed Bhatti, Naem Ahmed, Muhammad Sabir Bhatti, Rana Abid, Rana Akbar, Umar Awan and others also addressed the ceremony.

Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:19 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	5:03 pm
Maghrib	7:11 pm
Isha	8:52 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

General election of India 2024 and its impact on Pakistan

Aiman Naeem Zargar

The general election of India was started in April 2024 that called its first phase and its second phase of election is expected to be held in 2nd June, 2024. The official result of India's election will be announced in 4th of June. However, it seemed as the government of Narendra Modi who is from Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) will get victory by defeating its opposition, Rahul Gandhi from Congress Party (CP). There is a question arises in everyone's mind that how the victory of Modi government will impose negative impact on Pakistan? For addressing this question, it can be said that in near future, Modi Sarkar will make strick and strong Foreign Policy of Pakistan because of recent Pak-India relations. With this, the issue of Kashmir seems to be unresolved in the government of Narendra Modi, as he wants to rule over Kashmir. Furthermore, India will make more propagandas against Pakistan as it did in 2020 by targeted killings of Pakistani people. All above, Muslim minorities in India will face more threat, discrimination, and security issues in the government of Modi Sarkar. Therefore, it is right to say that expected result of India's election can make Pak-India relations more bitter and severe in the future.

Tax on tobacco products should be increased by 40%

Govt can boost revenues by 40 billion with Optimized Tobacco Taxation, Report Reveals

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Health advocates have proposed a 40% increase in taxes on tobacco products in Pakistan to reduce consumption, increase revenue and bridge the gap in health costs associated with smoking. This proposed increase would translate into a substantial rise in government revenue, estimated to reach Rs 336 billion from the current Rs 240 billion. The intervention would also significantly impact health costs associated with smoking, projected to be reduced from Rs 615 billion to Rs 418.2 billion, effectively reducing the gap between revenue and health costs to Rs 82 billion.

Mr. Murtaza Solangi, Former Caretaker Minister of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan, said all stakeholders must cast their differences aside and unite to protect our children and youth from an industry which is causing billions of losses to the national exchequer. Increasing tobacco taxes is such a step which should be regularly implemented. The low cigarette prices are the reason why children and young people initiate smoking. He added, that smok-

ing-related illnesses and deaths incur substantial economic costs in Pakistan's GDP every year. These increasing health cost burdens encompass healthcare expenses, productivity losses due to illness and premature death, as well as other indirect economic impacts.

Malik Imran Ahmad, Country Head Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) said that the effectiveness of high tobacco taxation as a vital measure in combating tobacco consumption, as advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO). The industry can absorb at least a 40% increase in taxes, and the IMF and World Bank have recommended Pakistan introduce a single-tier tax structure for cigarettes.

He further added that the cigarette prices in Pakistan are still cheaper than in many parts of the world. By utilizing price comparison as a reference point, policymakers can better understand market dynamics and assess the potential of tax hikes on consumer behavior and government revenue. Such an approach allows for a more targeted and evidence-based strategy in formulating taxation policies aimed at curbing tobacco consumption while maximizing revenue for public health initiatives.



Muhammad Asif Iqbal, Managing Director of the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) said smokers' response to price changes suggests an enormous potential for taxation to discourage smoking in Pakistan. As a result of the recent hike in the FED on cigarettes and the corresponding increase in prices, cigarette consump-

tion has declined by 19.2%. Mr. Asif Iqbal said that in addition to a significant decline in cigarette consumption, the survey results suggest that smokers have switched from high-priced brands to low-priced or economy brands. The cigarette market is currently dominated by economy brands. Mr. Iqbal said that the share of economy brands has increased from 80% in

2021-22 to 94% in 2023-24. The shift to cheaper brands is more prominent in rural areas, where the share of economy brands is 97% as compared to 88% in urban areas. He added that within the economy brands, consumption of brands that are priced close to the minimum price has increased from 16% to 46%.

Photo Ramzan Mughal

Protest

ISLAMABAD: Students and members of civil society shouting slogans during a sit-in protest (Dharna) at D-Chowk in the Federal Capital, against Israeli attack on Rafah.



Photo: Online

Altaf Ahmed Bhat host A reception in the honor of Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A reception was held by Altaf Ahmed Bhat, Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement and senior leader of the Hurriyat Conference, in honor of Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Ambassador of Kashmiris living in America. The event was attended by notable figures including All-Party Hurriyat Conference Convenor Mahmood Ahmed Sagar, Secretary-General of the Hurriyat Conference Sheikh Abdul Mateen, and senior Hurriyat Conference leaders Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Muhammad Rafiq Dar, Muhammad Hussain Khatib, among others. Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, the



special guest, expressed his gratitude to Altaf Ahmed Bhat for organizing the gathering. He emphasized that the Kashmiri people's struggle aligns with the United Nations Charter, as they seek their right to self-determination. Dr. Fai highlighted that this struggle continues at every level to secure their fundamental and birthright, and the global community is increasing-

ly aware of the Kashmir issue. He stressed the importance of presenting the Kashmiri cause to the world effectively, calling for unity and organization in the freedom movement. Dr. Fai reiterated that the sacrifices made in this movement should never be forgotten. Altaf Ahmed Bhat welcomed Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai and other distinguished guests, praising the diplomatic efforts of overseas leaders such as Dr. Fai, Muhammad Ghalib, Raja Fahim Kayani, Nazir Ahmad Qureshi, Zafar Qureshi, and Muzamil Ayub Thakur. He paid tribute to their valuable contributions on the diplomatic and international fronts of the Kashmir Freedom Movement. Bhat emphasized the necessity for a unified and organized approach to the Kashmir Freedom Movement, given the immense sacrifices made in the region. He called on the governments of Azad Kashmir and Pakistan to play a more active role in this regard. During the reception, participants discussed the challenges faced by the freedom movement and potential solutions.

Transformer out of order in posh Shami Road area for over a year: Ghulam Bilal Javed

Bureau Report



PESHAWA: The residents of the upscale Shami Road area in Peshawar have been facing severe inconvenience due to a malfunctioning transformer that has been out of order for over a year. Despite numerous complaints, public representatives have failed to address the issue, focusing instead on photo opportunities and publicity events.

Ghulam Bilal Javed, President of the Peshawar Traders Chamber, voiced his frustration over the prolonged outage. "It is disheartening to see that, despite our repeated efforts to bring this matter to their attention, the concerns of the community are being ignored. This negligence is unacceptable, and it is high time our representatives fulfill their duties," said Javed. Efforts to contact local MPAs and MNAs through WhatsApp have been fruitless, with no serious action taken to resolve the issue, even from members of the ruling PTI party. As a result, residents have decided to take matters into their own hands. In the coming days, banners will be displayed throughout the area, highlighting the absence of public representatives post-elections with the message: "Public representatives are only seen after elections."

CBD Punjab partners with odoo middle east to propel innovation in CBD NSIT city

PPA

LAHORE: The Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), has solidified a pivotal partnership with Odoo Middle East DMCC. Odoo is an integrated software, which offers a full suite of business applications including CRM, accounting, inventory, and other software for more efficient work, will provide digital transformation services and support small and large companies' growth. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) marks a significant milestone in fostering innovation within Pakistan's premier IT hub, the CBD NSIT City.



Under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz, the Government of Punjab has entrusted CBD Punjab with the prestigious NSIT City project. NSIT City is envisioned to provide essential knowledge infrastructure and foster an enabling ecosystem for driving innovation and technology advancement in the region. Through this MoU, CBD Punjab will facilitate Odoo's advancement into the local market leveraging the NSIT platform. The collaboration between CBD Punjab and Odoo will mutually support the identification and realization of business opportunities in Punjab. The MoU was officially signed by CEO of CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, and Khalid Khan, Country Manager of Odoo, Pakistan, underscoring the commitment of both entities towards advancing technological capabilities in Punjab.

Young singer enthalls the Chakwal public in music competition

PPAA



CHAKWAL: A music competition was organized at the District Council Hall under the auspices of the Punjab Arts Council, Chakwal. Dozens of candidates from all over Chakwal participated in the competition. The chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony of the music competition was Khawar Bashir Ahmed, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue, Chakwal. On this occasion, Director Arts Council Sajjad Hussain, Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman, Assistant Director Muhammad Tauheed, and Assistant Admin Officer Muhammad Farhan were also present along with the chief guest. Addressing the candidates, the chief guest Khawar Bashir Ahmed said that the organization of a music competition by the Punjab Arts Council in Chakwal is a welcome step. The youth of Chakwal are unparalleled in the art of music. The classical families present in the district have produced many renowned singers who have made the country proud at national and international levels. In the end, the chief guest assured that the district administration will always continue to support the Punjab Arts Council for the promotion of arts and culture. Director Arts Council Sajjad Hussain expressed gratitude to Deputy Commissioner Qurat ul Ain Malik, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Khawar Bashir Ahmed, the police, and the district administration for their cooperation.

PRCS begins cash distribution for flood-affected families in Gwadar

Correspondent

GWADAR: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has commenced the provision of cash assistance for 4,000 flood-affected households in Gwadar. The initiative was officially launched by PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, with former Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Alauddin Marri and National Assembly member Malik Shah Gorgajai, at a ceremony held at PRCS National Headquarters on Tuesday. Each household will receive PKR 32,000 in two installments.



Mir Alauddin Marri commended the PRCS for its exemplary response during natural disasters, highlighting the institution's significant contributions to humanitarian efforts. "The PRCS's performance, services, and actions in aid of humanity will be recorded in history in golden letters," stated Marri. He praised the leadership of Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, noting that under his guidance, the PRCS has excelled in providing public health facilities, clean drinking water, financial aid, and sanitation services.

Speaking on this occasion, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari expressed gratitude for the guests' presence. He reaffirmed the organization's commitment to prioritizing humanity, noting the challenge

of the Gwadar response, which was efficiently managed by the national and provincial branch teams. "We have fulfilled our promise by issuing the first installment of cash disbursement," said Laghari. He emphasized the continuous collaboration with PDMA and district administration, assuring that aid will be provided promptly whenever needed.

Chairman PRCS also announced that in the coming days, financial assistance would be extended to 200 pregnant and lactating women facing food shortages in Gwadar.

Speaking at the event, Takkari Shafiqatullah Langove appreciated PRCS National Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's immediate directives for support, respect, and timely response in the Balochistan province.

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Cost Paid by Heroes of 28th May

On May 28th, Nawab Kaifi, a distinguished veteran in the realms of production, acting, journalism, and media ownership, shared a poignant song commemorating the historic atomic bomb tests of Chagai. The song vividly depicted scenes of horsemen and common folk, adorned with flags, converging towards the blast sites, evoking a powerful imagery of unity and national pride. As a fellow producer hailing from Balochistan, I couldn't help but query the portrayal of horsemen, seemingly transporting the event back to antiquity, and the depiction of missile firings in a setting devoid of missile launch facilities.

In response to my inquiry, Mr. Kaifi promptly clarified that the song, titled "MOJZA," was a recipient of the National Award. It was a collaborative effort supported by ISPR and championed by Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister at the time of the nuclear tests in 1998.

In the video, two pivotal figures in orchestrating this historic achievement were depicted: Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister at the time, and Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. Both of these individuals played instrumental roles in realising this monumental feat, which fortified the defence capabilities of the nation. Remarkably, the very country which had endured the scars of three previous wars found itself transformed after May 29, 1998. With its newfound nuclear deterrent, Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity stood fortified, deterring any potential aggressors from daring to challenge its defences. Thus, the sacrifices and efforts of Nawaz Sharif, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, and countless others ushered in an era of unparalleled security and resilience for the nation, forever altering its geopolitical landscape.

However, their contributions were soon overshadowed by the ominous spectre of

retribution, serving as a cautionary tale for the 250 million citizens of Pakistan and the global community at large.

The tenure of first hero Mr. Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister of Pakistan was abruptly interrupted on October 12, 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf orchestrated a military coup, relegating Sharif from the apex of power to the depths of political obscurity transforming him from the government to an alleged hijacker within the span of a single day. Mr. Nawaz Sharif was swiftly apprehended, stripped of his office, and incarcerated. Subsequent legal proceedings saw him convicted on charges of hijacking and terrorism in April 2000, resulting in a life sentence. The weight of this verdict, coupled with the ignominy of imprisonment, bore heavily upon Sharif, marking a stark reversal of fortune for the once-powerful leader. However, in December 2000 Sharif was granted clemency and permitted to go into exile thus teaching him a good lesson to portray as a hero.

The narrative of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, often hailed as the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, is a poignant tale of heroism overshadowed by adversity. His unwavering dedication and groundbreaking contributions to Pakistan's nuclear program earned him reverence and admiration across the nation, as his efforts culminated in Pakistan becoming the first Muslim country to possess nuclear capabilities. However, amidst the accolades lay a darker undercurrent of humiliation and persecution.

Dr. Khan's legacy was marred by coerced confessions and relentless surveillance, casting a shadow over his towering achievements. In a moment of poignant

reflection, he lamented returning from a life of comfort and acclaim in Holland to devote his intellect and energies to his homeland, only to be met with ingratitude and scorn. His words serve as a sobering reminder of how easily we can turn our heroes into zeroes, tarnishing their legacies with the weight of indifference and betrayal.

One person who was not in the video was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a statesman of remarkable vision and determination who played a pivotal role in laying the cornerstone of Pakistan's nuclear research and development program.

His unwavering commitment to national security was underscored by a resolute vow to pursue atomic capabilities, even at the cost of enduring profound sacrifices, famously stating that Pakistan would "eat grass" if necessary to attain nuclear power. Bhutto's aspirations were abruptly curtailed by a military intervention by General Zia ul Haq on 5th July 1977. On April 4, 1979, Bhutto met his tragic demise, as he was executed by hanging—a verdict that remains contested. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the third most significant figure in Pakistan's odyssey to nuclear prowess was deprived of his life, rather than to be cherished and held in high esteem.

Pakistan's prime minister in the late 1980s and early 1990s was Benazir Bhutto. She was the first Muslim female Prime Minister and one of few worldwide. She was Prime Minister twice: 1988-1990 and 1993-1996 and relentlessly supported the nuclear programme. She embraced Shahadat in a Rawalpindi political rally suicide attack on December 27, 2007.

Imran Khan is one of Pakistan's most famous cricketers and regarded as one of

the finest all-rounders in the sport's history who founded the Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in 1996, and after winning the general election in July 2018, became Pakistan's 22nd Prime Minister and is now behind bars.

A nation that respects its heroes, both civilian and military, fosters a strong sense of unity, pride, and national identity. Honouring those who have made significant contributions through acts of bravery, innovation, or service reinforces the values and principles upon which a nation is built. This recognition encourages others to strive for excellence, promoting a culture of respect and admiration for those who positively impact the country's progress.

Conversely, disrespecting heroes can lead to a loss of national pride and disillusionment and decline in motivation as future generations may be discouraged from pursuing paths of service and innovation.

To undo the harm caused by disrespecting heroes, a nation must publicly acknowledge past mistakes and offer sincere apologies, establishing systems to honor and commemorate their contributions.

Educational reforms should integrate the stories and achievements of national heroes into the curriculum, ensuring that future generations respect and learn from their legacies.

Community engagement, robust support for veterans and contributors, and promoting positive narratives through media and public platforms are essential steps. By taking these measures, a nation can repair psychological and societal damage, fostering renewed unity, pride, and motivation for collective progress and development.

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

UN alarmed by 'inhuman' detention of Gazans by Israeli authorities

Amid relentless bombardment of Gaza overnight into Tuesday, UN and partner organizations have expressed deep concern over the "inhuman" detention of suspected Palestinian fighters in the enclave by Israeli authorities, alleging treatment so poor that some had to have limbs amputated "due to prolonged shackling". In a new report on the situation in Gaza for May 2024, the authors cited testimonies "from medics and whistle-blowers" that injured detainees have been held at a field hospital with "shackled hands and feet and blindfolded 24/7 to their beds".

In addition, as of May 19, 128 of the 253 people captured from Southern Israel on 7 October still remain in Gaza, the report's authors said, underscoring that the taking of hostages is a "grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and a war crime". More than 35 of the hostages have been declared dead and those still alive likely face "the direst of conditions". Returning to the Palestinian detainees, testimonies indicated that prisoners are "fed through a straw, with several cases of detainees having their limbs amputated due to prolonged shackling", according to the update from the Global Protection Cluster, which brings together UN agencies and other international and non-governmental organizations. It echoes earlier concerns about alleged mistreatment of detainees from the UN human rights office, OHCHR and independent rights experts. The Israeli army has previously denied these claims. At least 27 detainees from Gaza likely died while in custody at an Israeli military base including at Sde Teiman in Israel's Negev desert, it is believed, while "at least four" others from the enclave died in Israel Prison Service (IPS) facilities either because of alleged beatings or a lack of medical assistance. "Whether detained at IPS or army facilities, detainees are reported to face extremely harsh conditions of detention, including overcrowding and some detained in cage-like facilities, being constantly blindfolded and hand-cuffed, lack of access to toilet, exposure to the elements, provision of food and water in quantities barely sufficient to survive." Women and children are among those held during "mass detentions" carried out by the Israeli military, the report maintained, adding that many families "have no information about their loved ones", while Israel "fails or refuses to provide information on the whereabouts or fate of many of those detained...Boys 14+ are usually detained with adult men. Younger children are detained with women and elderly family members, usually for a shorter time." The Israeli army recently claimed to have detained 2,300 Palestinians from Gaza during ground operations in Gaza, the report's authors said, adding that the true number was likely much higher. At the end of April, some 865 detainees were held as "unlawful combatants", a category unknown under international law. "Numerous" further disturbing testimonies indicate that detainees are subjected to "forced nudity, sexual harassment, threats of rape, as well as torture through severe beatings, dog attacks, strip searches, water-boarding, and denial of food, sleep, and bathroom access, among other cruel practices". According to accounts from released detainees and medics with access to those being held, the aim of this treatment is to elicit forced confessions and screen for alleged members of Palestinian armed groups.



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

Significance of Youm e Takbeer - II

Despite the inherent risks associated with nuclear armaments, Pakistan reiterated its commitment to responsible nuclear stewardship, advocating for arms control measures and dialogue to mitigate tensions and enhance regional security. At its core, Pakistan's decision to acquire nuclear weapons was driven by its national security imperatives and the necessity to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The specter of conflict with India, rooted in historical animosities and unresolved disputes, reinforced Pakistan's resolve to possess a credible deterrent to deter any aggression or coercion. By obtaining nuclear weapons, Pakistan aimed to secure its strategic interests and ensure its survival in a volatile and unpredictable security environment.

Contrary to wrong apprehensions regarding the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, the country has implemented rigorous safeguards, protocols, and command-and-control mechanisms to ensure the secure custody and responsible oversight of its nuclear weapons. Pakistani nuclear facilities adhere to stringent security measures, encompassing physical protection, personnel reliability programs, and comprehensive export controls to thwart unauthorized access, proliferation, or sabotage. Furthermore, Pakistan adheres to international non-proliferation norms and standards, participating in initiatives like the Nuclear Security Summit and following guidelines set by the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA). The professionalism and expertise of Pakistani nuclear scientists, engineers, and personnel are pivotal in guaranteeing the safe and secure operation of Pakistan's nuclear facilities. Trained to the highest standards and adhering to strict protocols, these professionals uphold principles of safety, security, and non-proliferation in their work. Moreover, Pakistan fosters a culture of responsible nuclear stewardship, instilling a sense of duty, discipline, and accountability among those entrusted with the custody and management of nuclear assets.

Pakistan's commitment to nuclear safety, security, and non-proliferation has been acknowledged and commended by the international community. Pakistan has demonstrated responsible conduct and cooperation in nuclear affairs. Furthermore, Pakistan has engaged in dialogue and confidence-building measures with neighboring countries, including India, to enhance transparency, alleviate tensions, and foster regional stability. Through its actions and engagements, Pakistan aims to reassure the international community regarding the safety and security of its nuclear arsenal and its dedication to peace and stability.

As a frontline participant in the global campaign against terrorism, Pakistan has made significant sacrifices and implemented comprehensive

measures to combat violent extremism and promote regional stability. Through military operations, law enforcement actions, and counterterrorism strategies, Pakistan has disrupted terrorist networks, dismantled safe havens, and contributed to the worldwide effort to combat terrorism. Additionally, Pakistan collaborates closely with regional and international partners to address transnational threats, bolster border security, and promote cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, recognizing the crucial role of collective action in addressing common challenges.

Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting humanitarian assistance and development initiatives, both domestically and internationally, with the aim of alleviating poverty, enhancing healthcare, and improving education. Through humanitarian aid, disaster relief endeavors, and development projects, Pakistan extends support to communities in need, irrespective of nationality or religion.

Youm-e-Takbeer holds immense significance for Pakistan. It serves as a poignant reminder to celebrate the accomplishment of achieving nuclear statehood. The occasion reaffirms Pakistan's stance that its nuclear arsenal is solely for defensive purposes and not for showcasing aggression or superiority over any other nation. Pakistan, as a proponent of peace, always seeks to resolve conflicts through dialogue but reserves the right to defend every inch of its territory in the face of aggression. On this auspicious day, the nation pays homage to all scientists, engineers, and individuals who contributed to making Pakistan impregnable.

Youm-e-Takbeer: A Tribute to Pakistan's Scientific Excellence & National Security

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

Youm-e-Takbeer celebrated on May 28 every year, holds great significance in the history of Pakistan as it marks the day when Pakistan became the first Muslim nuclear power in the world. This day is a tribute to Pakistan's scientific excellence and national security, as it displays the country's capabilities in the field of nuclear technology. The journey towards this monumental achievement began in the early 1970s when Pakistan started its nuclear program with the goal of ensuring its national security and sovereignty. Despite facing numerous challenges and obstacles, Pakistani scientists and engineers worked tirelessly to develop the necessary infrastructure and expertise to build a nuclear arsenal. The culmination of these efforts came on May 28, 1998, when Pakistan conducted a series of nuclear tests in the Chagai district of Balochistan. These tests demonstrated Pakistan's ability to produce nuclear weapons and served as a deterrent against potential threats to its security. The successful nuclear tests on Youm-e-Takbeer were a result of the hard work and dedication of Pakistani scientists and engineers, who worked tirelessly to develop the country's nuclear capabilities.

Despite facing international pressure and sanctions, Pakistan refused to compromise on its national security and took a bold step to ensure its defense against external threats. The tests were a testament to Pakistan's scientific excellence and technological prowess, displaying the country's ability to innovate and achieve breakthroughs in the field of nuclear technology. It represents a turning point in Pakistan's history, where the country asserted its status as a responsible nuclear power and demonstrated its commitment to peace and stability in the region. The day serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining a strong and credible defense capability, while also emphasizing the need for diplomacy and dialogue to prevent conflict and promote cooperation among nations.

On this day, Pakistanis also remember the leadership of then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who took the bold decision to conduct the nuclear tests despite international pressure and sanctions. His vision and determination paved the

way for Pakistan to become a nuclear power and ensured the security and sovereignty of the country.

Sharif's vision for a nuclear-armed Pakistan was rooted in the belief that it was necessary for national security and deterrence against potential threats. He understood the geopolitical realities of the region and saw nuclear weapons as a means to ensure Pakistan's sovereignty and integrity in the face of external aggression. In the early 1990s, Sharif inherited a nuclear program that was already well underway, thanks to the efforts of his predecessor, Benazir Bhutto. However, it was under Sharif's leadership that the program reached its zenith. He provided unwavering support and resources to the scientists and engineers working on the project, despite mounting international pressure and sanctions. Sharif's determination to make Pakistan a nuclear power was evident in his handling of the 1998 nuclear tests.

In response to India's nuclear tests, Sharif made the bold decision to conduct tests of Pakistan's own nuclear weapons. This move, while controversial and condemned by the international community, solidified Pakistan's status as a nuclear-armed state. Sharif's leadership during this critical moment in Pakistan's history demonstrated his unwavering commitment to national security and sovereignty. Despite facing immense pressure and criticism, he stood firm in his decision to make Pakistan a nuclear power, knowing that it was essential for the country's survival and security.

Nawaz Sharif's vision and determination were instrumental in making Pakistan a nuclear power. It is a tribute to the country's commitment to defend its sovereignty and protect its people, and it serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining a strong defense capability in a volatile world. As Pakistan continues to face challenges and threats to its security, Youm-e-Takbeer reminds us of the sacrifices made by the nation to ensure its survival and prosperity. It is a day to honor the courage and resilience of the Pakistani people, and to reaffirm our resolve to defend our homeland against any form of aggression. This day serves as a tribute to the leadership and vision of Nawaz Sharif and all those who contributed to making Pakistan a nuclear power.

Writer is Postdoctoral Fellow, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

Russian Ambassador comments on Ukraine, calling for restraint on Ukrainian conflict

By Naveed Ahma Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Albert P. Khorev, held a press briefing at the Russian Embassy in Islamabad, providing updates and insights into the ongoing Ukrainian conflict.

In his remarks, Ambassador Khorev began by expressing gratitude to members of the press for attending the briefing and emphasized the importance of seeking information from diverse sources amidst the information war against Russia.

According to the press note, Ambassador Khorev briefed the audience on the latest developments in the Special Military Operation, highlighting the strategic advancements made by Russian troops in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. He reiterated Russia's commitment to achieving the goals of demilitarization and denazification in Ukraine.

Addressing concerns about the pace of the operation, Ambassador Khorev explained that Russia prioritizes minimizing casualties among both civilians and military personnel. He emphasized the need for a cautious approach to ensure the safety of all individuals involved.

Ambassador Khorev condemned the Ukrainian regime's targeting of civilians, citing recent terrorist attacks on Russian territory. He highlighted the tragic consequences



of such attacks, including the loss of innocent lives and the deliberate intimidation of Russian civilians.

The Ambassador commemorated significant anniversaries, including Crimea's reunification with Russia and the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. He emphasized the importance of these events in shaping the current geopolitical landscape.

Ambassador Khorev reiterated

Russia's openness to peace talks but criticized Ukraine's refusal to engage in meaningful dialogue. He accused Western countries of orchestrating pseudo-peace initiatives to pressure Russia, emphasizing the need for genuine efforts to address Russia's legitimate interests.

Following his remarks, Ambassador Khorev took questions from journalists, providing further clarification on key points raised during

the briefing. Topics of discussion included Russia's stance on Western military aid to Ukraine, prospects for future peace negotiations, and the impact of the conflict on regional stability.

The press briefing concluded with Ambassador Khorev reaffirming Russia's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Pakistan and supporting the country's food and energy security needs.



Prize distribution ceremony held at Junagadh Ghanchi Academy

By PPA

KARACHI: The annual prize distribution ceremony was held at the Junagadh Ghanchi Academy. The ceremony was attended by Provincial Minister Saeed Ghani, Senator Waqar Mehdi, Deputy Mayor Salman Murad, Chairman of Junagadh Ghanchi Board Rafiq Qasim Patel, Saleem Qasim Patel, Obaid Saleem Patel, and others.



Junagadh Ghanchi Academy, a project of the Muslim Ghanchi Jamaat, organised the 10th annual prize distribution ceremony, in which students and teachers welcomed the guests.

Speaking at the occasion, Provincial Minister Saeed Ghani said that the services of

Rafiq Qasim Patel and Salim Qasim Patel are appreciable and assured full support for the noble cause. He congratulated all the teachers for organising a very successful event and underlined the importance of such positive activities. Saeed Ghani

said that educating children is the responsibility of everyone and that we will always support such quality institutions.

Every person has the right to a good education, and authorities should do whatever is needed to make sure every child gets

a quality education, he underlined. Senator Waqar Mehdi, speaking at the event, said that the services of Junagadh Ghanchi Jamaat are appreciable, and Qasim Patel's exemplary services for this city will be long remembered.

He added that education plays a pivotal role in all of our lives and paves the way for all of us to reach our highest potential.

When we talk about the importance of education in life, it is extremely important to understand what education is and why it is so important to nation-building.

Rafiq Qasim Patel said that 800 children are being given and health facilities are being provided under the welfare

dispensary. We are establishing an IT institute that will start functioning soon, he informed.

Principal Tuba Akram told participants about the quality of education and sports activities in schools, while other speakers appreciated the services of the community in education, health, and other social sectors.

Obaid Saleem Patel said that those who devote themselves to philanthropic works are serving humanity, and the masses can be best served through schools.

President of the association Asif Jewa, General Secretary, Arif Patel Ghanchi, Mohammad Shahid Ghanchi, Saleem Ko Ladia, Vice Chairman Sikander, and others also participated in the event.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal inaugurates Nestlé Pakistan's Clean and Safe Drinking Water Facility in Narowal



By PPA

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry inaugurated Nestlé Pakistan's clean and safe drinking water facility in Narowal that aims to cater to more than 10,000 people in the district.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Iqbal said "Access to clean and safe drinking water is an absolute necessity for all of us, and I am touched that Nestlé has focused its community efforts for the people of Narowal. It is a remarkable contribution, and I am hopeful that people will truly benefit from this."

During the inauguration, Jason Avanceña, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé Pakistan said, "We are committed to Creating Shared Value (CSV) throughout our value chain for communities and the inauguration of this eighth clean safe drinking water facility is a testament to our commitment to making a positive impact for families, communities and the planet."

Nestlé Pakistan has already developed and is currently managing seven clean and safe drinking water facilities around its manufacturing sites in Sheikhpura, Kabirwala, Khanewal and Islamabad. With the inauguration of this facility in Narowal, approximately 80,000 people will have access to clean and safe drinking water daily through these facilities.

The Narowal facility will use ultrafiltration water treatment technology with capacity to supply up to 3,000 liters per hour of clean and safe drinking water. It will utilize a multi-stage filtration process, with monitoring systems that guarantee consistent quality and a UV disinfection unit providing an extra layer of protection. The plant is also equipped with energy-efficient pumps and utilizes sustainable practices to minimize its environmental footprint.

Greenstar Social Marketing Pakistan (G) Limited celebrates 32 years of Sitara Bajis

By PPA

ISLAMABAD: Greenstar Social Marketing Pakistan (G) Limited, a leading private not for profit organisation dedicated to improving public health in Pakistan hosted an event in Islamabad to celebrate 32 years of Sitara Bajis – The Change Agents, an initiative designed to allow women to not just embrace financial freedom but spread health awareness in their respective communities at the same time. This milestone event highlighted the impact made across Pakistan through the program over the past three

decades. Greenstar Social Marketing, through an extensive network of 2,500 Sitara Bajis and 500 Sattar Bhaias has helped avert 4,503 maternal deaths, and 46,032 child deaths during the last decade, showcasing the profound impact of community health and wellbeing, on the masses. Greenstar's community health workers have been instrumental in driving behavioral change communication (BCC) to improve knowledge on women's health through counseling and referrals, offering women in various under developed areas to



obtain better maternal and child health.

The event was graced by Dr. Shabana Saleem, Director General – Population Planning Wing, MONHSRC, as the chief guest, Dr. Zaem Zia, District Health Officer, Islamabad, and

Dr. Syed Azizur Rab, CEO of Greenstar Social Marketing. These distinguished officials shared their insights and remarks with the audience, enriching the discussion with their valuable perspectives.

Reflecting on Green-

star's legacy, Dr. Syed Azizur Rab, CEO, Greenstar Social Marketing, stated, "Over the past 32 years, Greenstar has continuously evolved to meet the dynamic health needs of our communities. Our vision has always been to empower individuals with knowledge and access to quality health services, and our journey has been marked by innovative approaches in behavioral change and demand creation. The dedication of our Sitara Bajis and Sattar Bhaias is a testament to our mission of transforming lives through sustainable health solutions."

Commemorating Youm-e-Takbeer, ISSI hosts Seminar on 'Missile Developments in South Asia: Global and Regional Implications'

By PPA

ISLAMABAD: As part of commemoration of Youm-e-Takbeer, the Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a seminar titled "Missile Developments in South Asia: Global and Regional Implications." General (R) Zubair Mahmood Hayat NI(M) HI(M), former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee was the chief guest. Distinguished speakers included: Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, Dean and Professor SPIR, QAU; Air Commodore (R) Khalid Banuri, Adviser Jinnah Centre for Character and Leadership (JCLL), AHQ Islamabad; Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow ACDC-ISSI; and Dr. Naeem Salik, President Strategic Vision Institute (SVI).

In his keynote address, General Zubair Mahmood Hayat provided a profound analysis of India's ideological and strategic shifts. He began by commemorating Youm-e-Takbeer and emphasized that it was a day to reassert national pride and ownership. He stated that missile development in South Asia must be seen as a "tool" in the hands of the current political dispensation in New Delhi, which was effecting the ideological shift from 'India to Bharat'.

General Hayat highlighted the politicization of India's military strategy, drawing from historical figures like Chanakya, whose principles emphasized power and deception at all costs. He pointed out that India's aggressive missile developments, including deploying advanced systems like the BrahMos missile and developing MIRVs, reflect this new strategic

posture. He emphasized that these developments pose significant regional and global security threats, necessitating Pakistan's vigilant and comprehensive response. He also pointed out that India had the fastest growing nuclear program in the world, which remained opaque.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, DG ISSI, emphasized the pivotal moment in South Asia's nuclear history on 28 May 1998 — marked by Pakistan's response to Indian nuclear tests and the restoration of strategic balance in the region. He emphasized Pakistan's commitment to maintaining robust deterrent capabilities and its role as a responsible nuclear state. He commented on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer and said it was rightly termed as Pakistan's "finest hour," when the country demonstrated its technological

pro prowess and unwavering national resolve.

Earlier, in his introductory remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC ISSI, welcomed the participants and highlighted the significance of Youm-e-Takbeer in reinforcing Pakistan's national security and strategic stability in South Asia.

Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal discussed "Global Missile Developments and International Security," tracing the evolution of missile technology and its proliferation. He highlighted the increasing security dilemmas and the rise in missile capabilities among major powers, including China, the U.S., Russia, and India. He explained the weakening of the Cold War-era arms control architecture and the strategic implications of integrating nuclear technology with missile systems.



Air Commodore Khalid Banuri discussed Indian missile developments, India's ambitious missile programs, including the Agni-5 and MIRV technologies, and their strategic implications for Pakistan and China. He underscored the technological advancements and increasing range of Indian missiles,

which pose significant challenges to regional security.

Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil presented an in-depth analysis of India's missile defence and hypersonic missile developments. She explained the technological advancements in hypersonic missiles and highlighted India's

pursuit of hypersonic missile technology, including the development of the HSTDV. She also examined the strategic implications of these advancements for regional stability and argued that the development of hypersonic missiles could destabilize the existing deterrence equilibrium in South Asia.

Dr. Naeem Salik discussed Pakistan's global and regional missile development options. He discussed the development and deployment of ballistic missile defence systems, the rapid response capabilities of hypersonic missiles, and the strategic challenges posed by India's missile developments. He suggested policy measures for Pakistan, including adopting a launch-on-warning posture. The seminar concluded with a comprehensive Q&A session, followed by a vote of thanks by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI.

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
8,254.18	-63.41
Percentage	Time
-0.76%	28 May, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
38,845.23	-224.36
Percentage	Time
-0.57%	28 May, 1:23 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
38,855.37	-44.65
Percentage	Time
-0.11%	28 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	277.6	280.2

Public outrage against IPPs is growing

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said on Tuesday that public anger against independent power producers (IPPs) is growing due to frequent tariff hikes.

For decades, IPPs have been looting the masses in the name of business. Now that they have earned trillions of rupees, they should reduce their charges; otherwise, they and their political facilitators may soon face the wrath of the public, he said.

Dr. Hanif Mughal told party workers that we cannot allow IPPs to make extraordinary returns, which have depleted the nation and the masses.

He warned that they must provide some relief to the people, or else they may face severe consequences in the event of public backlash.

He said that it is surprising that many people still consider the facilitators of private power plants and those who extend their disastrous



contracts to be leaders instead of enemies of the country.

According to official data, the IPP bill is the

third largest debt owed to the government after defence expenditures and foreign debt repayments. However, despite paying this amount and continuously increasing the cost of electricity, the circular debt is increasing to become a heavy burden on the national treasury.

According to Dr. Hanif Mughal, due to their aligned interests and lack of concern for the plight of the masses, no major political party will ever speak against the plunder of IPPs.

He stated that although such agreements with IPPs are impossible to cancel or amend, they cannot protect IPPs and their owners from violent public reaction.

A minor political party has accused the ruling elite of sucking the blood of the people, as they own 70 percent of IPPs. Meanwhile, other sources assert that the leaders of major political parties or their partners own all but a few power plants.

He recalled that Dr. Mubashir Hasan declared the installation of IPPs to be a heinous act that would ruin the national economy and

plunder the public. There will come a time when people will not be able to pay expensive electricity bills, nor will it be accessible for industry and commerce.

He said restoring the energy sector's viability requires vital cost-side reforms, including continuing efforts to improve transmission infrastructure, improve integration, and expand renewable energy capacity. Improving DISCO's performance via either privatization or management reforms and revisiting the terms of power purchase agreements is necessary.

If rulers had built dams with the assistance of private investors, it would have ensured cheap electricity. It would have saved a lot of water wasted in the sea that could have been used to boost agriculture, which would have helped the country's rapid development, he said.

He hoped that all those responsible for the crimes against the country and the masses would be brought to justice.

Hardwork

RAWALPINDI: Labourers are pushing an overloaded handcart on their way at a road during hot day in the city.



Photo: Online

Chairman ICE determines through 'Creative Economy' connect Pakistan-Indonesia economy

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman International Creative Exchange (ICE) Atta-ul-Karim on Tuesday said that tourism and education are important sectors to promote 'Creative Economy in Pakistan' and to connect Pakistan with trillion dollar Indonesia economy.

International Creative Exchange (ICE) is his vision, which includes for promoting the concept of 'Creative Economy', connecting Pakistan with modern and innovative economies including

Indonesia, bringing investment in the tourism sector in Pakistan and developing it along modern lines, Chairman ICE, Atta-ul-Karim said.

Chairman International Creative Exchange (ICE) Atta-ul-Karim said this while addressing a press conference along with Charge d'Affairs Indonesia in Islamabad, Rahmat Hindiarta to announce the business and investment promotion in Pakistan and shared his vision with media in National Press Club (NPC) Islamabad.

Yarn Brokers, Traders & Importers Association Demands Prevention of EFS Misuse

PPA

KARACHI: The Yarn Brokers, Traders & Importers Association, Karachi, has expressed serious concerns over the sale of imported polyester yarn in local markets under the Export Finance Scheme (EFS). The association pointed out that the importers of polyester yarn, who bring it in on a commercial basis, are facing severe financial losses due to the sale of this yarn in local markets. This misuse of the EFS is causing the trade of polyester yarn to decline day by day. Therefore, effective measures should be taken to prevent the misuse of EFS.

Javed Bhuri, General Secretary of the Yarn Brokers, Traders & Importers Association Karachi (Bhuri Enterprises), raised this issue following a complaint from Munaf Cheena, an active member of the association and of Maria Enterprises.

Garment industry opposes holiday on Youm-e-Takbeer as nation can't afford economic disruption

PNP

LAHORE: The garment industry has opposed the government decision of declaring public holiday to mark Youm-e-Takbeer, forcing the whole industry to halt its work, as the nation cannot afford the economic disruption caused by such holidays.

The Pakistan Ready-made Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) Central Chairman Mubashar Naseer Butt, in a statement issued here on Tuesday, also warned the government of announcing long holidays on the coming Eid-ul-Azha, as the move would hurt the business.

He said that the abrupt announcement of May 28 holiday has been met with significant opposition from the whole industry, as it would cause loss of billions of rupees in exports, amidst continuously declining textile exports.

Tajikistan 'Gateway' For Central Asia: Abdul Aleem Khan

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Investment Board, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, during his visit to Tajikistan held detail meetings with Transport Minister Azim Ibrahim and Minister for Economic Development and Trade Zavqizoda Zavqi Amin to increase bilateral trade between the two countries. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan agreed to the proposals for starting a pilot project at the ports of Gwadar and Karachi and increasing the "Organic Export". Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan while expressing the determination to expand existing relation between two countries said that good neighbors are no less than a blessing. He mentioned that Tajikistan is the "Gateway" for trade with Pakistan for Central Asian countries. He assured his all possible cooperation to start at least one direct flight in a week from Tajikistan to Pakistan. Federal Minister Abdul



Aleem Khan said that he would like to perform as an Ambassador of Tajikistan in Pakistan to increase relations between the two countries. He added that both countries should also increase "organic exports" while Pakistan's trade may increase from Tajikistan via China and Afghanistan as well.

Earlier, on his visit to Tajikistan, Federal Minister for

Investment Board, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan arrived at Dushanbe Airport on Tuesday where he was warmly welcomed by the Minister of Transport of Tajikistan Azim Ibrahim. It is noteworthy that Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan visited the offices of Tajikistan's Minister of Transport and Minister of Economic Development and

Trade where they exchanged views on different matters of mutual interest and discussed important issues. Moreover, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan will spend a busy day in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on Wednesday, May 29, where he will be attending meetings related to investment, bilateral trade and other important issues.

Federal Commerce Minister assures APTMA of facilitating textile industry in export diversification

PPA

LAHORE: Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan has assured APTMA of facilitating the textile industry in export diversification, saying that measures are being devised to promote export-oriented industries in the country.

He was speaking to the export-oriented textile industrialists during his visit to APTMA Lahore office on Tuesday.

The commerce minister highlighted the government's determination to bring institutional and structural reforms, resolve energy and tariff issues, enhance regional connectivity, and diversify exports to ensure sustainable growth and stabilise the economy.

Earlier, Patron-in-Chief APTMA Dr Gohar Ejaz, Chairman APTMA North Mr Kamran Arshad, Senior Vice Chairman Mr Asad Shafi, former Chairman of the Association, Secretary General Mohammad Raza Baqir and many leading textile millers welcomed him on the occasion.

Federal Commerce Minister also appreciated the APTMA's idea of modern industrial zones with plug and play facility, saying that it would be helpful in attracting Chinese investment ahead.

Speaking on the occasion, Patron-in-Chief APTMA Dr Gohar Ejaz stressed on bringing the interest rate and electricity tariff down to ensure level playing field for the industry.

He said the APTMA have proposed establishment of modern

industrial zones dedicated to garment manufacturing offering state of the art infrastructure with plug & play facilities ensuring highest standards in security, amenities, hospitality, housing, etc., in the country.

He said garment manufacturing is less energy intensive and will pose no additional burden to grid.

According to him, the Punjab government has already conceptually approved this project and formed a committee headed by Provincial Minister for Industries. APTMA is in close liaison of this committee.

Chairman APTMA North Mr Kamran Arshad made a detailed presentation on the state of affairs in the textile industry.

He urged the federal minister to

bring power tariffs for industrial consumers to regionally competitive level of 9 cents/kWh by removing cross subsidy/stranded costs

Also, he stressed on allowing B2B power contracts with Use of System/Wheeling Charge of 1-1.5 cents/kWh, excluding cross subsidies and stranded costs.

He further proposed to increase cap on solar net-metering for industrial consumers from 1MW to 5MW.

He also stressed on restoration of zero rating, saying that more than two third of textile production is exported. Present system of collecting sales tax at multiple stages like spinning, weaving, processing etc., causes tremendous financial liquidity and promotes fraudulent refunds through fake/flying invoices.

Refunds claimed are much higher than actual collection of sales tax.

He said sales tax should be collected only on the last stage of local supply of end products like made ups, garments, towels etc. ready for use by local consumers.

He also urged the federal minister to expedite payment of tax refunds besides extension of financial liquidity to the industry and proposed steps to promote export of MMF products.

It will promote product diversification and Pakistan will be able to gain handsome share in global MMF based market, he added.

Senior Vice Chairman APTMA Mr Asad Shafi extended vote of thanks to the visiting federal minister. A memento was also presented to him at the end of the meeting.

All Pakistan NTDC Engineers Association Reject the Privatization Decision From Pakistan Govt



Quatul Ain Asim

MULTAN: All Pakistan NTDC Engineers Association General Secretary Malik Tariq Raza Kalro has said that we reject the privatization decision of the government, if this is done, thousands of engineers of Pakistan will come to the streets and protest when they reach Islamabad. Will also demonstrate.

The All Pakistan NTDC Engineers Association (APNEA) has rejected the government's proposal to restructure NTDC.

All Pakistan NTDC Engineers Association (APNEA) expresses reservations over NTDC's demerger proposal. General Secretary APNEA Malik Tariq Raza Kalro further said that the division of NTDC is not in favor of the country, power sector and employees. Before taking such decision all stakeholders including employees should be brought to a table for comprehensive discussion and consensus accordingly. Because such quick and consensus-based decisions reduce the overall performance of the organization and the future of the employees is always at stake.

In the past decision to split WAPDA into generation, transmission and distribution companies, capacity payments to IPPs suffered due to lack of communication between companies in power system planning and expansion and circular debt (now Pakistan's has become a financial threat to the government and the people.)

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal inaugurates Summer Games 2024 at NPSC Gymnasium Hall

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal inaugurated volleyball event of Summer Games 2024 at Nishatar Park Sports Complex (NPSC) Gymnasium Hall, Lahore.

Director Admin M Kaleem, Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Director Zahoor Ahmed, Deputy Director Ataur Rehman, Administrator NPSC Gymnasium Hall Mustafa Shah, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti, all Divisional Sports Officers and a large number of volleyball players and officials were also present on this occasion.

Prior to the event, the players and officials of all teams were introduced with Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal. National Anthem was also presented at the inaugural ceremony. Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal also

witnessed the opening match of Summer Games.

Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar and Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum also presented a souvenir to chief guest Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal on this occasion.

In his address on this occasion, Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal welcomed all the participating teams and their officials at the opening ceremony. He said that the competitions of Summer Games 2024 are being organized under Punjab Chief Minister's vision of 'Khaailta Punjab'. "Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has always encouraged sports competitions. She along with Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman attended the opening and closing ceremonies of Pink Games in recent weeks," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that sports is one of the top priorities

of the Punjab government. "Sports Department Punjab was provided every kind of support including funds whenever requested from Chief Minister Office".

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that the amount of Sports Endowment Fund will be spent on the grooming and preparation of international level athletes of different games. "The players' community is the main beneficiary of Sports Endowment Fund. Even the profit of Sports Endowment Fund will be spent on the Players Development Programme".

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal informed that ten new E-Libraries are going to be built in various cities of the province. "We are also focusing on the rehabilitation of old sports facilities besides launching several new sports projects.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal further

said that Sports Board Punjab is promoting sports culture among the youth as a mission. "The main purpose of organizing Summer Games is to identify fresh talented athletes from all parts of the province. International coaches will also be invited to train the players when necessary."

He said that our scrutiny committee will be present at every match of the event to evaluate the performance of all the players. "After the event, the players selected on the basis of their performance will be given a stipend of Rs 70,000 per month. Not only this, but they will be further groomed under the supervision of qualified coaches for top national and international competitions".

Following are the results:
Match No. 1: Lahore vs Sargodha
Won by Lahore by 3-0
Set point: 24-10, 25-15, 25-18
Match No. 2: Sahiwal vs



Rawalpindi

Won by Sahiwal by 3-0

Set point: 25-19, 25-23, 25-19

Trophy Unveiling Ceremony of the '1st PNSC Inter-Provincial Women Softball Championship' was held at the Governor House

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has said that by providing equal opportunities to women players in sports, we can empower them so that they can pave new ways and horizons for future generations.

Hosting the inter-provincial women softball championship is an honor for Sindh, this championship will further promote equality and mutual respect between the provinces.

He expressed these views while unveiling the trophy of the 1st PNSC Inter-Provincial Women's Softball Championship in a grand ceremony held at the Sindh Governor House.

Softball Federation of Pakistan President, Asif Azeem, Senior Vice President Dr. Farhan Essa, Vice President Tehmina Asif, PNSC General Manager Admin Commodore Masood ul Hasan, Assistant Manager Admin Ayesha Leena were also present on this occasion.



Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori said that as Governor of Sindh, I am proud that Sindh is hosting the first women's softball championship at the inter-provincial level.

From this event, along with increasing equality and mutual respect, the message of national unity will be promoted across the country.

By organizing the championship, while the passion for softball among the women of Sindh will grow, new talent will also emerge.

He assured the Sindh Softball Association of all possible support for hosting this historic championship and said that I am also grateful to other sponsors including PNSC for making this cham-

pionship a success.

The President of Softball Federation of Pakistan Asif Azeem said that the patronage of softball by the Governor of Sindh is welcome for this game.

On May 30, the opening ceremony of the championship will be held at KPT Football Stadium, Karachi, while the final of the championship will be played on the evening of June 1, he added.

SSA President Dr. Farhan Essa said that we are fortunate that the unveiling ceremony of the championship trophy was held at the Governor House.

Organizing the championship will be very helpful in the promotion and development of softball in the country. PNSC General Manager Admin Commodore Masood-ul-Hasan said that an environment of healthy competition between women players will be created at the provincial level. Our institution will continue to play its effective role for the promotion and development of the game of softball, he added.

Pakistan thwart Australia in Volleyball series opener

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Volleyball team recorded a dominating 3-0 victory over Australia at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex here on Tuesday.

The home side started the series opener on a high as they secured the first set with a score of 25-9.

Both sides went hard at each other in the second set but the Pakistan volleyball team clung to their basics and displayed remarkable blocking and quick reflexes and thus, managed to seal the second set with the same scoreline.

The home side continued their dominance in the third and decisive set by winning it 25-20 to highlight their adaptability to pressure and ability to capitalize on the opposition's errors.

The second and third matches of the series between Pakistan and Australia will be played on May 29 and May 30 respectively. Both the remaining fixtures will start at 6:30 PM local time.

For the unversed, Australia's volleyball squad reached here on Sunday to embark on their first-ever tour to Pakistan for an international series.

The series was organised by the Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF) at the request of the Australian Volleyball Federation.

The visiting team received a warm welcome on their arrival at Islamabad International Airport from the officials of the PVF. "All matches will be starting from 6:30 PM and entry of the fans and supporters are free", Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, Chairman of the Pakistan Volleyball Federation announced.

"It will be a cracker of a series as Pakistan has recently won the Central Asian title while Australia is ranked much higher. Both teams are preparing for the Challenge Cup to be held in Bahrain next month," he added.

Wapda, PAF, Rangers, Sindh Greens wins matches in Memorial Basketball Tournament

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Wapda, Pakistan Air Force, Rangers, Sindh Greens earned victories in the first round of All-Pakistan Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament at Siddique Memon Sports Complex, Karachi.

The six-day tournament organized by Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) was inaugurated by Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui while Associate Secretary of Pakistan Basketball Federation Muhammad Yaqoob Qadri and other personalities were also present on the occasion, said a press release.

On the first day, Wapda after a one-sided competition defeated Sindh Whites by 74-36 points. In the second match, Pakistan Rangers defeated Balochistan by 74-40 points while Sindh Greens defeated Sindh Whites by 84-53 points.

In the fourth match on the Pakistan Air Force defeated Islamabad by 75-43 points while Police defeated Sindh Yellow by 62-32 points.

Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui appreciated the arrangements of the tournament and efforts made by the organizers to attract youth towards the game of basketball.

Former New Zealand cricketer compares Kohli with Ronaldo, Messi

A Sports

LAHORE: New Zealand's legendary batter Ross Taylor spoke highly of India's batting star Virat Kohli, stating "he is up there" with football greats Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.

Ronaldo and Messi are regarded as two of the best football players in the world, courtesy of their unparalleled success on the field amid their ongoing decorated careers. Whereas, Kohli has been reaching new heights as a batter since making his debut for India in 2008.

In addition to their on-field achievements, Ronaldo and Messi have been sweeping the social media landscape.

The Portugal international is the most followed individual on Instagram with 630 million followers, followed by the Argentine superstar, who has 503 million followers.



Virat Kohli has a whopping 269 million followers on Instagram, the 13th highest in the world by an individual. Meanwhile, former New Zealand

batter Ross Taylor asserted that Kohli is parallel to Ronaldo and Messi in terms of social media influence.

"Players are putting outposts endorsing products and things like that. Who would have thought of that in 2008? Someone like Kohli, who is a superstar in the world of cricket, but is also a global superstar in the world of sports," stated Taylor.

"In terms of Instagram and social media, he's up there with Ronaldo and Messi," he added.

It is worth mentioning here that Virat Kohli has thus far represented India in 522 international matches across formats and scored 26,773 runs with the help of 80 centuries and 139 fifties.

He was also a part of the Indian teams that won the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2011 and ICC Champions Trophy 2013.

PCB announces international cricketers registered for PSL 9 Draft

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) have announced that a total of four hundred and eighty-five international players from 22 nations have registered for the PSL 9 Draft 2024 scheduled to take place on 13 December at the National Cricket Academy, Lahore.

There are 46 players registered in the Platinum category while 76 players have signed up in the Diamond category.

The foreign players roster for the PSL Draft is boosted by the presence of England's Dawid Malan and South Africa's Reeza Hendricks, both of whom feature in the top 10 of the ICC Men's T20I player rankings for batters. World No. 5 T20I batter Rilee

Rossouw was earlier traded to Quetta Gladiators from Multan Sultans.

Sri Lanka spinner Maheesh Theekshana, Afghanistan duo Fazalhaq Farooqi and Mujeeb Ur Rahman and West Indies left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein, all ranked among the top 10 T20I bowlers, have made themselves available for the draft.

World No. 2 T20I all-rounder Mohammad Nabi is also a part of the draft.

The maximum number of players to register from a foreign country are from England (158).

The next on the list - from full member countries - is West Indies (58), Sri Lanka (40), Afghanistan (36), South Africa (30), Bangladesh (21), New Zealand (18), Australia (16),

Zimbabwe (11) and Ireland (nine).

A considerable number of players have also registered from associate member countries.

Some of the prominent players in the Platinum category include Daniel Sams, Ashton Agar (both Australia), Fazalhaq Farooqi, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Rahmanullah Gurbaz (all Afghanistan), Ben Duckett, Chris Jordan, David Willey, Dawid Malan, Luke Wood, Reece Topley, Tom Curran, Tymal Mills (all England), Sandeep Lamichhane (Nepal), James Neesham (New Zealand), Rassie van der Dussen, Imran Tahir (both South Africa), Maheesh Theekshana, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Dasun Shanaka (all Sri Lanka), Kieron Pollard, Rovman Powell,

Romario Shepherd, Brandon King and Kyle Mayers (all West Indies).

The notable players to feature in Diamond category include Azmatullah Omarzai, Mohammad Nabi (both Afghanistan), Ben McDermott (Australia), Litton Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Mahmudullah (all Bangladesh), Dan Lawrence, Gus Atkinson, Jordan Cox, Liam Dawson, Matthew Potts, Ollie Pope, Richard Gleeson, Sam Hain (all England), Tim Seifert, Martin Guptill, Chad Bowes (all New Zealand), George Linde, Lungi Ngidi, Reeza Hendricks, Wayne Parnell, Sisanda Magala (all South Africa), Dilshan Madushanka, Charith Asalanka, Dushmantha Chameera, Sadeera Samarawickrama (all



Israeli aggression

Smoke rises in Rafah city in the southern Gaza Strip, May 28, 2024. The Israeli army on Tuesday advanced into the heart of Rafah city in the southern Gaza Strip, amid clashes with Palestinian militants, according to Palestinian security sources and eyewitnesses. Security sources told Xinhua that Israeli tanks and Israeli army forces reached the city center amid heavy gunfire and airstrikes covering up the ground incursion.



Photo: Khaled Omar/Xinhua

Youm-i-Takbeer symbolises collective effort of all facets of national power: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Youm-i-Takbeer symbolised the collective effort of all facets of national power, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday as he hailed the day when the country became a nuclear power.

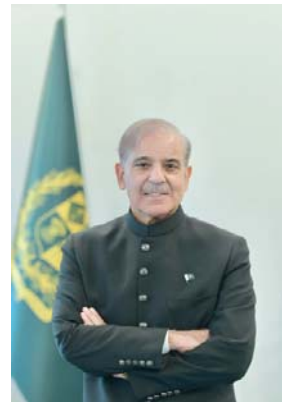
"May 28 signifies more than just a mere commemoration of a day; it encapsulates the narrative of our nation's arduous yet remarkable path towards establishing a credible minimum deterrence," he said in a post on X.

Youm-i-Takbeer is observed on May 28 to commemorate the day in 1998 when Pakistan joined the list of nuclear powers

after atomic tests in the hills of Chagai, Balochistan. Pakistan became the seventh nuclear nation in the world and the first Muslim state to have a nuclear arsenal.

On Monday, PM Shehbaz declared a public holiday on Tuesday (today) across the country on account of the day. In his post, PM Shehbaz praised former PM Nawaz Sharif's "bold leadership" by rejecting pressures and inducements to make Pakistan a nuclear armed nation.

Over the years, the PML-N has claimed that it was offered billions of dollars to stall the nuclear programme by the then US government. But the party said "absolutely no"



to the offer. "I also pay tribute to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme for his strategic foresight and unwavering

commitment to the cause," he said.

The premier added that the country overcame what seemed like an "insurmountable challenge" by achieving the milestone in its defence capabilities.

Acting president Gilani said that Youm-i-Takbeer served as a "testament to our nation's resilience, unwavering determination and commitment to maintaining regional peace and stability".

In a statement shared by the President's House, he described the day as a "pivotal moment in our history". He admitted that the "journey to becoming a nuclear state was not without its difficulties".

He said: "Our leadership and

scientists braved various challenges to achieve this remarkable feat." The acting president acknowledged the hard work of scientists and engineers "without whom this achievement would not have been possible".

Gilani highlighted that Bhutto's "efforts led to making Pakistan a nuclear state" and also appreciated former premier Benazir Bhutto's "decision as the opposition leader of the time to support Mian Nawaz Sharif for conducting nuclear tests".

He added that it was the collective determination of our civil and military leadership as well as our scientific acumen that propelled the country forward.

Pakistan Navy foils drug smuggling bid



Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy has foiled a major drug smuggling attempt in the North Arabian Sea, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Tuesday.

In a statement issued here, the ISPR said that the Pakistan Navy ship PNS Aslat seized a large quantity of narcotics in the North Arabian Sea during a regional maritime security patrol.

"The seized drugs are worth thousands of dollars in the international market. The successful operation against drug smuggling is the result of effective surveillance at sea by Pakistan Navy," the statement added.

The ISPR said that the ships of the Pakistan Navy regularly perform duties on Regional Maritime Security Patrol to prevent drug smuggling,

piracy and human trafficking at sea.

Earlier on May 20, the Airport Security Forces (ASF) thwarted a drug smuggling bid and arrested a Dubai-bound passenger at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi.

The ASF officials claimed to have arrested a passenger, named Mohammad Ahsan, traveling to Dubai from Karachi airport and recovered a total of 2.28 kg of ICE heroine and 420 grams of brown heroine from his possession.

The drug was expertly hid in a dough kneading machine, but the ASF staffers foiled the smuggling attempts by recovering the drugs during the search of the goods.

The ASF officials after initial investigation handed over the arrested accused along with the seized drugs to the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) officials.

26th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer being observed

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The nation is observing 26th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer today with national zeal and fervour in remembrance of successful nuclear tests conducted on this day in 1998 that made the defense of the country invincible.

On this day, Pakistan became seventh nuclear world power of the world with demonstration of nuclear capabilities and the first in the Muslim world after conducting nuclear tests at Chagai in Balochistan on 28th May, 1998 as a response to India's nuclear bomb tests on 11th and 13th May of the same year at Pokhran in Rajasthan state of India.

Pakistan became the seventh nuclear nation of the world and the first Muslim state on this day to have the nuclear arsenal in its defense stockpile to exercise deterrence for peaceful purposes.

Prime Minister has announced public holiday today for making Pakistan's defense impregnable.

Acting President, Prime Minister and Services Chiefs have felicitated the nation on the observance of the 26th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer.

In his message on the day, Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani has reiterated the resolve to contin-

ue working towards a peaceful and stable world.

He said, on this day, we successfully demonstrated our nuclear capabilities and joined the ranks of nuclear powers. The Acting President said that Youm-e-Takbeer serves as a testament to our nation's resilience, unwavering determination, and commitment to maintaining regional peace and stability.

He said Pakistan, as a responsible nuclear state, firmly believes in the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Congratulating the nation on Youm-e-Takbeer in his message on social media platform X, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the day symbolizes the collective effort of all facets of national power.

The Prime Minister said on this day, the entire nation vowed for the integrity of this country that no compromise will be made by accepting any kind of external pressure on country's defense.

He said Youm-e-Takbeer is a day to pay tribute to the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Army's initiative to make country's defense impregnable.

The Prime Minister also paid tribute to former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and scientists for their role in initiating and continuing Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Raof Hasan claims deal offers are still available to PTI founder

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson Raof Hasan has claimed that deal offers are still available for the former premier.

Talking to ARY News' program 11th Hour, Raof Hasan stated that the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) could have been released within ten days if he had agreed to a deal.

"Offers for deals are still available to Imran Khan".

According to Hasan, the PTI founder



had an 'offer' during his first ten days in Attack. However, the founder does not believe in making deals and gave preference to remaining in jail.

The PTI leader emphasized that the

day the PTI founder calls for protest, people will hit the streets in large numbers.

Raof Hasan asserted that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is a party of the people. He conveyed the public's sentiment, stating that people are urging leaders to leave their offices and take to the streets. The public also warned that they will not forgive any form of compromise.

Last week, the Central Information Secretary of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Raof Hasan said that he agrees with Rana Sanaullah's state-

ment, underscoring the importance of collaboration among all political parties in the country.

In a recent episode of ARY News program "Off The Record", Raof Hasan expressed optimism about problem-solving, saying "There is always a way, if two individuals are willing to solve the problem."

He highlighted the significant divide between PTI and JUI-F in the past but noted that both sides are working on Terms of References (TORs) to address issues, indicating a positive shift.

FBR's WeBOC system to be replaced with new system

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has announced that Pakistan Customs will be replacing its existing WeBOC customs clearance system with a new, state-of-the-art Customs Digital Management System.

According to the details released by the FBR, the customs transformation project involves the deployment of advanced hyper-automation tools. The Pakistan Single Window Company, as the designated implementation partner of Pakistan Customs, will be responsible for quickly developing the new Customs Digital Management System.

This move aims to replace the aging WeBOC system with a more robust and comprehensive digital system, which will improve compliance and ease of doing business.

The FBR further informed that Pakistan Customs has successfully completed the business process mapping of its core functions during the first five months of the World Bank-funded project for the transformation of Customs operations. This project was designed in April 2021 and has been in implementation since December 2023.

Pakistan, Cambodia sign MoU on trade, investment promotion

Spokesman Report

BELJING: Pakistan and Cambodia on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a joint trade committee.

The deal was inked in Phnom Penh between Cambodian Minister of Commerce Cham Nimul and Pakistani Ambassador to Cambodia Zaheeruddin Babar Thaheem. Xinhua reported while quoting a news release from Cambodia's Ministry of Commerce.

"This MoU will significantly contribute to the elevation of the two countries' relations, particularly on trade and economic cooperation," Nimul said at the event.

"The joint trade committee established under this memorandum will serve as a mechanism that allows both sides to explore ways to create favourable conditions for businesses and investors and to diversify economies, expand production bases, and foster bilateral trade," she added.

Under the MoU, both countries will work together and actively engage the private sectors, including chambers of commerce and business associations, to promote trade and economic activities, the news release said. The two sides will exchange information on trade, promote small and medium enterprises, and boost mutual exports, it added.

China concerned over Israel's air strike on Rafah refugee camp

Spokesman Report

BELJING: China on Tuesday expressed serious concerns over Israel's air strikes on Rafah refugee camp in Gaza which killed more than 40 Palestinians including children. "China is seriously concerned about Israel's military action against Rafah," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Mao Ning said during a regular briefing held here.

The spokesperson said that Chinese side has noted that the International Court of Justice has issued a third interim measures order on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which explicitly called for the cessation of military action in the relevant area for the first time. This reflects the general consensus and strong call of the international community to urgently hope for a ceasefire, protect civilians and ease the humanitarian crisis. The interim measures order should be effectively implemented as soon as possible, she added. Terming China's position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict consistent and clear, she said, "We oppose any violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and demand that all parties protect civilians and civilian facilities." China strongly urges Israel to listen to the voice of the international community and stop attacking Rafah and asks that the international community should work together to alleviate and end the humanitarian disaster in Gaza, she added.

Algeria seeks emergency UNSC meeting on Israel's 'massacre' in Rafah

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) will hold an emergency meeting on Tuesday, following the brutal airstrike by Israel near Rafah, a city in the southern Gaza Strip, that left dozens dead. The meeting was requested by Algeria, a non-permanent member of the 15-member Council, and backed by Slovenia, diplomats said.

The Palestinian health authority in Gaza said at least 50 people were killed and dozens injured in the Sunday airstrike that hit tents housing displaced people. Most of the victims of the airstrike were women and children, the health authority said, describing the incident as a "massacre". On Sunday, Israeli warplanes fired eight missiles towards makeshift shelters housing internally displaced persons in Rafah's northwest, killing at least 50 Palestinians. Many world leaders and international organiza-

tions have vehemently condemned the attack, citing the already desperate situation of the victims. "There is no safe place in Gaza. This horror must stop," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres posted on social media. ActionAid UK, the British chapter of an international relief organization, noted that the shelters struck during the assault "were supposed to be safe havens for innocent civilians, yet they became targets of brutal violence."

"Children, women, and men are being burned alive under their tents and shelters," it noted. Reacting to the Israeli strike, the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas called it an "egregious affront" to a recent ruling by the International Court of Justice, which ordered the Israeli regime to "immediately" halt its offensive against Rafah. Since Oct. 7, the Israeli war in Gaza has claimed the lives of more than 36,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, throughout the coastal enclave.

HEC budget reduced to Rs25bn

Continued from Page 1

the Ministry of Finance regarding the reduction of the recurrent grant and the development budget from the Planning Commission and said that this would have a very negative

impact on the universities.

He said he is also writing letters to the finance minister and the prime minister on this matter. He said that in 2018, the budget of the HEC was Rs65 billion, but now it has been reduced to Rs25 billion.