



Situation is under control in Bishkek: Ambassador of Kyrgyz Republic claims

Ambassador of Kyrgyz Republic for Pakistan H. E. Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev briefed the media in Islamabad regarding the Bishkek events in which Pakistani students sustained injuries and hundreds of students flew back to Pakistan after hostile locals attacked students pursuing education. (Details on Page 5)



Pakistan to launch second satellite into space today (Thursday)

Pakistan's latest modern Communication Satellite, MM1, is all set to be launched into space on Thursday (May 30). Radio Pakistan reported, after the successful launch of Satellite ICUBE Qamar. The satellite — PAKSAT MM1 — will be launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Center (XSLC), China. The state-run broadcaster reported that the SUPARCO MM1 satellite is a result of the tireless efforts of Pakistani scientists and engineers.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Calls on

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Buddhist Monks led by Minister of Budhassasana and Religious Affairs of Sri Lanka H.E Vidura Wickramanayaka calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan recalls its role in UN peacekeeping on I. P. Day

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Today, Pakistan joins the international community in commemorating International Peacekeepers Day, paying tribute to the brave men and women who have served in United Nations peacekeeping missions around the world.

Pakistan is one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping, with around 3,000 Peacekeepers currently serving in missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Abyei, Central African Republic, Cyprus, Western Sahara and Somalia. Since 1960, Pakistan has contributed 235,000 troops to UN peacekeeping operations in 48 United Nations Missions in 29 countries including almost all continents of the world.

Pakistan is proud of its long-standing commitment to UN peacekeeping. Our peacekeepers have demonstrated exceptional courage, professionalism and dedication to promoting peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions. Overall, 181 Pakistani peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

On this International Peacekeeping Day, we honour their



service and sacrifice for noble cause of global peace.

Pakistan also remains committed to United Nations Uniform Gender Parity Strategy (UGPS) of United Nations for enhanced representation of women in uniform, Secretary-General's Action for peace (A4P) initiative, which seeks to improve the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations by enhancing their capacity, coherence and responsiveness. Additionally, Pakistan also supports initiatives aimed at improving the safety and security of UN peacekeepers, particularly those serving in high-risk environments.

Pakistan's contributions to UN peacekeeping are a testament to our nation's commitment to international peace and security and Pakistani peacekeepers will continue towards uplift of local communities in troubled regions.

PM highlights ancient heritage of Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday highlighted that Pakistan was proud of its ancient Buddhist heritage, which flourished in the northwest Pakistan in the shape of Gandhara art and culture, over two thousand years ago. He underscored the importance that his government attached to interfaith harmony.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of esteemed Buddhist leaders that called on

him. PM highlights ancient heritage of Pakistan The delegation is visiting Pakistan to attend a symposium and an exhibition titled "From Gandhara to the World," organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The delegation included Sri Lanka's Minister for Budhassasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs Vidura Wikramanayaka, Most Venerable Thich Duc Tuan from Vietnam, Most Venerable Anil Sakya from Thailand and Dr Keshabman Shakya from Nepal.

Minister for Religious Affairs Ch. Salik Hussain, Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Cultural Heritage Attaullah Tarar, SAPM Syed Tariq Fatemi also attended the meeting. The prime minister warmly welcomed the delegation and expressed his gratitude for their participation in the symposium, being held in connection with the 'Vesak Day' that commemorates the birth, enlightenment and passing away of Lord Buddha. He also acknowledged the valuable contributions of the Buddhist scholars and monks to the

promotion of interfaith harmony and understanding.

During the meeting, the prime minister and the delegation discussed ways to strengthen interfaith dialogue and cooperation, as well as opportunities for cultural and academic exchanges between Pakistan and the Buddhist majority countries. "The meeting concluded with a resolve to continue exploring avenues for mutual understanding and cooperation, and to work together towards a more harmonious and peaceful world. In that connection, the possibil-

ity of establishing a joint forum for dialogue and collaboration was especially discussed," it was added. The Buddhist leaders appreciated the prime minister's commitment to fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect for all religions.

They also commended Pakistan's efforts to preserve and promote its Buddhist heritage sites and cultural artifacts. The delegation members showed their keen desire to collaborate with Pakistan in preserving and promoting Buddhist heritage in Pakistan.

Progress made in Raouf Hassan attack case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The investigators, in a case pertaining to the attack on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesman Raouf Hassan, made progress as they discovered specifics about the vehicle used by the transgressors who allegedly attacked him, ARY News reported.

According to sources, the attackers used a black Mehran car to travel to Star Market, the crime scene. The investigators have obtained Close Circuit Television (CCTV) camera footage of the private CCTV Project within a two-kilometer radius surrounding the crime scene.

The sources added that the investigating team is also examining footage of the private CCTV cameras. They added that the complete route of the black Mehran car is being examined while a report from the National Database Regulatory Authority is awaited.

Xi holds talks with Egyptian president

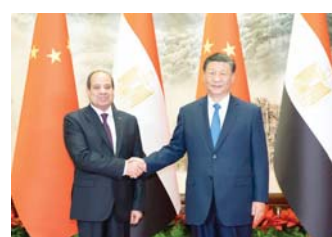
Xinhua

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in Beijing on Wednesday.

Xi noted that, 68 years ago, Egypt was the first Arab and African state to establish diplomatic relations with China. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the China-Egypt comprehensive strategic partnership, he said, adding that over the past decade, the two heads of state have worked together to guide the vigorous development of bilateral relations.

China-Egypt relations have become a vivid illustration of China's solidarity, coordination, and mutually-beneficial win-win cooperation with Arab, African, Islamic and developing countries, Xi said, adding that under the new circumstances, building a more enriched and dynamic China-Egypt relationship meets the common expectations of the two peoples.

Xi said that China is ready to work with Egypt to deepen mutual trust,



advance cooperation, build a China-Egypt community with a shared future in the new era, and contribute to regional and world peace, stability, development and prosperity.

Xi stressed that China is striving in all aspects to build a strong and prosperous country and achieve national rejuvenation, and China and Egypt are facing historic opportunities for exchanges and cooperation in various fields. The two sides should continue to firmly support each other and work together to promote common development, Xi added.

China is ready to work with Egypt to tap the potential of cooperation in traditional areas such as infrastructure, industry, electricity and agricul-

ture, explore cooperation in emerging areas such as health care, information and communications, and renewable energy, deepen economic, trade and investment cooperation, and encourage more Chinese enterprises to invest and do business in Egypt, Xi said.

Xi urged efforts to organize the 2024 China-Egypt year of partnership, expand personnel and cultural exchanges, and make the Luban Workshop in Egypt a benchmark for China-Africa vocational education cooperation.

China supports Egypt in playing a greater role in international and regional affairs, and stands ready to further strengthen coordination and cooperation with Egypt on multi-lateral platforms such as the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS cooperation mechanism, advocate an equal and orderly multi-polar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and jointly safeguard international fairness and justice, as well as the common interests of developing countries, Xi said.

Lawyers who attacked Maneka not from PTI: Zafar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and Senator Barrister Syed Ali Zafar has denied the involvement of PTI lawyers in the attack on Khawar Manika within the court premises.

Speaking on the news program "Rubaroo" on Wednesday, Barrister Ali Zafar stated that the lawyers involved in the attack were not among those he knows from the PTI.

He emphasized that no lawyer has the right to physically assault anyone. Barrister Zafar demanded that the licenses of those involved in the incident be revoked.

Regarding the clarification provided by PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on the

Continued on Page 8

Missing poet Ahmad Farhad found in police custody

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Poet Ahmad Farhad who went missing from the federal capital reportedly for his firebrand poetry has been found in the custody of Azad Jammu Kashmir police, Islamabad High Court was told on Wednesday.

The Islamabad High Court heard the case regarding the recovery of the missing Kashmiri poet, Ahmad Farhad. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani presided over the proceedings on Wednesday.

Attorney General Mansoor Awan, Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Dogar,



and Minister for Law and Justice Nazeer Tarar appeared before the

court.

The Attorney General informed the court that the whereabouts of the missing poet Ahmad Farhad have been determined. He is a suspect in a case registered in the Bagh district and is currently under police custody.

This revelation marks a crucial

development in the case, which has garnered widespread attention. Farhad's disappearance had sparked concerns across the country, prompting demands for his recovery.

The court had given one week to the attorney general to locate the poet, who is of Kashmiri origins.

SC says criticism by UK High Commissioner on bat decision 'unjustified'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has dismissed British High Commissioner Jane Marriott's criticism of the court's decision regarding the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's "bat" election symbol as 'unjustified'.

In a letter written by the Registrar of the Supreme Court on the instructions of the Chief Justice of Pakistan, the court responded to remarks made by Marriott at the Asma Jahangir conference.

The court stated that all decisions made by the Supreme Court of Pakistan are within the framework of the country's constitution and law. The decision concerning the PTI's "bat" symbol was also made in accordance with the constitu-

tion and law, and therefore, any criticism regarding it is unjustified.

The letter added that the decision to take away the symbol was based on the fact that the party did not hold intra-party elections despite the law requiring them.

However, the letter added that the SC has itself acknowledged and addressed the mistakes it made in the past, in an effort to prevent them from being repeated. It went on to say that if the Commissioner has criticised the Supreme Court's decision and called for an 'open society' then it should reciprocate as well.

The letter also added that copies may be delivered to the president and lady chief justice of England.

JICA Field Survey Team visits Children's Hospital Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency) field survey team visited Children's Hospital Multan and met Dean Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti in his office.

The JICA team along with Dean Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti and MS Dr. Kamran Asif made a detailed visit to the various departments of the Children's Hospital, all the ICUs, operation theatres, wards and the old block. Dean Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti led the JICA team including Mr. Sumoto Tadayoshi, Mr. Nishikawa Kohei, Mr. Sarmad Hashmi, Mr. Abo Hiroshi, Miss Seyama Shoko, Mr. Hiroka Hirotsuka, Mr. Uchida Kazofumi and Mr. Suzuki Kazuhiro to visit the Children's Complex Hospital Multan.

The purpose of JICA's visit was to ascertain the current challenges



and discuss future collaborations for better healthcare delivery at Children's Complex Hospital Multan.

Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani visits the Department of Pediatric Medicine



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical College University Professor Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani visited the Department of Pediatric Medicine the children affected by measles and the medical facilities provided to them to prevent the possibility of further spread of this disease. A detailed review of the steps taken for Head of Department of Pediatric Medicine Prof. Dr. Azam Khan informed to Vice Chancellor Prof Mahnaz Khakwani about all the details in this regard. On this occasion, the Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical College University directed the medical staff to ensure uninterrupted provision of the best treatment facilities to the affected children in every possible way and assured all possible support. MS Nishtar Hospital Dr. Muhammad Kazim Khan and other senior faculty members were also present on the occasion along with Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Prof. Mehnaz Khakwani.

26th anniversary of Youme Takbeer marked at Shah Abdul Latif University

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Institute of International Relations, Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur in collaborations with the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh, Karachi commemorated 26th Anniversary of Youme Takbeer at Diplomatic Corridor of New Academic Block of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur.

In solidarity and obligation with the motherland a grand celebration of 26th Youme Takbeer were held at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur.

Professor Dr Liaqat Ali Chandio, Director Institute of International Relations, Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur was in chair, while Principal Cadet College Khairpur Col Aamir Hayat was a keynote speaker.

Talking to the participants Dr Chandio highlighted the importance of this day and enlightened the audience through his detailed intellectual discourse on the theme. He said that nuclear tests of May 28, 1998 were the strategic compulsion of Pakistan to make parity with her strategic regional rivals. This capability has the defense of Pakistan more safe and secure. He stressed more on the balance between the traditional and non-traditional security dynamics of Pakistan. He deeply appreciated the role of partner organization the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh, (CISSS), Karachi for their generous support in organizing this event. Dr Chandio in his talk briefed about future joint ventures with CISSS & other organizations to make a just and genuine academic narrative in fields of International Relations.

In his keynote speech Principal Cadet College Khairpur Col Aamir Hayat acclaimed the importance and sanctity of celebrating

Other faculty members Dr Muhammad Ramzan Kolachi, Dr Zaheer Hussain Soomro, Mr Aijaz Ahmad Shaikh also spoke at the occasion.

Mr Ishrat Ali Meerani, Ms Shaheebano along with brilliant students graced the occasion.

Finally, Mr Sarfaraz Ali Korejo honored to exchange the vote of thanks followed by a group photo.

Pakistan Youth Parliament Delegation visits Parliament House

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: A delegation from the Pakistan Youth Parliament, led by President Muhammad Abubakar, visited the Parliament House today. The five-member delegation included Senior Vice President Muhammad Faizan, Coordinators Umair Chand and Nauman Majeed, and President Punjab Malik Waqas Awan. During their visit, the delegation engaged in productive discussions with various prominent parliamentarians. Among those they met were Aleem Khan, Federal Minister; Sheharyar Afridi, Chairman PTI; Barrister Gohar, Chairman Sunni Ittehad Council; Sahibzada Hamid Raza; Mehmood Khan Achakzai; and Zartaj Gul. The meetings focused on fostering youth involvement in national governance and exploring avenues for greater collaboration between the youth and the government. President Muhammad Abubakar emphasized the importance of such interactions in bridging the gap between the youth and the political leadership. He stated, "Our aim is to ensure that the voices of the youth are heard and that they have a platform to contribute to the development of Pakistan. The support from our parliamentarians is crucial in achieving this goal. The delegation's visit is part of an ongoing initiative by the Pakistan Youth Parliament to engage with key stakeholders in the government and to advocate for policies that address the needs and aspirations of the young population."

Azad Kashmir State Disaster Management Commission approves disaster relief package for Jammu and Kashmir

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: An extraordinary meeting of the Azad Kashmir State Disaster Management Commission was held here with Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq in the chair. Besides top officials of the Commission the meeting was attended by government ministers including Diwan Ali Khan Chaghtai, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, Chaudhry Aamir Yasin, Javed Iqbal Badhanvi and several others. DG SDMA Raja Tahir Mumtaz, on the occasion presented a detailed briefing about the budget, performance and emergency response activities carried out through the authority during natural calamities. During the meeting the commission approved the purchase of relief items from the funds allocated for State Disaster Management.

The commission also approved the assistance package for the family of the SDMA assistant director who died on duty. Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Haq directed the concerned authorities of the department to be more vigilant and proactive in dealing with natural disasters. The PM said that refresher courses should be arranged for the employees of the SDMA so that they could be able to deal with any kind of emergency situation effectively. He said that the protection of life and property of the people was the government's responsibility. The Prime Minister has also directed to the state disaster management authorities to conduct a seismic study of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad. The Prime Minister further stated that the employees of the rescue agencies should be equipped with modern equipment and machinery so that they could perform their duties in an efficient manner. He, however, maintained that the purchase and procurement of all machinery and relief items should be done through e-tendering to ensure transparency in the whole process.

Social welfare

ISLAMABAD: A charity distributing free food to deserving peoples at Sector G-8 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Economic Development in the Country is the Top Priority of the Federal and Punjab Government: Governor Punjab

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Khwaja Jalaluddin Rumi, former president of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, met the Governor of Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here at the Governor's House, Lahore. Khawaja Jalaluddin Rumi congratulated him on assuming the post of Governor of Punjab. Punjab Governor Sardar Salim Haider Khan appreciated the social services of Jalaluddin Rumi. During the meet-

ing, various issues including education and national economy were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that economic development in the country is the top priority of the federal and Punjab government. He said that the government needs to pay immediate attention to the problems of industrialists. In addition to the reduction in electricity and gas rates, there is an urgent need to review the markup of banks. Jalaluddin Rumi Jalaluddin Rumi

said that the foundation will provide clean water in South Punjab, daily food supply to the needy and other public health projects. is working

In this regard, we need the patronage of the government. Jalaluddin Rumi invited Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan to visit South Punjab soon. Governor Punjab said that he will visit South Punjab soon. Governor Punjab said that I will try to solve the problems of the people at their doorstep.

said that the foundation will provide clean water in South Punjab, daily food supply to the needy and other public health projects. is working

Awami National Party honors sacrifices of Takkar martyrs at big ceremony

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Organized by the Awami National Party Tehsil Takht bhai, a big and dignified ceremony was held to honor the sacrifices of the martyrs of Takkar in the Tragedy of Takkar on May 28, 1930. The service was held in the Hujra of the late Akbar Khan Lala Takkar. It was presided over by the president and moderator of Awami National Party Tehsil Takht bhai, Mian Nasrullah Bacha. On this occasion, Quran recitation was also done for the souls of the martyrs. Fatiha will be recited in the memory of the martyrs who were martyred in the war of 1930. And special prayers for raising their ranks were asked in the ceremony, besides the family members of the martyrs who were martyred in the war of independence. Awami National Party Mardan District President Imran Khan Manduri District Vice President Jawad Khan Takkar District Additional General Secretary Sajjad Hoti, Deputy Secretary Dr. Akhtar Iqbal, Khudai Khitmatgar Lal Sharaf Khan Advocate, ANP Tehsil Takht bhai President Mian Nasrullah Bacha General Secretary Intiaz Khan Advocate. Former candidate of PK 61 Jamal Nasir, Arshad Takkar, Sajjad Takkar, Farhan Takkar, Sher Ali Shah, Umarzada Afghan, Sajid Takkar, Sultan Takkar and others praised the historical role of God's servants under the leadership of Bacha Khan Baba. Detailed light was given on the sacrifices of the martyrs of Takkar. And tributes were paid to them in magnificent words. Later, in the form of a procession, wreaths of flowers were placed on the memorial of the martyrs of Takkar in the form of a procession. Promised that the leadership of the Awami National Party in the background of the current domestic and international situation, the statement given by Bacha Khan Baba's followers will implement the statement with all their might.

Railways union demands 100% increase in salaries, pensions in upcoming budget

Abdul Majid

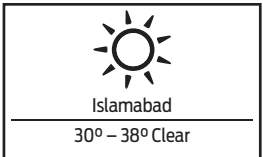
FAISALABAD: Railway Prime Union Chairman Ziauddin Ansari, President Sheikh Muhammad Anwar, Secretary General Khair Muhammad Tunio, Chief Organizer Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry have demanded that in the upcoming budget, the salaries, pensions, medical allowance and house rent of the present and retired employees should be increased by 100%. And the income tax applied to pensioners should be abolished, instead of eliminating more than thirty thousand vacant posts in the railways immediately, children of serving and retired employees and TLA employees should be given permanent jobs. The appointment of



contract officers and highly paid consultants and MP Ones in Pakistan Railways should be banned and the appointed MP One officers should be dismissed from the railways immediately. The Ministry of Finance should take responsibility for the salary and pension of railways like other federal institutions, the government should immediately give a bailout package of Rs. go In the upcoming budget, Railways should be given the same budget as the

National Highway Authority. He said that the government has a budget of trillions of rupees to reward the people of their choice in the name of IPPs and Benazirankum support program, while the government has a budget of Rs. There is no budget. He has said that according to the Railway Charter, the railway is not a commercial but a welfare institution. Just as institutions like motorway, metro, orange train, government educational institutions and

hospitals provide facilities to the public with the financial support of the government, similarly, railways is also the largest institution providing affordable travel facilities to the public in Pakistan. Previous governments have used this institution as a welfare institution for their political interests, but the railways were deprived of the financial support they needed from the government. Railways need to be put on its feet immediately.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:19 am
Zohr 12:05 pm
Asr 5:03 pm
Maghrib 7:12 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 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation 9209224

Equal World Campaign for Summit of the Future launched by Sightsavers

PNP

ISLAMABAD: In September 2024 world leaders will come together for the Summit of the Future in New York, to accelerate progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These global goals aim to reduce poverty and inequality by 2030, but with the deadline looming and 50% of time gone, only 12% of targets have been met.

Sightsavers' Equal World campaign says without immediate, radical and inclusive actions, and underrepresented voices of youth with disabilities not being heard, these goals will be failed.

Ahead of the upcoming UN summit, Sightsavers has launched a campaign in Pakistan to call on government to commit to disability-inclusive and specific accelerated actions for economic empowerment of youth with disabilities in line with the aims of the Summit of the Future.

Munazza Gillani, Director Pakistan and Middle East has expressed her commitment to this and said, "I would like to emphasize the critical importance of advocating for the rights of youth with disabilities in the context of the upcoming UN Summit of the Future. This summit presents a unique opportunity to address the challenges faced by young people with disabilities and to ensure their full inclusion and participation in shaping the future. At Sightsavers, we believe that every individual, regardless of their abilities, deserves equal rights and opportunities to thrive and contribute to society."

BISP disburses Rs 633.979 million to 60,379 deserving beneficiaries in Sindh

PPA

KARACHI: The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Sindh has disbursed Rs 633.979 million to 60,379 deserving women in eight districts of Sindh province under the Benazir Kafalat program. The disbursements were made during the first phase of the program, which covers eight districts in Sindh, including seven districts of Karachi Division and Hyderabad. The BISP administration ensured transparent and efficient disbursements without any deductions through camp sites set up in the respective districts. "The Benazir Kafalat program empowers women and supports low-income families," said Director General BISP Sindh, Zulfiqar Ali Sheikh.



"We ensure fair and transparent disbursements, and deserving women receive their due stipend without any hassle." A total of 228,755 deserving families in Karachi and Hyderabad received their quarterly financial assistance of Rs 10,500 each, along with their educational stipends, under the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24. The BISP administration established 34 camp sites in eight districts of Sindh, providing transparent and convenient disbursements. Basic facilities, including clean drinking water, seating arrangements, and shade, are available at all camp sites.

He further informed that to address grievances or complaints, the BISP administration constituted a Taskforce and established a complaint cell at the Central Zone office in Karachi. Beneficiaries can also contact the BISP official free helpline number at 0800-26477 for assistance.



Conference

ISLAMABAD: Reema Aftab, DG Special Services Registration NADRA addressing the conference titled "National Street Children Conference – I am Somebody" under the auspices of Muslim Hands and Maidaan at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

National Street Children Conference: "I Am Somebody" kicks off in Islamabad

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Muslim Hands inaugurated the National Street Children Conference titled "I Am Somebody" today at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel. The two-day conference aims to create a platform for dialogue, action plans, and partnerships to improve the lives of street-connected children in Pakistan. Opening Remarks: Executive Director of Muslim Hands, Mr. Javed Gillani, emphasized the need for collective action and strategic partnerships to transform the lives of street children. He announced the launch of the nationwide campaign "I AM SOMEBODY," which pledges to facilitate the legal registration and school enrollment of half a million children across Pakistan over the next five years. This campaign aims to address urgent issues of birth registration and education access, mobilizing support and fostering collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure every child's right to education and identity.



Panel Discussion on Strengthening Legal Framework for Street Children: Experts discussed legal barriers faced by street children and proposed solutions for enhanced protection and rights. The discussion highlighted the need for legal aid, access to justice, and technological solutions for birth registration.

Pakistan Cables completes the commissioning of 2MW on grid solar power plant at Nooriabad



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Cables, the nation's pioneer wires and cables manufacturer, has completed the successful commissioning of its 2MW captive solar power plant located at its new manufacturing facility in Nooriabad, Sindh.

The project was executed by Atlas Energy Limited for Pakistan Cables within stipulated timelines and has commenced operations as of April 23, 2024.

The installed capacity of solar power plants is an investment in renewable energy initiatives by the Company. "We are committed to pursuing environmentally friendly initiatives in the future at our state-of-the-art manufacturing facility at Nooriabad, Sindh. We actively advocate use of renewable energy sources that save cost and contribute to the circular economy," said Fahd K. Chinoy, Chief Executive Officer – Pakistan Cables Ltd.

Pakistan Cables is the first and only building material Company in Pakistan to have science-based emission reduction targets validated by SBTi. The Company's new state of the art manufacturing facility spread across 42 acres of land in Pakistan, is equipped with cutting edge technology and equipment, set to transform the industry.

Earlier the Company also announced installation of Pakistan's first 69kV CCV line also at its manufacturing facility in Nooriabad, Sindh.

Youth-Led Initiatives Drive Momentum for iTFA Regulations in Pakistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a significant push towards the regulation of industrially produced trans fats (iTFA) in Pakistan, youth leaders under the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign from various educational institutes have successfully arranged a series of back-to-back consultative roundtable discussions. These events have underscored the need for adopting best practice policies by setting no more than 2 percent limit of iTFA of the total fats in all foods. This campaign, spearheaded by Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) with support from the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MoNHSR&C), and the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI), aims at advocating conflict of interest free iTFA regulations through such dialogues.

Dr. Waqas Ahmed, Assistant Professor at UVAS and the university's focal person for youth engagement, expressed his admiration for the proactive involvement of the youth. He stated, "The fact that this dialogue is being led by youth leaders is highly encouraging, not just for the young participants but also for the coalition advocating for iTFA regulations."

In continuation of this momentum, the second policy dialogue, 'Limiting trans fats in food supply chain: Policy options' emphasizing the urgency of iTFA regulations in the country, was organized at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad.

ISSI concludes MoU with Turkiye's Yunus Emre Enstitusu

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Further strengthening its international collaboration, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Yunus Emre Enstitusu, Turkiye. The MoU signing ceremony included the participation of the Turkish Ambassador in Islamabad, His Excellency Mehmet Pacaci; Dr. Halil Toker, Coordinator of Yunus Emre Enstitusu; Turkiye, Dr. Yousaf Junaid, Ambassador of Pakistan in Ankara; Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA; and Team CAMEA. While giving her introductory

remarks, Ms. Amina Khan said that this MoU is a testament of the long-standing relationship between Pakistan and Turkiye which is built on mutual respect and shared history. Collaboration between ISSI and the Yunus Emre Enstitusu is a step towards further enhancing as well as opening new avenues for cultural and academic cooperation between the two countries. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his remarks, welcomed the conclusion of the MoU stating that it will lead to further fortifying the relationship which goes back centuries and is underpinned by cultural and religious affinities as well as shared history. He added that Pakistan and Turkiye are two

indispensable partners and that initiatives such as these further reinforce the efforts of the two governments to further deepen their multifaceted partnership. He concluded by saying that effective implementation of this MoU will provide a range of opportunities for collaboration in the research and academic fields and people-to-people exchanges. Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci, while expressing his views, said that the relationship between Turkiye and Pakistan is very special. He added that more academic collaborations are needed to strengthen and further expand the relationship in various dimensions. He also said that

there is a need for further studies on the present opportunities and future horizons of Pakistan-Turkish relations. Dr. Yousaf Junaid, while speaking on the occasion, said that the signing of the MoU between ISSI and Yunus Emre Enstitusu will pave the way for a closer understanding in the already very sound relationship. Sharing a historical perspective on the ties between Pakistan and Turkiye, he stressed the need for taking the message of this special relationship to the youth in both countries. He assured of the Embassy's full support in implementation of the MoU. Dr. Halil Toker, in his remarks, said that the Yunus Emre Enstitusu has a significant presence



in Pakistan and that the signing of this MoU is of unique significance as it will pave way for further collaboration in various

spheres. He concluded by saying that such initiatives will take Pakistan-Turkiye relations to further heights.

The ceremony ended with the signing of the MoU by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and Dr. Halil Toker.

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Freedom of Speech and Thought: A Historical Perspective

The freedom of speech, expression, thought, and assembly does not have direct references in ancient history, but various rudimentary signs of encoding them exist. In Draco's Code (c. 620 BCE) and Solon's Reforms (c. 594 BCE) in Ancient Greece, there was an emphasis on public debate. The establishment of the Assembly (Ekklesia) allowed for more open political discourse among citizens, particularly in legal and political matters. The Law of the Twelve Tables (c. 449 BCE) in Ancient Rome encoded slander and defamation with penalties for false accusations and insults. Hammurabi's Code (c. 1754 BCE) in Ancient Babylon emphasized retributive justice, where false accusations and bearing false witness were punishable, highlighting the importance of truthfulness and protection of one's reputation.

During the medieval period, laws regarding freedom of speech, expression, and assembly were significantly influenced by religious doctrines and sociopolitical structures of the time. The concept of individual rights as understood today was not fully developed, and speech and assembly were often tightly controlled by religious and secular authorities. These were encoded in Canon Law, Islamic Law (Sharia), and Common Law. Amongst the monolithic religions, the injunctions on freedom of speech, thought, expression, and assembly are enunciated in the most comprehensive manner. The Holy Qur'an calls upon humankind and says, "There shall be no compulsion in (acceptance of) the religion." "And speak gently to the People." "Avoid false statements." "O you people of faith, fear from Allah and

always say the right words." "So what would you love after clearing the truth except for error?" "And don't mix the truth with falsehood." "And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and justice." Invite all the people to your Lord with wisdom and best preaching, and only argue with them most graciously. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said, "To tell a word of truth to a tyrant king is the best form of Jihad." In Islam, "Freedom of Speech and Expression" is regulated by Sharia, the Quran, Hadith, and the consensus of Islamic scholars (ijma), where intellectual freedom, particularly in scientific and philosophical debates, is protected and emphasizes social harmony and the maintenance of public order.

In Hinduism, principles like Satya (truth) and Ahimsa (non-violence) guide honest and open communication, with respect for teachers and elders being paramount. Buddhism promotes right speech (Samma Vacha), advocating for truthful, kind, and beneficial communication, while avoiding negativity and hurtful speech. In the post-medieval period, the first formal act to control, censor, and abridge freedom of speech, thought, and expression was England's Licensing Act of 1662. This act required all printing presses and publications to obtain a license and controlled what could be printed and distributed, aimed at restricting seditious, treasonous, heretical, and offensive materials. The act authorized the government to search homes and businesses for unlicensed presses and printed materi-



Analysis
Qamar Bashir

(1867) required printers and publishers to obtain licenses before operating, giving the government gatekeeping powers. The Vernacular Press Act (1878) and the Press Act (1910) punished publications that printed seditious material critical of the government or content deemed a threat to public order. These laws allowed the government to seize printing presses and publications, arrest and imprison publishers and editors, and impose heavy fines. The evolution of media laws in Pakistan bears a notable resemblance to the restrictive laws imposed by the British in India and earlier in England. Though Section 19 of the Constitution grants freedom of speech, expression, and freedom of the press, these rights have been largely ignored by successive governments since the inception of Pakistan. Instead, these governments have focused more on the reasonable restrictions imposed by law.

As a result, there are over 52 laws, rules, regulations, and codes of conduct primarily designed to empower the government to discipline the press and media rather than promoting a free, professional, and responsible press. Consequently, Pakistan's media environment mirrors the conditions that existed in England before 1695 and in British India. The England's Licensing Act of 1662 was copied almost entirely by the "Press and Publications Ordinance of 1963" reflecting the same ethos of control, requiring newspapers to obtain government permission to publish. Subsequent regimes, especially military dictatorships, continued this legacy with stringent laws and censorship practices. General Zia-ul-Haq's era (1977-1988) saw the imposition of martial law regulations that severely restricted media freedom, akin to the oppressive British laws. More recent laws, like the "Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act of 2016," have continued this trend by extending state control into the digital realm, echoing the colonial strategy of stifling dissent and controlling public discourse. This continuity underscores the enduring impact of colonial legal frameworks on contemporary media governance in Pakistan, highlighting the persistent struggle for genuine freedom of thought, speech, and expression in the country. Despite periods of relative liberalization, the legacy of colonial control mechanisms remains evident in the regulatory environment governing Pakistani media today. *Writer is Former Press Secretary to the President, Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC*

Overwhelming disaster

Vital medical supplies are fast running out in Gaza's remaining hospitals, the UN health agency warned Wednesday, amid reports of continuing Israeli bombing in the besieged enclave. "We have distributed an enormous amount of essential medical supplies, but it's not enough. I mean, this is such an overwhelming disaster, it's not enough," said Dr Rik Peepkorn, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Palestine.

Speaking in Geneva on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly, the senior WHO official echoed widespread international condemnation of the Israeli airstrike at a camp for displaced people at Tal as-Sultan northwest of Rafah, that left scores dead on Sunday. "WHO actually deplores this attack on displaced people. It demonstrates that there is no safe place in Gaza at all," he told UN News, a media website, as videos from the field hospital treating victims distributed by the UN aid office, OCHA, showed an injured father weeping while describing the moment his children died. "When the strike hit, I was thinking of my children," said Mohammad Al Ghouf. "I promised them to get to the supermarket and do some shopping and to hug them. But, unfortunately, I am here, and they are in a different place." From the same OCHA footage taken on Monday, the medical director of the International Medical Corps (IMC) field hospital described the grim task of preparing lifeless victims for burial. "I saw the dead body of a father who was basically holding his child, perhaps around three years of age. They were burned and charred. We couldn't separate them. So, we had to put both of them together in a body bag. It was very, very hard." Some 75 patients received treatment at the IMC field hospital, it was pointed out. "Out of those 75, 25 were very critical," the IMC official added, fuelling deep concerns that the specialist burns and trauma care and medicines they need are out of reach in Gaza since the Israeli military seized the main aid crossing point at Rafah earlier this month. "You can only do so much in Gaza. And when it comes to really extensive burns, etcetera, there's no place currently in Gaza where that can be treated," Dr. Peepkorn said. "Since the closing of the Rafah crossing, we only have had three trucks into Rafah. They came through Kerem Shalom and that's the only supply. We fortunately still have some supplies, but they are quickly running out." The perilous lack of lifesaving aid supplies could be reversed if lorries carrying humanitarian aid are allowed back into the enclave in significant numbers, the WHO official insisted. "There are 60 WHO trucks standing in El Arish [in Egypt] ready to get into Gaza. So again, this plea: the Rafah crossing needs to be opened not just for medical supplies, but for all other humanitarian supplies," he said. "We have distributed an enormous amount of essential emergency medical supplies, but it's not enough. This is such an overwhelming disaster. Now, when there would be a sustained ceasefire and there would be entry routes into Gaza which are properly managed, when there is a deconfliction mechanism which actually facilitates and supports, much more is possible." The UN health agency has previously warned that more Gazans will die unless desperately needed medical evacuations for seriously sick or injured people are allowed outside the enclave. Some "10,000-plus" people are believed to require urgent transport outside Gaza for treatment, but since the Rafah closure on May 6, "there's no medical evacuation outside Gaza, and it was already a huge problem before", Dr. Peepkorn said. According to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, and OCHA, the intensification of hostilities and issuance of evacuation orders have displaced more than 940,000 people from Rafah in the past three weeks, alongside 100,000 who have been displaced in northern Gaza.

- Image battle -



Rasmi

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

AJK, Protest and Rangers - I

Within the fabric of civil liberties, the privilege of engaging in peaceful demonstrations emerges as a foundational element. It symbolizes the collective voice of the populace, the pulse of democracy, and the avenue through which societal reform is not only requested but often realized. Primarily, governments are duty-bound to respect and protect the right to peaceful assembly, as enshrined in various international human rights conventions and articulated in the constitutions of democratic nations. This entails refraining from imposing arbitrary restrictions on protest rights, such as overly stringent permit requirements, excessive delineation of protest-free zones, or disproportionate use of force against demonstrators. Instead, governments should facilitate and safeguard peaceful protests, ensuring that protesters can exercise their democratic rights without fear of harassment, intimidation, or violence. Furthermore, governments must exhibit restraint in their response to public demonstrations, avoiding the use of excessive force or violence unless absolutely necessary and strictly adhering to the principles of necessity and proportionality. The deployment of tear gas, rubber bullets, batons, or other crowd control measures should be carefully regulated and utilized only to the extent required to uphold public order and safeguard lives and property. Any use of force must undergo thorough over-

sight, be held accountable, and uphold the rights of protesters, including their right to life and physical well-being. Additionally, governments are tasked with ensuring the safety and protection of protesters, bystanders, and law enforcement personnel alike during public demonstrations. This entails implementing sufficient policing and crowd management strategies, guaranteeing access to emergency medical assistance, and safeguarding vulnerable groups such as journalists, human rights advocates, and minority communities from harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. Governments should refrain from arbitrary arrests or detentions of demonstrators and uphold their right to due process and a fair trial in accordance with international human rights norms. Beyond safeguarding the rights and safety of protesters, governments have a responsibility to address the underlying grievances that often spark public demonstrations. The grievances expressed by protesters, whether arising from social injustice, economic disparity, political oppression, or environmental degradation, are indicative of underlying systemic issues necessitating substantial and sustained reform. Governments are called upon to engage in dialogue with protesters, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, employing transparent and inclusive processes of policy reform, legislative amendment, and institutional restructuring to address these grievances. Moreover, governments should perceive public protests

not as challenges to their authority but as opportunities for democratic revitalization and social discourse. By attentively listening to protesters' concerns, engaging in constructive dialogue, and addressing legitimate grievances, governments can enhance their democratic legitimacy, cultivate trust with citizens, and promote a culture of accountability and transparency. In doing so, they can demonstrate their dedication to upholding democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law, thereby fulfilling their obligation to govern in the best interests of all members of society. Nevertheless, along with the exercise of these rights come responsibilities aimed at ensuring the effectiveness and legitimacy of the protest itself and safeguarding broader democratic principles, peace, and human rights. Therefore, protesters should shoulder a vital responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these principles and contribute constructively to the pursuit of their demands. Chief among protesters' responsibilities is a commitment to nonviolence and peaceful methods of expression. While the right to protest is inherent in democratic principles, it is crucial that this right is exercised in a manner that respects the rights and safety of others. Violence, destruction, or intimidation not only undermine the legitimacy of the protest but also detract from the central message and risk escalating tensions with law enforcement or opposing demonstrators. By adhering to nonviolent principles, protesters can amplify their message, garner broader public support, and maintain moral integrity in their quest for change. *To be continued*



Analysis
Abdul Basit Alvi

Collection of skins without registration with PCC should be banned

What is Punjab Charity Commission PCC? The Punjab Charity Commission (PCC) is a registering and regulatory authority for registering charities and regulating collection of charitable funds. On the Eve of Eid al-Adha 2024, the Government of Punjab has imposed a ban on the collection, acquisition, purchase, or sale of animal skins from sacrificial animals without the permission of the authorized authority, which is the Deputy Commissioners. This ban also applies to prohibited and outlawed organizations, institutions, and individuals listed under the Fourth Schedule. To collect or purchase sacrificial skins, one must apply for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) in writing. In Multan, the deadline for submitting the NOC application is June 5, 2024. As per Punjab Government directives, the application must include necessary details such as a copy of the NOC obtained in 2023 for skin collection, a copy of the identity card, and if the skins are being collected by a madrasa or institution, a certified copy of the renewed registration of that madrasa or institution. Authorized representatives must possess a permission letter from their respective madrasa/institution. Fourth Schedule individuals are not allowed to collect skins of sacrificial animals. Anyone found collecting or purchasing skins without permission will face legal action under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997, with various teams assigned to conduct raids and take action in each tehsil. This is a commendable step by the Punjab Government. However, I would like to draw the Punjab Government's attention to the important law. In 2018, an act was passed by the Punjab Assembly known as the "Charities Act 2018." According to this act, all NGOs, madrasas, and associations collecting charity must register with the Punjab Charity Commission. Those who do not register will not be able to collect charity, donations, or sacrificial skins. The Punjab Charity Commission (PCC) is a regulatory body established to ensure the proper registration of charitable organizations across the province and the proper utilization of

funds received as donations and financial aid. The commission was established in 2018, and its objectives are as follows: Restore public trust in donations and financial aid. Encourage non-profit organizations to build a sustainable, strong, autonomous, and modern charitable sector. Reduce unnecessary and traditional administrative burdens on welfare organizations through information technology within the legal framework. Facilitate the development and promotion of legally compliant welfare organizations and institutions. All institutions registered under Section 2(c) must re-register with the Punjab Charity Commission, whether they are non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations, trusts, or institutions already registered under the following laws: Volunteer Social Welfare Agency (Registration and Control) Ordinance No. 46 of 1961. Societies Registration Act No. 21 of 1860. Companies Act 2017, Law No. 20. Any governmental or non-governmental institution, organization, or individual collecting donations and charity for public welfare must re-register with the Punjab Charity Board, regardless of previous registrations under formal or periodically enacted laws. Currently, many madrasas and NGOs collecting sacrificial skins in Punjab are not registered with the Punjab Charity Board. The registration of any organization, NGO, or madrasa can be verified through WhatsApp at this number: 03134995564. Remember, institutions not registered under the Charities Act 2018 are not permitted to operate (collect charity, donations, or skins). The registration of such institutions with the Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Mal or the Industry Department will also be considered revoked. Through this column, we would like to draw the Chief Secretary Punjab's attention to ensure that the Deputy Commissioners of all districts in Punjab implement the provisions of the Punjab Charity Act 2018. Madrasas, associations, and NGOs not registered with the Charity Commission Board should be prevented from collecting sacrificial skins.



Analysis
Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

Media briefing

Situation is under control in Bishkek: Ambassador of Kyrgyz Republic claims

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kyrgyz Republic for Pakistan H. E. Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev briefed the media in Islamabad regarding the Bishkek events in which Pakistani students sustained injuries and hundreds of students flew back to Pakistan after hostile locals attacked students pursuing education.

He said On the evening of May 13, a fight broke out between local and foreign citizens in one of the hostels in the eastern part of Bishkek. Then the police opened a criminal case under the article "Hooliganism" of the Criminal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic and all participants in the brawl were taken to the police department.

He said On May 17, a video of the fight and injured Kyrgyz citizens was published on one of the social media pages, as a result of which on the night of May 18 in Bishkek a crowd of people gathered demanding that the foreigners be brought to justice.

From the moment information about the incident was received, law enforcement agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic took prompt measures to detain persons involved in the event, both foreign citizens (four Egyptian citizens) and around 10 citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic. The Chief and 9 officers of the Internal Affairs Directorate of the Sverdlovsk region were removed from their positions after riots on the night of May 18.

The situation was completely under the control of law enforcement agencies. The safety of citizens and public order were ensured.

There are no seriously injured people among the participants of the incident.

At the same time, the Embassy urges representatives of the mass media not to disseminate unreliable and unverified information.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic informs that destructive forces in foreign mass media, social networks, especially in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan deliberately spread totally false information about the situation in the Kyrgyz Republic that does not correspond to reality.

The Ministry states that at present the situation in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, is absolutely calm and fully under control. All necessary measures have been taken to ensure security and maintain peace and stability.

In this regard, the Embassy of Kyrgyz Republic asks representatives of the media, the blogging community and foreign colleagues to be guided only by official and verified information from the competent authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Ambassador informed that On May 18, 2024, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Almaz Imangaziev met with the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



to the Kyrgyz Republic Hassan Ali Zaigam at the Ministry.

During the meeting, the Pakistani side was informed about the incident involving foreign citizens and the measures taken by the law enforcement authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic to suppress illegal actions and ensure public order. The Kyrgyz side also asked the Pakistani side to conduct explanatory work among representatives of the Pakistani mass media on the non-dissemination of inaccurate information on the incident.

At the same time, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic assured the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan that the situation was under the control of the competent authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Mr. Ulanbek On May 19, 2024, a meeting was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic between the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Avazbek Atakhanov and the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Kyrgyz Republic Hassan Ali Zaigam.

During the discussion, Ambassador of Pakistan Hassan Ali Zaigam expressed gratitude to the Kyrgyz side for the assistance provided in obtaining the information about the incident on May 18, 2024, in Bishkek with the participation of foreign students, including citizens of Pakistan.

Deputy Minister A. Atakhanov noted that this incident has been resolved and the situation is under the full control of the law enforcement agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic, and an investigation is underway against all those involved.

At the same time, the parties agreed to organize a meeting between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Zheenbek Kulubaev, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mohammad Ishaq Dar, within the frame-

work of the SCO Ministerial Council, which will be held on May 21, 2024 in Astana.

On May 19, 2024, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Zheenbek Kulubaev had a telephone conversation with the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

During the conversation, the parties noted their readiness for close cooperation and the strengthening of the Kyrgyz-Pakistani relations in various fields, which traditionally have a friendly nature and are steadily developing at the bilateral level, as well as within international and regional organizations, primarily the UN, SCO, OIC, and others.

Minister Zheenbek Kulubaev informed about the incident on May 18 of this year in Bishkek involving foreign students, including Pakistani citizens, and emphasized that public order is currently fully ensured and the situation is under the control of the competent authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Minister Zheenbek Kulubaev emphasized the importance of using reliable information and conducting appropriate work to suppress false information and publications in Pakistan's information space, which could harm the Kyrgyz-Pakistani relations.

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar expressed complete understanding of the situation and also gratitude for the effective measures taken by the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan to ensure public order and the safety of Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan. He also noted readiness for active cooperation on this issue.

To further exchange data and discuss the development of the Kyrgyz-Pakistani relations, the parties agreed to hold a bilateral meeting on May 21, 2024, in Astana within the framework of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers, as well as to organize inter-ministerial consultations on

consular and legal issues between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in Bishkek in the near future.

Both parties agreed that the peoples of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan are close brotherly nations and will work together to strengthen friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

He said On May 20, 2024, in Astana, on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Zheenbek Kulubaev had a bilateral meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

The parties discussed issues related to the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in such fields as trade and investment, textile, tourism and education, healthcare, and other areas, paying a particular emphasis on the enhancement of economic diplomacy, and cultural and humanitarian ties between the two countries, as well as on the exchange of high-level visits.

The parties noted the important role of the Intergovernmental Kyrgyz-Pakistani Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, and the cooperation between the two countries within the CASA-1000 sub-regional energy project.

In the end of the meeting the parties agreed to focus efforts on increasing the dynamics of mutual visits and strengthening cooperation between the business communities of the two countries. Besides, they decided to hold consultations between the foreign ministries of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan on political, consular and legal issues in the near future.

He said On May 21, 2024 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic informs that following the regular meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Astana, end route to Islamabad, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister



of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar made a brief stopover in Bishkek.

In Bishkek, Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar intends to visit Pakistani citizens receiving relevant treatment in medical institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic. Besides, there were working meetings of the representatives of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic with him.

On May 21, 2024 Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Edil Baisalov met with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Muhammad Ishaq Dar, who arrived in Bishkek on a short visit.

They jointly visited a Pakistani citizen undergoing treatment at the National Hospital.

During the conversation, the parties expressed satisfaction that, thanks to the established direct and constant intergovernmental contact, recent events could not damage the traditionally friendly Kyrgyz-Pakistani relations.

Deputy Head of the Cabinet of Ministers Mr. Edil Baisalov assured the senior representa-

tive of Pakistan of a friendly and benevolent attitude towards foreign students in Kyrgyzstan and that all those responsible for the recent incident will be brought to justice.

The interlocutors exchanged views and outlined a number of joint steps to strengthen cooperation in the cultural, humanitarian, trade and economic spheres. The parties also found mutual understanding on the need for interstate regulation of labor migration issues. On May 20, 2024 President of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Sadyr Japarov made an appeal on the incident that occurred on May 18 in Bishkek.

Mr. Sadyr Japarov noted that he gave the law enforcement agencies an order to take control of the situation, continuously conduct explanatory work with young people and try to stabilize the situation without clashes. We were able to stop the riots in time. Now all those responsible will receive their well-deserved punishment.

Ambassador said Kyrgyz people are looking forward to strengthening ties with brotherly people of Pakistan, taking into account deep common history, single religion and numerous cultural similarities.

The bilateral relations between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan are described as friendly, also have a rich history and many things in common from the perspective of religion, culture, language and traditions.

For the last years our countries have organized a significant number of visits on different levels, and are actively cooperating within the framework of various regional and international organizations.

He is confident that joint efforts can build prosperous and developed regions for the future of our nations.

I want to tell you don't be afraid to visit Kyrgyzstan, the situation in Bishkek is calm. The recent incident in Bishkek on May 18th should not deter you from visiting Kyrgyzstan. It was an isolated case that does not reflect the overall safety of the country or the warm hospitality of the Kyrgyz people.

In the last he said Kyrgyz people are known for their hospitality: Kyrgyzstan has a rich cultural tradition of welcoming guests. You will be greeted with warmth and kindness by the locals, who will go out of their way to make you feel at home.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Pakistan-China Friendship Association celebrates 73rd anniversary of diplomatic relations

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: In a testament to their enduring friendship, Pakistan and China celebrated the 73rd anniversary of their diplomatic relations this morning at KP House, Islamabad. The event, organized by the Pakistan China Friendship Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (PCFA KP), underscored the deep-rooted ties and mutual cooperation between the two nations.

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani, Secretary-General of the PCFA KP, opened the ceremony by emphasizing the importance of understanding the dynamics of Chinese socio-economic development. "As close friends, it is crucial for us to grasp the intricacies of China's growth trajectory to foster deeper cooperation and mutual benefit," he remarked.

Mr. Arshad Ayub Khan, Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Department, highlighted the significance of this historic friendship in his address. He emphasized the need to further enhance people-to-people relationships, drawing lessons from China's successful implementation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).



"Pakistan and China are time-tested friends, and our friendship has stood the test of time. We must continue to strengthen our bonds by increasing cultural, trade, and business exchanges. The CPEC is a game-changer for Pakistan's economy, and with enhanced cooperation, we will see significant development across various sectors," stated Mr. Arshad Ayub Khan.

He also praised the efforts of the PCFA KP and encouraged more initiatives that foster cultural understanding and economic collaboration. He specifically urged for the learning of the Chinese language and deeper engagement with Chinese experts to benefit from their experience and expertise.

Mr. Zhang Heqing, Chinese

Cultural Counsellor, also spoke at the event, appreciating the role of PCFA KP in promoting bilateral relations. He highlighted the historical linkages between China and Pakistan and the cultural and economic benefits of their partnership. Mr. Zhang Heqing mentioned the successful implementation of CPEC and the ambitious plans under-



way, including over 40 projects aimed at constructing highways and motorways to boost Pakistan's prosperity and development.

Mr. Yousaf Ayub Khan, President of PCFA KP, welcomed the distinguished guests and reflected on the successful history of Pakistan-China relations. He noted that the 73rd anniversary is a testament to the enduring success

of this partnership.

The event saw participation from notable dignitaries, including Mr. Wang Heihua, President of the All Pakistan Chinese Enterprises Association, Mr. Saleem Khan, Secretary of the Local Government Board, and Mr. Shakeel Khan, Director of PESCO. Members of the Chinese Media Group and other PCFA KP

members were also in attendance. Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani provided a brief overview of the association's contributions and future plans.

The celebration of the 73rd anniversary of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations not only commemorates a rich past but also heralds a promising future of continued cooperation and mutual growth.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain in a meeting with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

IMF wants Pakistan to impose tax on stationery items

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recommended the Pakistani government impose a tax on stationery items including books, pens, etc, citing sources.

Sources in the finance department told ARY News that the lender has asked the government end tax exemptions on books, pen, paper, sticky note paper, card board and other stationery items.

Sources say that the FBR authorities will brief the prime minister tomorrow on the FY budget 2024-25.

According to budget proposals for the FY2024-25, Pakistan is likely to end exemp-

tion on sales and income tax, phase-wise.

The government is also considering imposing a sales tax on tractors and pesticides, potentially leading to price hikes for these essential agricultural products.

Currently, under the Sixth Schedule of the Sales Tax Act, pesticides and their active ingredients registered by the Department of Plant Protection are exempt from sales tax.

Earlier on Monday, IMF released an official statement following discussions with Pakistan. The statement confirmed that Islamabad has formally requested a new loan program from the IMF.

The IMF delegation, led



by Mission Chief Nathan Porter, visited Pakistan and held extensive negotiations from May 13 to May 23 to discuss the country's economic improvements.

The statement highlights that the Pakistani government is making serious efforts to increase revenue and emphasizes the need for fair tax collection from privileged sectors.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission assured

Pakistan of its commitment to working together for sustainable economic growth. The statement noted that Pakistan's economy would stabilize with the support of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program.

Pakistan has successfully met the targets set under the Standby Arrangement Agreement, which will support the forthcoming new loan program.

The statement underscores the necessity of expanding the tax net to ensure economic growth and stability. The IMF calls for appropriate policy and exchange rate measures to control inflation and stresses the critical need for energy sector reforms in Pakistan.

Reducing the cost of energy production is essential, and a stringent monetary policy is required until inflation is under control, the statement said.

The IMF also highlighted the need to improve the performance of state-owned enterprises and indicated that privatization of these corporations is essential for better efficiency.

Aleem Khan meets Prime Minister of Tajikistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Communications, Board of Investment and Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan on Wednesday met with Prime Minister of Tajikistan Kokhir Rasulzoda in Dushanbe.

He discussed with him matters relating to further strengthen and enhance bilateral relations, besides discussing other important matters of mutual benefit, said a press release.

Who is visiting Tajikistan While welcoming Federal Minister the Prime Minister of Tajikistan reiterated that the doors of Tajikistan will always be open for bilateral cooperation for Pakistan. Abdul

Aleem Khan thanked the Prime Minister of Tajikistan and said that the two countries are historically bound in religious and cultural ties and in future this relationship can be further strengthened by the promotion of trade activities.

Earlier, while addressing International Conference at Dushanbe Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan is ready to cooperate in all kinds of economic and business activities in the region for which practical work is being done to bring trade corridors to global standards and connect them with other countries.

He added that Pakistan is working on digitizing the "Silk Route Corridor" especially for the countries of Central Asia

while also ensuring the implementation of "Right to Monitor" through satellite technology on the roads under construction.

Abdul Aleem Khan further said in his address that today is the era of import and export, international trade is the guarantee of development for which standard and spacious roads will be constructed while for the countries of Central Asia, like Karachi and Port Qasim, Gwadar Port would also be available.

The minister while offering all kinds of support from Pakistan to the Central Asian States said that through this international conference, new ways of development and prosperity will be opened between differ-

ent countries.

Abdul Aleem Khan held separate meetings with the Ministers of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in addition to Tajikistan in Dushanbe, in which it was agreed to promote Business-to-Business and Government-to-Government activities between Pakistan and Central Asian countries.

Similarly, the construction of trade corridors from Pakistan to these countries through China, Afghanistan and alternative routes was also considered.

Tajikistan's Minister of Material Resources Ahmedzoda Noor Mahmud also called on Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan in which the

export of various food items including sugar, potatoes, textiles and livestock from Pakistan was discussed. Among those who held a meeting with Abdul Aleem Khan were Transport Minister of Kyrgyzstan Tilektebaev, Transport Minister of Uzbekistan Makhkamovilkham Rustamovich, Deputy Transport Minister of Kazakhstan Maksat K. Kaliak Parov and the Minister of Transport of Tajikistan and the host Azeem Ibrahim were included.

Abdul Aleem Khan expressed his gratitude to the ministers while describing the holding of this conference as very fruitful while gifts were also exchanged with each other on this occasion.

Illicit cigarettes worth around Rs 202m destroyed in Jhelum Zone

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Jhelum Zone of Regional Tax Office, Rawalpindi on Wednesday destroyed a massive quantity of illicit, smuggled and counterfeit cigarettes worth Rs 202 million, including Rs 147.15 million in evaded duties.

A ceremony for destruction of massive quantity of illicit/smuggled/counterfeit cigarettes including non-duty paid and smuggled cigarettes at Chak Barahm, Jhelum.

The total value of destroyed illicit cigarettes approximated about Rs. 202 million on which the total value of duty evaded comes at Rs. 147.15 million.

Chief Commissioner, RTO, Rawalpindi Ms Tehmina Aamer graced the occasion as Chief Guest. The ceremony was also attended by the Commissioner Jhelum Zone Walyat Khan and officers and staff of Jhelum Zone.

The participants were briefed about the whole process of confiscation of illicit tobacco and tobacco products till its ultimate destruction under the law.

All the distinguished guests together torched and destroyed the illicit cigarettes.

The State of Palestine welcomes Mexico's declaration of intervention in the genocide case against Israel before the ICJ

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine warmly welcomes the declaration of intervention by the Government of the United Mexican States under Article 63 of the Rules of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case concerning the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel).

Mexico's motion shows a steadfast commitment to justice and the international rule of law, underscoring the deep-rooted solidarity and historical friendship between our nations. In this regard, the



State of Palestine wishes to reiterate its profound appreciation to the Republic of Nicaragua, the Republic of Colombia, and the State of Libya for their declarations of intervention before the Court in this critical case.

We call upon all states to actively engage in the proceedings before the Court to push for an end to the geno-

cide and to combat Israel's impunity. These declarations come at a crucial time when the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, particularly in Rafah, are enduring a disastrous humanitarian situation, which has resulted in unprecedented suffering, highlighting the urgent need for international intervention and justice.

Pakistan condoles deaths, destruction by landslide in Papua New Guinea

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday expressed its condolence over the losses of life and properties caused by massive landslide in Papua New Guinea. "The people and government of Pakistan are deeply saddened by the widespread death and destruction caused by a massive landslide in Enga province in Papua New Guinea," Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in a statement.

She conveyed heartfelt condolences and sympathies over the tragic loss of life. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families. We pray for early recovery of those who are missing and stand with the people and government of Papua



New Guinea in this hour of national tragedy," the spokesperson added.

Ahsan Iqbal honoured by APO for outstanding contributions to socio-economic development

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiative Prof Ahsan Iqbal received an award from the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Kuala Lumpur for his outstanding contribution to socio-economic development efforts through policy, strategic thinking, effective leadership and management.

He received the award at the 66th meeting of the Governing Body of the Asian Productivity Organization in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as the organization includes 21 countries, including Pakistan, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives.

He was awarded for his achievements during all his tenures as federal minister, implementing innovative projects to increase productivity in Pakistan through international networks.

Ahsan Iqbal formulated progressive policies and regulations that



contributed significantly to Pakistan's productive agenda and overall development. The award recognizes individuals who have made exemplary contributions to improving national or regional socio-economic productivity through their work, inspiring ideas, and influence, it added.

The Asian Productivity Organization, established in 1961, promotes productivity in the Asia-Pacific region through mutual cooperation, committed to sustainable socio-economic development through policy advisory services in various sectors.

FM Azerbaijan arrives on two-day visit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov on Wednesday arrived here on a two-day official visit. At the Islamabad International Airport, he was warmly received by Additional Foreign Secretary (Afghanistan and West Asia) Ahmed Naseem Warraich, Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted on X account.

Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov will call on Prime Minister



Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and hold extensive discussions with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

Health ministers reach Kabirwala, review treatment of measles affected children

Bureau Report

LAHORE: On the direction of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Provincial Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir visited the Basic Health Unit (BHU) in Kot Haq Nawaz, Kabirwala and gathered information from parents about the measles affected children and mandated strict action against those responsible for the negligence.

Following the Chief Minister's directives, the number of 'Clinic on Wheels' and 'Field Hospitals' has been increased in the affected areas.

Additionally, a special ward for measles treatment has been established at the Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has

sought an immediate report from the Secretary of Health on the causes behind the rise in measles cases. She emphasized the need for the Health Department to provide the best possible treatment to the affected children, highlighting that the loss of innocent lives is due to departmental negligence and inefficiency.

The chief minister stressed that those found responsible for the negligence will face severe punishment. She also ordered daily monitoring of measles and other infectious diseases, ensuring that no lapses occur in treating affected children. Furthermore, she directed the Health Department to ensure the availability of vaccines for all diseases, including measles, at all health centers and government hospitals across Punjab.

Lawyers who attacked Maneka...

Continued from Page 7

tweets from Imran Khan's account, Zafar stated, "Since the tweets have been happening, they have been from Imran Khan's account and he approves them."

PTI leaders flay Khawar Maneka's for 'obscene' remarks against party founder

He added, "The tweets are only made under Imran Khan's instructions."

Responding to a question, Zafar confirmed that there has been no deal and there is no plan for one. He dismissed these as rumors. He stated that the current situation surrounding the PTI clearly indicates that there is no deal in the works.