



## Representative of Uzbekistan elected to UN Human Rights Committee for the first time in history

On May 29, at the UN headquarters in New York, during the 40th session of the states parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), elections were held for nine members of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) for the 2025-2028 term. (Details on Page 5)



## PM Shehbaz's China visit to become a milestone in bilateral relations: Chinese ambassador

Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Jiang Zaidong said on Monday that under the guidance of two leadership and strong support from the people of both countries, the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China would achieve complete success and become a milestone in the development of China-Pakistan relations. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Mr. Gulbar Khan on Monday.



Photo: PID

## PM directs immediate abolishment of Pak PWD

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed for immediate dissolution of Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD) due to years' long poor performance and corruption. The prime minister issued directive during a high level meeting held on reducing the government expenditures and the size of its infrastructure, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the prime minister observed that Pak PWD as department had failed to achieve its objectives and asked for alternate mechanism for the development projects which were tasked to misuse the contents of the cipher to fulfill nefarious purposes", it added. It further stated that former premier and top diplomat endangered the state interests. The report claimed that former prime minister asked Azam Khan - the then principal secretary - to "manipulate the contents of cipher". "The former premier deliberately kept the copy of diplomatic cipher, which was sent to the PM office", it added.



PM's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jehanzeb Khan and other relevant senior officials. For reduction of government expenditures, the prime minister was apprised of a report compiled by a committee headed by Chairman Deputy Planning Commission Jehanzeb Khan. The committee had recommended for abolishment of certain government entities and merger of others. The prime minister directed the committee for finalization of further recommendations.

# PTI founder, Qureshi acquitted in cipher case

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday acquitted former prime minister Imran Khan and PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi in cipher case.

IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict on the pleas challenging the conviction in the cipher case.

In January this year, PTI founder and party's vice-chairman were sentenced to 10 years each in prison in cipher case.

However, the two are not expected to be released from prison due to Imran's sentences in the Toshakhana and Iddat cases while Qureshi has been arrested in recent May 9 cases.



On January 30, a special court hearing cipher case handed a

10-year jail term, each, to former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

Both the PTI leaders were

accused of conspiracy to misuse the contents of the cipher to fulfill nefarious purposes.

The court in its verdict said the prosecution had enough evidence to prove the charges against the former prime minister and ex-foreign minister.

The first information report (FIR) was registered on August 15 under the Official Secrets Act. It was registered on the complaint of the Home Secretary.

Former prime minister Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi were nominated in the report, while names of former principal secretary Azam Khan and former planning minister Asad Umar

were also mentioned.

The FIR stated that the former prime minister and foreign minister distorted the facts of the diplomatic cipher. "A conspiracy was launched to misuse the contents of the cipher to fulfill nefarious purposes", it added. It further stated that former premier and top diplomat endangered the state interests.

The report claimed that former prime minister asked Azam Khan - the then principal secretary - to "manipulate the contents of cipher". "The former premier deliberately kept the copy of diplomatic cipher, which was sent to the PM office", it added.

## Planning Minister meets PM AJK



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday met with the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq and discussed matters regarding upcoming budget and development work in AJK.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Iqbal said that PakSat MM1 Satellite will provide internet service facility to AJK and GB, adding that it was a major success and need to take full advantage of this service in the fields of education and health.

The minister further said

that the government was realizing the sensitivity of GB and AJK, adding that special measures would be taken for the uplift of these areas.

He said that government would utilize available resources to achieve economic development and social prosperity of these areas. Ahsan Iqbal said that government will initiate internship program and young development fellow program for the youth of AJK, adding that the youth are the bright future of this region.

He said that the government was taking special steps for the development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and urged the need to promote tourism by up-grading its infrastructure with proper planning.

## Cipher case: Govt to review detailed IHC verdict before deciding to appeal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Monday asserted that it would decide whether to challenge the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) verdict, acquitting PTI founder Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in cipher case, once the detailed court order is out.

Barrister Aqeel Malik, the government's spokesperson for legal affairs, made these remarks while addressing a press conference shortly after IHC announced the short verdict by accepting the appeals of the former premier and diplomat against their convictions in the cipher case.

Addressing a press conference, Barrister Aqeel pointed out that cipher is a reality and it can't be denied that a national security document was exaggerated and used for political purposes.

## Minister Finance Aurangzeb meets with the CM, Gilgit-Baltistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Mr. Gulbar Khan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at Finance Division today. The Federal Finance Secretary was also present in the meeting.

Chief Minister Gulbar Khan expressed gratitude to the federal government for its continued support, particularly the wheat subsidy provided to the region. He highlighted several areas where GB requires further assistance and appealed for increased support in the upcoming budget to address these issues.

In response, the Finance Minister, Senator Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized the numerous opportunities available in GB, noting its potential as a prime location for tourism. He pointed out that the region is rich in gems and mineral resources and suggested that GB government can leverage its resources to generate revenue and unlock its true potential. The Finance Secretary also recognized the potential areas for investment in GB, reiterating that the federal government has generously supported the region in the budget.

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to continue working together to address the challenges and harness the opportunities in Gilgit-Baltistan for the benefit of its residents.

## PML-N, PPP, JUI-F, PTI-P oppose SIC's plea seeking reserved seats

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday adjourned the hearing of Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) plea against the Peshawar High Court's verdict that denied it reserved seats for women and minorities until tomorrow (Tuesday).

The development came as the 13-member full court bench of the Supreme Court took up the SIC's plea challenging the PHC's judgment regarding the reserved seats.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, comprised Justices Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Munib Akhtar, Yahya Afridi, Aminuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Ayesha Malik, Athar Minallah, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Shahid Waheed, Irfan Saadat Khan and Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

On May 6, a three-member SC bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, and including Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minallah, suspended the PHC verdict and referred the matter to the judges' committee for the formation of a larger bench since the matter required constitutional interpretation.

# Quetta coal mine gas leak kills 11

Bureau Report

QUETTA: At least 11 people, including nine miners, were killed in a coal mine gas leak in Balochistan's Quetta on Monday, the chief mines inspector said.

Abdul Ghani Baloch said that the deceased included nine labourers, one

contractor, and one mine manager. The mine is in UC Singidi, which is located 40km away from Quetta.

"The accident occurred due to suffocation following a gas leak," he said.

"All the deceased were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat," Ghani said and added that bodies would be repatriated to their native

areas after the funeral prayers.

Coal deposits are found in the western areas of Pakistan that sit near the Afghan border and mine accidents are common, mainly due to gas build-ups.

Mine workers have complained that a lack of safety gear and poor working conditions are the key causes of frequent acci-

dents, labour union officials have said in the past. In March, twelve miners were killed and eight rescued after an explosion in a coal mine in the Zardala area of Balochistan's Harnai district.

In December, two coal miners were killed and three injured when a fire broke out in a private mine in Balochistan's Duki coal field.

# All parties agree on establishment of Saraikistan province

**Kiran Asim / Syed Nadeem Kazmi**

MULTAN: All parties agree on the establishment of Saraikistan province, the government will give a time frame and immediately establish a provincial commission, if the delay tactics for the establishment of the province are not stopped, they will protest and the assembly will be surrounded. These views were expressed by the political leaders of different parties at the second annual All-Parties Conference of the Province of Saraykistan organized by the National Council of Saraykistan in Multan. The conference was presided over by the chairman of Saraiki National Unity, Khawaja Ghulam Fareed Koreja, while the host of the conference was the chairman of the Saraikistan National Council, Zahoore Ahmed Dharija, and the president, Dr. Maqbool Hasan Gilani. Addressing the ceremony, the central leader of Pakistan People's Party and Senator Rana Mahmoodul Hasan said that we have raised the flag of Saraykistan, we will not back down now, the prov-

ince of Saraykistan is our right and we know how to fight for the right. He said that the rulers should give the province immediately, otherwise we will turn Islamabad, Lahore and Multan into a Panipat field and will surround the assembly with a convoy of thousands of people and will not return until the province is given. Zahoore Dharija, the host of the event, said that the government should give a road map for the establishment of Saraikistan province, the time frame should be announced, the provincial commission should be formed, and now lollipops will not run. The milestone will be proved, the province is an inscribed wall, the people of Wasib are not asking for a separate country, a separate province, the treatment of Bengalis should stop. President of Saraiki Lok Sanjh Ashiq Buzdar, Chairman of Saraikistan Democratic Party Rana Muhammad Faraz Noon, Central President of Pakistan Saraiki Party Allah Nawaz Vance, Central Chairman of Saraiki Wasib Party Malik Khizr Hayat Dayal said that Wasib is being exploited step by step,

all of Saraikistan. The biggest usurper is Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa people have also occupied our DI Khan and Tank, he said that Ranjit Singh and the British reject the decisions of imperialism. It is that the rulers should stop the behavior of the stepmother. Member National Assembly Rana Muhammad Faraz Noon, Member Provincial Assembly Rahim Yar Khan Saima Tariq, Former Provincial Minister Chaudhry Abdul Waheed Arain, Member Provincial Assembly Rana Iqbal Siraj said that the establishment of Saraiki province has become inevitable for the stability of Pakistan. If it goes, the political crisis will continue to rise. Senior Baloch nationalist leader Rauf Khan Sasoli said that the Saraiki nation has its own homeland and the civilization of the Saraiki nation spans thousands of years, the subjugated nations of Pakistan should get their rights and the unity of nationalist parties is also important of the time. Required. Muhammad Hussain Babar Advocate, Allama Farooq Ahmed Saeedi, Rana Tahir Bashir, former MPA,

central leader of People's Party Malik Arshad Iqbal Bhatta, former MPA Babu Nafis Ansari Senior Journalist Mazhar Javed Sial said that the resources of Saraiki Wasib are being spent on Lahore, Cholistan. The President of Saraikistan Democratic Party Inayatullah Mashriqi, the Chairman of Saraiki Wasib Party, Jam Azizullah Bhit, the Central President of Wasib Tajir Ittehad Syed Matloob Bukhari, Major (retd) Mujibur Rahman, the Central General Secretary of Pakistan Saraiki Party Muhammad Akbar Ansari, the Chairman of Ghareeb Awam Party. Ms. Rashida Bhutta, Senior Journalist Mumtaz Niazi, Chairman She-mail Association Shahana Shani, Leader Saraiki Lok Sanjh Akram Mirani, Admin Saraiki Wikipedia Professor Parvez Qadir Khan, Chairman Border Welfare Society Bahawalnagar Mian Afzal Kaluka, Sindh Nationalist Leader Professor Mushtaq Chana, Malik Ikram Dewala Chairman All Saraiki Ittehad, Saraiki leader Rana Zeeshan Noon supported the establishment of Saraikistan province in his address.

## Railway workers' union condemns privatization of railways



**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Prime Union strongly condemns the news of privatization of railways. President of the Prime Union Sheikh Muhammad Anwar said this while talking to the media. He has further said that Pakistan Railways has achieved record revenue this year with its limited resources. By the end of the financial year i.e. by June 30, the revenue of the railways will reach 88 billion. Khair Muhammad Tonio has said in his statement that there is no truth in the news in the media and Prem Union strongly condemns for broadcasting the news without research. Such fabricated news harms the reputation of the organization and the railway workers and also causes anxiety among the employees. Sheikh Anwar says that the railway workers and their officers are trying to develop their department. If the government takes such a step, first of all, the union will oppose it and take the path of protest. On this occasion, Chief Organizer Haji Khalid Mahmood was also present on telephonic contact.

## Faisalabad traffic overchargers to be punished on passenger vehicles



**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Strong action is being taken against those who charge more than the prescribed fare on passenger vehicles. Complaint and awareness camps are being set up at all passenger vehicle terminals by the city police. Those who exploit citizens are being fined and their vehicles are impounded. All DSPs should self-assess action against traffic overchargers in their respective circles. These views were expressed by Chief Traffic Officer Maqsood Ahmed Lone while presiding over a meeting held in this regard. In light of the orders of Additional IG Traffic Punjab Mirza Faran Baig and City Police Officer DIG Kamran Adil, this special campaign has been launched before Eid-ul-Azha.

## India want to end the Islamic identity of Kashmir: Sardar Attique

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

RAWALAKOT/NIRIAN SHARIF: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former prime minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that Kashmir is the land of saints and it is India's abominable goal to end the Islamic identity of this land, but the people of Kashmir will not allow this effort to succeed. The Kashmiri people have protected their Islamic identity by giving sacrifices. These views were expressed by President Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan while addressing the ceremony of Nirian Sharif Urs. He said that Islam in Kashmir is the fruit of the efforts of Sufis and Now the extremists of India want to end the Islamic identity of Kashmir by changing the population ratio in Kashmir, but the fragrance of Islam has become so rich in this soil that India cannot succeed in its ambitions. He said that a genius like Pir Alauddin Siddiqi Employees are our greatest asset. He has left a great legacy for future generations through his educational and welfare projects. Thanks to these personalities, the harvest of Islam is flourishing in Kashmir today. He said that Azad Kashmir is witness to the preaching and preaching of Sufis and scholars. The protection of this great heritage is the responsibility of the new generation. The light of Islam did not spread in Kashmir by force and gun. Sufis and Saints filled the region with the light of Islam by conquering the hearts of the people of Kashmir with their role and actions. These great people perform the duty of bringing people closer to their Lord. This is the reason why shrines of saints are also a source of light and guidance he added.



By following the special instructions of the District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan, the Attock Police is continuing the crackdown against the criminal elements. Son of Khudadad Khan recovered 800 grams of hashish from the possession of Fateh Jang, while Ehtisham Ali alias Shama, son of Yasir Ali R/O Hasan Abdal, recovered 600 grams of hashish and arms and illegal pistol 30 bore ammunition in another operation. The person who gave his name and address as Ibrahim son of Khayal r/o Akbar Hasan Abdal was stopped and 700 grams of hashish was recovered during the search. While Murad Ali son of Sher Mohammad r/o Kot Sundki Hasan Abdal during the checking of weapons recovered illegal pistol 30 bore ammunition.

## 'Record-low inflation' a positive indicator for the country: Tarar

**City Desk**

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday termed a historic and record decrease in inflation a positive indicator for the country and reaffirmed the government's commitment to work hard till the complete revival of the economy.



Addressing a press conference here at the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Secretariat at Model Town, the federal minister said, "The inflation rate has dropped to 11 percent during this month beyond expectations, as reported by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics while Bloomberg, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, World Bank and other international departments are also acknowledging progress of Pakistan's economy and also see it on right direction". Attaullah Tarar highlighted the government's tireless efforts from day one, focusing on the economy, leading to several positive outcomes. "These include a significant drop in inflation, lower fuel prices, unprecedented growth in the stock exchange, increased foreign reserves, enhanced direct investment, and record tax collection by the Federal Board of Revenue," he added. He expressed optimism about Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's upcoming historic visit to China with a delegation of approximately 100 businessmen. Tarar anticipates fruitful B2B meetings, business conferences, and the signing of agreements, which he believes will further bolster the country's stability.

## Protest

KARACHI: Workers of Mohajir Qaumi Movement participating in the protest demonstration against the worst load-shedding and over-billing of electricity in the port city.



Photo: Online

## Zubair Khan says he is dedicated to Sui gas workers

**Syed Nadeem Kazmi**

MULTAN: Central President of Sui Northern Gas Employers Union CBA Zubair Khan has said that my life is dedicated to the workers for whom I got the best package which is better than all the government departments. Today the workers and officers of Sui Gas are happy. We all have to move this department towards development. If the department develops, prosperity will also come in our homes. He further said that inshallah if he becomes the president for the third time, there will be more improvement in



the homes of the workers. will win because Zubair Khan is a man who cares for the workers. He is a worker-friendly leader who is loved by thousands of needle gas workers because of his love for

also knows how to solve them which is the administration of Sui gas and After solving their problems with the authority, Syed Kashif Shah, Rana Afzal, Javed Bangash, Bilal Ahmed Chishti, Hasnain Zia, Qayyum Toor, Nisarul Haq Amir, Mumtaz Khan Gopang, Ustad Ghulam Hussain, Mian Ejaz, Malik Tariq, Safdar Gopang, Malik Salim, Abdul Qayyum Toor, Mian Tahir, Rana Ahmed and others addressed the meeting. A large number of officials and workers from the entire region participated and expressed full confidence in the leadership of Zubair Khan.

## CTD Punjab arrested 44 terrorists from banned organizations

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: The Counter-Terrorism Department Punjab Arrested 44 Terrorists From Banned Organizations banned organizations Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Al-Qaeda, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Sipah-e-Sahaba and Daesh. According to the spokesman Of Counter Terrorism Department CTD Punjab, during the last month of May the CTD Punjab conducted 794 intelligence based operations in different cities of Punjab based on intelligence, in which 44 suspects were arrested.



Jhang, Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur, the CTD arrested 44 Terrorists Of Ban Organizations including Muhammad Din Haseeb Hamza Fazal-e-Mola Moeen Ajmal Farooqi Sayed Faizan Zafraan Sheikh Qasim Mehmood Muhammad Mumta Muhammad Akhtar Abdul Rahman Inman Hussain Haider Al Muhammad Sohail Husnain Naveed Hanzila Imran Muhammad Ibrahim Saeed Ur Rehman Waqar Khan

Muhammad Uzair Muhammad Ali Zia ur Rehman Arfeen Haider Numan Hassan Ahtasham Abbas Waqar Abbas Razaq Ali Muhammad Usman Muhammad Shafique Tanveer Ahmad Qari Muhammad Makki Muhammad Usman Tariq Khan Muhammad Zareen Muhammad Khan Tjmeer Habib Ullah Jan Muhammad Shahzad Syed Muhammad Abdullah Hamayat Ullah Usama Usmani Bakhat Alam Muhammad Ahsan Muhammad Azeem and Anees ur Rehman. 10275 grams of explosives were seized from their possession, explosive vest 01, pistol 3 bore 01, hand grenade 01, IED bomb 03, Ball Bearing Box 03, Detonators 37, Safety Fuse Wire 174 Feet, Prima Card 14 Feet, Prohibited Books 11, Prohibited Magazines 14, Pamphlets 209,

Stickers of 137 Prohibited Organizations, Receipt Boxes 02, Travel Tickets 01, Mobile Phones 06 and Cash of Rs 52640 were also recovered from them. The arrested persons belong to banned organizations Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Al-Qaeda, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Sipah-e-Sahaba and Daesh, who were planning to attacks at various locations, he said and added that 96,796 people were interrogated during a total of 2,738 combing operations last month, 673 suspects were arrested, 450 cases were registered and 270 were recoveries were made.. The spokesman further said that the Counter Terrorism Department Punjab is diligently pursuing its goal of a safe Punjab and is determined to root out the scourge of terrorism.

Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:16 am
Zohr	12:06 pm
Asr	5:05 pm
Maghrib	7:15 pm
Isha	8:57 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

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

# Spirit School gets FBISE accreditation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education has granted affiliation to the Spirit School.

The Spirit School has become the only school in the Koral area to get this honor. To mark this achievement, the school organized a ceremony.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr. Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said that the Spirit School is serving the masses, and now it will be better positioned to help spread literacy.

He said that the school fosters a welcoming and supportive environment for students to thrive, while the administration provides excellent resources and opportunities for students to excel in their academic and personal growth.

Hanif Mughal said that the faculty and staff at the school are dedicated and passionate about helping students succeed; they encourage creativity, critical thinking, and a love for learning.

The school prioritizes student well-being and has a strong sense of community



and teamwork, creating a positive atmosphere for both learning and personal development.

He said that the education system in Pakistan continues to face significant challenges, hindering the country's progress and development.

Despite efforts to improve access to education, there are still significant barriers that prevent millions of children, especially those in rural areas and from marginalized communities, from receiving a quality education.

ing a quality education.

One of the primary issues is the lack of adequate infrastructure, including a shortage of schools and classrooms, particularly in remote areas, which leads to overcrowded classrooms and a lack of resources, making it difficult for students to learn effectively, he said.

Additionally, there is a shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in science and mathematics, which further impacts the quality of education provided, he added.

Hanif Mughal noted that socio-cultural norms and economic factors also play a role in limiting access to education, especially for girls. Discrimination against girls and women in education leads to lower enrollment and higher dropout rates among female students.

The government recognizes the challenges facing the education system and has taken steps to address them, including initiatives to increase enrollment rates and improve teacher training. However, to ensure that all children in Pakistan have access to a quality education and can fulfill their potential, more efforts and increased investment are required.

## High wind

ISLAMABAD: Citizens busy in a walk at F-9 Park amid wind and dust in the evening in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## DHA-1 Buzzes with Activity: Arlink Developers Announce Three Commercial Projects

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a glorious event held at ASL CLUB, Arlink Developers announced the launch of three major commercial projects in DHA-1 Islamabad. The event, celebrated the successful 100% sales completion and booking closure of the first project, followed by a lavish Dinner. Attendees were treated to an impressive presentation on a big screen, showcasing the rapid construction progress of the first project and its delivery timeline.

In addition to the celebration, Arlink Developers unveiled two new projects, emphasizing their premier locations, better space planning, world class development and enhanced investment potential compared to previous developments. These new ventures promise to elevate the standards of DHA, making them ideal for discerning investors. The booking for these highly anticipated projects is now open, offering residents and investors exclusive opportunities in this prestigious area.

## Anti-Corruption awareness seminar held at AIOU

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: "Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is ready to collaborate with NAB to raise its voice against corruption at national level and to create awareness among the youth against this scourge," said Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir in his address at the anti-corruption awareness seminar held in the university. Dr. Sahir said that we have campuses in 54 cities of the country, we can introduce short courses, organize seminars, workshops and walks with the cooperation of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to raise awareness against corruption.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir said that corruption is the root of all evil, so it is considered as a pest for socio-economic development. He added that by following the path of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), corruption and other crimes can be completely eradicated from the society. This seminar was organized by the Directorate of Student Affairs, AIOU, in collaboration with NAB Rawalpindi.



Other speakers included Director, NAB, Abdul Khaliq, Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi and Dr. Syed Imran Haider. Dr. Sadia Anwar Pasha hosted the seminar. The speakers said that corruption is as dangerous as a termite for any society.

Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi said that corruption is our internal enemy, which is causing us more damage than the external enemy.

He highlighted the moral and religious aspects of corruption in detail. Director NAB, Abdul Khaliq said that the only solution to eradicate corruption lies in raising awareness among the youth and raising their voices against corruption. Two female students and two male students gave speeches in Urdu and English languages on the topic of corruption.

## SECP bootcamp to impart financial literacy to over 1500 educators concluded

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, effectively imparted basic financial literacy concepts to over 1500 teachers from 432 Federal Government Schools & Colleges of Islamabad Capital Territory.

The training program, conducted in batches of teachers covered essential topics such as savings, investments, importance of financial literacy, its various elements and how to identify scams and frauds etc. The Ministry of Education has announced to integrate topics of financial literacy into curricula of FG schools.

Addressing the concluding ceremony, Secretary of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, announced



major reforms to modernize the education system. These reforms include introduction of performance-based incentive system for teachers, training programs for teachers and combining subjects like science with mathematics and Pak studies with Urdu to reduce burdens from students as well as teachers. He said that subject of financial literacy will be introduced gradu-

ally at provincial levels. Wani emphasized the importance of understanding basic financial skills for youth, especially women, to protect themselves from scams and exploitation.

The Secretary Education appreciated the role of SECP and national Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) in imparting the necessary skills to teachers through training programs. The

SECP and the Ministry of Education have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance financial literacy among students in federal educational institutions.

The SECP Chairman, Mr. Akif Saeed emphasized that empowering youngsters with financial literacy is critical to ensuring that they learn fundamental concepts like as budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management from an early age. Akif also highlighted the pivotal role of a financially literate youth population in driving economic growth through fostering a culture of savings, investment, and entrepreneurship.

The Secretary of Education, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, also presented shields to SECP and NIBAF trainers, as well as program organizers. Officials from the Federal Directorate of Education, NIBAF, and SECP were also present at the ceremony.

## Literature is a mirror of any society: Sajjad Hussain

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Literature is a mirror of any society that reflects its culture, history, and collective experiences. It is a beautiful form of expression through which thoughts, emotions, and experiences are artistically presented. Literature is not only a means of entertainment but also a source of intellectualism and emotional training for individuals. These thoughts were expressed by Director Sajjad Hussain while highlighting the role of the Arts Council in the promotion of literature. The Director of the Arts Council further stated that over the past three months, more than 20 literary events have been organized at the Arts Council. These included the weekly meeting and poetry session of Halqa Arbab-e-Zauq every Sunday, the book launch event of Dr. Sajid Raheem, a memorial reference for Farzana Naz, daily poetry sessions during Ramadan, and the inauguration of Allama Iqbal Public Library by the Punjab Arts Council. Mr. Sajjad Hussain clarified that Punjab Arts Council is providing halls and other facilities for all literary events free of charge. This year, a two-day literary conference titled Punjab Rawal Festival was also organized. In the various sessions of the conference, discussions were held on literature, poetry, prose, and literary criticism. Director of the Arts Council Sajjad Hussain mentioned that several cases for the financial assistance of poets and writers have been sent to the Punjab Writers Welfare Fund, which the Government of Punjab has provided with special grants. The Punjab Arts Council is well aware of its responsibilities for the promotion of literature and will continue to provide its platform to nurture literature in the future.

## 'BankIslami Celebrates Completion of Umeed Digital Certifications Program Distribution Ceremony'

City Desk

LAHORE: Building on their dedication to youth empowerment, BankIslami, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank, proudly announces the successful completion of the BankIslami Umeed Digital Certifications Program on May 31, 2024 where 50 students were awarded with certificates. A ceremony was held at the IBA, Karachi to honor the participants who completed the Diploma in Digital Marketing with AI.



Addressing the graduates, the spokesperson of BankIslami emphasized the transformative potential of their education, stating that BankIslami recognizes the importance of equipping them with the necessary skills to succeed in the digital age.

CICT Officials at IBA Karachi, Ms. Mahwish Ahmed and Dr. Irfan Nabi, extended a warm welcome to the students. They also conveyed heartfelt gratitude to BankIslami for collaborating in this initiative and emphasized that the goal of this partnership is to empower the youth of Pakistan with cutting-edge skills in business and technology.

The event featured representatives from BankIslami and notable guests including Mustafa Shiraz from the State Bank, Dr. Shakeel Khoja, Riaz Soomro, and Sadaf Anees from BBSHRDDB.

BankIslami's partnership with IBA Karachi is designed to equip students with essential technical skills while fostering an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset. This initiative perfectly aligns with BankIslami's commitment to shape a brighter future for Pakistan by equipping its youth with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to excel in the digital era.

## Mastercard East Arabia report projects accelerated economic growth in 2024

Spokesman Report

DUBAI: Real consumer spending in the UAE is projected to increase by 5% year over year – one of the highest rates globally, according to the Mastercard East Arabia Division's Special Report, "Towards a Connected Future: Innovation Fueling Transformation".

Developed in partnership with The Business Year, the report explores the impact of digital transformation across the financial services industry and beyond in the East Arabia region that includes countries as diverse as the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Pakistan.

"This special report marks a positive outlook following the establishment of Mastercard's East Arabia division – a clear indication of the incredible growth we see in this dynamic part of the world. Recognizing the region's immense potential, Mastercard's recent divisional restructure is part of our refreshed organizational design that focuses on fast-tracking growth, strengthening stakeholder engagement and enhancing our multi-rail capabilities in key markets," said J. K. Khalil, Division President, East Arabia, Mastercard.

The report further emphasizes the importance of public-private partnerships in the development of the sector. Mastercard's milestones in government collaboration include the launch of the Digital City Partnership with Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) and the opening of the Center for Advanced AI and Cyber Technology in Dubai with the UAE Prime Minister's Office. In Pakistan, Mastercard also signed a strategic agreement with the Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA) to turn the community into a cashless economic zone by deploying innovative smart city solutions.

## OGDCL Announces Production Commencement from Chanda-7 Well in Kohat

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Pakistan's largest Exploration and Production company, has announced the commencement of production from the Chanda-7 well in Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and successful revitalization of the Kunnar-8 well located in Hyderabad, Sindh to enhance oil and gas production.

Chanda-7, a new development well, has been successfully tested, completed, and brought into production utilizing OGDCL's in-house expertise. The well is currently producing 305 barrels per day (BPD) of oil and 2.5 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCFD) of gas. Furthermore, 3.0 metric tons per day (MTD) of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) are being recovered. The well has been connected to the OGDCL's Chanda Plant, and gas is being injected into the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) network. The commencement of production from Chanda-7 is projected to result in annual foreign exchange savings of \$22.57 million as import substitution.

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# Responsibilities of State and People - II

**G**iven the region's vulnerability to natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, Pakistan has established a comprehensive disaster management framework to provide timely relief and rehabilitation assistance to affected areas in AJK. This includes the setup of emergency shelters, distribution of food and medical supplies, and efforts towards reconstruction to aid communities in their recovery and rebuilding efforts.

In an effort to uplift marginalized communities and empower vulnerable groups, Pakistan has implemented various socio-economic support programs in AJK. These initiatives focus on poverty alleviation, women's empowerment, vocational training, and the promotion of small-scale entrepreneurship. Through these programs, resources and opportunities are provided to improve livelihoods and foster inclusive development.

These initiatives not only enhance the quality of life for residents but also contribute to socio-economic advancement and regional integration.

During times of natural disasters, the Pakistan Army takes the lead in providing relief and rehabilitation in AJK. Quick-response teams are dispatched to provide emergency medical aid, shelter, food, and clean water to affected areas. Additionally, the army collaborates with civil authorities and international organizations to coordinate relief efforts, ensuring timely assistance to impacted communities. Through its proactive approach and efficient logistics, the Pakistan Army has saved countless lives and assisted communities in recovering from natural disasters.

Pakistan Army has established schools, colleges, and vocational training centers in AJK. These institutions not only provide academic education but also offer technical and vocational skills training, preparing students for employment opportunities. Moreover, scholarships and financial aid programs are available to support talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to pursue higher education and realize their potential.

Additionally, the army hosts programs for youth development, leadership workshops, and recreational activities, aiming to direct the energies of young individuals positively and cultivate a culture of peace and tolerance. It's important to highlight that the Pakistan Army maintains a close relationship with the people of AJK, as evidenced by the significant presence of Kashmiris in various ranks of the army, demonstrating equal opportunities for recruitment and progression.

The Pakistan Army, dedicated to ensuring national security and promoting socio-economic progress, has played a crucial role in AJK. In addition to its defense responsibilities, the army has undertaken numerous initiatives to uplift communities, enhance infrastructure, and improve the overall quality of life. This involves the establishment and restoration of essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, educational institutions, medical facilities, and water supply systems. Through its engineering corps, the army leads projects aimed at enhancing connectivity, improving transportation, and deliv-

ering vital services to remote regions. Operating various medical facilities across AJK, the army offers high-quality healthcare services, including routine check-ups, surgeries, and specialized treatments. Mobile medical camps are also deployed to reach underserved populations in remote areas. Beyond healthcare, the army conducts awareness campaigns on preventive measures, maternal and child health, and hygiene education, aiming to improve community well-being and prevent diseases.

The Pakistan Army is actively involved in various socio-economic empowerment initiatives in AJK, focusing on uplifting marginalized communities and improving livelihoods. These initiatives include microfinance programs, agricultural development projects, and support for small-scale entrepreneurship, all aimed at creating sustainable income opportunities. Additionally, the army promotes women's empowerment through vocational training, literacy programs, and improved access to healthcare services, promoting gender equality and social inclusion.

In contrast, the situation in IIOJK has been characterized by neglect and deprivation for an extended period, with residents facing a shortage of fundamental facilities and essential services despite being a so-called integral part of the broader Indian state. The Indian government, Indian Army, and the Government of IIOJK have failed in fulfilling their responsibilities. Persistent systemic discrimination deprives the people of IIOJK of access to various amenities readily available in other parts of India. The healthcare infrastructure in IIOJK remains severely lacking, with shortages of hospitals, medical facilities, and trained professionals. Residents often face long journeys to receive basic healthcare, leading to delays in treatment and worsening health conditions. Furthermore, the region struggles with insufficient medical equipment, diagnostic facilities, and essential medications, further endangering the health and well-being of the population.

*To be continued*

## Israeli attacks force one million people to flee Rafah

**A** staggering one million people have now fled Rafah in southern Gaza, the UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said Monday, amid fresh reports of overnight attacks in southern, central and northern locations by Israeli forces. The small city on the southern edge of the Gaza Strip had been sheltering more than a million Palestinians who fled Israeli assaults on other parts of the besieged enclave.

"Thousands of families now shelter in damaged and destroyed facilities in Khan Younis, where UNRWA keeps providing essential services, despite increasing challenges. Conditions are unspeakable," the UN agency said in a post on X, formerly Twitter. The development comes three days since US President Joe Biden unveiled a ceasefire proposal based on a phased end to the war, reportedly involving the withdrawal of Israeli forces from built-up areas, the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, along with a plan for Gaza reconstruction. According to UNRWA, thousands of families have been forced to seek shelter in badly damaged buildings in Khan Younis. The city, which is just north of Rafah, is estimated to be home to some 1.7 million people. All 36 of UNRWA's shelters in Rafah are now empty, it reported. The UN agency said it had continued to provide basic humanitarian relief despite the increasingly difficult conditions, illustrated by one photograph of a young girl sitting alone on a rubble-strewn stairwell and another showing huge mounds of rubble and twisted metal next to a largely unscathed building. Some 690,000 women and girls were believed to lack basic menstrual hygiene kits, privacy and drinking water, UNRWA said. Highlighting the daily struggles faced by extremely vulnerable people in Gaza, UNRWA cited the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) estimated that around 18,500 pregnant women had been forced to flee Rafah. "Around 10,000 more remain there in desperate conditions," the UN agency said on X. "Access to healthcare and maternal supplies is minimal. Mothers' and babies' health is at risk." Echoing those deep concerns, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) said that there was now "little we can do for the people still in Rafah", where roads were "unsafe, access limited, and most of our partners and other humanitarian agencies have been displaced". In an alarming update on the exodus from Rafah since the escalation of the Israeli military operation there, a senior WFP official warned that public health concerns were now "beyond crisis levels", while "the sounds, the smells, the everyday life, are horrific and apocalyptic". People "have fled to areas where clean water, medical supplies and support are insufficient, food supply is limited, and telecommunications have stopped", said Matthew Hollingworth, WFP Country Director in Palestine. In support of repeated international calls for an immediate ceasefire, top human rights experts urged all countries to recognize the State of Palestine, as 146 UN member states have done already. "This recognition is an important acknowledgement of the rights of the Palestinian people and their struggles and suffering towards freedom and independence," the experts said in a statement on Monday. They noted that the State of Palestine – formally declared by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on November 15, 1988 – claimed sovereignty over the remaining parts of historic Palestine that Israel occupied in 1967: the West Bank including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. As of May 28, 2024, the State of Palestine has been recognized by the majority of UN member states, including most recently Ireland, Norway and Spain. The rights experts insisted that Palestine must be able "to enjoy full self-determination, including the ability to exist".



Analysis  
**Abdul Basit Alvi**



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

## Punjab: Banking on IT & Education Sector Reforms for Development

**T**he 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) of the 21st century, characterized by rapid advances in the cutting edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Robotics, Augmented and Virtual Realities has resulted in a paradigm shift in the ways we produce, consume, think and even interact with others. The very fascinating memories of the Digital Revolution of the 1990s have lost steam. Things like ChatGPT, Self-driving cars, Face and Speech Recognition softwares, Virtual Personal Assistants and Internet of Things (IoT) were unheard of not a very long time ago. Freelancing, remote work, flexi office hours and the 'fatal' intrusion of social media in our lives are corollaries of these changing tech trends that have shook our work ethics and social interaction values to the core.

In a right desire to keep pace with these changing job market trends, Punjab Government under the progressive leadership of its Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is all set to exploit wonders of the modern technology by laying focus on market-driven technical skills and education sector reforms.

The start of Pakistan's first IT City: Nawaz Sharif IT City is a step in the right direction. Nawaz Sharif IT City features in IT & Tech District, an Education City and a Film City. The Government of Punjab has declared the project tax-free for 10 years in order to lure in huge investments both local and foreign. Major tech giants of the world including 16 Chinese tech companies have not only given their consent to work with Pakistan's first IT City, but 08 of them are immediately ready to establish their business offices here. Well-reputed international educational institutions are being convinced to

set up their campuses in Nawaz Sharif IT City, so that our youth could get rewarding international degrees in their own beloved homeland, Pakistan.

To fulfill the need of quality human resource, ably-trained in the modern highly-tech skills and vocational trades, the Government has also started restructuring of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in order to enable it run market-driven advanced training courses in the fields like artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning, augmented and virtual realities etc instead of the old conventional trades like plumbing, refrigeration and motor winding. It has also started imparting advanced training to 4000 young boys and girls under Chief Minister's Skill Development Programme.

In order to promote a culture of research and higher education in youth, Government of Punjab has announced multiple programs including foreign undergrad scholarship program for the talented but deserving students across Punjab, besides augmenting the existing undergrad scholarship Programs in the local universities under Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF). It has also announced the grant of iPads and laptops to the talented students, besides providing them 20,000 bikes (E-bikes and petrol bikes) on interest free easy monthly installments.

The Government of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif fully understands the need of a quality school education system to better reap the fruits of higher education outcomes, because 'GIGO (Garbage in Garbage Out)' is a proven maxim. Therefore, it has started a comprehensive program of school education reforms. It includes outsourcing of some 13000 non-performing or under-performing schools out of the total 49000

public sector schools in Punjab. The Government is focused on complete overhaul of the education system in the province, for which it is not only categorizing schools on the basis of their performance but is also devising a workable model to engage the private sector in the quality uplift of overall teaching-learning exercise in public sector schools of the Province. Moreover, it has also launched teachers' training programs in the province. Another sore point of the school education sector in Punjab is reflected in a recent report of Pakistan Institute of Education, prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, that Punjab has 10.11 million Out-of-School children (OSC). In order to fix this issue, Punjab has started a school enrolment programme.

Another major speed trap in the development of kids' cognitive abilities is the prevalence of stunting and malnutrition in a greater number of kids across the province. Therefore, the Government has planned to start giving nutritious milk packs to the students of primary classes in public sector schools. This valuable intervention of Punjab Government would not only spur creative thinking and analytical abilities of the students but would also equip them with the courage and stamina needed to undertake challenging assignments in life.

To wrap up the discourse, we can rightly claim that these quality interventions in the education sector, besides shifting focus of skill training from conventional to high-end technical trades, would no doubt go a long way in raising a productive human resource that would be instrumental in the socio-economic development of the province, acting as its real asset instead of being a precarious liability.

*(The writer is an Information Officer working with Ministry Information and Broadcasting. He can be reached at arshakir.cmo@gmail.com)*



Analysis  
**Abdul Rashid Shakir**

## Importance of Ecotourism For Gilgit Baltistan - I

Danish Iqbal

**G**ilgit Baltistan is a land of unmatched beauty and natural and cultural capital of Pakistan. Gilgit Baltistan is Known for its snow capped mountains, landscape covered with lakes, rivers, valleys and glaciers. Gilgit Baltistan is famous for its sceneries and has mountainous peaks including K2 that is the 2nd highest mountain in the world. Moreover, it is also renowned for its history, culture, landmarks, and the local community. Due to its natural beauty tourism is the main source of revenue for gilgit baltistan and its people, tourism contributes to the socioeconomic development of gilgit baltistan. Its ecosystem and biodiversity contributes to the attraction of people around the world and tourists predominantly visit GB for adventure sports such as climbing, hiking, camping, and paragliding. Many tourists visit Gilgit Baltistan which include locals and foreigners, the tourism has positive impacts in economical, sociological and environmental which contributes to the development of the area as well as there are negative impacts of tourism in different spheres. Tourism in Gilgit Baltistan is essential and requires a proper structure and mitigation of adverse effects of tourism.

Ecotourism which is responsible travel to natural areas where that conserves the environment and sustains the wellbeing of locals. The ecotourism in gilgit baltistan holds great importance for sustainable development of the area as the ecotourism is a sub component of tourism and it includes visiting natural areas to study and observe nature and environmental friendly activities. A large number of studies have explored the factors of sustainable tourism and asserted that a criterion for sustainable

tourism should include indicators of social and economic sustainability, adding up to the indicators of environmental sustainability. Others have argued that for tourism to contribute to sustainable development it must be economically viable, environmentally sensitive and culturally appropriate and the forms that this might take are likely to vary with location.

Gilgit Baltistan has the population around 1.8 Million and the poverty rate is high in this area of Pakistan, Socio economic condition of GB is not that much satisfying, the tourism's impact must be positively affecting locals and providing them opportunities in this specific arena is essential most importantly their perspectives are of great importance and must be considered during implementations of tourism policies. The locals native land must be preserved. The lack of education, healthcare, electricity and increase in poverty are the hindrance and a reason which affects tourism. If the people of Gilgit Baltistan are provided the basic facilities and right over their land then they can contribute in the tourism and the promotion of ecotourism and its significant impact would certainly benefit the government and people.

However, it is observed that tourism has also resulted in creating adverse effects on the ecosystem and biodiversity of the region due to the lack of consideration of the environmental issues. For instance, it has become a common practice that the tourists litter and strew garbage alongside rivers and picnic spots, which results in environmental degradation. This development has shifted the focus of the present government, the provincial as well as the federal government, towards ecotourism development in the region. The GB government is already working with different stakeholders in order to raise awareness among the masses.

*To be continued*

# Minister for Finance meets with the Representatives from Korean Companies working in Pakistan

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb had a meeting with the Korean Ambassador and representatives of Korean Companies working in Pakistan at the Finance Division today. The Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Chairman National Highway Authority (NHA), MD Private Power & Infrastructure Board (PPIB), and senior officers from relevant ministries were also present in the meeting.

The Korean Ambassador appreciated the Government's economic initiatives and strong bilateral relations between Pakistan and Korea. He emphasized the need to fully exploit the untapped potential for further collaboration.

Representatives from Korean



companies briefed the Minister on their concerns regarding project timelines and operational efficiency.

The Finance Minister underscored the significant macroeconomic improvements and noted the positive trend in foreign exchange reserves.

Furthermore, Senator Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb reiterated the commitment of the Government to address the challenges faced by Korean companies operating in Pakistan and in this regard urged the relevant authorities to ensure their facilitation for smooth business operations.

The meeting concluded with a pledge to strengthen economic cooperation between Pakistan and Korea and to work collectively towards addressing mutual concerns for the benefit of both nations.

## Representative of Uzbekistan elected to UN Human Rights Committee for the first time in history

By Spokesman Report

On May 29, at the UN headquarters in New York, during the 40th session of the states parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), elections were held for nine members of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) for the 2025-2028 term.

Representatives from 16 states, including Burundi, Georgia, Egypt, India, Spain, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Lithuania, Morocco, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea, North Macedonia, Togo, Uzbekistan, Croatia, Ethiopia, and South Africa, competed for the nine seats in the HRC.

In a historic achievement, Akmal Saidov, Director of the National Center for Human Rights and an academician from Uzbek-



istan, received the highest number of votes from ICCPR member countries. This marks the first time Uzbekistan, and indeed any Central Asian country, has joined this key UN body.

The United Nations has acknowledged the significant progress made by Uzbekistan on the international stage. This progress is attributed to specific meas-

ures implemented under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. These measures include eradicating child and forced labor, combating domestic violence, empowering women and girls, ensuring gender equality, improving conditions for vulnerable populations, and maintaining an open dialogue on all issues within the UN human

rights agenda. Uzbekistan's election to the Human Rights Committee demonstrates the country's commitment to ensuring and protecting human rights through constructive interaction with international human rights structures. It will enable Uzbekistan to actively participate in decision-making processes and exchange best practices in this field.

It is worth noting that the Human Rights Committee is a UN body consisting of independent experts who monitor the implementation of the ICCPR by state parties. There are 173 states participating in the pact. Uzbekistan acceded to this international document in 1995. The Committee's activities aim to ensure full respect for all civil and political human rights.

## ICCI, RCCI collaboration to benefit business community: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry have decided to pool efforts to evolve a strategy for the solution of business community's problems and for having a congenial atmosphere for ease of doing business.

This decision was taken in a meeting between President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Saqib Rafiq at Chamber House Islamabad. It is noteworthy that the latter paid a visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal



Shahzad and Member Executive Committee Ikram Ur Rehman.

On the occasion Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry apprised the visiting guests about the working of the ICCI especially about its engagements for the welfare of Business community,

promotion of Industry-academia linkages and most importantly about the role it is playing as a bridge between the government and business community for the advancement of exports and fascinating foreign investments for the economic prosperity of the country.

President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce

and Industry Saqib Rafiq said that for the promotion of business and industrial activities, a business facilitation center (BFC) should be established in Islamabad like Rawalpindi. He said that establishment of expo centers and industrial zones are inevitable in both the cities to boost SMEs and reduce traffic pressure from the cities.

Former President ICCI and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari by terming the collaboration between two Chambers as a good omen for the business community of twin cities expressed the hope that it will prove highly beneficial for enhancing connectivity with the business community of friendly countries.

Khalid Chaudhry, Sheikh Jamshed Akhtar, Ms. Naima Ansari were also present on this occasion.

## Privatisation Commission Board Meeting

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 219th Meeting of Privatisation Commission Board was held on 3rd June 2024, under the Chairmanship of Minister for Privatisation/Chairman Privatisation Commission, Abdul Allem Khan to review the recommendations of the pre-qualification committee in light of the results of the scrutiny/evaluation of Statement of Qualifications (SOQs) submitted by eight (08) Interested parties for divestment of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited (PIACL). The Board, after detailed deliberations and keeping in view the criteria including technical, financial and documentary requirements stipulated in the RSOQ, decided to pre-qualify six (06) Interested Parties namely (1) Fly Jinnah Limited, (2) Air Blue Limited, (3) Arif Habib Corporation Limited, (4) Consortium Lead by Y. B. Holdings (Private) Limited (Consortium members comprises Pioneer Cement



Limited, Artistic Milliners Limited, ANS Capital Private Limited, Metro Ventures Private Limited), (5) Consortium Lead by Pak Ethanol (Consortium members comprises AirSial Limited, Serene Airlines Private Limited, Liberty Daharki Power Limited), and (6) Consortium Lead by Blue World City (Consortium members comprises Blue World Aviation, IRIS Communication Limited). RSOQ provides that Consortium members (not LEAD) can

be added/replaced, with the permission of Privatisation Commission, 15 days prior to Bid Submission Date provided that the proposed new member of consortium and the Consortium meets the requirements of RSOQ. The pre-qualified Interested Parties will be invited to the next stage of bidding process to start buy-side due diligence.

Earlier, in response to the Invitation of Expression of Interest (EoI), for Divestment of Pakistan Interna-

tional Airlines Corporation Limited (PIACL), published advertisement in leading national and international newspapers on 2nd & 3rd April, 2024, Privatisation Commission had received Statement of Qualifications from eight (08) Interested Parties by the last date i.e. 17th May 2024.

In addition, Federal Minister of Communications Abdul Aleem Khan praised the services of Pakistan Post for the citizens on Sundays across the country and congratulated all the employees. Abdul Aleem Khan added that the system of post offices is being adapted to the modern requirements and in the future, In Sha Allah, facilities for the public through the platform of postal services will be increased. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan further said that Pakistan Post has emerged as an active organization with facilities, while people's trust in this organization which is being restored with hard work, dedication and best facilities.

## Sightsavers celebrates the first-ever World Day of Assistive Technology

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan development organisation is celebrating the inaugural World Day of Assistive Technology on June 4 by calling for improved access to the innovative technology that transforms the lives of people with disabilities.

Sightsavers Pakistan invites government, organizations, and individuals to join them in marking the first ever day dedicated to formally recognising the transformative impact of assistive devices on millions of lives worldwide.

Sightsavers want to raise awareness of the crucial role assistive technology plays in empowering individuals with disabilities and the urgent need to improve access to it as a fundamental human right.

Assistive technology encompasses a wide range of products such as wheelchairs, eyeglasses, hearing aids, artificial limbs, digital devices, and their related systems and services. These tools enable individuals to move, communicate, and see better, empowering them to live more independently and enhancing their quality of life.

Munazza Gillani, Director Pakistan and Middle East said "Sightsavers has been at the forefront of providing essential services and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. This first-ever World Day of Assistive Technology is a milestone in our journey towards inclusivity and equality."

## SDPI launched Pakistan's Industrial Decarbonization Program

By City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) launched Pakistan's Industrial Decarbonization Program (PIDP) during the Policy Dialogue on Just Energy Transition in Pakistan that was conducted under the auspice of SDPI's Network for Clean Energy Transition (NCET). This significant dialogue brought together key stakeholders, including diplomatic missions, development partners, and public sector institutions, to discuss and collaborate on decarbonization drive in the industrial sector.

This initiative aims to significantly reduce carbon emissions in Pakistan's industrial sector by leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple partners. Key industries targeted for decarbonization in the initial phase

include cement, steel, and textiles, with a focus on harnessing green financing opportunities, developing business case for the industries and implementing best practices from around the world, particularly to align it with the European Union's Cross Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI emphasized the challenge of transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy, especially for developing countries like Pakistan. He highlighted the need for international support in technology and financing, given Pakistan's minimal contribution to global warming. Dr. Suleri while pitching a case for Just Energy Transition Partnerships cited successful examples from South Africa and Indonesia, urging similar support for Pakistan to ensure a just energy transition. The dialogue aimed

to gather recommendations for key development partners and G7 diplomats, to be discussed at COP29 in Baku.

Dr. Sardar Mohazzam, Managing Director, National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) stressed the importance of a diversified energy portfolio for ensuring energy security and highlighted the shift towards renewables. He raised concerns about addressing the circular debt issue and emphasized the need for a just transition in the energy sector, particularly in terms of financing mechanisms.

Ms. Saleha Qureshi, Research Associate and Lead of the Decarbonization Program at SDPI, presented the decarbonization program to stakeholders. She mentioned that the Pakistan Industrial Decarbonization program aims to achieve global goals through collaboration,



research, capacity building, and policy development, involving key stakeholders from the public and private sectors, CSOs, and international organizations.

Ms. Sobiah Becker Advisor, (GIZ) the urgent need for a transition to renewables, stressing the economic case for increased investments in renewable energy sources like green hydrogen in the industrial sector. She highlighted the potential for substan-

tial savings in manufacturing green hydrogen in Baluchistan compared to Europe.

Dr. Shafiqat Munir, Deputy Executive Director (DED), SDPI, mentioned that under this initiative SDPI will be engaging with all key stakeholders for providing the private sector with alternate economic engines to make a business case. Dr. Munir invited the stakeholders to engage with SDPI in joint

efforts for energy and climate action of Pakistan.

Dr. Khalid Waleed, Research Fellow at SDPI presented a Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) model for Pakistan. He highlighted that through this model, Pakistan can mobilize the necessary finance to enable its clean energy transition. Dr. Waleed further explained how a JETP model for Pakistan can generate funding for the early

retirement of coal powerplants and mobilizing the investments for renewable energy development in the country.

Moreover, it stressed the need for a comprehensive, forward-looking energy roadmap incorporating public-private partnerships and the importance of learning from successful energy transition and decarbonization examples in countries like South Africa and Indonesia.

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
75,575.25	75,878.47
Day's High	Day's Low
76,209.96	75,495.38
Index Value	Change
9,827,431,017	-303.22
Percentage	Time
-0.4%	3 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,262.75	-12.63
Percentage	Time
-0.15%	3 Jun, 4:50 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,395.42	-290.90
Percentage	Time
-0.75%	3 Jun, 1:47 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,923.03	+435.13
Percentage	Time
+1.13%	3 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	185
Bahrain Dinar	740.45	748.45
Canadian Dollar	204	206
China Yuan	38.45	38.85
Danish Krone	40.39	40.79
Euro	299.5	302.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.61	35.96
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	904.64	913.64
Malaysian Ringgit	59.18	59.78
New Zealand \$	171.04	173.04
Norwegians Krone	26.34	26.64
Omani Riyal	723.28	731.28
Qatari Riyal	76.57	77.27
Saudi Riyal	73.5	74.2
Singapore Dollar	203	205
Swedish Korona	26.13	26.43
Swiss Franc	308.46	310.96
Thai Bhat	7.57	7.72
U.A.E Dirham	75.25	76
UK Pound Sterling	351.5	354.5
US Dollar	277.5	280

# Budget should not be made intolerable for the public

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that some of the budgetary measures proposed by the IMF are not implementable.

He said the upcoming budget should not be made unbearable for the people because the masses and the business community are unable to bear more burdens.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that electricity consumption increases in summer, and the steep increase in electricity prices is condemnable.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the removal

of subsidies in various sectors and commodities, privatization of sick government industries, and continuous increase in electricity and gas prices will give the government temporary relief.

The solution to the problems does not lie in breaking the back of the people but in full recovery from the taxpayers and non-taxpayers, which amounts to four thousand billion rupees annually, towards which no significant progress is being made.

Also, until the power sector issues are resolved, the dependence on debt will continue to rise. Therefore, instead of increasing the burden on the people, the tax base should be widened, tax collection should be improved, and the affairs of the power sector should be streamlined.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the IMF is



demanding that taxes be increased on flour, sugar, rice, milk, tea, and other important food

items, which will promote the documentation of the country's economy.

On the other hand, it will increase inflation and mass anxiety, so attention should be paid to improving the purchasing power of the people.

Taxes on pesticides will affect the agricultural sector and increase inflation, so this should also be considered.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that in 2008, due to the budget deficit, the government used to meet 24% of its capital requirement by borrowing from banks, which has now increased to 83%, which can become a big risk for the country's financial system.

The current situation can be tackled through drastic economic reforms, privatization, import substitution, and an increased tax base. In this regard, the whole nation must unite with the government.

## Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressing media persons at Ground Breaking Ceremony of Residential Tower at Askari-2 Karachi Cantonment on Monday.



Photo: PID

## FBR Tajir Dost Scheme: All Businesses Should Pay Taxes: Atif Ikram Sheikh



**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stated that all businesses should pay taxes and small traders should register with FBR under its Tajir Dost Scheme (TDS). He expressed his satisfaction that, despite some initial teething problems, 22,000 small traders have registered under FBR-TDS so far.

It is pertinent to note that FPCCI hosted a high-profile and well-attended session of small traders with both the Chief Commissioners of Karachi regions, i.e. RTO I & RTO II with Mr. Naecem Mir, Chief Coordinator of FBR Tajir Dost Scheme, to establish better understanding, coordination and liaison between FBR and small traders.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, reiterated FPCCI's stance that FBR needs to expand tax-net and simplify the taxation system to improve tax-to-GDP ratio; instead of further squeezing the existing taxpay-

ers. However, the process should be in consultation with the business community; should be fair & transparent and undertaken in a business-friendly manner, he added.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon stressed that Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio stands poorly at 9 percent while the regional and sub-regional countries have achieved that ratio in the range of 16 - 18 percent.

Mr. Aman Paracha, VP FPCCI, maintained that terms & conditions of taxing the traders should be made clear sooner than later to alleviate concerns and apprehensions to take the registration process further.

Mr. Naecem Mir, Chief Coordinator of FBR Tajir Dost Scheme, highlighted that the authorities are well aware that small traders cannot afford an accountant or a lawyer to file taxes through prescribed method of FBR. Therefore, FBR has come up with a Tajir Dost mechanism.

Mr. Abdul Rehman Khan, Convener of FPCCI's Sindh Regional Standing Committee on Small Traders, stated that Karachi is the business and commercial hub of the country.

Dr. Muhammad Sarmad Qureshi, Chief Commissioner of Regional Tax Office - I (Karachi) and Ms. Hina Akram, Chief Commissioner of Regional Tax Office - II (Karachi) answered the queries of the traders in detail on the spot.

## Karandaaz and PostEx Partner to Digitise Cash on Delivery Payments in Pakistan



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz Pakistan, an impact investment platform dedicated to driving sustainable economic growth and strengthening financial and social protection systems for inclusion, announced its partnership with PostEx, a leader in e-commerce logistics with over 20,000 registered merchants and a customer base of over 20 million. This collaboration aims to transform Pakistan's e-commerce landscape by digitalising cash-on-delivery (COD) payments.

Waqas ul Hasan, CEO Karandaaz, stated: "This collaboration is a significant

milestone in our mission to establish a cashless economy in Pakistan. By advancing our broader agenda of creating a digital nation, we aim to contribute towards economic growth and development through innovative financial solutions.

Jawad Mirza, CEO PostEx Logistics, emphasised: "To tackle one of the biggest challenges in Pakistan, cash, we need to come up with innovative solutions to unlock the real potential of Pakistan. It is partnerships like these that have the potential to really push the markets in the right direction.

Sharjeel Murtaza, Director of Digi-

tal Financial Services at Karandaaz, commented: "E-commerce has been a crucial driver of economic growth globally. The dominance of cash transactions has been a significant barrier which has to be removed with innovative solutions. Our pilot program with PostEx targets one of the biggest barriers, that is lack of trust, in local context.

Karandaaz's collaboration with PostEx marks a significant effort towards realising a digital ecosystem. This transformative initiative aims to revolutionise the e-commerce payment landscape, promote the digital economy, and foster sustainable economic growth in Pakistan.

## Business confidence inches up, while inflation, taxation, and policy concerns cloud future outlook: OICCI Survey

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Business confidence in Pakistan has improved by 4 percent, though it remains in the negative, as reflected in the 25th Wave of the Business Confidence Index (BCI) survey conducted by the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI). The survey was conducted across Pakistan during March-April 2024.

Rehan Shaikh, President of OICCI, stated, "The OICCI Business Confidence Index has shown some positive signs of economic recovery, rising to negative 14 percent in March-April 2024 from negative 18 percent in the previous survey of October-November 2023.

This upward trend," Rehan continued, "albeit small, indicates a more optimistic business environment, supported by improving economic growth, a stable exchange rate, and declining inflation".

Going forward, anticipation of rising inflation, high taxation and inconsistent government policies have been expressed as key threats to the business growth by the survey respondents.

The OICCI BCI results reflects feedback from about 80 percent of the GDP stakeholders and comprised of the 43 percent participants from the manufacturing, 36 percent from services, and 20 percent from the retail/wholesale trade sectors. The sectoral break-

down reveals that compared to the last wave, confidence declined substantially to negative 15 percent among firms in the manufacturing sector, indicating significant chal-



lenges confronting this sector. In contrast, the retail sector's confidence rose by 16 percent from negative 31 percent in previous wave to negative 15 percent in current one, showing the highest improvement among the sectors. The services

sector demonstrated signs of optimism, although overall confidence remained negative at negative 14 percent, compared to negative 18 percent in the previous Wave 24.

Secretary General of OICCI, M. Abdul Aleem, discussing the results, expressed "The main concern for the country highlighted in the Wave 25 BCI survey is the drop in the new investment index to negative 12 percent compared with negative 4 percent in the last wave, which is mainly attributed to ineffective commercial and trade policies and an unclear global security situation. The BCI of OICCI members, randomly included in the survey," M. Abdul Aleem continued, "was recorded at negative 4 percent,

showing a notable decline from positive 3 percent in Wave 24".

Key factors raising concerns over the past six months include political instability (74 percent), fuel prices (70 percent), high inflation (69 percent), and currency devaluation (65 percent). On the positive side, declining inflation, stable exchange rate, better economic growth were recorded as favourable factors, along with improvements in the company and industry business situation. The BCI survey respondents also foresee continued risk of political stability, rising fuel prices, and rebounding inflation in the future, which restrained their confidence and showed a marginal improvement.

*Experience 120FPS gaming with Infinix GT 20 Pro - available in Pakistan now!*

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Infinix GT 20 Pro, the official gaming phone of the PUBG Mobile Super League (PMSL), is now available. Targeted towards young gaming enthusiasts, the GT 20 Pro offers up to 120FPS gameplay for PUBG and other game titles. The processing power of Dimensity 8200 Ultimate 4nm 5G processor paired with a dedicated gaming display chip ensures lossless frames delivering an immersive gaming

Simon Feng, the CEO of Infinix Pakistan, recently made a statement regarding the launch of the newly released Infinix GT 20 Pro, "Mobile gaming is exploding globally, and Pakistan is no exception, the Infinix GT 20 Pro is our response to this growing demand. GT 20 Pro is designed to empower the next generation of gamers and push the boundaries of what's possible on smartphone"

Beyond the core performance features, the GT 20 Pro offers a range of secondary features that elevate the overall user experience. The phone's striking Mecha loop design offers a visually captivating aesthetic, while dual speakers tuned by JBL deliver immersive and powerful sound. A long-lasting 5000mAh battery ensures you can stay powered throughout the day, and for those who demand even more, the phone supports hyper charge mode. The software experience is kept clean and bloatware-free with Infinix's XOS 14 built on top of Android 14. This commitment to a clean OS extends to software updates, with Infinix guaranteeing two major Android updates and three years of security patch updates, keeping your phone protected and up-to-date. Gamers will particularly appreciate the inclusion of an esports mode, which optimizes performance and prioritizes resources for a competitive edge.

For those seeking a touch of personalization, the GT 20 Pro comes in three captivating color options: Mecha Blue, Mecha Silver, and Mecha Orange.

GT 20 Pro is available to order on Xpark and outlets nationwide for PKR 99,999/-.

## Ovais Yousuf appointed CEO of P&G Pakistan

**PPA**

PAKISTAN: P&G Pakistan today announced appointment of Ovais Yousuf as its new Chief Executive Officer effective June 1, 2024. Ovais is an experienced business leader who has worked with P&G for close to 16 years in various roles across Asia, Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Most recently, Ovais was Commercial Leader, based out of Karachi, overseeing

the successful launch of Baby & Fem Care Startup Project and Fabric Care in Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, Ovais said, "I'm excited to lead P&G's business in Pakistan. We have grown manifolds in the last three decades, with brands that millions rely on a daily basis. I also want to express my gratitude to Adil for his outstanding leadership in the last three years.



# Chairman Senate Gillani organized a reception in the honor of World Football Delegation

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The delegation was led by Farhan Ahmed Junejo, Chairman Pakistan Football League UK. The delegation included famous international football players and furniture owners along with experts Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani's speech at the reception ceremony. I welcome all distinguished guests to the Parliament House.

It is my pleasure to host the reception in honor of the delegation of international footballers, experts, managers and administrators.

Chairman Pakistan Football League (UK), Farhan Ahmed

Janejo, CEO Pakistan Football League (UK) Ahmar Kanwar and other representatives of PFL (UK) are welcome here. Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani said that

The presence of eminent international footballers and PFL representatives here at Parliament House is a reflection of our shared passion for football.

Football is not an ordinary sport but a bridge that connects borders, cultures, and touches the hearts of millions of people. There is no dearth of talent and passion for football in Pakistan

We need professional coaching to produce world class players. Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani said that We need

professional coaching to produce world class players and put Pakistan on international football map I believe that this wonderful sport has a bright future in Pakistan

More than 60% of the population of Pakistan consists of youth who are the valuable asset of the country. If opportunities are provided, our youth have the ability to prove themselves in every field Pakistan Football League. PFL (UK) is playing an important role in promoting international football in Pakistan management of PFL (UK) for their tireless efforts in promoting football in Pakistan.

Together we can bring positive change in society by promoting



Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani said that I Being a football enthusiast myself, I assure you that I will

do my best to develop the latest football facilities in Pakistan and nurture the local talent. Let us work together to create a

brighter future, where every child has the opportunity to fulfill their dreams on the football field. British footballer Michael

Owen thanked Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani. He said that there is no shortage of talent in Pakistan Sports passion among Pakistani people is admirable

The largest delegation in the history of Pakistan, including international football players. Chairman Pakistan Football League UK Farhan Junejo Said. This is a big initiative, ten clubs of the world have come to Pakistan, the game of football will be promoted. Chairman Pakistan Football League UK Said Ten teams will be launched,

Multan, Peshawar, Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi, Sialkot and other teams will be released The aim is to bring out the talent

# Pakistan rowing team takes second prize in the Grand Moscow Regatta

Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: The team from Pakistan won second prize in the 63rd Grand Moscow Regatta held on May 30 - June 2, 2024 on Moscow Rowing Canal.

Ambassador of Pakistan Muhammad Khalid Jamali congratulated Pakistani sportswomen Manahil Hussain, Aaleen Hussain, Mariam Yousuf Ali and Nehan Asad, as well as their coach Imran Khan and manager Danish Iftikhar on their brilliant effort. "Karachi Boat Club's participation in the rowing competition will have a positive impact on the relations between the two countries," said Ambassador Muhammad Khalid Jamali.

Mohammad Khalid Jamali expressed satisfaction over the positive relations between Pakistan and



Russia in various fields, including sports.

The Pakistani team expressed their gratitude to the organizers for their hospitality and top-notch

organization. Additionally, they extended their thanks to the Ambassador for the encouragement he provided.

More than 1,300 athletes

from Russia, Cuba, Serbia, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and the Republic of Belarus took part in the 63rd Grand Moscow Regatta.

# WBSC president Riccardo Fraccari impressed by performance of Pak women softball players

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The President of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), Riccardo Fraccari, has said that the future of softball in Pakistan is bright.

The successful holding of the first Inter-Provincial Women's Softball Championship shows that softball in Pakistan is moving in the right direction and gaining popularity.

In a video message sent to Softball Federation of Pakistan President Asif

Azeem, the WBSC president said that this championship is an important step towards the promotion of softball throughout Pakistan, especially among women.

"It was a great opportunity for the players from different provinces to showcase their skills and passion and of course they improved their game by showing their performance and sportsmanship", he said, adding, I was very impressed with the hard work, passion and dedication of the Pakistani women players

during the championship,

Riccardo Fraccari added that this championship was not just a competition between provinces but it has seen an atmosphere of learning, progress and healthy competition between the players, adding, "I believe that this inter-provincial event has strengthened the ties between the softball community. In this connection, the tireless efforts and commitment of the Softball Federation of Pakistan for the promotion of softball is commendable, he concluded.

# Mahnoor Ali wins Gold Trophy at Lion Junior Open 2024

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Mahnoor Ali, an 11-year-old Pakistani squash prodigy, achieved a significant milestone by clinching the gold medal in the U13 category at the Lion Junior City Open 2024, held in Singapore defeating Tang Ching Sum of Hong Kong. The Pakistani player's winning score was eleven-six, eleven-seven, and eleven-four.

This achievement was made possible through the generous support of the Bilquis and Abdul Razak Dawood Foundation. This marks Mahnoor's fourth international title. Previously, she secured the gold medal in the Australian Junior Open 2024 and earned a bronze medal in the U-13 category at the 7th Borneo Junior Open 2023. The foundation's dedication to promoting sports and nurturing young talent has been crucial to Mahnoor's journey, allowing her to participate in prestigious events and gain invaluable experience.

Abdul Razak Dawood says, "Mahnoor's victory not only brings



pride to her family and the whole nation but also serves as an inspiration for other young athletes in Pakistan. Her success story highlights the importance of providing opportunities and resources to young sports enthusiasts, setting the stage for future champions in various fields. We are always committed to supporting young talents in Pakistan by providing them with the right platforms to nurture and develop their skills in the right direction."

The young athlete has consistently made both the foundation and the

organization proud, having won 14 medals and 4 international titles to date.

"This news was a tremendous delight for the foundation and all of us. Mahnoor's journey has been incredible. When we first met her, we instinctively knew that this young girl would make us all proud and achieve great victories for the country. Today, we celebrate her 14th medal in the world of squash, a testament to her hard work and talent," said Mehreen Dawood.

The Bilquis and Abdul Razak Dawood (BARD) Foundation has always played a vital role in promoting talent and paving the way for successful careers for many. The initiative undertaken by the Foundation believes in changing fortunes by helping competent individuals realize their potential as champions in their chosen fields. The purpose of the Foundation is to develop strong and confident individuals, with a special emphasis on skill construction and improvement. The Foundation extends assistance to anyone who has the spirit of adventure by becoming a part of their transformative journey.

# University of Punjab beat Kinnaid College by 23 runs at COMSATS Unifers

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The University of Punjab won the Lahore Zone Final beat Kinnaid College by 23 runs here at Comsat University Cricket Ground, Lahore. Opted to Bat First PU scored 103 for 6 in 20 overs. Gul Rukh 58, for PU while excellent bowling spell from Kinnaid College Qurat ul Ain 5-19. In reply Kinnaid College could manage 80 runs in 20 overs. Qurat Ul Ain 20 runs Ezza got 2 wickets for PU. From PU Hul Rukh was declared player of the match.

# SBP Summer Sports Camp to be conducted at different venues of NPSC from June 25

Tahir Amin Malik

ISLAMABAD: Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal has announced to conduct Sports Board Punjab Summer Sports Camp at different venues of Nishar Park Sports Complex (NPSC) from June 25.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that the online registration of Sports Board Punjab Summer Camps will continue from June 3 to June 10. "The children of 5 to 16 years of age can participate in the Summer Sports Camp," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Summer Sports Camp 12 games, including athletics, archery, badminton, table tennis, hockey, football, tennis, swimming, cricket, karate, taekwondo and gymnastics will be organized in Lahore.

"The camps of six games, including athletics, archery, table tennis, hockey, football, karate, taekwondo, volleyball, basketball will be conducted in other divisions of the province."

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Summer Camps will play a key role in finding talented male and female young athletes in different games at grassroots level.

# WBSC president sees bright future of softball in Pakistan

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), Riccardo Fraccari, sees a very bright future of softball in Pakistan. The successful holding of the first Inter-Provincial Women's Softball Championship at Karachi shows that softball in Pakistan was moving in the right direction and gaining popularity, said a press release.

In a video message sent to Softball Federation of Pakistan President Asif Azeem, the WBSC president said this championship was an important step towards the promotion of softball throughout Pakistan, especially among

women. "It was a great opportunity for the players from different provinces to showcase their skills and passion and of course they improved their game by showing their performance and sportsmanship", he said and added that he was very impressed with the hard work, passion and dedication of the Pakistani women players during the championship. Riccardo Fraccari said this championship was not just a competition between provinces but it has seen an atmosphere of learning, progress and healthy competition between the players. "I believe that this event has strengthened the ties between the softball community,

# PFL delegation meets Rana Sanaullah discuss development of football

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Pakistan Football League (PFL) UK Holding Limited, led by Michael Owen and Farhan Ahmed Junejo, met with Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah, to discuss the development of football in Pakistan. The meeting was a significant milestone in the government's efforts to promote sports in the country, in line with the Prime Minister's vision, said a statement.

Sanaullah, who also holds the portfolio of Ministry of Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) appreciated the comprehensive plan presented by PFL to develop football infrastruc-



ture, attract investment, and nurture young talent in Pakistan.

The plan includes the construction of a state-of-the-art soccer city stadium in Karachi, which will meet FIFA standards and provide modern facilities. PFL will also establish academies to train 2,000 children initially, and partner with Portuguese club Benfica to provide training to 100 Pakistani children every year.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

"National Aerospace City" Affordable Private Housing Scheme located at Mouza Pind Suleman Makhan Tehsil & District Attock and Mouza Kamala, Sahiba, Shamsabad, Veero, Teja Baja, Qutba & Jatial Tehsil Hazro District Attock comprised an area of **7440.42-Kanal**. The public is hereby informed through this office notice that **Project Director**, has applied to Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency (PHATA) for sanction of the Affordable Private Housing Scheme namely **"National Aerospace City"** located at Mouza Pind Suleman Makhan Tehsil & District Attock and Mouza Kamala, Sahiba, Shamsabad, Veero, Teja Baja, Qutba & Jatial Tehsil Hazro District Attock comprising an area of **7440.42-Kanal** under PHATA Affordable Private Housing Scheme Rules 2020. Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency (PHATA) has sanctioned this Affordable Private Housing Scheme in its 94th Governing Body Meeting held on **08/09/2023**. Director General PHATA issued Controlled Area Notification dated **26/02/2024**. Detail of various categories of housing units/ commercial units/ public buildings / salient feature provided in the Affordable Private Housing Scheme are as under:-

Description	Category	Plots Size	Units	Area		
				Kanal	Marla	Sft
<b>Residential</b>	01-Kanal	49'-6"x110'-6"	237	<b>2887.53</b>		
	16.50-Marla	50'x90'	1901			
	8.36-Marla	35'x65'	819			
	5.78-Marla	30'x52'-6"	462			
	05-Marla	25'-10"x52'-6"	1098			
	4.13-Marla	25'-10"x45'	977	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5494</b>	
<b>Apartments</b>			-	<b>141.43</b>		
<b>Commercial</b>	More than 01-Kanal	Irregular	33	<b>611.61</b>		
	01-Kanal	50'x90'	24			
	10-Marla	35'x70'	39			
	08-Marla	30'x60'	120			
	6.6-Marla	40'x45'	212			
	4.4-Marla	30'x40'	109			
<b>Public Building</b>	09-Nos. Educational Institute -03, Mosque-05, Grid Station		<b>140.40</b>			
<b>Other which are transferred for PHATA</b>	Society Office		<b>6.20</b>			
	Roads / Street / Parking		<b>2899.36</b>			
	Grave Yard		<b>153.43</b>			
	OHWT & Tube Well		<b>2.46</b>			
	Solid Waste Management		<b>10.70</b>			
	STP		<b>14.91</b>			
	Open Spaces / Parks		<b>540.66</b>			

Detail of various plots reserved for **Affordable houses/ Apartments** provided in the Affordable Private Housing Scheme are as follow:-

Description	Plot Size	Nos. of Plots	Total Area (in Kanal)
<b>Residential</b>	25'-10"x52'-6"	1073	275.59
	25'x45'	958	201.01
	Flat	19	135.53
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2050</b>	<b>612.13</b>

The public is hereby informed through this notice that the following plots in the Affordable Private Housing Scheme have been mortgaged with the Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency (PHATA) as security towards provision of development works (provision of roads, water supply, sewerage system and drainage system, street lights and electricity network, gas facilities and horticulture works). It is the responsibility of the Sponsor of the Affordable Private Housing Scheme to provide and complete the development work. The Sponsor could not sold or transfer these plots until redemption after due completion of the development works. List of mortgage plots is as follows:-

Description	Plot Size	No. of Plot	Total Area (in Kanal)
<b>Residential</b>	30'x52'-6"	<b>168</b>	<b>309.16</b>
	50'x90'	<b>79</b>	
	49-6"x110'	<b>175</b>	
	<b>G. Total</b>	<b>422</b>	
<b>Commercial</b>	Irregular	<b>01</b>	<b>68.56</b>

Pubic is informed through this notice that do not enter into any transaction, sale or purchase in the mortgaged plots till they are redeemed.

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR**  
 PUNJAB HOUSING & TOWN PLANNING AGENCY  
 AIRPORT LINE ROAD NEAR WATER TANK  
 GULZAR-E-GUAID RAWALPINDI  
 PHONE NO.051-5191909

## Israeli brutality

A Palestinian woman arranges a bed in a tent at a makeshift camp housing displaced Palestinians, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas on Monday.



Photo: AFP

# Turkish FM visits China amid Palestinian-Israeli conflict

### Spokesman Report

**BELJING:** China has been in close communication with the Muslim countries in the Middle East recently amid the worsening situation in Gaza, as Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan started his visit to China on Monday, just a few days after the 10th ministerial conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum. Chinese analysts

said that apart from boosting bilateral cooperation, China would strengthen cooperation and coordination with Turkey and other major powers in the region to jointly promote a sustainable cease-fire in the continuing Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Chen Wengqing, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and head of the Commission

for Political and Legal Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, met with Fidan in Beijing on Monday. Guided by the important consensus of the leaders of the two countries, China was willing to work with Turkey to bring cooperation in the field of security to new heights continuously, enrich and expand the connotations of bilateral ties further, protect the security interests of both countries in an improved

manner, serve the strategic alignment of the two countries' development, and contribute actively to the peace and development of both countries, the region and the world, Chen added. Fidan expressed willingness to continue promoting bilateral cooperation in the field of security. Fidan will stay in China from Monday to Wednesday, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry. With regard to bilateral relations, the visit would boost

the China-Turkey cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, as Turkey was a key partner of China with an important location bridging Asia and Europe, and also a major power in the region, said Li Xinggang, a research fellow at the Institute for Studies on the Mediterranean Rim at Zhejiang International Studies University, Global Times reported.

## Chairperson BISP meets with unicef country representative

### Tooba Khan

**ISLAMABAD:** A delegation from UNICEF, led by Country Representative Mr. Abdullah Fadil, met with Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, Mrs. Rubina Khalid, at the Benazir Income Support Programme headquarters today.

The meeting centered on strengthening collaboration between Benazir Income Support Programme and UNICEF, with a particular focus on enhancing the health and nutrition of

women and children in Pakistan

During the meeting, Mrs. Rubina Khalid emphasized her commitment to increasing awareness of the Nashonuma Programme, which aims to address malnutrition among women and children. She highlighted the critical role that awareness plays in resolving various issues related to health and nutrition, particularly for vulnerable populations.

"My focus will be on raising awareness of the Nashonuma Programme," stated Mrs. Khalid. "By doing so,

we can address many issues, especially those affecting women and children. BISP and UNICEF need to collaborate closely on this front to ensure the well-being of our communities."

The UNICEF delegation also included key representatives: Anteneh Girma Minas, Chief of Nutrition; Sadaf Zulfiqar, Social Policy Specialist; Dr. Noreen Arshad, Nutrition Officer; Dr. Wisal Khan, Nutrition Specialist; Larissa Bruun, Chief of Resource Mobilization; and Xinyi Ge, Program Specialist. The delegation



met with Benazir Income Support Programme Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad and DG NSER/CCT Mr. Naveed

Akbar, discussing the strategic direction and operational aspects of their collaborative efforts.

# PM Shehbaz's China visit to become a milestone in bilateral relations: Chinese ambassador

### Spokesman Report

**ISLAMABAD:** Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Jiang Zaidong said on Monday that under the guidance of two leadership and strong support from the people of both countries, the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China would achieve complete success and become a milestone in the development of China-Pakistan relations. The ambassador in an interview with APP, a day before the prime minister's five-day visit from June 4-8, 2024 to China, said that all preparatory works had entered the final stage, and discussions on Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were in full progress.

At the invitation of Premier Li Qiang, Prime Minister Shehbaz will pay an official visit to China. This is his first visit to China after assuming the office this year. Highlighting the components of the visit, he said the prime minister would meet and have talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Zhao Leji. The leaders will have an in-depth exchange of views on China-Pakistan relations and issues of mutual interest, and jointly draw up a blueprint for the growth of bilateral relations. In addition to Beijing, the prime minister will visit Guangdong and Shaanxi. "China stands ready to work with Pakistan through this visit to make greater progress in our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership and take

new steps in building of an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era," the envoy remarked. Calling China and Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partners and ironclad friends, he said "Our friendship has stood the test of time and remained rock-solid and—to use a Chinese expression—"steady as Mount Tai." He said in recent years, both countries had close high-level exchanges, conducted fruitful and high-quality cooperation on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and maintained sound communication and coordination in international and regional affairs. Regarding CPEC, he said the landmark BRI project brought a total of US \$25.4 billion in direct investment, 236000 jobs, 510km of highways, more than 8000 megawatts of electricity and 886km of core transmission network, generating a strong impetus to Pakistan's economic and social development. Under the second phase of CPEC, he said both countries would implement the important consensus reached by their leaders including the strengthening synergy of development strategies and policy coordination and accelerate progress on mega projects including upgradation of ML-1, the Gwadar Port and realignment of Karakoram Highway Phase II.

Moreover, the two countries will strengthen cooperation in industry, agriculture, mining, new energy, information technology and other fields based on local conditions and further negotiate and promote trade liberalization. "Looking forward to the second

phase of CPEC, we are ready to work with Pakistan to ... inject new impetus into China-Pakistan cooperation with China's new development, and promote the in-depth integration of "5Cs" (5 Corridors: growth corridor, livelihood-enhancing corridor, innovation corridor, green corridor and open corridor) with "5Es" framework, to create an upgraded version of the CPEC and build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era."

He said that China was also ready to further promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with the Pakistani side, to implement the Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI) and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), and to make positive contributions to building an equal and orderly multi-polar world as well as a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization. About the launch of Pakistan's lunar mission ICUBE-Q satellite with Chinese cooperation, Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said that since May this year, China-Pakistan aerospace cooperation had achieved frequent success. A week after its launch, Pakistan's ICUBE-Q successfully transmitted images from lunar orbit, marking Pakistan's inaugural step from "zero to one" in deep space exploration and making Pakistan one of the few members of the "deep space club".

He said that on May 30, Pakistan's multi-mission communication satellite, PakSat MMI, was again successfully launched from China's Xichang Satellite Launch Center, which was



on its way to the geostationary orbit and would bring revolutionary changes to Pakistan's telecommunications, the internet, and television landscape, contributing to Digital Pakistan. "We will enhance cooperation and knowledge transfer in more "down-to-earth" sectors such as agriculture, new energy, and information technology, to promote the building of upgraded version of CPEC, and constantly enrich the significance and practices of the China-Pakistan community with a shared future," he resolved.

Discussing the security cooperation and efforts to thwart the enemy's attempts to undermine peace, the envoy said that the Dasu terrorist attack on March 26 further necessitated a secure and stable environment for practical cooperation between China and Pakistan and the CPEC. "So far in 2024, Pakistani security forces have collective-

## Unannounced load shedding sparks protest in Karachi

### Bureau Report

**KARACHI:** The unannounced power outage during the scorching heat wave in the region sparked protests in several areas of Karachi.

A large number of Mohajir Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) members along with party leader Afaq Ahmed and businessman Sharjeel Goplani joined the protest at the Numaish roundabout against K-Electric.

Highlighting the crucial role of electricity in sustaining businesses, Goplani stressed that Traders and industrialists are given importance everywhere in the world.

He further revealed that a case was

registered against him for speaking out against K-Electric's inefficiencies.

Goplani recalled previous protests against the privatization of Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC), indicating a longstanding dissatisfaction with utility services in the city.

According to traders, K-Electric's distribution system falls short, unable to handle the electricity demand, which peaks at 3,700 megawatts while the system can only provide 2200 megawatts.

Earlier in April, Karachi was likely to face severe load shedding as K-Electric lost a record Rs 39.4 billion in the first 9 months of the fiscal year 2022-23.

## Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation delegation calls on Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima

### Commerce Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** Delegation of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Monday.

The delegation comprised Deputy Director Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Mr. Jason Lamb and Foundation's Country Lead in Pakistan Syed Ali Mahmood.

Matters related to digitalisation process in Pakistan, Digital Economy Enhancement Project (DEEP), fiberization, connectivity, and digital payments were discussed in the meeting.

CEO Karandaaz Waqas ul Hasan was also present in the meeting.

Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima said the main focus of the present government is digitalization for which steps are underway to facilitate citizens and businesses.

She said fiberization, connectivity and digital devices are critical for digitalization.

Shaza Fatima said that digitalization will enable efficient public services delivery and higher degree of transparency.

The delegation appreciated the present government's vision for digitalization and ensured Foundation's full support in digitalization process in Pakistan. Director General International Coordination, MoITT Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi was also present in the meeting.

## Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan appointed Vice Chancellor Air University

### City Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan Hilal-Imtiaz (Military) has been appointed Vice Chancellor of Air University, Islamabad.

Throughout his tenure in the PAF, Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan has exemplified leadership and excellence in various capacities, notably as a decorated fighter pilot and in key administrative roles.

As the Vice Chancellor of Air University, a renowned, top-ranked institution for higher education and research in Pakistan, Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan will spearhead the university's mission to deliver qual-

ity education and its future growth.

Expressing his fervor for his new role, Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan remarked, "It is a privilege to lead an institution which has excelled in teaching, learning, and interdisciplinary research with a wide range of undergraduate, master, and Ph. D. programs in cutting edge technologies including computing, Artificial Intelligence, and Cyber Security. At Air University we are committed to fostering an environment of academic excellence, innovation, and leadership development".

