



PM deems Pakistan-China friendship unshakable
"We are coming with serious plans to make our friendship become much higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the deepest ocean of the world," Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said. At the invitation of Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Sharif is on an official visit to China from Tuesday to Saturday. (Details on Page 5)



Calibration Aircraft makes successful test landing at Gwadar airport
A major milestone of the Flight Calibration and Flight Procedure Design has been reached for the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIAP) as the Calibration Aircraft made a successful test landing on the newly constructed runway on Tuesday. The Calibration Aircraft was welcomed to the airport with a customary water cannon salute by the Rescue and Fire Fighting Services Department of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA).

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Mr. Meng Fanli, Party Secretary of Shenzhen Municipal Committee, and Deputy Party Secretary of Guangdong Provincial Committee, Shenzhen on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

President Message on the occasion of World Environment Day

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Today, we are commemorating World Environment Day to raise awareness about the issues of land degradation, desertification, and droughts. Pakistan is among the few countries that have been most affected by the adverse impacts of climate change. During the past few years, Pakistan has witnessed diverse climate phenomena, including floods, droughts, heatwaves, and forest fires. The focus of this World Environment Day on land restoration, desertification combat, and drought resilience is quite pertinent. This day highlights our shared responsibility to protect our environment for future generations. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to overcoming these issues by pioneering innovative solutions and fostering international partnerships.



Pakistan's unwavering resolve to tackle environmental challenges is showcased through initiatives like the Green Pakistan Programme, which has made significant strides in afforestation and ecosystem restoration. Initiatives such as the National Adaptation Plan and the Climate Smart Agriculture reflect our dedication to sustainable agricultural practices and land degradation mitigation. Although Pakistan is taking steps to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought through the restoration of degraded forests, and agricultural lands, but much more needs to be done. We need to adopt sustainable land management practices, and water conservation techniques, besides supporting community action to promote forestation in rural and urban residential areas.

We need to mobilize federal and provincial departments and local communities to combat desertification, land degradation and droughts by efficiently managing and charging our water resources, restoring pastures, and enhancing the water-holding capacity of soils by planting more trees. I am sure that our focus on climate adaptation and mitigation would prove to be indispensable in ensuring our nation's sustainability. On this World Environment Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to protect the environment and surmount these challenges to ensure a healthier, safer, and more resilient planet for our future generations.

and businessmen to harness the true potential for enhanced partnership in science and technology, innovation and trade and economic cooperation. They also agreed that Pakistan-China Business Conference being held on Wednesday (tomorrow) could make an important contribution in that regard. The prime minister also attended a banquet hosted by Meng Fanli.

People to people contacts characterize Pak, China deep rooted ties: PM

Spokesman Report

SHENZHEN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday noted that the deep-rooted ties between Pakistan and China were characterized by frequent engagement and dialogue at the leadership level, people-to-people contacts, cultural and educational exchanges.

The prime minister met with Meng Fanli, Party Secretary of Shenzhen Municipal Committee, and Deputy Party Secretary of Guangdong Provincial Committee in Shenzhen, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Frequent leadership's engagements, people to people contacts characterize Pak, China deep rooted ties: PM The prime

minister lauded the impressive economic growth and exemplary innovative spirit of Guangdong province and also termed Shenzhen a trade gateway for China's business linkages with Pakistan. Reaffirming 'the time-honoured All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China, the two sides agreed on the need to explore opportuni-

ties for increased cooperation between Pakistan and the Guangdong province particularly under CPEC. Frequent leadership's engagements, people to people contacts characterize Pak, China deep rooted ties: PM Prime Minister Shehbaz and Party Secretary Meng underlined the importance of robust linkages and exchanges between scientists, innovators

and businessmen to harness the true potential for enhanced partnership in science and technology, innovation and trade and economic cooperation. They also agreed that Pakistan-China Business Conference being held on Wednesday (tomorrow) could make an important contribution in that regard. The prime minister also attended a banquet hosted by Meng Fanli.

Russian embassy says closely following Pakistan's political situation, court decisions

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Russia in Islamabad has stated that it was 'closely following' the developments in Pakistan, including the political situation and court decisions.

"However, we believe that it is up to the Pakistani people to react to and comment on these developments," the embassy said in an X post on Tuesday. The embassy did not mention any context of the post. Some of the users in the comments linked it to the legal battle of former prime minister Imran Khan while a few were "astonished" to see such a statement from the official social media account of the Russian embassy. On Monday, Khan and his party leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi got major relief when the Islamabad High Court acquitted them in the allegedly leaking state secrets case.

The cipher case pertains to a diplomatic document that reportedly went missing from Khan's possession. The PTI alleges that the document contained a threat from the United States to oust Imran from office because of his stance on Russia. The US administration has rebuffed such allegations. Later, Khan retracted from his allegations and blamed the former army chief for his ouster from the office.

CM launches "Maryam Ki Dastak App"

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, along with Provincial Ministers and Members Provincial Assembly, inaugurated "Maryam Ki Dastak App" in a special event held at a local hotel on Tuesday.

At National University of Sciences & Technology NUST's stall, a robot greeted the CM and gave a briefing on Dastak app. At ITU (Information Technology University) stall, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif had a virtual inspection of Dastak Office in Arfa Karim Tower through Metaverse Technology.

The CM was briefed by the authorities concerned that all citizens including senior citizens, women, sick and disabled will initially get 10 services at their doorsteps through 'Maryam Ki Dastak App'. These services include Domicile, E-Stamping, Birth Certificate, Death Certificate, Marriage Certificate, Divorce Certificate, Motor Vehicle Transfer, Property tax, token tax and new vehicle registration.

They also briefed that a dedicated number, mobile app and public portal are being provided to citizens for availing these services. Citizens can order services through Web Portal, Mobile App or Call Center 1202. They would also be able to, track applications using their Tracking ID.

Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Provincial Ministers Azma Zahid Bukhari, Mujtaba Shujaat Rehman, Chaudhry Shafay Hussain, Sohaib Ahmed Bharat, Rana Sikandar Hayat, Bilal Akbar, Special Assistants Rashid Nasrullah, Zeeshan Malik and Members of Punjab Assembly accompanied Madam Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, IG Punjab, secretaries and others relevant officers were also present.

Pope Francis says he will try his 'best' to visit Pakistan soon

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pope Francis has said that his message for Pakistan was "peace" and added that he would try his "best" to visit Pakistan soon. "We all should work together for establishing peace in the world," he said during a meeting with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi who called on him at the Vatican City on Tuesday.

Naqvi is on a Europe visit. The minister was accorded a warm welcome upon his arrival in the Vatican City.

The Pope added that Pakistan's prime minister had invited him for a visit and he "would try his best" to visit the country soon. Both sides discussed ways to promote peace, brotherhood, interfaith harmony and dialogue during the meeting. Pope Francis commended Pakistan's efforts towards "immediate repair and reconstruction" of Churches in the aftermath of the Jaranwala tragedy.

A violent mob of hundreds ransacked and torched five churches, attacked the residences of members of the Christian community, following an alleged incident of blasphemy in Jaranwala town of Faisalabad district, on August 16, 2023. The Pope expressed concern over the Palestinian situation, stating that it was a cause of "huge concern." He added that he stayed updated on the humanitarian situation in Palestine through daily briefings with workers engaged in relief efforts.

He emphasised that interfaith dialogue and harmony was the key to resolve issues. Interior Minister Naqvi thanked him for his "effective stance" on the Palestine issue, which had been widely appreciated.

All communities enjoying religious freedom in Pakistan: Law Minister



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tatar on Tuesday said that all religions were enjoying complete religious freedom in Pakistan.

Addressing a ceremony, he welcomed all the people of the Sikh community who arrived in Pakistan. The minister said that the

people of this country respected the traditions of Sikh community as there was a strong connection between the two sides. The Sikh community has vibrant role in the development of the country.

He further said that promotion of interfaith harmony was need of the hour.

Azam Nazeer Tatar said that teaching of "Guru Nanak" negate the materialism, adding that no religion permits for hate and violence.

Service to the humanity should be our mission, he said, adding that the Prime Minister of Pakistan has sent his greetings to the Sikh community.

The law minister said that the government was taking measures to further facilitate the Sikh people who arrived here Pakistan.

CPEC phase-II to grow business links between Pak-China: Minister

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal Tuesday said that the economic and cultural connections between the people of China and Pakistan are strong and focused.

In a video message ahead of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China, he said that a delegation comprising of one hundred and twenty six Pakistani businessmen is also visiting China, PTV news channel reported. "China has an important



role in Pakistan's development. It has always helped Pakistan in difficult times," he added.

He said there is a big opportunity for us to export the country's products to neighboring China, adding, Pakistani business delegation will sign investment and export

Continued on Page 8

IHC orders CDA to de-seal PTI office in Islamabad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court ordered the Capital Development Authority on Tuesday to immediately de-seal the office of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Justice Saman Riffat announced the reserved deci-

sion early on Tuesday, accepting the PTI's plea against the office being sealed.

CDA had sealed the office, located in Islamabad's G-8 sector, a few days ago for 'violating building rules'.

In addition to encroaching on adjoining plots, the office had also added an additional storey

in violation of building laws, the CDA had said in a statement. Armed with heavy machinery and escorted by a large contingent of police, the CDA team had descended on the PTI office just before midnight.

Asked about the operation, CDA had claimed that it was part of a campaign against

encroachment in the capital and was being carried out without any discrimination.

The office being sealed had also been mentioned in the Supreme Court on Monday during a hearing about reserved seats not being allotted to Sunni Ittehad Council.

When told that many rele-

vant documents were inside the now-sealed office, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa had remarked that suitable orders could be issued if needed.

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Pakistan committed to pursuing robust geo-economic policy: Gillani

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani has said that Pakistan is committed to pursuing a robust geo-economic policy that prioritizes regional developmental cooperation and trade as a vehicle of shared prosperity.

He was speaking as chief guest at the roll-out ceremony of Shehzore Truck organized by Dewan Farooq Motors and KIA in Sujawal, Sindh on Tuesday.

The Chairman Senate felicitated Dewan Farooq Motors and KIA on achieving this remarkable milestone, highlighting its significance not only for the companies involved but also for Pakistan's industrial progress and development.

The launch of the Kia Shehzore truck represents a turning point in automotive excellence, showcasing the dedication to innovation and hard work within Pakistan's industrial landscape, he observed. He also emphasized the vital



role of the automobile sector in driving economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and fostering technological advancement.

"I strongly believe that advancement in the transport and automobile sector will create a win-win situation for regional countries by fostering

regional trade, creating jobs and stimulating economic growth", the Chairman Senate added.

Commending the South Korea's economic transformation fueled by its automobile industry, he urged the Pakistan's automotive industry to embrace innovation, emphasizing the impor-

portance of affordability and safety standards in making Electric Vehicles (EVs) accessible to all consumers.

The Chairman Senate called for Benefiting from Pakistan's demographic dividend of youthful workforce. He emphasized the need for investments in training and skills development by the automobile industry to harness the potential of young population, in our common endeavor to propel progress and prosperity.

He advocated public-private partnerships to drive innovation, investment, and sustainable growth in the automotive sector, positioning Pakistan as a hub of innovation and sustainable transportation solutions.

"I have full faith that the Pakistani automobile industry will become a significant engine for economic growth. Let us continue to foster partnerships, invest in research and development, and support the growth of the automotive industry for the betterment of our nation", remarked Chairman Senate.

Kashmir declares state of Kashmir as 'aorta' of Pakistan

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Organized by the Majlis Ulema Azad Jammu and Kashmir and with the support of the Department of Religious Affairs of Azad Jammu and Kashmir / Sufi Forum / Ulama Mashai-kh Council of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the Kashmir national unity Conference held on Tuesday at a private hotel in the capital Muzaffarabad. The chief guest of the conference was the Chairman of the Central Viewing of the Crescent Committee of Pakistan and Khatib and Imam of the Badshah Mosque, Lahore, Ambassador of Peace Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabeer Azad and the guest of honor was the Chairman of the Islamic Ideological Council Allama Dr. Mufti Muhammad Raghbi Hussain Naimi. Addressing the conference, Peace Ambassador Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabeer Azad said that Pakistan, the beloved country, is



the supreme blessing of Allah Almighty, which came into being after the sacrifices of millions of people. Pakistan was achieved on the basis of Islam and Kalima Tayyaba and Kashmir is the aorta of Pakistan.

Addressing the conference, Azad Kashmir Chief Secretary Daud Muhammad Barich said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah has declared Kashmir as the aorta of Pakistan. Just as life cannot be imagined without an aorta in a body, so Pakistan cannot be imagined without Kashmir. Dr. Mufti Muhammad Raghbi

Hussain Naimi said that the promotion of unity and national unity is the most important need of the hour. Secretary Religious Affairs Azad Kashmir Muhammad Zafar Khan, Allama Shabbir Hasan Maithami, Pir Syed Ali Raza Bukhari, Maulana Abdul Aziz Ulumi, Mufti Nazir Ahmad Qadri, Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan, Syed Attaullah Shah, Bukhari, Pir Imtiaz Ahmad Siddiqui, Allama Kifayat Hussain Naqvi, Maulana Zaid Bustan, Maulana Na Maqsood Ahmad Tawhidi, Allama Asif Akbar Qadi, Maulana Mushtaq

Qadri, Allama Azmat Hayat, Mufti Abdul Khaliq, Allama Syed Sadiq Naqvi, Muhammad Sharif Jahagwi, Professor Dr. Shaheen. Kawsar, Maulana Abdul Majid, Qazi Shahid Hameed, Maulana Ayub Khan Saqib, Maulana Mumtazul Haque Qasmi, Syed Tufail Kazmi, Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Salafi, Mufti Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Maulana Danial Shahab, Maulana Imran Shirazi, Maulana Abdul Aziz Qasmi, Mufti Muhammad Akhtar, Qari Shakhawat Hussain, Maulana Abid Hussain Butt, Maulana and Jahit Shah, Dr. Saqib

Hamdani, Mufti Shaukat Qadri, Allama Ko Kab Chishti, Allama Ya Sir Abbas Sabzwari, Mufti Tanveer Ahmad, Haji Syed Ghulam Hussain Shah, Mullah Na Bilal Ahmad. Goldavi, Sahibzada Atiqullah Mazhar, Pir Umar Farooq Shah, Maulana Abid Asrar, Professor Zafarullah Jan and other scholars, Imams of mosques participated. At the end of the ceremony, the scholars of all schools of thought joined hands and expressed solidarity. At the end of the conference, national security, development and prosperity, unity of the Islamic world.

UCC demands justice for Slain Nazir Masih

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The United Council of Churches in Pakistan held a press conference at the National Press Club, demanding justice for Nazir Masih, a Christian who was brutally murdered in Sargodha.

Pastor Samson Sohail, Executive Director of the United Council of Churches, addressed the conference, calling for the addition of Section 302 of the Pakistan Penal Code to the FIR against the perpetrators of the heinous crime.

Pastor Sohail also demanded that the provincial and federal governments provide immediate financial relief to the family of the



deceased, who have suffered immense loss and damage to their property.

He emphasized that the Council had previously demanded a judicial inquiry

into the incident and punishment for the false accusers under Section 295B.

The Islamic Ideological Council had also condemned the incident in a special meeting on May 29, 2024, and recommended the establishment of special courts to try such crimes.

Pastor Sohail urged the Council to implement its recommendations and ensure that those responsible for such incidents are punished accordingly.

The United Council of Churches reiterated its commitment to working towards the development and stability of Pakistan, acknowledging the sacrifices and services rendered by both Muslims and Christians. The Council prayed for peace and security in the country, under the blessings of God.

International climate change day

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, with far-reaching consequences for our planet and its inhabitants.

On International Climate Change Day, we come together to raise awareness about this critical issue and to urge governments, corporations, and individuals to take action to mitigate its effects.

The Science Behind Climate Change

Climate change is the gradual warming of the Earth's surface and atmosphere, primarily caused by human activities that release large amounts of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, into the atmosphere. These gases trap heat and cause the Earth's temperature to rise, leading to melting glaciers, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events.

The Consequences of Climate Change

Climate change has far-reaching consequences, including:

- Rising sea levels and coastal erosion
- More frequent and intense heatwaves, droughts, and storms
- Water scarcity and food insecurity
- Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem disruption
- Negative impacts on human health and well-being

The Urgent Need for Action

The scientific consensus is clear: human activities are causing climate change, and urgent action is needed to mitigate its effects. The good news is that there are many solutions available, including:

- Transitioning to renewable energy sources
- Increasing energy efficiency

- Electrifying transportation
- Carbon capture and storage
- Sustainable land use practices

International Agreements and Frameworks

The international community has come together to address climate change through various agreements and frameworks, including:

- The Paris Agreement
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- The Kyoto Protocol

These agreements aim to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

What Can We Do?

On International Climate Change Day, we are called to take action to address this critical issue. Here are some ways individuals, governments, and corporations can make a difference:

- Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions
- Invest in renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure
- Promote sustainable land use practices
- Support climate change research and development
- Advocate for climate change policy and legislation

International Climate Change Day is a reminder that climate change is a global problem that requires a global response. We must work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, transition to renewable energy sources, and promote sustainable development. The future of our planet depends on it.



Analysis
Czechangez Khan Jadoon

Stars Girls College to provide better environment for students: Athar Malik



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Stars Girls College Multan, Managing Director Athar Malik has said that his aim is to provide a better environment to the students with the improvement of the institution and to pay special attention to their better future. Principal Wafa Azim Butt said that the students have made the parents and teachers proud of the institution by taking great interest in extracurricular activities. Well-known columnist and writer Azhar Saleem Majuka and poetess Saima Noreen Bukhari said on the occasion. That the students should pay special attention to the textbooks as well as other genres of literature and studies for their better future, speech and writing competitions were also organized on this occasion.

In which the students enthusiastically participated in English and Urdu speech contests, essay writing contests, mask craft contests and Saraiki poetry contests. He also performed the duties of a judge.

Bahauddin Zakariya University Zakarin Debating Society President Warda Batul and Emerson University Society President Qamar Mohiuddin acted as the English judges.

And finally certificates and prizes were also distributed among the students. In this annual event, the students, their parents and teachers participated in full with discipline.

Pakistan People's Party South Punjab against PIA privatization: Makhdoom

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: President Pakistan People's Party South Punjab Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood, Senior Vice President Pakistan People's Party South Punjab Khawaja Rizwan Alam, Chief Coordinator Pakistan People's Party South Punjab Abdul Qadir Shaheen expressed deep concern over the government's policies regarding the privatization of important national government institutions including PIA. Expressing that the privatization of important government institutions including PIA is illegal and unconstitutional.

Party leaders said that PIA and airports are our strategic assets which the finance minister rejected, selling other institutions including the national airline is a mafia that wants every institution in Pakistan to be sold. We suggest that instead of selling the national airline, it should be brought under the category of public private partner, PIA is the national airline of Pakistan which is being sold. So why can't PIA earn, if there is a loss, then it may be due to corruption, it should be liquidated and not sold.

The party leaders further said that privatization has never given any benefits, what benefit did KESC get when it was privatized in Karachi, no investment came, electricity supply was not improved or anything else benefited KESC. With privatization, investors filled their pockets and consumers and employees had to bear the brunt of it

Massive irregularities in Scholarships in Hazara University Mansehra

Nasir Ali Tanoli

MANSEHRA: In Hazara University Mansehra, like every year, applications were taken from hundreds of scholarship students, for which the students applied online, after which the test was also conducted, but the marks of the students Most of them were ignored while the papers of many male and female students were also rejected online. Sources said that many colorful officers of Hazara University and many politicians wanted to seduce the students they liked. The list made by poor and deserving students was canceled and a new list was created, on which the deserving students strongly protested on this issue and MNA Prince Ghstasp Khan, who spoke on every public issue in Mansehra. It was reported that Prince Mohammad Gestasp Khan took immediate notice and spoke to the VC Hazara University, after which the changed list was immediately stopped and an inquiry commission has also been formed on the matter which will find out. How and who changed the list? On the other hand, Prince Muhammad Ghstasp Khan told the media that he will not tolerate the abuse of any poor and orphaned child. If you want, we all have a duty to support him. There is some mess in the scholarship in Hazara University because I have found that the list has been changed. They have immediately stopped the list and formed an inquiry commission. It is hoped that action will be taken against the people involved in this matter and orphans and poor students will get scholarships. On the other hand, the citizens expressed their anger on the efforts of some officers of Hazara University and some politicians to honor them and thanked them for stopping the list on the part of Prince Muhammad Ghstasp Khan. In Hazara University, a group always honors themselves by neglecting deserving students and nothing happens despite protests, but this time there is a glimmer of hope. People say that this time if these colorful officers and some politicians If they are awarded, there will be a strong protest throughout Mansehra, because these people have been trying to destroy Hazara University for a long time. They also demand from the provincial government that the corrupt and colorful officers should be sent back home from Hazara University and the students should be provided their right.

EPA leads awareness walk to mark WED 2024 with school children, volunteers

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan-Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) on Tuesday led an awareness walk participated by the students of different schools and volunteers to celebrate the World Environment Day 2024.

Director General, Environment Protection Agency (DG EPA) Farzana Altaf Shah was leading the rally alongwith the students and EPA staff.

The theme for this year's World Environment Day is Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience.

On the occasion, the DG EPA said plastic bags were a serious threat to our land driving pollution and damaging ecology with its lethal and non-degradable nature.

She said it was imperative to foster effective education among the youth to adopt eco-friendly practices in their day-to-day life and shun single-use plastics to ensure environment conservation from degradation.



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
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cannt 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

AIOU faculty board approves different programs of Social Sciences

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Faculty Board meeting of Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Allama Iqbal Open University held yesterday. Dean, Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir presided over the meeting. Different scheme of studies of postgraduates, BS, MPhil and PhD programs and other academic related matters were discussed. All the teachers of the faculty and external member Dr. Salman Basit participated in the meeting.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir said that in the light of the instructions of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, special attention will be laid on quality education and all the programs will be aligned with the contemporary requirements as per the instructions of HEC. He said that in the light of the directives of the Government of Pakistan, Fehm-ul-Quran and Seerat-i-Taiiba have been included in all teaching programs, Constitution and Ideology of Pakistan will be included in next phase. He also instructed to finalize the BS Political Science and International Relations programs as soon as possible to offer in the next admissions. All the decisions of the Faculty Board will be approved by the next meeting of the Academic Council and the Executive Council.

Fazaia Medical College holds 3rd Convocation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd Convocation ceremony of Fazaia Medical College, Islamabad was held at the main auditorium of Air University, Islamabad to celebrate the rewarding moments that marked the achievements and dedication of its exceptional graduates. Former Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafique Butt NI (M) graced the occasion as Chief guest.

The convocation ceremony was organized for the MBBS 3rd batch of 2017 of Fazaia Medical College. The Chief Guest has conferred upon the degrees and awarded Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals to the graduates who secured 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions respectively in their University Professional examinations. The convocation was attended by senior armed forces officials, senior members of civil society, Vice Chancellors of medical universities, principals of private and civil medical colleges, and students' parents.

Fazaia Medical College (FMC), under the esteemed leadership of its Principal Professor Maj Gen Tahir Khadim HI (M), is reckoned for its academic excellence. The state-of-the-art teaching facilities, highly qualified faculty, integrated modular curriculum, and well-equipped skill



lab which is advancing towards simulation adds to the superiority in theoretical knowledge and practical experience of students.

While addressing the audience, Chief Guest Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafique Butt NI (M) expressed his satisfaction with the standard and quality of Medical education being imparted at Fazaia Medical College and PAF Teaching Hospitals Islamabad. He also advised

the medical graduates to upgrade their knowledge to meet the challenges that the health care system is facing with current changing scenarios.

The Vice Chancellor Air University, Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan, HI (M) during his address highlighted the importance of the latest digital tools and technologies for learning medical procedures and skills. He congratulated the medical graduates and their parents for

this memorable day. Principal Fazaia Medical College, Maj Gen Professor Muhammad Tahir Khadim HI (M) (Retd) presented the FMC annual report in the ceremony. He highlighted the advancements in FMC to provide quality medical education in the basic and clinical sciences disciplines. He acknowledged the efforts of faculty and students in presenting research work and achieving various awards at national and

international institutes. Parents of the graduating students, thanked the Vice Chancellor Air University, Principal, faculty, and staff of FMC for their efforts, and dedication in mentoring their children to become successful medical practitioners. In the end, a group photo of the graduating batch was taken with the chief guest, the Vice Chancellor Air University, and other dignitaries.

Teacher awards ceremony

ISLAMABAD: "Federal Government College for Girls F-7/2, the National Institute of Excellence in Teacher Education (NIETE) and the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training celebrated Pakistan's educators with a Teacher Award Ceremony titled 'Ustaad se Ustaad-e-Moh-taram ka safar'".



Photo: PID

Health advocates applaud SIFC and IMF for boosting Pakistan's Economy through tobacco tax hike

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a press release, Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), appreciated Special Investment Facilitation Council's (SIFC) previous work on investing in better economic decisions. Tobacco tops the list when it comes to increasing taxes on non-essential items for boosting economy. Health activists are hopeful that SIFC will advocate for an increase in cigarettes taxes by 26% in upcoming budget of year 2024-25.

This will be a Win-Win situation for both the economy and public health as it will generate PKR 17 Billion in revenue and after this tax increase, there is huge potential for long-term savings in health cost recovery by 19.8%. Malik Imran Ahmad country head Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) said that, higher taxes on tobacco products can lead to increased revenue for the government. Pakistan currently holds the highest proportion of young people, as 64% of the total population of Pakistan is below the age of 30. While 29% is between the ages of 15 and 29 years. Approximately, 1200 children initiate smoking every day in Pakistan. This number is growing rapidly every year and as responsible citizens and stakeholders we must all take action to protect our future generations from addiction and death.

Dr. Khalil Ahmad program manager SPARC, expressed his gratitude towards the SIFC, mentioning the urgent need to make sustainable decisions right now for strengthening economy in the long run and saving Pakistani children. Which is possible if the proposed 26% tax increase on cigarettes secures a place in the upcoming federal budget 2024-25.



Tax Sugary drinks not necessities of life

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Non-communicable diseases are alarmingly on the rise in Pakistan. 1100 people dying daily due to diabetes and its complications, over 300 limbs removed every day. Pakistan has 3rd highest burden of people living with diabetes with 33 million diabetics, apart from this 10 million people are pre-diabetic. Without immediate policy action number of people living with diabetes will increase to 62 million by 2045. Consumption of If modifiable risk factors of these diseases are controlled, the spread of these diseases can be reduced to a great extent. Ultra-processed food and beverage products are being particularly high in sugar, salt and/or trans-fats. Increasing taxes on these products is an evidence based strategy to reduce their consumption and the associated health risks. Parliamentarians are urged to support the increase of excise taxes on all solid and liquid ultra-processed products in the Finance Bill 2024-25 to address



the growing disease burden in Pakistan. This measure will not only reduce health issues but also generate additional government revenue, which should be allocated to public health programs and subsidies for healthier alternatives like fruits, vegetables, lentils, and unsweetened milk. Policymakers must reject the tactics of beverage industry to mislead them on the name of investment. These tactics of the beverage industry which is not in the interest of peoples of Pakistan, neither for economy of

the country. Government must reject any such investment plan that adds miseries by building a huge burden on the health sector and hence, economy of the country. This was said in a pre-budget seminar with parliamentarians organized by Pakistan National Heart Association (PANA) at a local hotel in Islamabad.

President PANA, Maj. Gen. (R) Masud Ur Rehman Kiani said that in Pakistan one person suffers a heart attack every one and a half minute. Other non-com-

municable diseases are also at an alarming rise. If modifiable risk factors of these diseases are controlled, there will be a significant decrease in these diseases.

Mr. Munawar Hussain, country coordinator at Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) said that Increasing taxes on sugary drinks is first and most effective policy options to reduce the consumption of these drinks. "The cost of management of diabetes has increased to more than \$2640 million in Pakistan in 2021" he added. The annual cost of managing diabetes is double than what Pakistan is asking to IMF annually for the new program. The research shows that 30 % risk of diabetes is attributed to increased consumption of sugary drinks and juices" he added.

Col. Dr. Shakeel Ahmed Mirza said that Sugary drinks and juices are among the major risk factors of diabetes, heart diseases, cancer, kidney failure and other chronic diseases. 1100 people dying daily due to diabetes and its complications, over 300

limbs removed every day. Pakistan has 3rd highest burden of people living with diabetes with 33 million diabetics, apart from this 10 million people are pre-diabetic.

Mr. Sanaullah Ghumman urged policymakers not to be influenced by the tactics of the beverage industry. Government must reject any such investment plan on the name of rural economy and export by beverage industry which leads to killing people and adding miseries by building a huge burden on the health sector and hence, economy of the country. He said that the beverage industry has low taxes in Pakistan as compared to many countries regionally and globally. For example, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, UAE and other gulf states have imposed 50% excise duty on sodas and 100 % on energy drinks.

Other speakers also spoke emphasized policymakers to prioritize public health over corporate interests and increase taxes on ultra-processed food and beverage products in Finance Bill 2024-25 for the interest of public health.

World Environment Day

20 Organizations Honored for Outstanding Ecological Practices on World Environment Day

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In celebration of World Environment Day, twenty organizations from around the country have been recognized for their exemplary efforts in promoting sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices. They awarded with the newly instituted "Pakistan Environmental Awards", aimed at recognizing and appreciating the best environmental practices. The Awards highlight the innovative approaches and significant contributions made by businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions towards preserving our planet for future generations.

The awards ceremony was organized by the Devcom-Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), Pakistan National Council of the arts (PNCA), different sub-national EPAs and industrial associations on Tuesday at the PNCA.

The award winners included National Bank of Pakistan, Bank of Punjab, Fauji Cement Company Ltd, Bestway Cement Ltd, Giga Group, Stary Hydro, Balochistan Rural Support Programme, Snow Leopard Foundation, Murree Brewery, PTV World Morning Show, Centre for Climate Diplomacy, Pak-EPA, Mira Hydro, and

Laraib Hydro Power. Former Prime Minister Shahid Khqan Abbasi was the chief guest. The guests of honour included Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Belgium Charles Delogne, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Netherlands embassy Hajo Provo Kluit, Pak-EPA Director General Farzana Altaf Shah, PNCA Director General Ayub Jamali. Speaking on the occasion, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said Today, as we celebrate World Environment Day 2024, I am reminded of the immense beauty and richness of our natural heritage here in Pakistan. Our moun-

tains, rivers, forests, and diverse ecosystems are not only a source of national pride but also vital to our health, prosperity, and well-being.

Belgian Ambassador Charles Delogne said: I would like to thank DEVCOM for inviting me to PNCA on June 4, 2024, for an award ceremony and conference to promote good practices in environmental protection. Climate change is a reality and people know it better in Pakistan than elsewhere. But this concept must not lead to a lack of responsibility.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed said Pakistan has achieved many



milestones in the environmental compliance, conservation, and community engagement. That shall be mainstreamed to inspire more folks and industries to follow the restoration

of land and natural resources. Pakistan Environmental Awards is an initiative to appreciate the environmental performance of industries and organizations. Ashiq Ahmed Khan brief the

audience about the process of the selection of awardees. Among others who spoke at the conference of best practices and land restoration and drought resilience included.

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Judges versus Judges: The SIC Reserve Seats Controversy

The entire proceeding of the Supreme Court on the Sunni Ittehad Council's petition seeking the allocation of reserved seats for women and minorities in the National and Provincial Assemblies seemed like a clash between the Chief Justice and the rest of the bench. The Chief Justice used the strength and power of his argument to assert that PTI's failure to conduct intra-party elections was the root cause of their predicament. Consequently, all actions taken by the Election Commission and the subsequent Supreme Court decision to deprive PTI of the BAT election symbol were seen as the party's own fault. The Chief Justice argued that PTI should accept the repercussions of their mistakes.

During the hearing, a stage was reached where the Chief Justice seemed completely cornered by his fellow judges. The brother judges negated the Chief Justice's interpretation of his own judgment. The Chief Justice maintained that even when PTI was deprived of the BAT symbol, individual candidates could have demanded it as their election symbol.

The majority of the judges argued that if BAT were allocated to any party or independent candidate, it would have resulted in a contempt of court case. Justice Munib was particularly incisive, categorically stating that, according to the Supreme Court judgment and contrary to what the Chief Justice was now arguing, the BAT symbol was off the list for this general election.

The lady lordship raised another pertinent question: if independent candidates,

other than those of the SIC, have joined parties other than PTI, then why have the independents of PTI who joined the SIC not been accepted so far? Another brother judge raised an equally important question, noting that the ECP first declared the SIC a parliamentary party and asked PTI's independents to join, which they did within three days, the ECP turned around and stated that since the SIC does not qualify as a political party, it cannot be granted the reserved seats.

The question of proportional representation was raised repeatedly. One argument was that, under the constitution, the allocation of reserved seats must be based on the seats won and secured in the national and provincial assemblies. Thus, they can only be allocated based on seats won, and independent candidates must join a political party within three days of the election to claim reserved seats. However, this argument was deeply contested by the Chief Justice, who believed that, as per the constitution, the National Assembly would only be considered complete when all reserved seats are allocated to political parties. According to him, independent candidates, regardless of their number, cannot claim reserved seats. The Chief Justice argued that candidates contest elections based on their party's manifesto, and if they join another party with a different manifesto, it disrespects the people's mandate. However, the brother judges refuted this, arguing that it

would be a greater crime to disrespect the people's mandate by failing to distribute reserved seats proportionally based on seats won or secured.

Justice Athar Minullah interjected with a broader philosophical view, stating that the biggest stakeholders in this case are the public and the voters, who cannot be disenfranchised. He emphasized that it was the duty of the Election Commission to ensure this right under Article 70 and that the EC should have rectified its mistake by itself, instead of depriving the people of their rights.

He further argued that instead of protecting their rights to vote, these very voters were intimidated and harassed, and one political party was singled out. The state's brute power was employed to crush the party and its leadership, depriving it of a free hand and level playing field to contest the elections. It was argued that since voters have the fundamental right to cast their vote according to their conscience, and political parties have the right to contest elections in a fair-free environment, both of these rights were violated. Therefore, the Supreme Court, as the guardian of fundamental rights, should play its role in rectifying the wrong done to both the voters and the political party. However, this line of argument was brushed aside by the Chief Justice, who interjected that the bench had to confine itself within constitutional limits and should not indulge in endless discussion.

One stark reality that emerged from the two days of highly contested hearings was the Supreme Court's misconstrued judgment, authored by the Chief Justice, which deprived PTI of its election symbol. This forced PTI candidates to contest elections as independents, causing the party to lose significant political capital. It made it difficult for candidates to launch effective election campaigns and created confusion among voters trying to identify PTI candidates. Furthermore, the process of allocation of reserved seats was seen by almost all the brother judges to be full of errors, omissions, and faulty conclusions. One of the judges even stated that the Supreme Court should not rubber-stamp the cascade of errors and omissions made by the Election Commission. However, the Chief Justice countered by asserting that everything could have fallen into place if PTI had conducted intra-party elections.

After diligently and carefully observing both sides, one can predict the upcoming judgment. The court may decide to allocate the share of the reserved seats in both the National and Provincial Assemblies to the SIC after taking them back from other political parties. Another likely scenario is a split verdict from the full bench, which may restore PTI as a party in the National and Provincial Assemblies and allocate the reserved seats to it. A third, extremely unlikely scenario would be to uphold the decision of the Election Commission and maintain the status quo.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Gemstone Exhibition concluded

The 2024 Beijing International Gold, Jewelry, and Gemstone Exhibition concluded on June 3 at the Beijing Exhibition Center. The event featured exhibitors not only from major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou but also from various international jewelers. Chinese consumers showed consistent enthusiasm for gold, jade, pearls, and other precious items. Notably, there was a marked interest in colored gemstones, with a significant crowd around the booths of exhibitors from Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"The quality of colored gemstones from Pakistan and Sri Lanka caught my eye, so I stopped to ask about the prices. I might find something good to buy," a consumer shared with China Economic Net (CEN). "In 2023, the total import and export value of China's jewelry industry reached a record high of \$145.334 billion, an increase of 8.62% year-on-year. Chinese consumers show a strong interest in gold and silver jewelry products for both their aesthetic and investment value. Additionally, Pakistan's exports of gems and precious stones to China saw a 47 percent increase in 2023, indicating growing recognition of the quality of Pakistani gemstones among Chinese buyers. Muhammad Amjad, the owner of PIEDRA, a Pakistani-colored gemstone company, brought emeralds, aquamarines, and other gems from Peshawar to the exhibition. "I came to China in 2006 and have been in the colored gemstone business ever since. The reason for choosing to do business in China is simple: the good relationship between the two countries and the strong purchasing power of Chinese consumers. My partners here have never deceived me, which I value highly. Although sales have fluctuated in the past few years due to various factors, the market is now recovering, and I am very confident," Muhammad Amjad said. Since 2023, demand for colored gemstones in China has been steadily expanding, supplementing the traditional safe-haven asset of gold. According to market research by the China Gems and Jade Association (Beijing) Fund Management Co., the average price increase for colored gemstones across all categories in China during the first half of 2023 ranged between 30% and 50%. Prices for larger or relatively rare gems surged by as much as 100% to 150%. "Although the demand for precious-colored gemstones hasn't surged as dramatically as that for gold, it has remained relatively stable, with a consistent customer base. In recent years, with the rise of e-commerce and social media platforms, younger consumers have become increasingly accepting of colored gemstones," said Ma Xiaozhong, a jeweler from China. Ma owns Munny Asia Jewellery, a colored gemstone company in Beijing, and has been in the business for over 20 years. "We source raw gemstones from around the world, process them domestically, and sell them both locally and in Western markets. Unfortunately, we haven't established stable cooperation with Pakistan." When asked why, Ma provided a cautious response: "Pakistan's gemstone industry has a longer history than China's. In Peshawar's gemstone market, you can find family businesses that have been around for a century. It's difficult for outsiders to enter the market, and it's not easy for foreigners to do business there. Pakistan's gem certification institutions aren't aligned with international standards, and some certification documents are not recognized." Ma's story highlights a missed opportunity. Various indicators suggest that China, as Pakistan's all-weather strategic partner, boasts a thriving and growing market for colored gemstones. Pakistan, with its diverse geological conditions, is rich in high-quality natural-colored gemstones.



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

Responsibilities of State and People - III

Similarly, many in IIOJK are denied access to quality education, a fundamental right, due to a scarcity of educational institutions. The shortage of schools, colleges, and universities limits educational opportunities for children and youth. Moreover, the curriculum often overlooks the cultural diversity and historical significance of the region, perpetuating a sense of alienation and erasing identity among the younger generation.

Infrastructure development in IIOJK lags far behind other regions of India, evident in deteriorating roads, inadequate transportation networks, and unreliable public services. Essential services such as clean water, reliable electricity, and adequate sanitation facilities are frequently lacking or unreliable, significantly reducing the quality of life for residents. Additionally, the region suffers from a lack of investment in crucial infrastructure projects, hindering economic growth and overall development. Unemployment rates in IIOJK exceed those in other Indian regions, with limited job prospects and economic opportunities for locals.

Despite the Indian government's so-called welfare initiatives and social safety nets, they fall short in adequately addressing the needs of IIOJK residents. Programs aimed at poverty alleviation, healthcare subsidies, and food assistance often fail to reach or inadequately cover the population in the region, exacerbating socio-economic disparities. The ongoing neglect perpetuates a cycle of poverty and deprivation, depriving vulnerable communities of crucial resources and support systems.

Residents of IIOJK endure severe restrictions on their fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, assembly, and association, imposed through draconian laws. Heavy-handed tactics of security forces, arbitrary detentions, and censorship suppress dissent and undermine democratic values. Lack of accountability for human rights violations fosters fear and distrust in government and insti-

tutions. Vulnerability to natural disasters is worsened by inadequate preparedness and relief efforts, leaving residents at heightened risk during crises. Furthermore, the politicization of humanitarian aid delays its timely and effective distribution to affected communities. IIOJK stands as a stark reminder of the ongoing human rights crisis perpetuated by the Indian government and its armed forces. Its people have endured years of systemic oppression, state-sponsored violence, and severe human rights violations. Despite global condemnation, Indian authorities act with impunity, committing atrocities against civilians while showing blatant disregard for human dignity. Security forces have a documented history of extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests, often targeting civilians under the guise of maintaining law and order.

Innocent individuals frequently face violence, disappearances, and extended detentions without trial, often labeled as "terrorists" under draconian laws such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). Reports of torture and inhumane treatment of detainees are distressingly common, with perpetrators shielded by state-endorsed impunity. Excessive force is regularly deployed against unarmed civilians, resulting in casualties, injuries, and property damage, further traumatizing the community. The deliberate targeting of civilians, including vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly, constitutes a clear violation of international humanitarian law, showcasing a blatant disregard for human life by those responsible. The Indian government's frequent imposition of curfews, movement restrictions, and communication blackouts in the region has instilled widespread fear and a sense of isolation among the populace. Entire communities endure prolonged lockdowns, grappling with limited access to essential services, medical aid, and information. This siege mentality perpetuated by authorities not only exacerbates the suffering of the people but also obstructs efforts to hold security forces accountable for human rights violations. Basic

rights and freedoms, such as freedom of expression, assembly, and association, are systematically denied to the people of IIOJK. Journalists, activists, and human rights defenders often face intimidation, harassment, and censorship when they speak out against injustices or document human rights abuses. The suppression of dissent and independent voices serves to further erode democratic principles and delegitimize the actions of the Indian government in the region. The rich cultural heritage and unique identity of the people in IIOJK are systematically undermined by governmental policies aimed at enforcing conformity and suppressing opposition. Cultural symbols, religious sites, and linguistic traditions are targeted for appropriation or destruction as part of an effort to impose a singular narrative that disregards the historical and cultural diversity of the region. This deliberate erasure of identity compounds the marginalization and disempowerment experienced by the people of IIOJK, stripping away their heritage and sense of belonging. Moreover, there is a deep-seated animosity between the people of IIOJK and the Indian Army, resulting in minimal representation of Kashmiris within its ranks. Kashmiris encounter unequal opportunities for recruitment and advancement in the Indian Army due to a lack of trust and perceived inequality in citizenship. This sentiment is further fueled by the atrocities committed by the Indian government and its armed forces against innocent Kashmiris, fostering a profound resentment towards the Indian Army. Several incidents underscore the severity of human rights abuses in IIOJK. For instance, in July 2016, the killing of Burhan Wani, a prominent Kashmiri figure, sparked widespread protests met with excessive force by Indian security forces, resulting in numerous civilian casualties. Subsequent events, such as the Pulwama suicide bombing in February 2019, led to further crackdowns, including arbitrary detentions and extrajudicial killings. Instances like the Shopian shooting in March 2018, where unarmed civilians were fatally shot, highlight the disproportionate use of force by Indian security forces.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Importance of Ecotourism For Gilgit Baltistan - II

Danish Iqbal

The local hotels and institutes have started "Responsible Tourism" initiatives in order to educate the young children and women about protecting their resources and acting as the environmental stewards. Prospects for Ecotourism under CPEC Environmental sustainability is an integral part of a nation's overall economic development framework. Striking a balance between the two is very crucial for ensuring a sustainable path of development. In Pakistan, with the prospects of better infrastructure facilities under the CPEC framework, there is a boost in the flow of tourists to the scenic spots of the country. Moreover, it is very important that the government timely formulates the relevant policies so that with an increase in commercial activities, their negative fallouts are minimized in the fragile eco-system of regions like GB. Background of CPEC and its Importance In Pakistan, the CPEC has opened the doors of economic opportunities for the people of Pakistan through improved infrastructural development and enhanced regional connectivity. The CPEC is a multi-billion development project signed between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2015. It aims at establishing a network.

Ecotourism is essential for people of Gilgit Baltistan as it may enhance their

sustainable development. The poverty rate in Gilgit Baltistan is more than any other province of Pakistan and the people of Gilgit Baltistan are migrating to different areas of Pakistan due to lack of facilities and to acquire what they need as a citizen of this country. Through sustainable development the ecotourism might be improved and the indigenous people of Gilgit Baltistan would get opportunities and would help to maintain ecotourism, which eventually impacts tourism and its economical, environmental and social gains somehow increases the per capita income of GB. The revenue generated by this responsible tourism would be helpful in recovering the adverse effects on the area by tourism.

Thus ecotourism is a beneficial tool for Gilgit Baltistan's development and prosperity if utilized properly otherwise the environmental degradation and adverse effects may impact the indigenous people and Gilgit Baltistan and would finally exploit the natural essence of the area and its economical structure.

It is expected and must be made sure to preserve natural beauty of Gilgit Baltistan and the people of this land must be taken in confidence before any implication, by the government otherwise that will gradually diminish the sustainable development. government must make sure to frame eco friendly policies with the consent of indigenous people. Tourism is the major source of revenue for Gilgit Baltistan so the people of GB must be priority so they may prosper and take tourism to the zenith in Gilgit Baltistan.

Pakistani PM deems Pakistan-China friendship unshakable

Xinhua

ISLAMABAD: "We are coming with serious plans to make our friendship become much higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the deepest ocean of the world," Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said.

At the invitation of Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Sharif is on an official visit to China from Tuesday to Saturday.

"We are two iron brothers, our friendship is unshakable and our hearts beat together," Sharif said in an interview with Chinese media in Islamabad ahead of his China tour.

China has supported Pakistan through the most difficult times, and Pakistan considers China as one of the most trusted friends around the globe, he said.

Pakistan firmly adheres to the one-China principle, and this commitment will, as always, be unwavering, said the prime minister.

"There is absolutely total unanimity that people from all walks of Pakistan believe that Taiwan is an integral part of

China, which, as our policy, comes from the core of our heart with no discussion at all," he said.

Sharif first visited China about 40 years ago, when he noticed that though underdeveloped, China was dedicated to meeting the basic needs of its people while vigorously developing modern science and technology.

"Today, China has become a giant through vision, hard work, and serious and untiring efforts," said Sharif.

"All doubts about the Chinese model have been rubbished by the evidence of history," he said.

Sharif said when he was elected as prime minister in March, Chinese President Xi Jinping congratulated him at the earliest time.

Expressing his gratitude to Xi, Sharif said the congratulations reflected the two countries' friendship, which will always be fresh in his mind.

Under Xi's leadership, China has alleviated millions of its people out of poverty, Sharif said, adding that one of the agenda items for his visit is to learn from the Chinese model about how to

alleviate poverty in Pakistan and help people stand on their own feet.

Through the visit, Pakistan hopes to promote interaction between enterprises in both countries, utilize special economic zones and Pakistan's labor advantages to establish joint ventures, facilitate the transfer of industries and technologies, and enhance Pakistan's manufacturing output, to promote constructing upgraded China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the prime minister said.

The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative benefits people in participating countries, promotes cooperation, and advances the world towards a vision of shared prosperity and a better future, he said.

"Pakistan is willing to work with China to implement the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, which will bring peace, tranquility, progress, and prosperity to the world," he added.

Describing China as always proactive in promoting Pakistan's business, industry, trade, and agriculture, Sharif

said Pakistan is willing to issue Panda bonds and expand Chinese yuan transactions and settlements.

Pakistan is willing to promote economic cooperation with China, learn from China's advanced experience in information technology and artificial intelligence, consolidate the ironclad friendship between the two countries, and achieve leapfrog development, he said.

Pakistan is also ready to learn from China's governance experience, deepen reforms and counter-corruption, create enabling circumstances for Chinese investors, and provide policy support for investors, focusing on fields that can benefit both peoples to modernize the economy, he said.

Highlighting the role of youth in cultural exchanges, Sharif said Pakistan is actively encouraging its young people to learn the Chinese language and study in China, and will create a favorable environment for Chinese tourists to visit Pakistan for exchanges and cooperation.

"Despite the hot weather, it still



doesn't match the warmth of our hearts," said the prime minister.

China's position on Ukraine crisis is promoting talks for peace: FM

Xinhua

BELJING: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has elaborated on China's consistent position on the Ukraine crisis, stressing that China adheres to promoting talks for peace, and although the conditions for peace talks are not yet in place, China will never stop its efforts for peace.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks in Beijing on Tuesday when he met the press together with Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan.

China also encourages and supports all initiatives and efforts in the world that are conducive to easing the situation and achieving peace, Wang added.

Wang said that China attaches importance to Switzerland's work for the preparation to the Summit on Peace in Ukraine, and has put forward constructive suggestions to the Swiss side on many occasions, for which the Swiss side has always given positive comments and thanks.

"There are many summits in the world today. Whether and how to participate, China will decide independently according to its own position," Wang added.

On May 23, Wang Yi met with Celso Amorim, special advisor to the president of Brazil, in Beijing. The two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on pushing for the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis and calling for the deescalation of the situation, and reached six common understandings.

China believes that the world



now needs to make more objective, balanced, positive and constructive voices on the Ukraine crisis, Wang noted, adding that to this end, China and Brazil recently jointly issued the "Common Understandings Between China and Brazil on Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis."

In just one week, 45 countries from five continents have responded positively to the "six common understandings" in different ways, of which 26 countries have confirmed their accession or are seriously studying the way of accession. Russia and Ukraine also affirmed most of the contents of these six common under-

standings, Wang added. This once again illustrates that these six common understandings meet the common expectations of the majority of countries. China believes that the more countries that support these six common understandings, the closer the day of a truly peaceful summit will be, and the brighter the prospects for peace will become, Wang said.

When holding talks with Fidan, Wang noted that the China-Türkiye strategic cooperative relationship has maintained the momentum for rapid development and shown broad prospects.

He added that China appreciates Türkiye's understanding and support for China's legitimate position on core interests concerning China's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, and stands ready to maintain multi-level exchanges and expand cooperation areas with Türkiye.

Fidan said Türkiye adheres to the one-China principle and brooks no activities that sabotage China's sovereignty and security on Türkiye territory, adding that Türkiye highly appreciates China's fair and just position on issues such as Ukraine and the Middle East.

International Winter Fashion Exhibition in Moscow



Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: Pakistani leather goods displayed in Moscow, Pak Ambassador terms this a major step in establishing trade relation between Pakistan and Russia

Pakistani leather goods manufacturers present their goods at the International Winter Fashion Exhibition in Moscow

Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia, Muhammad Khalid Jamali visited today Pakistani stalls at the International Winter Fashion Exhibition "Le Show" being held in Moscow on June 4-6, 2024.

The Ambassador personally welcomed Pakistani businessmen in Moscow, expressing confidence that such an event would help establish new business contacts and contribute to boosting Pak-Russia bilateral trade. This is a good opportunity to introduce high quality leather goods to the Russian market and enhance bilateral trade, the Ambassador added.

While talking to the Russian media, the Ambassador underscored that bilateral trade between Pakistan and Russia is growing steadily, last year it reached 1

billion USD. However, Pakistan is committed to further expanding trade ties between the countries, Ambassador Jamali noted, adding that a new land route from Pakistan to Russia via Iran and Azerbaijan, which is operational now, will greatly contribute to this.

Nineteen Pakistani companies from leather sector displaying leather and its articles, goods and accessories are taking part in the exhibition. Such a representative delegation under the umbrella of TDPAP is taking part in a Russian exhibition after a gap of few years.

Celebrate Father's Day in Saudi: The Perfect Destination for this Special Occasion

Spokesman Report

RIAZ: This Father's Day, treat your dad to some of the most unique experiences Saudi has to offer. A fascinating destination, Saudi boasts a diverse array of activities tailored to every dad's interests. From cultural attractions and adventure-filled amusement parks to outdoor recreation options, luxurious stays, and shopping malls, there's something special for every dad to enjoy.

The Nujuma, Ritz-Carlton Reserve is situated on a pristine set of private islands. Recently opened, it is the first Ritz-Carlton Reserve in the Middle East, nestled within the captivating Blue Hole cluster of islands, where pristine coral reefs thrive beneath the surface and the celestial canopy above paints an endless tapestry of stars.

St. Regis Red Sea Resort and Six Senses Southern Dunes: Experience unparalleled luxury at these newly opened resorts, with more luxurious accommodations set to grace the Red Sea coast in the coming years.

Habitas AlUla: Time out after a day of adventure at sustainable retreat Habitas AlUla, home to Thuraya Wellness, a secluded heaven created to enhance well-being and restore balance. Relax with sunrise yoga, private fitness sessions or treatments from the resident physiotherapist.

The Jeddah EDITION: Situated along the Jeddah Corniche, adjacent to the Yacht Club &



Marina and the F1 racetrack, this hotel offers unparalleled convenience with easy access to Jeddah's City Center and the Red Sea Mall. Featuring 63 rooms, including 11 suites, the newly opened hotel boasts a signature restaurant, a cozy lobby lounge, an intimate bar, a rooftop terrace, and a refreshing pool.

An outdoor adventure with the wildlife in Aseer

Embark on an unforgettable adventure in Aseer, the premier destination for nature lovers. At 3,000 meters, perched on the side of Saudi's highest mountain, Soudah is the unofficial outdoor adventure capital of Saudi and part of the vast Aseer National Park. Its network of hiking routes, lush greenery, cool mountain air, wild nature and mist-cloaked valleys make for the perfect Father's Day getaway. Whether your dad prefers hiking, paragliding, cycling, or kayaking, there's endless excitement and adrenaline-pumping activities in this breathtaking region.

For nature-loving dads, the

Jurf Raydah Reserve nestled within Sarawat Mountains is a must-visit. Amidst the fragrant juniper trees and exotic flora like cacti, wild olives, and banana trees, you will encounter fascinating wildlife, from Arabian woodpeckers to the rare and endangered Aseer magpie. You can also gift your father a thrilling experience by booking him a hike on a 250 year old trail in the Sawda Mountains.

The upcoming Aseer Season 2024 also has exciting events to offer which you can enjoy during your trip—from live music to delectable dining options and family-friendly activities and athletic championships.

Saudi is one of the best diving spots in the world with its pristine waters, white sandy beaches, an abundance of thriving coral reefs and some of the world's coolest shipwrecks. The Red Sea is home to more than 90 pristine islands, dormant volcanoes, mountain canyons, and historical and cultural sites spanning 28,000 square kilometers, and boasts the world's fourth-largest

barrier reef system.

For adventure-loving dads, the Red Sea is a paradise. Enjoy activities such as kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, guided dive excursions and snorkeling excursions, and more.

Perfect for families, KAEC is a haven that offers luxurious resorts, locally styled accommodations, and a range of water activities on stunning beaches for a perfect weekend getaway.

Book exciting adventures at Yam Beach in KAEC, with options to rent a banana boat, donut boat, or kayak, or enjoy a scenic stroll along the turquoise seashores. For dads who love to golf, indulge in a round or two at The Royal Greens Golf & Country Club, located in the luxurious district of Al Murooj with-in KAEC.

Tranquility and rejuvenation await at Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh. With more men prioritizing self-care and wellness, pamper your dad with a much-needed break from the daily grind, where they can choose from a range of luxu-

rious treatments designed to soothe and revitalize, such as the all-time favorite traditional Moroccan Hammam ritual, or a hot stone massage to melt away tension provide deep relaxation.

Known as the jewel of the south, the enchanting Al Baha Province boasts dense forests, majestic mountains, cascading waterfalls, and picturesque valleys, all steeped in a history brimming with ancient traditions, which makes for a wonderful glamping or camping experience.

Discover the region's vibrant culture and history at the Al Baha Museum, embark in an exhilarating hike along scenic trails in Shada Mountain Park, or wander through the charming narrow alleyways in Al Qala old town, where dad can browse through the local shops brimming with handicrafts, souvenirs, and aromatic spices.

Culinary delights and attractions in Al-Balad, Jeddah's historic district

Better known as 'Historic Jeddah' or the Old Town, the

Al Balad district of Jeddah is a UNESCO World Heritage site boasting buildings that date back to 7th century.

Treat your dad to the renowned seafood scene when in Jeddah. Nestled along its stunning coastal location, Jeddah boasts a rich seafood culture that is not to be missed. Indulge in the finest selection of freshly caught fish expertly prepared; from delicate filets to hearty seafood platters at Twina Obhur, or immerse in the elegance of Japanese coastal flavors for an unforgettable dining experience at Kuuru.

After a hearty meal, you can cool down from the summer heat in the captivating Fakhie Aquarium, the immersive Jeddah Open Air Museum, and the iconic King Fahd's Fountain, which casts its enchanting spray along the waterfront.

Find dad the ideal gift or spend the day at one of Saudi's many shopping destinations

Boulevard City: Treat dad to a day of excitement with thrilling activities and delicious cuisines at different food corners in

Boulevard City, a one-stop entertainment and relaxation hub for families of all ages to enjoy. Besides fun zones and virtual reality game experiences for thrill seekers, fitness enthusiasts can also try their hand (or fist) at Mike Tyson's Boxing Club.

Red Sea Mall: Nestled near the picturesque Waterfront Promenade along the Corniche, the Red Sea Mall stands as one of Jeddah's premier shopping destinations. Pick out dad's favorites within the vast array of international brands and entertainment options.

Jeddah Boulevard: For the modern dad who appreciates a contemporary shopping experience amidst sleek architecture, Jeddah Boulevard offers a delightful mix of retail therapy and culinary delights.

Mall of Arabia: Make Father's Day a family affair at the Mall of Arabia, which offers many entertainment options. With attractions like the beloved Kidzania indoor game village, both kids and dads can have a blast.

It has never been easier, smoother, and safer to visit Saudi - visa initiatives have been continuously developed, with the eVisa program now including 66 countries, reduction of the total price of the eVisa by 20%, as well as the free 96-hour Stopover Visa. To learn more about Saudi and experiencing all the unique experiences with your family, visit <https://www.visit-saudi.com/en> for more information. Plan your unforgettable trip today!

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
74,666.65	75,575.25
Day's High	Day's Low
75,669.76	74,592.74
Index Value	Change
9,875,792,522	-908.60
Percentage	Time
-1.2%	4 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,232.04	-30.71
Percentage	Time
-0.37%	4 Jun, 4:50 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,578.81	+7.78
Percentage	Time
+0.020%	4 Jun, 1:16 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,837.46	-85.57
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	4 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.55	748.55
Canadian Dollar	204	206
China Yuan	38.44	38.84
Danish Krone	40.39	40.79
Euro	299	302
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	26.61	26.91
Omani Riyal	723.26	731.26
Qatari Riyal	76.5	77.2
Saudi Riyal	73.5	74.2
Singapore Dollar	203	205
Swedish Korona	26.13	26.43
Swiss Franc	308.46	310.96
Thai Bhat	7.59	7.74
U.A.E Dirham	75.25	76
UK Pound Sterling	353.45	356.95
US Dollar	277.25	279.9

PPDA rejects plans to approve Doorstep Delivery Tankers for fuel or gas

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) on Tuesday opposed the plan to sell diesel on roads through Doorstep Delivery Tankers (DDTs) across the country and termed it against the national interests.

It said the decision would further increase smuggling and cause the government to lose billions in revenue.

It added that this decision will endanger the lives and property of the people while sinking the billions of dollars invested by oil and gas companies and their dealers.

At an emergency meeting of petroleum dealers, Hassan Shah, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the PPDA, warned that such a move would result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs and the bankruptcy of thousands of businesses.



He said that dealers make a profit of a few rupees on the sale of a liter of diesel, while the smuggled oil sellers make a profit of Rs 70 to Rs 80 per liter.

However, he said, most petrol pump owners cannot sell the smuggled oil because doing so risks their investment of Rs 300 to Rs 400 million. However, it will be easier for smugglers to sell fuel through benami tankers.

He informed that the decision would facilitate smugglers and the mafia under the pretext of providing convenience to the people.

He questioned the decision's rationale, given the widespread presence of petrol pumps across the country and its lack of practice globally.

He said that the government should refrain from implementing this project; otherwise, after Shell, other companies will also leave the country, affecting Pakistan's image.

According to Hassan Shah, the legalization of smuggled diesel will shrink the size of the documented economy and increase the size of the black economy.

Smugglers are already installing nozzles on tankers similar to those installed on filling stations to discharge fuel wherever they please, which will raise concerns about public safety, he underlined.

According to Hassan Shah, the PPDA has met Chairman OGRA, DG of the Explosives Department, and sent letters to the Ministry of Petroleum to inform them of their concerns.

However, the project's rapid progress raises concerns and suggests the mafia's influence, he said, adding that an influential petroleum company involved in large-scale smuggling is lobbying hard to achieve the goal.

He stated that petroleum dealers would not allow anyone to play with the future of the nation in order to benefit a few influential people, as it is obvious that after the sale of diesel on roads, the sale of petrol and gas will also be allowed.

Pak-Swiss Relations

KARACHI: Jason Avancena, President Swiss Business Council and Khizer Pervaiz, CEO, Sindh Enterprise Development Fund sign an MoU to promote trade and Swiss investment in Sindh along with Ambassador of Switzerland to H.E. George Steiner and Secretary Sindh Investment Department Raja Khurram Shahzad Umar.



Photo: PID

Mondelez Pakistan 2.2 MW Partnership with Shams Power

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mondelez Pakistan has partnered with Shams Power to solarize its confectionary and powdered beverages plants and to take the installed capacity to around 2.2 MW of Solar on both sites. This initiative aims to enhance sustainability and reduce carbon emissions.

Shams Power will install the equipment, manage the operation and maintenance of the solar systems throughout the agreement, and transfer the equipment to Mondelez Pakistan upon the term's completion.

This project is expected to contribute approximately 3.3 million units of clean energy annually to Mondelez's electricity mix, offsetting around 1,500 tons of carbon emissions each year. This reduction in emissions is equivalent to the annual electricity consumption of approximately 1,000 households.

Sami Wahid, Managing Director, Mondelez Pakistan, stated that, "ESG and environment initiatives are at the top of our priorities. We take pride in the fact that happiness is at the core of all our products, and we wish to extend that spirit into all our operations."



Omar Malik, CEO, Shams Power, spoke on the value addition of alternate energy to any business operations. He was especially elated to have partnered with Mondelez, and commented, "We at Shams Power are excited to extend our partnership with Mondelez Pakistan and are thankful to their leadership and management team for their vision."

Mondelez, through this collaboration

with Shams Power, is set to further reduce its carbon footprint, lower energy costs, and promote sustainability. By using renewable energy sources, the company aims to support environmental conservation and align with global efforts to combat climate change. This initiative also reflects Mondelez's commitment to corporate social responsibility and sustainable business practices.

Women Equifin: Shaping Tomorrow's Policy for Non-Banking Microfinance Sector

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in collaboration with Asian Development Bank (ADB) held a workshop on "Women Equifin: Shaping Tomorrow's Policy for NBMFCs," marking a significant milestone in gender equality in the microfinance sector.

The workshop provided participants with a tour of a data portal designed by the industry to gather comprehensive gender disaggregated data from NBMFCs, aiding SECP in designing strategies and inventions, and promoting women's increased use of

financial services. Participants praised the SECP for its efforts in promoting gender equality and engaging with the microfinance sector, highlighting its collaborative spirit and commitment to drive positive change and create opportunities for women in the finance industry.

The Women Equality in Finance Policy Framework is a significant step towards gender equality and women's financial sector participation, aiming to address systemic barriers and empower women to contribute significantly to the country's economic growth.

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'Impact of Taxation on the Cigarette Sector in Pakistan'

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A recent study by the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), titled 'Impact of Taxation on the Cigarette Sector in Pakistan', has uncovered a pressing issue that demands immediate attention—the impact of tax policies, particularly Federal Excise Duty (FED) adjustments, on Pakistan's cigarette industry which is causing more loss to government in revenues less than in revenue collection.

The study, led by the experienced Dr Kashif Zaheer Malik, Associate Professor of Economics at LUMS, reveals that the frequent and substantial increases in FED have had a profound effect on the cigarette industry.

Malik said, "The government has implemented various initiatives to address the extent of the illicit sector to bring more companies and

the illicit sector under the tax net. These, however, have not been successful in reducing illicit trade in Pakistan."

The LUMS report says that the success of the Track and Trace System, for instance, hinges on a genuine, all-encompassing rollout across every industry, coupled with a unified and consistent enforcement campaign. Malik added this comprehensive approach, along with the government's focus on expanding the tax base, could potentially reduce the prevalence of illicit trade and tax evasion, offering a brighter future for the industry.

In conclusion, the report recommended that based on the profound price sensitivity prevalent in the Pakistani market, as well as widespread availability of illicit brands in the market, the existing excise tiers must be reconsidered and re-evaluated to reel in the potential lost tax revenues.

ESG in Action: Unity Foods Partners with The Green Ark to Recycle Plastic waste



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Unity Foods continues to showcase a strong commitment to ESG principles through a partnership with The Green Ark (TGA). A MoU was signed to this effect between both companies whereby TGA will collect and transform scrap materials from Unity Foods to create a diverse array of recycled products intended for reuse. The initiative aims to facilitate the circular economy by mitigating the impact of single-use plastics that contrib-

ute significantly towards the deterioration of global ecosystems.

Unity Foods regularly undertakes lasting projects that align with its objectives to reduce the impact of conventional industrialization on the environment. Under the current partnership with The Green Ark, a leading recycling solutions provider, Unity Foods will not only ensure the traceability of its packaging waste but also highlight a robust commitment to a greener environment by contributing to the circular economy.

Sindh Investment Dept, Swiss Business Council agree to promote trade, facilitate Swiss investment in Sindh

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sindh Investment Department (SID) and Swiss Business Council (SBC) have signed an MoU to promote trade and investment in the province. SID, Government of Sindh's primary investment has been active in facilitating investments and this partnership with Swiss Business Council aims to create the requisite nexuses crucial to further tap the trade and investment opportunities in Pakistan and Switzerland whilst encouraging links and cooperation in economic, cultural, and educational fields.

Talking on the occasion, Georg Steiner, Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan, emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach in fostering a healthy business environment. "The significant presence of the Swiss Business Community in Sindh attests to the region's substantial business potential," he added.

Raja Khurram Shehzad Umar, Secretary of the Sindh Investment Department (SID), stated, "We are pleased to see this collaboration strengthen further. SID will facilitate any incoming investment in the Sindh region and will also oversee matters of trade between Sindh, Pakistan, and Switzerland, along with other ancillary functions."

Jason Avancena, President of Swiss Business Council, said, "Collaboration is essential to attract Swiss Investment into Sindh, and this platform will help in promoting potential business and investment opportunities in the province. There is already a vibrant presence of Swiss companies here, and that is a testament to the business potential of Sindh."

SID and SBC will jointly generate market reports with comprehensive insights and also formulate a business plan aimed at bolstering business activities within the Sindh region to promote Swiss interest.

SBC is a non-profit organization launched in 2008 by renowned Swiss multinational companies operating in Pakistan to develop, facilitate, and monitor the trade and business relationship between the two countries.

PFL delegation meets Rana Sanaullah; IPC Minister extends full support to Pakistan Football League

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: PFL, led by renowned football figure Michael Owen and Farhan Ahmed Junejo, met with Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs and Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Rana Sanaullah, to discuss the development of football in Pakistan.

The delegation was warmly received by IPC Rana Sanaullah, who assured full cooperation from the government to advance the PFL initiative in Pakistan.

IPC Minister Rana Sanaullah expressed his enthusiastic support for the PFL, stating, "You have brought a delegation of 27 people to us, including prominent football personalities from 8 countries. We welcome them to



Pakistan. Despite the challenges, your efforts to develop football and nurture young talent in Pakistan will receive full support from the government. This initiative has the potential to be a significant

milestone for the sport and the youth of Pakistan."

Highlighting the government's commitment, Rana Sanaullah conveyed, "The Prime Minister, currently on an

official visit to China, has mandated to ensure that the government stands firmly with you in this endeavor. The visit of the PFL delegation marks a significant milestone for the promotion of football in Pakistan. We are dedicated to collaborating with PFL and all relevant stakeholders to build a robust football ecosystem in the country."

Michael Owen, head of the PFL delegation, outlined the project's goals, which include developing infrastructure, attracting investment, nurturing young talent, and raising Pakistan's overall footballing standard.

This meeting marks a significant milestone for the PFL and signifies a strong partnership between the league and the government in promoting football across Pakistan.

Pakistan Football League kicks off with global stars in attendance

PFL

ISLAMABAD: Top football stars from around the world have arrived in Pakistan for the official launch of the Pakistan Football League (PFL) on Tuesday (June 4) in Lahore.

Football stars and executives from the UK, Italy, Spain, USA, and Portugal have already confirmed their participation in the launch event. The Pakistan High Commission in London announced that it had issued over a dozen visas for the occasion.

The high-powered delegation is led by renowned figures such as Michael Owen, a retired English footballer famed for his goal-scoring abilities and stints with Liverpool, Real Madrid, and the English national team; Emile Heskey, a former English footballer who played for Leicester City, Liverpool, and Aston Villa; Pascal Chimbonda, a French national team player who also competed in the English Premier League with Tottenham Hotspur, Wigan Athletic, and Sunderland; and Raúl Rodríguez, a former central



defender for Espanyol in Spain's La Liga in 2010.

Shortly after arriving in Pakistan on Monday, the footballers visited Red Oak High, ISSC Campus, and Roots Millennium Group of Colleges. They also attended meetings with ministers. Michael Owen even played football with the children at a local school.

The delegation also includes Steve Wood, who oversees Michael Owen's global commer-

cial activities; Adrian Bevington, a highly experienced senior executive in English football; Michael Knighton, a well-regarded English businessman and former Manchester United board member; Carlo Mastellone, a former Italian footballer; Adolfo Guerrero Gunther, Club Atletico de Madrid's International Expansion Manager since 2016; Amando Moreno, a Spanish football director who has worked with Rafa

Benitez; Davide Gomes, former head coach of Benfica B, Benfica's reserve team; Luis Miguel De Sousa Santos Reis, a retired Brazilian footballer; Gustavo Amador Moure, a seasoned legal professional; Adrián Varela, President of International Relations at CA River Plate; Wilson Lotutala, Marketing Director at FC Basel; Chris Kaufmann, CEO of FC Basel 1893; Paul-David Matthias Ernie, head of recruitment at FC Lous Club

in Major League Soccer, USA; Michael John Farman, a British entrepreneur and co-founder of Redstrike; Simon Bytheway, a senior executive at Redstrike; and Glen Morgan and Ait-Ali Rabah.

Sports journalists Alison Jane Bender, renowned for her work with Sky Sports, Chelsea TV, and Real Madrid TV; Jim White, a veteran sports writer for The Telegraph; and Gary Stonehouse, an experienced sports journalist for The Sun, are also part of the delegation.

The three-day visit began on Monday in Islamabad, followed by a journey to Lahore for the official unveiling on June 4, and will conclude in Karachi, known as The City of Lights. The itinerary includes a lineup of important meetings with senior officials and a football carnival at Kakri Football Stadium in Lyari, aimed at honoring Pakistan's unsung football heroes.

Farhan Junejo, Chairman of PFL UK Holdings overseeing the event, mentioned that the launch will feature the largest gathering of high-profile football delegates ever seen in Pakistan.

PFL to play a key role in development of football in Pakistan

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Football League (PFL) UK Chairman Farhan Ahmed Junejo on Tuesday said that PFL will play a key role in the development of football in the country.

The visit of foreign footballers and officials will be an important milestone for the promotion of football in Pakistan, he expressed these views while talking to media on the occasion of an event held in Islamabad in the honour of foreign football professionals.

Former Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, PML-N leader Hanif Abbasi, Senator Abdul Qadir and other personalities also attended the event.

Junejo said the Portuguese professional football club Benfica will train hundred Pakistani children every year adding that there is a lot of football talent in Pakistan,



who need long-term planning to improve the football standard so football can flourish with the heights of success in Pakistan.

He said there is a need to provide

professional coaching to produce world-class players which needs the right policy to be adopted. He said that future of this sport will be bright in Pakistan as many

foreign football clubs hadn't visited before in the history of this country.

"We will work with government to create a bright future where every child will have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams in the field of football," he said adding that the best talent will get an opportunity to come forward through the Pakistan Football League as soccer city will be built in Karachi according to FIFA officials.

He said Pakistan has huge potential in sports and such opportunities would help explore hidden talent, bringing youth into the game of football, adding that we will explore talent and provide opportunities for youth to come forward and show their potential. I am very much hopeful to see football gaining momentum in the country and anticipated a bright future for this wonderful sport in Pakistan, Farhan Junejo said.

Parents must send their children in Summer Sports Camps: Pervez Iqbal

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal presided over an important meeting of all provincial coaches to review their performance ahead of SBP Summer Sports Camp at National Hockey Stadium on Tuesday.

The overall preparations of the SBP Summer Sports Camps were also reviewed in the meeting. Director Admin M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Directors Ataur Rahman and Zahoor Ahmed participated in the meeting. Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal directed Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar to present a report about the performance of provincial coaches.

Addressing the key meeting, Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that SBP Summer Sports Camp assignments are being assigned only to best coaches. "The SBP Summer Sports Camps are a very valuable and healthy activity and we are quite upbeat that several fresh talented players will emerge from this highly constructive campaign."

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal advised the parents that they must send their children to Summer Sports Camps for modern sports training and grooming during the summer vacations. "Sports Board Punjab will continue to take effective measures for the development of sports culture among the younger generation," he added.

PFF names final squad for FIFA World Cup Qualifier matches



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has named the final national men's squad for the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifier Round 2 matches against Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan. Pakistan will face Saudi Arabia here at the Jinnah Stadium on June 6 followed by an away fixture against Tajikistan on June 11 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan with Diaspora (D) players already joined the team.

Squad- Goalkeepers: Yousuf Butt (D), Saqib Hanif and Hassan Ali.

Defenders: Abdullah Iqbal (D), Mohammad Fazal (D), Haseeb Khan, Rao Omer Hayat, Mamoon Moosa, Mohammad Saddam, Waqar Ihtisham, Moin Ahmed and Abdul Rehman.

Midfielders: Rahis Nabi (D), Otis Khan (D), Ali Uzair, Umair Ali, Toqeer ul Hassan, Alamgir Ghazi and Ali Zafar.

Forwards: Imran Kayani (D), McKeal Abdulah, Fareedulah, Adeel Younas and Shayak Dost.

Pakistan are placed in Group G with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Tajikistan.

KBBA President lauds memorial basketball tournament

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA) Muhammad Yaqoob has expressed his gratitude and excitement over the successful organization of the Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament, held in Karachi after a gap of twenty years.

He emphasized that this tournament will significantly contribute to the development of basketball in the region, said a press release. "By the grace of Almighty, the tournament was organized with excellent and high-quality arrangements. I am pleased to say that we all made efforts to contribute to the success of this memorial tournament," he said.

He extended his appreciation to the Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF), participating teams, technical officials, local associations, basketball enthusiasts, sponsors, and especially the media for their tremendous cooperation and excellent reporting, which kept the public informed about the results.

KSL schedule announced, tournament begins in Sept

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The wait is finally over for cricket enthusiasts in Azad Kashmir, as the schedule for the Kashmir Supreme League (KSL) has been announced.

The tournament, which is being held under the banner of "League for Peace," will commence on September 18 and conclude on September 30.

A total of 19 thrilling matches will be played between six teams at the Muzaffarabad Cricket Stadium and Rawalpindi.

The tournament aims to promote peace and harmony through cricket, providing a platform for talented cricketers to showcase their skills and bringing communities together in a celebration of sportsmanship and friendship. The league will feature six teams, each representing different regions of Kashmir, including Muzaffarabad Falcons, Rawalkot United, Kotli Kings, Bagh Royals, Mirpur Stallions, and Overseas Patriots.

Shahid Afridi wants Babar lead fearlessly to lift T20 WC trophy

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Former swashbuckling all-rounder Shahid Khan Afridi has said that Pakistan skipper Babar Azam should lead the team fearlessly and take bold decisions for victory in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in the West Indies and USA 2024.

In a podcast by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Digital Team with the T20 World Cup 2009 winning team members released here on Tuesday, he said all seniors players should back skipper Babar Azam, adding that he was confident current Pakistan squad could make to the final of the marquee event, the conditions in the West Indies and the United States will suit our players a lot, adding that Pakistan have the services of excellent fast bowlers and spinners.

The PCB podcast celebrates 15 years

of team's victory in June 2009 and the ICC T20 WC 2024 also happens to be played in the month of June. Younis Khan-inspired Pakistan peaked at the right time to win four straight matches to win the title on June 21, 2009.

Reminiscing on his exploits in the ICC men's T20 World Cup final in 2009 Shahid Afridi, known as Boom Boom Afridi to cricket fans, said the bold decisions of the captain helped Pakistan team win the ICC Men's T20 WC 2009.

"Captain Younis Khan called me one evening during the 2009 World Cup in England and asked me to bat up the order as the team needed it. I submitted to his wish," Afridi said, adding that the decision of captain paid dividends as I won back to back 'Player of the Match' awards in the semi-final and final of 2009 T20 WC.

The Men in Green won the ICC Men's

T20 WC 2009 under the captaincy of Younis Khan. Shahid Khan Afridi, Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Amir, Umer Gull, Kamran Akmal, Saeed Ajmal, Misbah ul Haq and Abdul Razzaq were the stars for Pakistan in the tournament.

On individual goals, the former captain said a good player looks for opportunities to make a mark on the big occasions and comes out as hero, adding that "I took the opportunity for myself and availed it." Shahid Khan Afridi won back to back player of the match in the semi-final against South Africa and, later, Sri Lanka in the 2009 final.

He further said attitude and focus count a lot on the international arena, stressing the need of small contributions to achieve big goals. "Small extraordinary contributions from an individual player on the given day are vital to the success," Afridi said.



Misbah ul Haq said that the team carried the scar of losing a close final of the inaugural ICC T20 WC to India in 2007 and the year 2009 whetted the team and the individuals to do well on the bigger stage. He said the team trained at Bhurban in preparation for

the marquee event in England, adding that the beginning to the tournament was not good but the team gelled very well and achieved the goal.

"It was an emotional final for me as well as I could not finish well in the 2007 final against India. Demoting himself,

Younis Bhai sent me up the order to hit winning runs in 2009," Misbah recalled fondly.

Misbah ul Haq was upbeat that Pakistan team has edge over many team as the conditions in the West Indies suit us more than other, adding if Pakistan could make to the final in Australia in 2022 in quite foreign conditions, why not here as well.

Shoaib Malik, who captained Pakistan side in 2007 T20 World Cup, recalled how Younis Khan handed him the trophy soon after receiving it in 2009 as he knew that I could not lift the trophy in 2007.

The heroes of the 2009 T20 WC winning team Shoaib Malik, Saeed Ajmal, Abdul Razzaq and Mohammad Amir, speaking to the PCB podcast, said expressed the hope that Pakistan team was capable of winning the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.

Protest

MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmiri citizens protesting at Azadi Chowk against the Indian Prime Minister's Kashmir policy and the recent Indian elections.



Photo: Online

Modi majority set to shrink as Indian election results emerge

News desk

A person carries a cut-out of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi outside Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) headquarters, on the day of the general election results, in New Delhi, India, June 4, 2024. Reuters

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's alliance was headed for a narrow majority as vote-counting in the general election neared completion

on Tuesday, with its tally well short of an expected landslide in a surprise setback for the populist leader.

Modi's own Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was falling short of a majority of its own in the 543-member parliament, the trends showed. Having to depend on allies to form the government could introduce some uncertainty into policymaking after a decade in which Modi has ruled with

an authoritative hold.

The Hindu nationalist BJP won a majority on its own when it won power in 2014, ending India's era of unstable coalition governments, and repeated the feat in 2019.

The prospect of Modi having to rely on allies spooked markets, with stocks falling steeply. The blue-chip NIFTY 50 sank 5.9% and the S&P BSE Sensex tumbled 5.7%, posting their steepest decline

on an election outcome day since 2004, when a BJP-led coalition lost power.

The rupee also fell sharply against the dollar and benchmark bond yields were up.

Markets had soared on Monday after exit polls on June 1 projected Modi and BJP would register a big victory, and the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was seen getting a two-thirds majority and more.

At 1300 GMT, TV channels showed the NDA was ahead in nearly 300 of the 543 elective seats in the lower house of parliament, where 272 is an overall majority, with counting nearing its end.

Full results are likely later on Tuesday evening.

They showed BJP accounted for around 240 of the seats in which the NDA was leading, compared with the 303 it won in 2019.

Message of Chief of The Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf on World Environment Day 2024

World Environment Day (WED) is observed on 5th of June each year and calls for protecting our natural surroundings. The day, celebrated under the ambit of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) marks an occasion to raise awareness on the challenges facing our environment such as; pollution, illegal wildlife trade, unsustainable consumption, rising sea levels and food insecurity. This year's theme for the WED is 'Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience'. The occasion will serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to protect our land, sea, and everything in between.

Pakistan's long coastline provides access to rich resources of livelihood for millions of people. Our marine resources are a treasure trove of biodiversity that support a vast array of marine life, from majestic sea turtles to colourful coral reefs. However, our coastal areas and marine eco-system is faced with grave threats from human activities that include marine pollution, such as oil spills and industrial effluents endangering marine life and contaminating the food chain. Overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices are depleting fish populations, damaging the delicate balance of our marine ecosystem. Rising sea levels are causing coastal erosion which is accentuated by deforestation and construction activities that threaten the very existence of our coastal communities.

Pakistan Navy celebrates WED to highlight the significance of environment in Pakistan to promote awareness amongst personnel and encourage them to adopt practices conducive to the marine environment. PN has initiated numerous measures and actions ranging from collection of solid waste from harbour, establishment of Reedbed Plants in all areas under its jurisdiction and extensive tree plantation campaign. PN also continues to sensitize concerned Government and Non-Government organizations and departments to join hands and take actions to stem marine pollution and desertification.

A number of activities are planned by Field Commands and PN Units to inculcate a sense of responsibility amongst



all to save and preserve our environment. I expect all under Command to make concerted efforts and conduct these activities earnestly. National Institute of Maritime Affairs is also organizing a one day seminar on the theme of the day to create awareness in collaboration with Bahria

University, WWF Pakistan and Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination. As a nation, we have faced numerous challenges and overcome them successfully through resilience and determination. Let us now unite to tackle the environmental crisis affecting our coastal areas and marine ecosystems with the same spirit, zeal and zest. We owe it to ourselves, our children, and the country's future to protect vast resources and nature's immense bounties.

Remember, a clean and environment friendly Pakistan is a prosperous Pakistan! Let us join hands to build a sustainable future, where our land and sea are preserved and forests, both ashore and in coastal zones, grown and nurtured for the generations to come.

AJK PM pledges to improve the standard of life of economically backward areas

Bureau Report

NEELAM/LAWAT: Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the government would utilize its all available resources to improve the standard of life of people who live in economically backward areas. Addressing a reception hosted in his honour by minister for information Pir Saeed Mazhar Shah here today the AJK premier said that along with developing rural areas ending backwardness in Neelum was his government's first priority. While assuring the people that all their problems would be solved on a priority basis, the PM maintained that the government would ensure fair distribution of resources. He said that the state resources would be redirected towards least developed areas of the state. The PM thanked the information minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah for hosting a grand reception in his honour at Lawat Bala. Earlier, Prime Minister Haq was accorded a warm welcome on his arrival to Lawat. On this occasion, prime minister Haq was accompanied by government ministers including Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq and Dewan Ali Khan Chaghtai and several others. The Prime Minister, on the occasion, inaugurated the Basic Health Unit (BHU) at Lawat Bala. The PM said that he came to visit the Neelum on the special invitation of the Information Minister and virtual felt the pain and hardships the people of this beautiful valley have been enduring since long. The AJK premier hailed the morale of people and their resilience to face the hardships.

Chairman PMYP appreciates China's role in empowering Youth

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan and the Government of China on Tuesday celebrated the successful completion of the project "Strengthening PPEs Related Manufacturing Capacities in Pakistan" at a closing ceremony held in Islamabad. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, appreciated the support of the Government of China, UNDP, and other development partners for their efforts in empowering the youth of Pakistan.

He highlighted the government's priority to invest in youth employment and self-employment and acknowledged the project's contribution to achieving this goal. The project established Common Facility Centres (CFCs) equipped with modern equipment, serving as training hubs to enhance the skills of young entrepreneurs and MSMEs. The initiative is expected to increase employment opportunities, improve livelihoods, and enhance the economic empowerment of women. The Government of Pakistan is committed to investing in the youth of Pakistan, and this project is a shining example of our efforts to empower them," said Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme. Rana Mashhood also emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in achieving sustainable development. "We believe that the holistic development of youth should be achieved through collaborative and cross-sectional approaches. Projects like this demonstrate that together, we can achieve great things." The ceremony was attended by Mr Yang Guangyuan, Counsellor for Economic Commercial Affairs from the People's Republic of China, Ms Van Nguyen, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan, government representatives, project partners, beneficiaries, and other dignitaries.

Aafia Siddiqui raped in prison as punishment, lawyer says

Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani neuroscientist serving an 86-year sentence in a U. S. prison, has allegedly been subjected to sexual abuse and other mistreatment while incarcerated, according to her lawyer.

Siddiqui, a 49-year-old mother of three, was convicted in 2010 of attempting to shoot and kill U. S. soldiers and FBI agents in Afghanistan.

Her conviction and harsh sentencing have been controversial, with many in Pakistan viewing her as a victim of the U. S. criminal justice system.

Clive Stafford Smith, a human rights lawyer representing Siddiqui, has made shocking claims about her treatment at the Federal Medical Center in Carswell, Texas.

He stated that Siddiqui has been "raped" by prison guards on at least two occasions, and has faced countless other incidents of abuse by both guards and other inmates.

He said Siddiqui's complaints were "extreme" and "true," and that she has faced the "harshest" treatment of any woman in the federal prison system.

Siddiqui's case continues to draw attention and outrage in Pakistan, where the governments of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif have made efforts to secure her release.

Her lawyer says he has informed the Pakistani government of the abuse allegations and that it is the duty of her government to protect her.

Kundi asks HEC chairman to take effective steps for improving higher education in KP



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday asked HEC Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed to take effective measures for the improvement of higher education in the province and to ensure the provision of educational facilities according to international standards for the students. The governor held a detailed discussion with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) chairman on the development of higher education sector in KP during a meeting here.

He also talked about the problems

and difficulties faced by the Gomal University and said that effective steps should be taken to improve the educational quality of the university. The governor asked the HEC chairman to increase the number of scholarships for the KP students. He stated that the country's bright future was linked with the talented youth. "The youth are our precious asset and it is our common responsibility to provide them proper guidance and quality higher education." He said that the students should be exposed to modern methods so that they could perform better in their professional life.

Jimmy Mauldin highlights steel sector's importance for economic development



City Desk

KARACHI: A delegation headed by Jimmy Mauldin (Acting Consul General, United States Consulate Karachi) visited the National Steel Complex Limited (NSCL) at Bin Qasim Karachi.

He was accompanied by Stephen Berlinguette (Director CSG, USAID), Sarah Parvez (Economic Growth Advisor, USAID), and Farrukh Mehboob Khan (Chief of Party, USAID Investment Promotion Activity) said a news release received here on Tuesday.

NSCL is Pakistan's first and largest completely integrated, environmentally friendly steel complex, located at Port Qasim on an area of 220 acres. It utilizes the world's most advanced Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) tech-

nology, based on the most environment-friendly MIDREX Process in the USA.

During his visit, Mauldin emphasized the US government and business community's interest in exploring Pakistan as a potential economic hub.

Earlier, Zaigham Adil Rizvi, CEO of NSCL, gave a detailed presentation about the project and shared statistics about the global steel industry. He was of the view that currently Pakistan is among the countries that rely mostly on imports when it comes to a range of semi-finished and finished steel products and engineering goods. "By producing high-quality steel within Pakistan, we can manufacture such equipment locally by value addition with the help of downstream industries," he concluded.

APP MD meets KP Governor

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director of Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) Muhammad Asim Khichi on Tuesday met with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and briefed him in detail on the network and operations of the national news agency. The APP MD, in the meeting, informed the KP Governor that the country's premium news agency disseminated news in multiple languages, including Urdu, English, Sindhi, Balochi, Pashto, Arabic and Chinese.

Besides, news features were also put on the wire regularly for consumption of the national, regional and international media outlets, he said. Asim Khichi also apprised

Governor Kundi that APP disseminated news material to electronic media through videos and digital services.

On the occasion, the KP Governor said APP being an integral part of the state media, had been playing an important role in highlighting the positive image of the country not only at home but also across the globe, besides promoting the Ideology of Pakistan.

Faisal Karim Kundi underlined the need for upgrading the APP infrastructure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on modern lines. The APP MD assured the Governor of further improving the agency's infrastructure in province.

CPEC phase-II to grow business links between Pak-China: Minister

Continued from Page 1

agreements with their Chinese counterparts during the visit.

The Minister for Planning also recalled that the first phase of CPEC focused on infrastructure develop-

ment, adding, this also provided two hundred thousand job opportunities to the youth.

Ahsan Iqbal said the government is focusing all its efforts on ensuring high growth rate on sustainable basis.