

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
جزیرہ رحمتی اللہ عنہ نے بیان کیا کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم جو صومیں رات کو ہمارے پاس تشریف لائے اور فرمایا کہ تم اپنے رب کو قیامت کے دن اس طرح دیکھو گے جس طرح اس چاند کو پھر سے دیکھو۔ اس کے دیکھنے میں کوئی مزاحمت نہیں ہوگی۔ حکم محمد ﷺ کے سب سے تکلف سے مشقت ہے نہ زحمت۔ (کنز العمال، حدیث نمبر 7436)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



Punjab governor opposes passage of controversial defamation law

Punjab Governor Saleem Haider has said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is against the controversial defamation law passed by the provincial legislature earlier this month. "I tried to stop the [passage] of the defamation bill as governor," he said while speaking to the media in Dubai on Sunday. His statement comes a day after interim Punjab Governor Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan signed the bill into law in the absence of Haider.



KP governor warns Centre of big resistance in erstwhile FATA, PATA

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has warned the federal government of "big resistance" in erstwhile tribal regions - FATA and PATA - if the promises made to them before the merger to the province were not fulfilled. "People will raise their voice if there will be no development or promises made to them [FATA] were not fulfilled," he said in an interview with Aaj Exclusive aired on Aaj News on Sunday. (Details on Page 8)

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Martyred

"Shahadat hai matloob-o-maqsood-e-momin Na maal-e-ghanimat na kishwar kushayi."

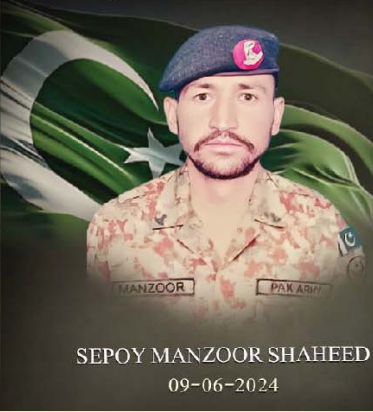
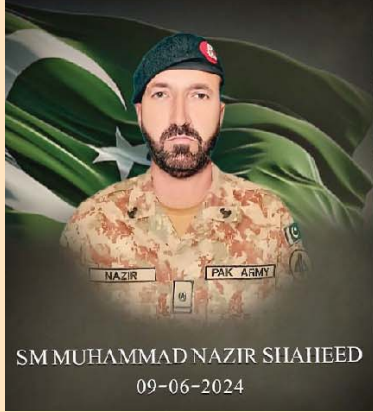


Photo: ISPR

Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: A Captain along with six soldiers of Pakistan Army on Sunday embraced martyrdom after an improvised explosive device exploded on vehicle of Security Forces in Lakki Marwat district. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the martyred soldiers were identified as Captain Muhammad Faraz Ilyas (age: 26 years, resident of Kasur District) along with six other brave sons of the soil; Subedar Major Muhammad Nazir (age: 50 years, resident of Skardu district), Lance Naik Muhammad Anwar (age: 34 years, resident of Ghanchi district), Lance Naik Hussain Ali (age: 36 years, resident of Ghizer district), Sepoy Asad

Ullah (age: 33 years, resident of Multan district), Sepoy Manzoor Hussain (age: 27 years, resident of Gilgit district), Sepoy Rashid Mehmood (age: 31 years, resident of Rawalpindi district); who made the ultimate sacrifice and embraced martyrdom. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR. The sanitization of the area was being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area and perpetrators of this heinous act would be brought to justice. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR. Captain along with six soldiers embraced martyrdom after IED went off: ISPR. "Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the ISPR said.

PM Shehbaz visit boosts Pak-China relations: say top Chinese firms

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: Chinese companies operating in Pakistan expect better opportunities for the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) following Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's recent visit to China.

World leading Chinese engineering and power companies such as CMEC and POWERCHINA Pakistan aimed to enhance investment and undertake new projects across various sectors.

Talking to the Chinese media, Dai Bao, Vice General Manager of China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) Pakistan has expressed strong interest in collaborating with the Pakistani government during the second phase of the CPEC.

He acknowledged the recent high-level meeting between President Xi and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

The initial phase of the CPEC laid a robust foundation for Pakistan national destiny and established a pivotal framework for further bilateral cooperation.



This progress paves the way for the next steps, and both sides eagerly anticipate the new phase of CPEC. The Prime Minister's visit to China signaled the beginning of this transformative stage.

The company senior representative highlighted that both nations aspire to witness fresh achievements and embrace a renewed outlook of the joint corridor. China, drawing from its experience with reform and

openness, extends a friendly hand of support to Pakistan. Notably, CMEC became the first Chinese state-owned company to operate in Pakistan since 1981.

"Having closely observed Pakistan progress, we are confident that both countries will reap benefits from this new chapter," Dai Bao said.

"Our company has diligently prepared for this moment over the past five years, formulating

comprehensive plans encompassing industrialization, agricultural modernization, trade, healthcare, education, poverty alleviation, and more."

"With unwavering support from both governments, we are committed to contributing significantly to this milestone project," he added.

During his recent meeting with PM Shahbaz Sharif, Ding Yanzhang, Chairman POWER-

CHINA assured that his company was ready to actively participate in hydro-power, new energy, and other fields in Pakistan, promoting the optimization of local energy structure and green development.

The Power Construction Corporation of China would seek further investment, engineering and construction opportunities in collaboration with relevant international partners, taking full advantage of the rich water, wind, solar, and mine resources in Pakistan.

Previously, it has implemented several major projects, such as Port Qasim 2—660 MW Coal-fired Power Plant, Dawood Wind Power Project, Haveli Bahadur Shah 1, 230 MW Combined Cycle Coal-fired Power Project, Tarbela 4th Extension Hydro-power Station (Civil Works). While presently constructing several projects, including some solar and wind power projects in Sindh, like the Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project (Civil Works) and the mega project Dier Basha Dam.

Ex-Sindh governor Muhammad Zubair announces to quit PML-N

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former Sindh governor Muhammad Zubair announced to part ways with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Talking to ARY News, Muhammad Zubair announced his decision to quit Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. In support of his decision, Muhammad Zubair said he had differences with the party leadership on the No-confidence move against the former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan, the 16-month performance

Continued on Page 8

'PM Shehbaz may dissolve National Assembly within three months'

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Manzoor Wassan has predicted a crucial three-month period for Pakistan politics, hinting at the possibility of Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif dissolving the National Assembly.

Speaking to journalists here, Manzoor Wassan - known for his bold predictions about the country's politics - said that the next three months are crucial for national politics. "[PM] Shehbaz Sharif may dissolve the National Assembly within the next three months."

However, Wassan believes that the provincial assemblies will remain intact.

Moreover, the PPP leader said the current setup does not favor PML-N Nawaz Sharif's return as Prime Minister. "After the dissolution of the National Assembly, we will see what kind of setup emerges," he added.

He also commented on the political climate for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and other politicians. "I do not foresee favourable conditions for the PTI founder and other politicians. Even if they receive relief, it is often short-lived," he added.

The statement referred to Islamabad High Court's (IHC) decision, acquitting PTI founder Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah

Mahmood Qureshi in the cipher case.

IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the short verdict after accepting the appeals of the former premier and diplomat against their convictions in the case.

The duo were not expected to be released from prison due to Imran's sentence in the Iddat case while Qureshi was arrested in recent May 9 cases.

A special court, established under the Official Secrets Act, had handed both Imran and Qureshi 10-year jail sentences each in the case in January after Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain appointed a state counsel for them.

Budget 2024: Govt decides to include 62 Health Ministry projects

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to include 62 projects for Ministry of Health in the upcoming federal budget, with a total allocation of Rs8.91 billion.

According to details available with ARY News, the projects include 32 ongoing and 30 new initiatives, with a focus on improving healthcare facilities across the country.

Sources claimed that Rs5.56 billion has been allocated for ongoing projects, while Rs3.35 billion has been earmarked for new projects. The ministry has also proposed allocating Rs200 million for the construction of four basic health units in Islamabad.

Other projects include the upgradation of various hospitals and healthcare facilities, purchase of medical equipment, and establishment of new health centers.

The ministry has also proposed allocating funds for the prevention and control

Continued on Page 8

President expresses grief over shahadat of security forces personnel



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday expressed grief over shahadat of personnel of security forces who lost their lives after their vehicle reportedly hit an improvised explosive device (IED) in District Lakki Marwat. The president paid tribute to the martyred Jawans of Pakistan Army and prayed for the high ranks of the departed souls, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

He also condemned the IED attack by the terrorists and reiterated the resolve of the entire nation to root out the cancer of terrorism. Paying tribute to the sacrifices and valour of shaheed Jawans, the president said the nation would never forget the sacrifices of its sons and Shuhada and expressed condolences with the bereaved families and prayed for them to bear the losses with fortitude.

PM grieved over shahadat of security personnel in Lakki Marwat



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday while reiterating the resolve to continue fighting against terrorism till its complete elimination, expressed his deep grief over shahadat of seven security personnel, including Captain Muhammad Faraz Ilyas shaheed, in a terrorist attack in District Lakki Marwat.

The prime minister prayed for the bereaved families to bear the losses with equanimity, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He said that the entire nation saluted the law enforcement agencies for their services and unprecedented sacrifices and stood with the brave Jawans. The prime minister also resolved to make terrorists accountable.

Saudi Authority unveils operational plan for Hajj season 1445 AH

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The General Authority for the Care of the Affairs of Two Holy Mosques has announced that all facilities are ready to welcome pilgrims.

The authority reiterated the readiness of all facilities and services, which function at the highest level and enjoy advanced infrastructure.

These include cooling and air conditioning systems, fans, audio and visual systems, as well as the door systems of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. Escalators and elevators, means of transportation within the Two Holy Mosques, and special pathways

for pilgrims are also prepared.

The area around the Grand Mosque has been arranged to facilitate the move of electric vehicles for Tawaf and Sa'i, and bathrooms and ablution areas have been prepared for the elderly and people with disabilities.

The Department of Services and Systems at the Two Holy Mosques operates round the clock to ensure a spiritual environment for pilgrims, so that they may perform their rituals with ease, and to maintain a steady supply of Zamzam water to the two holy mosques.

To enrich the experience of the pilgrims, exhibitions, including virtual, introduce

Continued on Page 8

Ten killed, 8 injured in passenger jeep accident in Neelum river

Abdul Majeed Tahir

NEELUM: 10 people were killed and 8 were injured when a passenger jeep going from Kiel to Tahir But fell into the Neelum river due to a road defect. The passenger jeep No. MDA146 fell into the Neelum river due to slippage while going uphill at Karimabad. There were more than 16 people on board the vehicle. Local people and Pakistan Army teams rescued 9 injured and transferred them to the local hospital for medical assistance. More than 11 people were swept away in the Neelum river, in which the dead bodies of four people were recovered. According to the details, the unlucky

AJK PM expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of life in the Neelum traffic accident

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Haq has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of life in the Neelum traffic accident. It should be completed immediately and the best medical facilities should be provided to the injured. The Prime Minister expressed his condolences to the families of the

deceased and prayed that Allah may raise the status of the deceased and give the injured a speedy recovery.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Information Minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah has also expressed his grief over the loss of life in the Neelum traffic accident.

passenger car that was going from Kiel to Taubutt got into an accident due to slippage, as a result of which 10 people were killed and 9 people were injured.

The search for the rest of the people is going on. In the ill-fated jeep, 19 people were on board.

Samri, Mashal Ammar Ali, Saima Shamim, Sadesh, Imam son of Ghulam Deen, Phalan Jan, are included while the injured include Mudassar son of Zareen, Waheed son of Parvez, Hafeez son of Parvez Nadeem son of Babu, Safir son of Babu. Army men and local people reached the spot and participated in the rescue operation. 7 tourists, 9 Bakarwal, 6 dead bodies have been found in the accident. The news of the accident will create an atmosphere of fear in the area. The district administration reached the accident site.

Business community backbone of society: Khalid Mehmood Khan



Syed Nadeem Kazmi

MULTAN: Deputy Director of Punjab Housing and Town Planning Sub-Region Multan, Khalid Mehmood Khan, Superintendent Abdul Karim Qureshi has said that the business community is the backbone of the society. He expressed this in a meeting with a delegation of traders led by the Chairman of the Central Association of Traders South Punjab and the President of the Association of Traders Al Falah Market Javed Akhtar Khan, President of Gulshan Market Chaudhry Muhammad Ilyas. Rao Muhammad Tariq, Chaudhry Zahoor Ahmad Chaudhry Muhammad Umar were also present. Business leaders Javed Akhtar Khan, Chaudhry Muhammad Ilyas congratulated Khalid Mehmood Khan on taking charge on this occasion and presented bouquets of flowers and expressed good wishes to Javed. Akhtar Khan said that the business community has always cooperated and will continue to cooperate for solving commercial and public problems.

Dr Zafar Iqbal says business community should cooperate with Punjab's ban on plastic bags



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Additional Director General of Environment Protection Department, Punjab, Dr. Zafar Iqbal, has said that on the instructions of the Punjab government, the business community should cooperate with the ban on shopping bags so that citizens can avoid plastic items that cause environmental pollution and Health problems. He expressed these thoughts in a meeting with the delegation of business leaders led by Chaudhry Shehbaz Akhtar, the president of Anjuman Tajran Shah, member of Alam T Chowk, and patron Ali Chaudhry Javed Akhtar. Deputy Director Muhammad Idris, Environment Inspector Fayyaz Hussain, Field Assistant Muhammad Ikramul Haq were also present on this occasion. Avoid the use of plastic items. Chaudhry Shehbaz Akhtar, president of Anjuman Tajran Shah, member of Alam T Chowk, said that the business community will fully cooperate with the government's directives regarding the ban on plastic shopper bags and in this regard, awareness of the business community in the markets. A campaign will also be conducted so that the business community will use bags on the instructions of the Punjab government and in this regard pamphlets will be distributed among the business community on the instructions of the Punjab government.

Sonia emphasized the critical role of youth in the socio-political and socio cultural

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: on behalf of the organizers. She provided a brief overview of the organizations involved and elaborated on the purpose of such interventions, particularly focusing on youth engagement in addressing political polarization. She emphasized the critical role of youth in the socio-political and socio cultural context of Pakistan, highlighting their potential to bring about positive change and influence social behavior.

Mr. Naseem Anthony discussed the complexities of political polarization in Pakistan, uncovering its root causes and highlighting how it has exacerbated intolerance, particularly regarding religion and politics, and affected the minds of the young generation. He explained that political polarization creates policy gaps.

Mr. Farman Ali shared the interventions of FAFEN in Faisalabad districts and explained the process to produce an analysis regarding voter turnout among youth, women, and other vulnerable and marginalized sections of society that help the organizations to develop projects and campaigns to ensure the engagement at different levels. He emphasized youth joining social movements and further encouraged them to communicate with diverse stakeholders including law enforcers and lawmakers.

Mr. Bilal Ahmed and Mr. Irshad Parkash further encouraged the youth to play their due role in reducing the political and religious intolerance and polarization in society.

Long-term loans on low markup vital for farmers to lift agri economy



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Stressing the need for a long-term loan scheme on low markup for the farmers, the business community has said that the provincial government's decision to launch a green tractor scheme will boost agriculture economy in Punjab and help stimulate national economy which is already showing signs of stability with stable value of the rupee, reduced inflation, and expected reduction in the interest rates.

Appreciating the government plan of providing subsidies to the peasants for the purchase of tractors, the Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts & Accessories Manufacturers Chairman Abdur Rehman Aizaz said that the tractor subsidy schemes have been introduced in the past as well but last for one year, which creates a boom in the industry followed by a bust in the following year, which is detrimental for the industry. Mumsahd Ali, SVC Paapam and a tractor parts manufacturer was of the opinion that both the federal and provincial budgets should function in unison to support the industry and the farmer. The federal government is likely to impose GST on tractors, and this should be offset by the provincial governments through reduced markup long-term loans, which should continue for at least five years. He was of the opinion that a one-time heavy subsidy on tractors would put the industry in overdrive for the coming financial year, followed by a sharp drop in orders in the next financial year. This trend has been observed several times in the past 20 years.

Wood Work

LAHORE: A craftsman prepare Butcher Wooden Blocks locally called as "mundhis" for cutting meat on Eid-ul-Adha on Ravi Road in the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

DSP issues instructions to railway officers to work hard and dedicate their time

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Divisional Superintendent of Railways, Multan Division, Kashif Farooq Butt while giving instructions to all railway employees and officers to work with hard work and dedication, said that all officers and railway employees should solve all the problems of their respective departments. He presided over the meeting of the divisional officers in the committee room of the DS office while addressing the railway officers of all departments participated in the meeting held in the committee room. asked questions about the problems faced in their departments and issued necessary instructions while issuing instructions to the officers to work more hard and dedicated and said that all the legitimate problems of the employees are understood DS Railway Multan Kashif Farooq Butt. It was assured that passengers are VIP guests of Paki-



stan Railways and safety of their lives is the prime responsibility of Railways. DS Kashif Farooq Butt Said Prevention of accidents is the most important and for this everyone has to work together, from the train driver to the

gang man standing at the gate, signal staff, engineering department, transport and all the officers and employees should pay full attention and fulfill their responsibilities.

On the instructions of Divi-

sional Superintendent Railway Multan Kashif Farooq Butt, Divisional Commercial Officer Railway Multan has issued strict instructions to Commercial Inspectors, Traffic Inspectors, Group Inspectors and STE to take action against passengers traveling without tickets DCO Railway Multan In this regard, ticket less campaign has been released from June 10 to June 24.

According to the schedule, Commercial Inspector, Traffic Inspector, Group Inspector and DCO Railway Multan will check ticket less passengers in different trains. Complaints will also be heard and resolved on the spot. In this regard, Divisional Commercial Officer Railway Multan said that traveling without a ticket is a crime. Passengers are requested not to travel without a ticket. Fare and fine are collected from the passenger from the starting point of the train.

Empowering youth: Embracing hobbies and dreams

Wajiha Nasir

The current societal norms tend to associate academic excellence with success, while deeming hobbies and other activities as a mere distraction. This mind-set compels students to abandon their passions and focus solely on their studies, disregarding their mental impact.

From a young age, children are expected to excel in academics. They are told from the young age that they can only achieve success by either getting a job as a doctor, pilot, or a public servant, and it is only possible if they concentrate on their studies.

Some students often have hobbies as a coping mechanism from all the trauma they get, either by school or parental pressure. They use it as an escape from the world, that gives them a sense of belong-

ing. Their hobbies are sometimes a reflection of their capabilities and identity that helps other people to understand them better. Studies show that people who spend time on activities they enjoy are less likely to experience stress, low mood and depression. These activities that get you out make you feel happier and more relaxed. Having hobbies can improve your mental health.

When it's time to choose a career path, students face a dilemma of between pursuing their interests or what the society demands of them. Often, students are compelled to abandon their dreams and interests.

Some children dream of becoming an artist, teacher, astronaut, musician, or pursuing unconventional career paths and explore these fields as hobbies. During this exploration, they may face criticism and discouragement, which can have a significant effect on their mental

health.

It is crucial to note that having a job as doctor or a pilot is not the only path to success. They can achieve anything and everything they want to be. All they need is a little confidence boost, a little motivation from you to do wonders. If your child wants to be a musician let him play an instrument, if he wants to be a cop let him be and if he wants to draw let him draw. There are no limitations in hobbies and dreams.

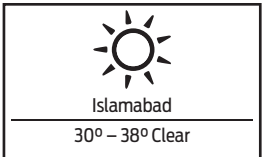
In conclusion, promoting hobbies and dreams can have a positive impact on an individual's mental health and well-being. Parents and educators must understand the importance of supporting children's interests and dreams to help them achieve their full potential. Try being supportive of your children and see the difference it makes.

Writer is Student of BS-IR(1) in National Defence University NDU

Armed bandit netted during botched robbery incident

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: An armed bandit was overpowered and later handed over to Police during a botched robbery incident Peoples Colony chowk in Attock city on Sunday. Faizan Ali has reported to Police that he along with his brother was going back to his house after withdrawing cash from the local bank when reached near Peoples Colony chowk, an armed bandit equipped with pistol while riding a motorcycle intercepted them and on gun point tried to snatch money from them. Mr Ali added that as he voiced alarm, people of the area came to rescue them and overpowered the armed bandit and later handed over to police. Later the suspect was identified as Muhammad Zaki- a native of



SERVICES

Namaz Timings
 Fajr 3:14 am
 Zohr 12:07 pm
 Asr 5:07 pm
 Maghrib 7:18 pm
 Isha 9:01 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
 Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
 CDA 9208301-04

AGPR disburses Rs 223 million for census activities

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In a recent development, the Accountant General Pakistan Revenue (AGPR) has evaluated, processed, and disbursed payments totaling Rs 223,259,535 on behalf of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). These payments were allocated to 36 districts for census activities conducted by respective district administrations, covering expenses incurred during the census.

The funds were disbursed to districts including Islamabad, Mandi Bahauddin, Umerkot, Khushab, Haripur, Cholistan, Pishin, Muzaffarabad, Tando Allahyar, Lower Kohistan, Khyber, Kotli, and Upper Kohistan. This financial allocation aims to reimburse the district administrations for their census-related expenses.

Additionally, individuals and employees of government departments who were tasked with responsibilities during the conducting and administering of census activities will now be reimbursed from their respective districts. This ensures that all personnel involved in the extensive



census activities are duly compensated for their efforts. Thanks to the timely action by the AGPR, districts will now be in a position to reimburse these individuals before Eid, providing financial relief and recognition for their hard work during the census.

The successful execution of this task by the AGPR reflects its commitment to robust financial management, supporting national initiatives, and maintaining smooth governmental operations. The timely disbursement is crucial for covering the costs incurred by district administrations during the essential census activities.

PAAPAM welcomes Punjab govt Green Tractor Scheme

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts & Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) has welcomed the government move of offering subsidies to the farmers for the purchase of tractors alongside other forms of support.



PAAPAM Chairman Abdur Rehman Aizaz stated that this step of the Maryam Nawaz government in Punjab will boost agri economy of the province and help stimulate National economy which is already showing signs of stability with stable value of the PKR, reduced inflation, and expected reduction in the interest rates.

Mumsahd Ali SVC Paapam, and a tractor parts manufacturer stated that the tractor subsidy schemes have been introduced in the past as well but last for 1 year, which creates a boom in the industry followed by a bust in the following year, which is detrimental for the industry.

The association has also decided to write to the CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif with regards to the mode of support to the farmer for the procurement of tractors, with a view to elaborate the role and impact of the tractor parts industry on the national and provincial economy. It is pertinent to mention here that 2 top tractor plants are situated in Punjab with the 200+ sme tractor parts industry mainly operating in the Lahore region, creating jobs for thousands of people.

846 Sikh pilgrims from India arrive for Jor Mela celebrations



Raaza Naqvi

ATTOCK: 846 Sikh pilgrims arrived at Hassan Abdal on Sunday to offer their religious rituals in connection to 418th death anniversary of Guru Arjan Dev also known as Jore Mela aimed strict security measures. Upon their arrival officials of local administration, Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) and the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Perbandhak Committee (PSGPC), local administration well come them. Speaking on the occasion, the Party leader of Sikh yatrees Sardar Gurbachan Singh said that Pakistan was their second home for Sikhs living in all around the world. Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) caretaker Asmat Ullah has said that the Sikh pilgrim would leave for Gurdwara Nanaka Sahib on June 10. He assured that the Sikh pilgrims would be provided with the best facilities during their 10-day stay in the country.

During their stay in Pakistan, the devotees are scheduled to visit and pay obeisance at various Sikh shrines. The pilgrims will follow a detailed schedule, including visits to Nankana Sahib on June 10, Gurdwara Sacha Sauda Farooqabad on June 11, Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib Narowal on June 12, and Gurdwara Rohri Sahib Eminabad on June 14, before arriving in Lahore. The main ceremony for Guru Arjan Dev Ji's death anniversary will take place on June 16 at Gurdwara Dera Sahib Lahore.

World Food Safety seminar held in Gillani Law College, BZU, Multan



Bureau Report

MULTAN: World Food Safety Day is celebrated worldwide on June 7, in this context a World Food Safety Day event was organized in Gillani Law College, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, by the Department of Food Safety and Quality Management, Faculty of Food Science and Nutrition. Dean Professor Dr. Saeed Akhtar, Professor Dr. Muhammad Riaz, Dr. Aamir Ismail, and Dr. Sameem Javed warmly welcomed all the guests.

During his speech, Dean Professor Dr. Saeed Akhtar stated that unsafe food is a global issue, with diseases caused by unsafe food posing a significant health risk worldwide. Approximately 600 million people are affected annually, resulting in 420,000 deaths.

Professor Dr. Muhammad Riaz, in his address, highlighted the risks associated with foodborne diseases, stating that these diseases can be caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, or chemical contamination. Poor hygiene, violations of health principles, and unsafe food preparation exacerbate these risks. Additional Deputy Commissioner General, Multan, Mr. Muhammad Saif, emphasized the need to educate children about food safety in schools to raise awareness among the new generation. He stated that food safety is our responsibility, and we must take it seriously. He also thanked the Department of Food Safety and Quality Management for their ongoing activities in schools.

Mr. Muhammad Asif, Director of Operations at the Punjab Food Authority, mentioned in his speech that food safety is crucial for the health and well-being of our society.

Dr. Muhammad Aamir Ismail presented his perspective, emphasizing the importance of adhering to hygiene and health principles during the preparation, storage, and distribution of safe food.

Dr. Sameem Javed stated that we should adopt international standards for food safety to ensure our food meets global standards. He stressed that everyone's role is important in food safety, and we must work together.

Other guests, including Ghulam Mustafa (CEO FDO), Manager of the Program Doaba Foundation Javed Iqbal, Fayyaz Abbas (CEO Education), Mr. Shahid Mubeen Sarwar (Quality Manager Volka Food), Mr. Shams (Manager Family Foods), Mr. Rana Munir Ahmed (Head of Quality and R&D SM Food), Muhammad Usman Khalid (CEO Rahmat Food), Mr. Sirajuddin (Manager ARS Water), Mr. Muhammad Jamal (General Manager Amna Food), Mr. Abdul Sattar (CEO Honey Food), and Mr. Sajid Abbas Sial (Principal Program Manager Nutritional International), also shared their thoughts.

Media Talk

ISLAMABAD: PPP Senator Palwasha Khan talking with media person along with PPP social media vice president Gulf and Middle East Syed Matloob Hussain Gillani outside Parliament House.



Photo: Online

AIOU holds KP chapter of Convocation in Peshawar

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The convocation of Allama Iqbal Open University (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter) took place yesterday at Peshawar. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi was the chief guest of the ceremony. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood presided over the ceremony. Governor KP, Faisal Karim Kundi said in his speech that the educational services of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) are exceptional across the country. He said that providing free education to prisoners, children of martyrs and transgressors is a great service of AIOU for the nation. While congratulating the gold medallists and students, Faisal Karim Kundi said that today is the beginning of your journey of practical life, make education a tool of change and be a



source of pride for the nation.

He said that we need to focus on improving the quality of education more than increasing the number of universities. The governor further said that he will approve the appointment of vice chancellors of 26 universities of the province as soon as he receives the summary. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood

said that Allama Iqbal Open University has been providing educational services for half a century and celebrating its golden jubilee. Dr. Nasir added that more than 50 lac students have been graduated from AIOU and there is hardly a household in Pakistan that doesn't have a student from Open University.

Vice Chancellor while congratulating the students who got gold medals and degrees said that this university is yours and you are our pride. Registrar, Raja Umer Younis said that this university is the precious gift of former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Today there is no school, college or university in the country in which graduate of AIOU is not serving. The Governor and the Vice-Chancellor distributed degrees among 246 male and female students, in which 42 students were awarded with gold medals.

FIA warns public about fraud in online notices: don't give out personal information

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A public service announcement is being issued by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to warn the public about a recent rise in online fraudulent activity. Unauthorized individuals are impersonating FIA officers and circulating fabricated notices through various electronic communication channels i.e. email, WhatsApp and other such social media platforms.

These deceptive notices falsely accuse recipients of criminal activity and often employ scare tactics by threatening legal action or demanding immediate financial compensation. In some instances, scammers may attempt to elicit sensitive personal information under the pretense of verification or compliance procedures.

The FIA operates with the utmost professionalism and adheres to strict protocols in its communication practices. All official communication is initiated only after prior investigation and with a clearly identified case number. It is important to note that the FIA will never request sensitive information, such as banking details, via such notices or phone calls.

If you receive a suspicious notice claiming to be from the FIA, we urge you to exercise caution. Do not engage with the sender or provide any personal information. To verify the legitimacy of such communication, please contact our helpline 1991 or visit the nearest FIA circle.

Why is it necessary?

The Punjab government recently passed a bill, now ratified into law by the governor's signature, which has drawn severe criticism from journalists, media outlets, and various political factions. Critics argue that the legislation undermines freedom of speech and poses a threat to the integrity of free journalism. The primary function of the state, however, is to safeguard its citizens by all available means. Legislation within the state framework is fundamentally aimed at ensuring public welfare and safety.

Examining the content of this bill reveals that it mandates punitive measures against individuals who post false information about others on social media platforms. This provision aims to combat the spread of misinformation and protect individuals from defamatory content. From my perspective, it is difficult to see how such a measure stifles journalism. Instead, it appears to be a necessary step

to curb the spread of falsehoods. Human beings, inherently social animals, are profoundly influenced by their environment and the actions within it. The persistent dissemination of incorrect or misleading material on social media has a detrimental impact on public perception and psychology. It is irrelevant to us whose agenda this misinformation supports; our primary concern is the well-being and protection of the public. Continuous exposure to lies and fabricated content can disrupt the psychological well-being of individuals, leading to a broader sense of social insecurity.

In this context, the enactment of this bill is crucial. It addresses a pressing need to mitigate the impact of misinformation and maintain a healthier informational

environment. The psychological distress caused by false information is not merely an abstract concern but a tangible issue that affects social stability and individual well-being.

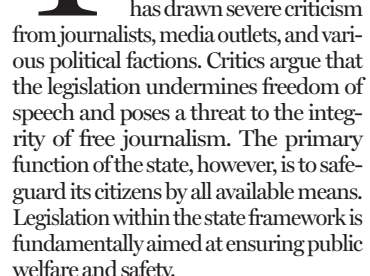
Furthermore, from a political standpoint, this law is expected to curtail the misuse of social media by political parties within Punjab. This misuse often involves illegal and non-traditional methods to influence public opinion and political discourse. By limiting such activities, the bill aims to promote a more transparent and fair political environment, free from the distortions caused by unscrupulous social media practices.

The legislation addresses a significant gap in the regulation of online content, acknowledging the evolving landscape of digital information and the unique chal-

lenges it poses. In a world where social media has become a powerful tool for communication, the unchecked spread of false information can have far-reaching consequences. This bill represents a proactive approach to safeguarding public trust and the integrity of online discourse.

In conclusion, while the bill has faced criticism for allegedly curbing freedom of speech, its primary objective is the protection of the public from the harmful effects of false information. It strives to balance the need for free expression with the imperative of safeguarding public interest and social harmony. By addressing the issue of misinformation, the bill aims to foster a more informed and secure society. The regulation of social media content under this law is not an attack on journalism but a necessary measure to ensure the accuracy and reliability of information in the public domain.

Writer is student at University Of Sargodha.



Analysis
M Azam Tariq

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At the heart of ethical journalism is a commitment to truthfulness and precision. Journalists have a responsibility to meticulously verify facts, authenticate sources, and present information in an objective and transparent manner. Upholding the truth is paramount, even when it may be inconvenient or unpopular. Ethical journalism necessitates independence from undue influence or bias. Journalists must strive to maintain objectivity in their reporting, steering clear of conflicts of interest and refraining from advancing personal or organizational agendas.

By offering diverse perspectives and enabling readers to form their own opinions, journalists uphold the principles of fairness and impartiality. Fairness is indispensable in ethical journalism, ensuring that all pertinent viewpoints are represented and given fair consideration. Journalists should seek out a variety of sources and perspectives, providing context and equilibrium to their reporting. By presenting a comprehensive portrayal of complex issues, journalists empower readers to make informed judgments. Ethical journalism demands accountability and transparency from both journalists and media organizations. Journalists ought to maintain transparency regarding their methodologies and motivations, acknowledging any mistakes and promptly rectifying inaccuracies. By holding themselves answerable to the public, journalists preserve the trust and credibility of their profession. In today's rapid media landscape, the urgency to disseminate news swiftly can occasionally compromise accuracy and comprehensiveness. Journalists

must navigate this tension between timeliness and precision, with an unwavering commitment to truth above all else. The pursuit of ratings and online engagement has led to an abundance of sensationalist headlines and clickbait articles. Ethical journalists must resist the allure of sensationalism, prioritizing substantive reporting that genuinely serves the public interest. The proliferation of misinformation and disinformation presents a formidable obstacle to ethical journalism. Journalists must remain vigilant in verifying information and debunking falsehoods, thus preserving the integrity of the profession and combating the erosion of trust in the media. Ethical journalism is instrumental in holding authority figures accountable, fostering transparency, and encouraging informed civic engagement. By furnishing accurate and impartial information, journalists empower citizens to participate meaningfully in democratic processes and make well-informed decisions. Trust serves as the cornerstone of journalism, and ethical conduct is imperative for upholding the credibility of the profession. Journalists must steadfastly adhere to ethical standards, thereby earning and maintaining the trust of their audience. Ethical journalism cultivates dialogue and comprehension by presenting a range of perspectives and nurturing civil discourse. By promoting empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect, journalists contribute to the advancement of a more cohesive and inclusive society.

In the domain of journalism, the pursuit of truth takes precedence. Nonetheless, there are occasions when journalists deviate from the ethical course, engaging in detrimental practices like negative journalism and the dissemination of false propaganda. Such actions not only diminish the trustworthiness of the media but also carry tangible repercussions, prompting legal repercussions against those responsible. One of the most notorious instances of journalistic fabrication occurred in 1980 when Janet Cooke, a reporter for The Washington Post, penned a Pulitzer Prize-winning article titled "Jimmy's World." The piece depicted the life of an eight-year-old heroin addict, later revealed to be entirely fictitious. Cooke's deception not only damaged her reputation but also resulted in the rescinding of her Pulitzer Prize and the resignation of top editors at The Washington Post. Although Cooke did not face criminal charges, the incident underscored the significance of fact-checking and honesty in journalism.

In 2003, Jayson Blair, a young reporter at The New York Times, was exposed for fabricating stories, plagiarizing content, and misleading readers about his whereabouts while reporting. Blair's actions triggered a significant scandal that prompted an internal investigation by The New York Times and ultimately led to his resignation. The fallout from Blair's misconduct also raised concerns about the newspaper's editorial oversight and credibility.

Brian Williams, the former anchor and managing editor of NBC Nightly News, faced scrutiny in 2015 for falsely asserting that he was aboard a helicopter hit by enemy fire during the Iraq War in 2003. Williams' embellishment of events sparked public outrage and compromised his credibility as a reliable journalist. Consequently, NBC News initiated an internal investigation, and Williams was suspended without pay for six months. Despite returning to the network in a different capacity, the incident serves as a cautionary tale about the ramifications of misleading reporting.

Milo Yiannopoulos, a right-wing commentator and former editor at Breitbart News, has encountered several defamation lawsuits for his inflammatory and deceptive statements. In 2017, Yiannopoulos was sued by Leslie Jones, an actress and comedian, for allegedly provoking a targeted harassment campaign against her on social media. Although the lawsuit was settled out of court, it underscored the legal repercussions of disseminating false information and inciting online harassment.

Alex Jones, the host of the conspiracy-driven website Infowars, faced numerous defamation lawsuits for falsely alleging that the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012 was a government-orchestrated hoax. Families of the victims filed lawsuits against Jones, contending that his unfounded conspiracy theories had exposed them to harassment and emotional distress. In 2019, Jones was ordered to pay damages to several plaintiffs after a judge ruled that he had defamed them with his false claims.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Rising heatwaves, floods causing increase in snakebites across Southasia

Climate change is driving an increase in snakebites and envenomation deaths in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and beyond – and the community-driven solutions are leading the fightback.

In Punjabi, they call avoiding a snakebite "kakh lagna", denoting a narrow escape. Chaudhry Waqar Anwar, a 39-year-old journalist and farmer says he narrowly escaped snake bites thrice in the fields around Gujranwala, in Pakistan's province Punjab. Anwar recounts how snakes often hide under ready-to-harvest crops.

Recently, one had its sights on his feet as he worked in a paddy field, but he killed it with a farming implement before it could bite him. A growing crisis of snakebites has much of the subcontinent in its grip, cutting across borders and threatening thousands of lives. Recently, two South Asian journalists Al Jabber Malik from Pakistan and Diwash Gaharaj explored the link between climate change and the growing incidents of snakebites as part of a cross-border reporting workshop organized by the US-based East-West Center.

The duo's joint research and interaction with the affected communities revealed a notable increase in snakebite cases in the region, with links to climate change-induced extreme heat and floods. On a tour of his lush farmland, Anwar explained to the two environmental journalists that his village once had acres of dunes, but the locals had converted that area to arable land. While this led to bigger harvests, it also forced many snakes out of their usual habitats, increasing fatal snakebite encounters.

Anwar said the area around Gujranwala is home to diverse species of venomous and non-venomous snakes.

The venomous snakes include king cobras and cobras, Russell's vipers, saw-scaled vipers and the common krait. That's a stroke of luck that Rajesh Manjhi did not share. The 35-year-old daily-wage labourer succumbed to snakebite in 2022 while sleeping at home in the town of Muzaffarpur, in the Indian state of Bihar, leaving his family in poverty.

"A snake must have slithered in during the night as we lacked electricity in our house, and bit my husband while he was asleep," Kiran Devi, Manjhi's 25-year-old widow, recounted. She is now struggling to make ends meet and raise her children without her husband.

In 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared snakebite envenoming a neglected tropical disease, with 70 percent of all snakebite deaths reported in Southasia. And the burden of this disease, like so many others, falls most heavily on the poorest. Snakebites are more likely to kill people in impoverished communities because antivenom is often inaccessible to them.

THE WHO ESTIMATES that approximately five million snakebites occur annually worldwide, leading to around 2.7 million envenomations. A 2020 study that pieced together 19 years of snakebite data found that, on average, over one million snakebites occur each year in India alone. And, frequently, snakebites kill.

The study reported an average of 58,000 snakebite deaths per year across the country. Hafiz Saboor Ul Hassan, who works at the serology laboratory of the National Institute of Health in Islamabad, said that Pakistan has no official data available for snakebite cases because there is no central reporting system. But various scientific and health institutes, including global agencies like the WHO, UNICEF and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, have calculated estimates of around 30,000 to 50,000 per year, with some 15,000 to 20,000 severe envenomation cases.



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

Bhutto's Execution: Democracy's Turning Point and Alternate History

Syed Abdul Waheed Fani

On April 4, 1979, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the charismatic and controversial former Prime Minister of Pakistan, was hanged in Rawalpindi. His execution marked a significant and tumultuous moment in the country's history, deeply affecting its democratic trajectory. To understand the profound implications of Bhutto's execution on Pakistan's democracy and speculate on an alternate history where this event did not occur, we must delve into the political landscape of Pakistan during the late 1970s.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came to power in 1971, after the secession of East Pakistan (Fall of Dhaka) and the formation of Bangladesh. He was a founding member of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and served as both President and Prime Minister. Bhutto's tenure was marked by significant reforms aimed at modernizing Pakistan, including land reforms, nationalization of key industries, and the introduction of a new constitution in 1973, which enshrined parliamentary democracy.

However, Bhutto's rule was also damaged by allegations of authoritarianism, electoral fraud, and political repression. His controversial measures to consolidate power alienated many political opponents and segments of the military. The tipping point came with the 1977 general elections, widely criticized for rigging in favor of the PPP. Mass protests erupted, leading to political instability and eventually prompting a military coup by General Zia-ul-Haq.

Bhutto was arrested, tried, and convicted of conspiracy to commit murder in a trial that many observers, both domestic and international, deemed flawed and politically motivated. His execution was seen not just as a punishment for his alleged crimes but as a means to eliminate a formidable political adversary.

The immediate aftermath of Bhutto's execution saw Pakistan's democratic institutions suffer severely. General Zia-ul-Haq imposed martial law, and his regime embarked on a process of Islamization, which included the introduction of Sharia law, restrictions on civil liberties, and the suppression of political dissent. Zia's regime lasted until his death in a plane crash in 1988, marking one of the most extended periods of military rule in Pakistan's history.

The impact on Pakistan's democracy was profound:

- Zias era entrenched the military's role in politics, creating a legacy of military dominance that has repeatedly interrupted democratic processes in Pakistan. The military's influence in political affairs became a recurring feature, with subsequent coups in 1999 and 2007.

- The judiciary's involvement in Bhuttos controversial trial and subsequent execution undermined its independence. The judiciary perceived complicity with the military regime damaged public trust in the legal system, an issue that Pakistan grapples with to this day.

- Bhuttos execution intensified political polarization. His party, the PPP, became a symbol of resistance against military rule, leading to a deepening divide between pro-democracy forces and those supporting military interventions.

- The Zia regimes repression of political opponents, censorship of the press, and discontinuity of civil liberties marked a significant regression in human rights. The legacy of these repressive policies persisted beyond Zias era, affecting the nature of political discourse in Pakistan.

An Alternate History: What If Bhutto Had Not Been Executed?

Speculating on how Pakistan's democratic trajectory might have unfolded had Bhutto not been executed offers a glimpse into an alternate history. Several potential scenarios could have emerged:

- If Bhutto had been allowed to live and partic-

ipate in the political process, there might have been an opportunity for political reconciliation. A negotiated settlement between the military and political forces could have led to a more stable democratic transition. Bhuttos political acumen might have facilitated a balance between civil and military relations.

- Bhuttos presence could have contributed to the strengthening of democratic institutions. As a prominent political leader, he might have championed the cause of democratic governance, pushing for reforms that reinforced the independence of the judiciary, parliament, and other democratic institutions.

- His political survival could have discouraged future military interventions. His ability to navigate political crises might have set a precedent for resolving conflicts within the democratic framework. Ultimately, reducing the military's justification for coups.

- His vision for economic and social reforms could have continued to shape Pakistans development. His policies aimed at addressing social inequalities and economic disparities might have led to a more equitable society, fostering political stability and reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies.

- Bhuttos leadership style and foreign policy insights might have influenced Pakistans regional and international relations differently. His ability to articulate Pakistans position on the global stage and navigate complex geopolitical landscapes could have resulted in a more assertive and independent foreign policy.

As Pakistan continues to navigate its complex political terrain, the lessons from Bhutto's era underscore the importance of protecting democratic institutions, promoting political reconciliation, and ensuring the rule of law. The legacy of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto serves as a reminder of the challenges and opportunities that lie in the quest for a truly democratic Pakistan.

'Showcasing Pakistan: How Social Media can elevate cultural diplomacy amid political turmoil'

Ujala Bibi

Diplomacy, whatever one might call it, is the most effective method of enhancing the image of a state and its people both at home and abroad. It is commonly known that during the traditional era, this tool was mostly used by the governing bodies of various countries in order to make decisions and have an impact on their people. However, with the emergence of globalization, which has eroded the concept of borders and traditional barriers, diplomatic relations have also evolved and changed in terms of how they are conducted.

There is a critical need in developing countries such as Pakistan to consider soft power image through cultural diplomacy, which can be used as a tool to project a more positive image of the country in the international community. This is necessary because of the current political turmoil that is constantly affecting and destroying the image of the country. Taking advantage of social media sites is one way in which a country can showcase its beautiful side because social media is one of the most powerful tools for shaping perceptions and mindsets in the contemporary era. To foster a high-quality image of its state, the government should consider working with vloggers and bloggers to showcase the state's cultural diversity and beautiful destinations.

Since social media evolved so that it shattered the monopoly of traditional media, each and every individual of a state is able to contribute to the development of a positive image of the country due to the emergence of social media.

I think many of you are wondering "why Pakistan needs a soft image in the international arena? Since 9/11 and the beginning of the

Global War on Terror, Pakistan has been severely criticized for harbouring terrorists which has often resulted in the country being referred to as a state that sponsors terrorism. It led to a significant dent in Pakistan's reputation as a peaceful nation in the international community. As a result of this analysis, it is clear that Pakistan's ongoing political turmoil has a further negative impact on Pakistan's image not only in international circles but also on the economy as well as other institutions because political stability is the foundation upon which all the institutions of a state are built, whether they are decision-making institutions or policy-makers. There is also a decline in foreign direct investment in Pakistan due to this crisis, which is the lowest level in the history of Pakistan. The reason is simple: in order for FDI to flow into the country, a stable government and a positive perception of the state must be in place in addition to boosting tourism in the country, which is a great way to contribute to its overall economy.

As the situation in Pakistan continues to be plagued by political crises, Human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, a branch of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and Amnesty International have expressed concern regarding the situation.

The political crisis in the country has also resulted in a strong sense of societal polarization, which has resulted in many divisions within the government and within the country as a whole. As a result, Pakistani society and its people are very likely to need to critically examine and reconsider what is best for their national interest as well as align with their needs and interests in order to make Pakistan a prosperous and rich nation.

Writer is pursuing Bachelor of Science in International Relations at the Fatimah Jinnah Women University.

Pakistan Pavilion Shines at the International Festival Organized by the International School of Brussels

Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: The Embassy of Pakistan, Brussels participated in International School of Brussels (ISB) International Festival with a uniquely designed Pakistani pavilion on 9th July, 2024.

The ISB International Festival is an annual celebration showcasing diverse cultures and traditions from around the world. The diverse student community of the school actively participated with 100 countries represented in the event with their distinctive displays.

The event provided an opportunity to present rich heritage, cultural diversity, tourism, and export potential of the country. These displays included artefacts, handicrafts, traditional costumes, and photographs. A selection of books and documentaries on tourism and culture in Pakistan provided visitors with a unique insight into the country's rich history, traditions, and tourism potential.



Traditional Pakistani street food was a major attraction, drawing a large number of visitors, who enjoyed deli-



cacies such as Biryani, Samosas, Gulab Jamun, and the special Pakistani chai. The pavilion also featured a Henna (Mehndi) corner, offering intricate and beautiful designs for those seeking a more immersive cultural experience. Particular interest was taken in Made in Pakistan Sports items i.e. football and cricket kits. Children and parents took special pictures with the World Cup Football on the Pakistan stall. Ambassador Anna Baloch stated that "The International Festival serves as a wonderful platform to showcase Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, diversity, and the warm hospitality of our people. It is heartening to see such enthusiasm and interest in our culture from the international community." Visitors deeply appreciated the Pakistani cuisine and the beautiful artefacts displayed at the Pakistan Pavilion, making it one of the highlights of the festival.

Prince Rahim Aga Khan Inaugurates HBL MfB's RHQ Gilgit-Baltistan

Spokesman Report

GILGIT: HBL Microfinance Bank (HBL MfB) inaugurated today its new Regional Headquarters for Gilgit Baltistan. The ceremony was attended by Prince Rahim Aga Khan, Chair of the Executive Committee of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED); Mr. Sultan Ali Allana, Chairman, HBL; Mr. Muhammad Nassir Salim, President & CEO, HBL; Mr. Raymond Kotwal, Chairman, HBL MfB; and Mr. Amir Khan, President & CEO, HBL MfB.

"The inauguration of HBL Microfinance Bank's Regional Headquarters Gilgit-Baltistan is a remarkable milestone for both the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and the Bank," said Prince Rahim Aga Khan. "It is a major step towards AKDN's goal of achieving Net-Zero by 2030. As we continue our journey to a better and more sustainable future, this building serves as a symbol of continued progress, sustainability, and prosperity for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan."

Mr. Raymond Kotwal, Chairman HBL MfB, remarked, "The inauguration of our Regional Headquarters, Gilgit Baltistan is a testament to our



commitment to sustainable development and the well-being of the communities we serve. Gilgit holds a special place in the journey of HBL Microfinance Bank, as we started here more than two decades ago. This building is

a symbol of our dedication to fostering economic growth while preserving the region's environment.

Mr. Amir Khan, President & CEO HBL MfB, added, "The flagship Regional Headquarters Gilgit Balti-

stan exemplifies the strength, stability, and resilience of Pakistan's best microfinance bank. The Regional Headquarters not only boosts our operational capabilities but also represents progress and hope for the Gilgit Baltistan region.

Public Diplomacy at Digital Age

Khadija Anjum

Public diplomacy in the digital age has revolutionized the way governments engage with foreign publics, fostering a new era of global communication and collaboration. Social media platforms have become the primary channels for public diplomacy, offering unprecedented opportunities for governments to connect with global audiences. For instance, the United States Department of State has a robust social media presence, with over 100 million followers across various platforms, sharing news, updates, and behind-the-scenes insights into its work, fostering a sense of transparency and accountability.

Digital platforms have also enabled governments to share personal stories, highlighting the human impact of their policies and initiatives. The Australian government's "Stories of Australia" campaign is a great example of this approach, using social media and online platforms to share stories of Australian citizens, highlighting their experiences, achievements, and contributions to the country. This approach helps build a sense of national identity and promotes a positive image of Australia globally.

Moreover, digital media has become a priority for countries as it offers a cost-effective and efficient way to reach a large audience. Compared to traditional public diplomacy methods, digital media requires significantly less investment, yet provides a much wider reach and more measurable results. For instance, the Canadian government's "Canada C3" expedition, which took place in 2017, saw a team of Canadians travel across the country by ship, engaging with local communities and promoting Canadian culture. The expedition was documented extensively on social media, providing a unique glimpse into Canadian life and culture, and reaching a global audience of millions.

Pakistan has been actively using digital media to promote its culture and national policies. The Pakistani govern-

ment has launched various social media campaigns to showcase its achievements and promote its national identity and culture. For example, Coke Studio and the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation have been actively promoting Pakistan's tourism industry through social media platforms, highlighting the country's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.

Similarly, South Korea has been leveraging digital media to spread its culture and national policies. The South Korean government has been actively promoting its K-pop and K-drama industries through social media platforms, showcasing the country's vibrant entertainment scene and cultural exports.

In Russia, the Russian Ministry of Culture has been sharing videos and articles showcasing Russia's cultural landmarks, such as the Hermitage Museum and the Bolshoi Theatre.

In Japan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been sharing videos and articles highlighting Japan's unique culture and traditions, such as its tea ceremonies and martial arts.

In the past, traditional public diplomacy methods often relied on formal diplomatic channels, such as official visits, press conferences, and diplomatic cables. These methods were often slow and limited in their reach, making it difficult for governments to effectively communicate with foreign publics.

One of the significant challenges faced by traditional public diplomacy was the lack of transparency and accountability. Governments often relied on official channels to communicate their policies and initiatives, which could be slow and limited in their reach. In contrast, digital media provides a platform for governments to share their messages and engage with citizens in real-time.

While digital diplomacy offers many benefits, it is not without its drawbacks. One of the major concerns is the spread of misinformation. Social media platforms can easily become conduits for false or misleading information, which can distort public perception and undermine trust. This is particularly

problematic in the realm of international relations, where misinformation can exacerbate tensions between countries or create unwarranted fear and suspicion among the public. Governments must be vigilant in countering misinformation and ensuring that their digital communications are accurate and reliable.

Another potential downside of digital diplomacy is the perception of propaganda. While governments aim to promote their policies and values positively, there is a fine line between legitimate public diplomacy and propaganda. When digital campaigns are overly promotional or lack transparency, they can be seen as attempts to manipulate public opinion rather than inform and engage. This can lead to skepticism and diminish the credibility of the government's messaging efforts.

The rise of digital diplomacy has also highlighted the importance of cyber security. As governments increasingly rely on digital platforms to communicate with global audiences, they become more vulnerable to cyber-attacks. These attacks can compromise sensitive information, disrupt communication channels, and damage the government's reputation. Ensuring robust cyber security measures is essential to protect the integrity of digital diplomacy efforts and maintain public trust.

Furthermore, the digital divide remains a significant challenge. While digital media offers the potential for broad global reach, not all populations have equal access to the internet and digital technologies. In many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, limited access to digital platforms can exclude large segments of the population from participating in public diplomacy initiatives. Governments need to consider these disparities and seek ways to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that their messages reach diverse and inclusive audiences.

In the future, public diplomacy in the digital age is likely to continue to evolve, with governments increasingly relying on digital media to engage with foreign publics. As digital media continues to shape the way we commu-

Ensuring Decent Work for Agriculture Workers is Vital for Sustainable Development



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Employers' associations play a crucial role in providing strong representation and promoting decent working conditions for all their members, emphasized EFP Secretary General Syed Nazar Ali. He made these remarks while addressing participants at a capacity-building session for members of the Mehar Agriculture Employers (Landlords) Association (MAEA). The session, organized by the Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO), took place in Hyderabad.

Syed Nazar Ali also appraised the participants about the role played by EFP in promoting fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW) to safeguard workers' rights, enhance the sustainability of businesses, and create sustainable economic development.

Qazi Wajid Mahesar President Mehar Agriculture Employers (Landlords) Association (MAEA) expressed gratitude to the Employer's Federation of Pakistan and the International Labour Organization for driving international attention to the significance of employer-represented organizations in Sindh, especially for small-scale farmers while praising EFP's efforts in advancing fair employment conditions to support businesses in attaining sustainability.

Customs agents call for clearing thousands of stuck containers at port

City Desk

KARACHI: Khurram Ejaz, the former president of the Karachi Customs Agents Association, has sharply criticized port authorities for their lack of preparation in clearing the stuck containers at Karachi Port. In a statement, Ejaz highlighted that the arrival of the world's largest ship, a historic event for the port, was marred by administrative failures, leading to a significant backlog of containers awaiting clearance.

Ejaz remarked, "The docking of such a massive ship was known well in advance, yet no effective measures were taken to ensure the timely processing of the cargo. As a result, thousands of containers are now stuck, causing substantial financial strain on importers who are incurring hefty detention and demurrage charges."

He commented on the Karachi Port administration's readiness, saying, "Had there been adequate preparations for the prompt clearance of these containers, the situation at Karachi Port would be vastly different. Over a week has passed, and yet, the containers remain unexamined."

Ejaz also directed criticism at the Minister of Ports and Shipping, pointing out that while the arrival of such a significant vessel is a notable achievement, it requires meticulous planning and stringent regulation to manage the increased volume efficiently.

He called for stricter regulatory measures to ensure the smooth functioning of port operations, emphasizing that the trade community and consumers, already grappling with inflation, should not bear the brunt of administrative oversights.

Ejaz urged the new Minister of Ports and Shipping to not only launch promising projects but also to enforce stringent measures where necessary to prevent such disruptions in the future.

Denmark PM Frederikson suffers assault in Copenhagen, suspect arrested

Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen walked away following an assault by a man in central Copenhagen on Friday and had no outward signs of harm, a local resident told Reuters.

"Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen was beaten on Friday evening at Kultorvet (square, red.) in Copenhagen by a man who was subsequently arrested. The Prime Minister is shocked by the incident," her office said in a statement without giving further detail.

All the prime minister's official events on Saturday have been cancelled, her office added.

The assault took place when the man walked up to the prime minister and hit her. Frederiksen's office said the incident had left the premier "shocked" and suffering a minor whiplash injury.

"She seemed a little stressed," Soren Kjergaard, who works as a barista on the square, told Reuters after seeing the prime minister being escorted away by security following the assault.

Police said on social media platform X they had arrested a man and were investigating the incident but declined to give further details. Danish police said the 39-year-old attacker was sentenced to 12 days in custody.

Written by Khadija Anjum student from Fatima Jinnah Women University, International Relations department

Saudi Air's Emergency Landing at Masqat Remained A Mystery for 12 Long Hours

Tazeen Akhtar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan International Airlines is not alone or one and only in the World when we talk about taking the passengers as granted and taking least care but it definitely has company in the comity of airlines and Saudi Airlines has proved this on 06 June 2024.

Saudi Air's emergency landing at Masqat remained a mystery for 12 long hours adding to the concerns of the families of the passengers. The flight 3723 took off from Islamabad Airport at 10-40 AM for Jeddah to land at 3-30 PM but it was vanished in between for at least 12 long and painful hours for the passengers as well as for their relatives who could not find out where the flight gone if not reached the destination.

In between, the flight had an emergency landing at Masqat, Oman. Certainly it was before 3-30 PM but the airline did not bother to share it with the authorities in Islamabad or to media for the knowledge of general public.

The relatives of the pilgrims remained in a state of pain through long hours till 11 PM night when the pilgrims were provided WiFi and it was only then that they could call their families to inform them about there whereabouts.

At about 10 PM, the administration of Saudi Air was getting visas for the travelers to let them stay in Masqat for night and leave for Jeddah next day on 07 June.

The authorities of Saudi Air shared with the passengers that it was a technical fault that forced the pilot for emergency landing at Masqat. No other detail was shared with the passenger for hours. They were left to wander at the airport with no care or relief during these long hours.

In the meanwhile, the families behind were in a fix that weather the plane is crashed or kidnapped because no one was sharing any information to them, neither the airline nor Islamabad airport authorities and most probably the local authorities in Masqat were also asked not to share any information regarding the flight till they are let to from Saudi officials.

The members of the families of the travelers were calling to the media persons to help them get any information. They have condemned the irresponsible handling of the situation by the Saudi Air and seek inquiry against them.

If Saudi Air officials have anything to share in this regard, they are most welcome. We were definitely not in a position to collect their side of story for the reason explained above that they are not reachable.

Saudi Aramco says foreigners grab 'majority' of share offering

RIYADH: Oil giant Saudi Aramco said Sunday that international investors had snatched up the bulk of shares sold in its latest offering, which was set to raise \$11.2 billion.

"The majority of the shares constituting the institutional tranche of the Offering was allocated to investors located outside of the Kingdom," the company said in a statement before shares were to begin trading on the Saudi bourse as it reopens on Sunday.

Sources close to the situation told AFP that around 58% of shares were allocated to international investors, up from around 23% for the company's initial public offering in 2019 which was the biggest flotation in history.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the private information, said around 70% of orders outside the local market came from the European Union and the United States, while others came from Japan, Hong Kong and Australia.

Other provinces should take steps to revive agriculture: Murtaza Mughal

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), lauded the Punjab Government on Sunday for introducing the Kisan Package, which can revive the agriculture sector and improve food security in the country.

He said that through this significant initiative, easy loans will be provided to farmers through the establishment of the Punjab Kisan Bank.

He added that the comprehensive package for farmers includes the Green Tractor Scheme, local harvesters and agricultural equipment manufacturing, and the Oilseed Promotion Programme.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that a 70 percent subsidy on small tractors and a 50 percent subsidy on large tractors will be offered through this package.

Through the High-Tech Mechanisation Programme, local manufacturing of advanced agricultural equipment in collaboration with foreign companies will be ensured, and incentives will be offered to enhance the technological capabilities of agricultural sector.

Additionally, the Oilseed Promotion Programme was approved to encourage different regions of Punjab to cultivate oilseeds, as Pakistan is spending billions on the import of edible oil, he informed.

Through the Kisan Card, farmers will receive agricultural inputs, along with



other benefits and facilities. Implementing solar-powered tube wells and the drip irrigation system, both critical components of modernizing farm infrastructure are also under review and a decision is expected soon.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that agriculture has never been given importance, so the agricultural country has been forced to import billions of dollars worth of agricultural products.

If the package is implemented and merit is ensured, Pakistan can become an agricultural country in the true sense, which will help it overcome economic difficulties, he said, adding that other provinces should also follow suit and announced support packages for farmers.

Price hike

LAHORE: Citizens buying vegetables in the Sunday Market of the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

Rawalpindi Anjuman Tajran to stand up for Palestine: Sheikh Abdul Waheed

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of Rawalpindi Anjuman Tajran Liaqat Road Rawalpindi and founder of Rawalpindi Sanwaro Tehreek Sheikh Abdul Waheed said that Israeli atrocities on Palestine must be ended. Muslim countries should raise their voices against the violation of human rights in Palestine.

He said this while addressing the event of "Palestine Solidarity" organized by Pasban Watan Welfare Foundation at Rawalpindi Arts Council. The President of Rawalpindi Anjuman Tajran Liaqat Road Rawalpindi and the founder of Rawalpindi Sanwaro Tehreek Sheikh Abdul Waheed further said that

the life of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is a blessing for us. Muslim countries around the world have to gather on one platform to become a Muslim Ummah.

Palestine is our brother Islamic country, which is facing a new war every other day. Sheikh Abdul Waheed said that International human rights organizations, including Muslim countries, must unite and raise their voices against the atrocities committed against Palestine.

If the Muslims still do not wake up from the slumber, there will be no one left to save us from the fall. He said that We have to be conscious. We will raise our voices in every forum to express solidarity with Palestine.

Rector NUML visits ICCI: terms Academia-Industry linkage vital for sustainable economic growth

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Rector National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Major General Shahid Mahmood Kayani HI (M) (Retd) has said that academia-industry integration is vital for sustainable economic growth and that NUML is determined to provide wholehearted cooperation to industry in new developments and trends in businesses through research.

Speaking at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry he said that this partnership is critical driver of skill development, adoption of knowledge and promotion of entrepreneurship in strengthening R&D investment via exploiting the synergies and complementarities present in scientific and technological capabilities.

Highlighting the University initiatives and achievements for the purpose he said that both the institutions can work together to promote research culture to boost industrialization and produce demand-driven graduates for the corporate sector, adding that this platform will also be a strategic



move to bring stakeholders closer to each other to interact for mutual benefits by developing tech products, thereby contributing towards the socio-economic growth of Pakistan.

The Rector said that NUML is one of the biggest Universities with

29000 students, second in ranking in Asia with online facility to over 4600 students and is fully ready to impart necessary education, disseminate business information to Chambers' members for the promotion of businesses in the country.

He went on that for the beneficial results, the University will support the ICCI ideas and that appointment of a focal person by the ICCI will definitely go a long way in strengthening this collaboration.

Secretary General United Busi-

ness Group Zafar Bakhtawari, while welcoming the distinguished guest emphasized the significance of industry-academia cooperation by saying that ICCI is keen to evolve a formal mechanism under the guidance of the NUML for strengthening a viable relationship for the development of corporate sector as per the market economy.

Vice President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar said that a vibrant industry-academia linkage will surely bear fruit.

Convener ICCI sub committee on Higher Education Commission Adnan Mukhtar said that Pakistan cannot progress without the active industry-academia linkage and that ICCI is playing a pro-active role for needful.

ICCI Member Sajid Iqbal said that tasking University students for the preparation of feasibility studies about different projects will also be equally important.

On this occasion, former SVP Khalid Chaudhry, Executive member Maqsood Tabish, Rizwan Chheena and Ch. Mohammad Ali were also present.

Malaysia's Multicultural Identity in the Future: Opportunities and Challenges in Promoting Social Cohesion

Ameena Sarfaraz

Malaysia as a country that boasts of its colourful human rights quilt has come to that cross road where it is now a possibility to forge a new unified nation that is founded on righteousness. It appears in front of the world as multicultural society and the latter is trying to build the lines of tolerance and cooperation for many years. However, one can also recognize that there is a great number of opportunities to develop opposite relations of people, who compose the population of this country.

Malaysia is a multicultural country in which the Malay people Chinese, Indian, and indigenous people of Malaysian also equally fortify the cultural aspect that makes Malaysia unique. On the one hand, this is advantageous as this is likely to introduce new ideas to the team/Consulting company and provide views that may have been overlooked given the existence of diverse team members; on the other hand, this is a challenge as this implies that there are more likely to be disagreements and conflicts of view. Earlier, colonialism poli-

cies which denied some ethnic groups even the barest of necessities and discriminated the other prepared the stage for a segmented ethnic structure as it was observed in the relations between two ethnic groups.

Another emerging problem is the conflicts based on; racial and religious conflicts. They have been very active in the world. Years of nation-building chemistry studies the mission to remove ethnical rivalry that hasn't evaporated from years of efforts in that direction on the surface. Certain political measures like Bumiputera affirmative action was developed in an attempt to uplift the standard of the Malays has at certain times ignited the fuse of exclusion equally discriminating the Chinese and Indians. Albeit, such policies that might have been formed with an intention to enhance the society, require overhaul for harmonization other than polarization of the society along political lines.

Middle-eastern ethnic groups' population of Malaysia is influenced through them as the agents of change in their attitudes and information sharing. Schools should embrace the fact that there are variety of lesson plans that would make recognition and practice of diversity and tolerance of children encouraged. On

the other hand media has to address diversity in a responsible manner that is culture has to portray the various aspects of the ethnic layout without raising tendency of negative feelings towards any group.

It accurately posits that social discrimination stemmed primarily from economic inequality. Class, ethnic and other privileged positions have the potential to breed hate and rivalry that makes it very hard to encourage the formation of an integrated society. This must be done through establishing several economic and social policies, in other words, the Malaysians' economic rights must be protected, that means every Malaysian irrespective of ethnicity is eligible for the same economic opportunities in the country as Americans are. It is one of the Classifications that influence academic achievements, job opportunities, and support for career.

Challenges. Last but not least, one can also mention here that, as far as festivals are celebrations connected to people's cultures, they are also the tools that can help other people get to know the strangers' cultures better and know that it is impermissible to disrespect someone's culture and try to unite people. Chinese New Year, Diwali, Hari Raya, and

Gawai are not only representative of pride moments whereby a special group of people or community gets to eat, drink, and merry but also moments whereby fellow human beings could merry, accept the uniqueness of the, and embrace their culture for a couple of time. It should help in the organization and promotion of better support; as well as 'voicing' those from such cultures as a form of creating allies.

Regarding the prospective multicultural Malaysia, the vectors of its future evolution are either integration or conflict the outcome of which will depend on how these challenges will be met and in what ways new potentials for the creation of a new social and cultural subject will be searched. Indeed, it is possible for Malaysia itself to be an example of what a developed nation in the twenty first century can demonstrate as positive outcome of multiculturalism - the vision for members of plural societies to regard cultural differences as strengths beyond which people should bond with each other, not pull apart. This must be in parallel with an ongoing dialogue, use of practices that, in diversity and inclusion, are quite different and advocate equality and justice.

Engaging interacting with these men and

women from across the sectors in Malaysia is listening to their narratives and learning from them. It will also mean that the normally unheard, unrecognized and unappreciated stories of the struggle, conflict and aspirations can be insightful for a true assessment of the status of integration in the society of that country. For instance, a Malay student, while telling a story of learning alongside the Chinese and Indian students, describes aspects such as solidarity and fellowship as positive relations under structural diversity in support cooperation.

Thus, the Malaysia as multicultural society make it questionable as the future depends on its assets and liabilities in dealing with ethnic and religious tension as well as welcoming the ideas and opportunities buoyed by the architectural and assimilation, economy, education, media and cultural celebrations found in the Snow. The process is challenging, yet it is a worthwhile goal to pursue an integrated Malaysian society that is cohesive, at least, and something that should be achievable.

Writer is Student from Fatima Jinnah Women University department International Relations

PM praises Team Pakistan for good display of bowling against India in ICC T20 World Cup

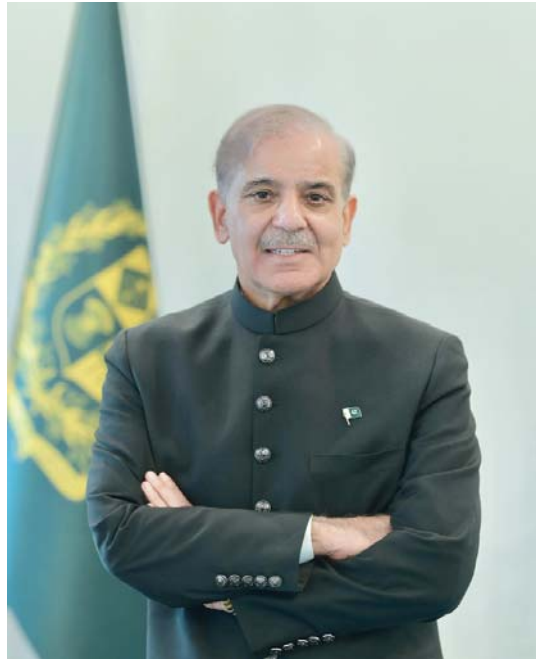
City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday praised a display of good bowling by

Pakistan cricket team in their crucial qualifying fixture against archrival India in ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, being underway in New York, USA. On his X account, the prime

minister posted "Great bowling by Team Pakistan against India in New York today. I am confident that the tournament will witness a great game of cricket!"

The prime minister wished the Green Shirts a good chase as India playing first was bowled out for 119 runs in 19 overs. Till filing of this news, Pakistan were 15 without any loss in 2 overs.



Education is highest peak, each girl deserves chance to reach summit: Naila Kiani

Sports Desk

MULTAN: Education is the highest peak one can climb and every girl deserves the chance to reach the summit.

As a goodwill ambassador for girls' education in Pakistan, celebrated mountaineer Naila Kiani's mission is to use her platform to inspire and advocate for educational reforms, especially in the most under-served regions. Naila Kiani, renowned for her mountaineering feats, stood at the summit of another peak, not of rock and ice, but of ambition and hope. In an interview with APP telephonically from Dubai on Sunday she stated that her journey began in the narrow, winding alleys of her hometown in Rawalpindi, where she first discovered her love for climbing. Her passion led her to scale some of the world's highest peaks, but her heart always remained with the girls back home, whose dreams

were often stifled by societal and economic barriers. She stated that her education had been her most reliable anchor, enabling her to dream and achieve beyond the ordinary.

"I dreamed of touching the sky. Education gave me the wings to reach those heights", she said. As a goodwill ambassador, Naila focused on three key areas including advocacy, mentorship, and resource mobilization. She believed that these pillars could transform the educational landscape for girls in Pakistan. "Climbing is just like achieving your dreams," and each step, no matter how small, brings you closer to the top." the goodwill ambassador explained. Replying to a question, she said that education was her biggest achievement even more than mountaineering and it was recognized by the govt to appoint her as a goodwill ambassador for girls' education. Answer-

ing another question, the only woman in Pakistan summiting world's 11 out of 14 highest peaks said that she would work on government's guidelines to promote girls' education adding that she would inspire them from her education journey which started from a federal public school of Rawalpindi and concluded at Queen Mary University, London from where she did Aerospace Engineering with special efforts of her mother.

I had a very tough routine during my education in London. I worked at night and studied during the day. I had sleepless nights for about four or five years to complete my degree. My struggle for education was higher than the mountains. People know because of my mountaineering, but I reached there by my education which gave me strength to utilize in life. No one has ever thought in Pakistan that a Rawalpindi

girl will climb the highest mountains within two years. I'm much blessed," she disclosed.

To yet another question she replied: "We have to penetrate education keeping in view the cultural norms and practices of our country. The mindset of the region where we were facing resistance to girls' education is changing with time. The most important thing is we should not go against the culture of the areas where we want to embed education," she believes.

She noted that she has been tasked to raise awareness about girls' education besides inspiring them and to promote the initiatives undertaken by the govt including IT, AI and infrastructure development. Naila Kiani explained that education was the main source of her achievements in sports and hoped that she would make a meaningful contribution as the ambassador. APP

PCB announces international cricketers registered for PSL 9 Draft

Sports Desk

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

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

The foreign players roster for the PSL Draft is boosted by the presence of England's Dawid Malan and South Africa's Reeza Hendricks, both of whom feature in the top 10 of the ICC Men's T20I player rankings for batters.

World No. 5 T20I batter Rilee Rossouw was earlier

traded to Quetta Gladiators from Multan Sultans.

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

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

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

The next on the list - from full member countries - is West Indies (58), Sri Lanka (40), Afghanistan (36), South Africa (30), Bangladesh (21), New Zealand (18), Australia (16), Zimbabwe (11) and Ireland (nine).

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

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

Indies).

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

Pak team to feature in Asian Squash C'ship



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: A seven-member Pakistan contingent would be participating in the 22nd Asian Squash Team Championship to be held at Dalian, China from June 12 to 16. A group of 14 teams from all over Asia would participate in the Men event, said a press release.

Pakistan contingent includes Muhammad Asim Khan, Noor Zaman, Nasir Iqbal, Farhan Mehboob (Players); Fahim Gul (Coach); Waseem Umar (Physical Trainer) and Air Cdre (R) Amir Nawaz (Manager). The teams have been divided into four pools. Pakistan team has been placed in Pool C along with Korea, Chinese Taipei and China. In the 1st match, the Pakistan team will play Chinese Taipei on June 12, while the green-shirts will face Koera in the 2nd match.

PBBF trails for Asian Indoor Games on June 28

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) one day trials for the selection of Pakistan team to compete in the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games 2024 in the 3x3 format (Men) would be held on June 28.

The trails would be held at the Government College University Basketball Courts in Lahore, said a press release issued on Sunday.

The affiliated units of PBBF have been directed to nominate budding, talented and upcoming players for the trials.

The nominated sportsperson must be below the age of 23 years on Dec 31, 2024.

The National Basketball Training Camp would be sponsored by the Pakistan Sports Board and qualified coaches will impart training to the players.

The PBBF was also exploring possibilities that selected team also undertake training cum competitions tour of neighbouring countries before participation in the Indoor Games.

FESCO wins 49th WAPDA Inter-Unit Baseball Championship



Abdul Majid

LAHORE: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) won the 49th WAPDA Inter-Unit Baseball Championship. This baseball competition was held under the auspices of WAPDA Sports Board from June 3rd to June 6th at WAPDA Sports Complex Lahore in which Fesco, Lesco, GAPCO, MAPCO and N Five teams, including TDC, participated. In the finals, Fesco won the first position, while the GAPCO (Gujranwala) team won the second position and the LESCO (Lahore) team won the third position. Congratulating Team Kovapada for winning the Inter-U. N. Baseball Championship and said that this victory of the baseball team definitely includes the tireless efforts of the team management, coaches and players. He expressed hope that Fesco's other sports in the same way, the teams will shine the name of Fesco and the country by showing the best game with the spirit of victory and dedication. In the closing ceremony, the special guest PDGSC Gapomerza Ghulam Nafis and General Secretary WAP Sports Board Malik Umeer Aslam won the first position. Vali gave trophy and other prizes to Fesco baseball team. Manager Fesco Baseball Team Exion People's Colony Division Tahir Maqsood, Assistant Manager Zabihullah, Coach Muhammad Asif, Sports Manager Fesco Sajid Mehmood and others were also present on this occasion.

Pak football team to face Tajikistan in June 11



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan football team is set to play its final away match of the FIFA World Cup Qualifier Round 2 against Tajikistan on June 11 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. However, the team's travel schedule has faced significant disruptions due to unforeseen circumstances.

A private airline flight, initially scheduled to transport the team, was canceled following a bird strike incident, causing two delays before the eventual cancellation, said a press release.

As a result, the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has reached out to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) for a chartered flight.

Currently, 8 out of the 35-member squad have arrived in Tajikistan. The PFF is trying its best to facilitate the travel of the remaining squad members to ensure they reach Tajikistan in time for the crucial match.

The PFF remains committed to overcoming these challenges and is exploring all possible avenues to ensure the smooth travel of the players.

Pakistan grabs 2nd gold medal in Asian Road Cycling C'ship



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan bagged the second gold medal in the Asian Road Cycling Championship, with top cyclist Ali Alyas winning the Road Scratch Race at Almaty, Kazakhstan. Ali Alyas completed a distance of 61.4 km in one hour and 26 minutes, showcasing his exceptional endurance and speed.

The championship, witnessed an impressive performance from Alyas, solidifying his status as a leading cyclist in the region. His back-to-back gold medals mark a significant milestone for Pakistani cycling on the international stage. Syed Azhar Ali Shah, President of the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), lauded Ali Alyas and the entire Pakistani team for their outstanding performance. He praised Alyas's dedication and skill, highlighting the significance of these victories for the sport in Pakistan. This is a proud moment for Pakistan," said Shah. "Ali Alyas has not only made history but has also inspired countless young athletes across the country.

Pace-laden Pakistan book India on 119 in blockbuster T20 World Cup clash

A Sports

Seamers wreaked havoc and powered Pakistan to bundle out fierce rivals India on a modest total in the blockbuster ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 clash here at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

Sent into bat first, India's strong unit unfolded on a paltry 119 in 19 overs despite Rishabh Pant's 42-run knock.

India had a decent start to their innings when Rohit Sharma scored eight off Shaheen Shah Afridi's first over but the returning rain halted their

momentum. Fortunately for cricket fans, it was a passing shower and the action resumed after a brief delay and Naseem Shah bowled from Pakistan from the other end.

The right-arm pacer brought major breakthrough for the Green Shirts as he dismissed Virat Kohli (4) with just 12 runs on the board.

Shaheen doubled the delight for Pakistan in the next over when he avenged Sharma for a first-over six by dismissing him on a similar stroke. Sharma made 12 off 13 deliveries.

Returning wicketkeeper

batter Rishabh Pant then took the reigns of India's batting charge. He put together a crucial partnership with Axar Patel to anchor the innings.

Pant and Patel added 39 runs for the third wicket before Patel was cleaned up by Naseem in the eighth over.

Rishabh Pant then put together a one-sided partnership with Suryakumar Yadav.

The fourth-wicket stand, which yielded 31 runs, lasted with Yadav's dismissal in the 12th over. The top-ranked T20I batter could score seven off eight.

Yadav's dismissal sparked a

middle-order collapse as India lost three more wickets in quick succession including their mainstay Pant, who fell prey to Mohammad Amir in the 15th over.

Pant remained the top-scorer for India with 42 off 31 deliveries, laced up with six boundaries. Pakistan pacers, fuelled with momentum, soon rattled India's toothless batting tail and booked them on a below-par total.

Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf picked up three wickets each for Pakistan, followed by Mohammad Amir, who bagged two, while Shaheen Shah Afridi chipped in with a wicket.



India are placed second in Group A standings of the T20 World Cup 2024 with two points after one match. Whereas, Pakistan are fourth with zero points.

Cricket Lovers

KARACHI: Spectators watching cricket match between India and Pakistan on big screen at Arts Council during ICC Men's Twenty20 World Cup in New York



PM's China visit to upgrade CPEC, further bilateral ties

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to China will prove to be a catalyst for the next phase of CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) and also further strengthen investors relations, flourish businesses, and enhance people-to-people contact between China and Pakistan, ushering in a new era of economic prosperity in Pakistan.

This was the upshot of a panel discussion on "PM

Shahbaz Sharif's visit to China and its impact on Pakistan", organised by Press Information Department (PID) here at its regional office on Sunday.

The panelists included renowned journalists Salman Ghani, Saleem Bukhari, Ayesha Ashfaq, Mohammad Mehdi, and Najam Wali. Director General Bushra Bashir and other officers of the PID. The discussion delved into the political and economic significance of the China-Pakistan Econom-

ic Corridor (CPEC) and its revival for Pakistan's progress.

Ms. Ayesha Ashfaq, Head of Department of Development Communications at Punjab University, commenced the dialogue by underscoring the positive outcomes expected from the PM's visit, particularly highlighting the signing of 32 new agreements and MoUs. She emphasized the crucial role of effective communication, both through mainstream and social media, to elucidate the importance of CPEC to the common popu-

lace to ensure effective implementation of CPEC projects in future.

Saleem Bukhari, a senior journalist and analyst, underscored the criticality of the IT sector within the signed MoUs, foreseeing its pivotal role in Pakistan's future progress. Moving on, Najam Wali Khan, a senior broadcast journalist, stressed the correlation between economic stability and political stability, advocating for robust measures to counter misinformation and build public

trust that must go along to ensure effectiveness of CPEC projects.

Mohammad Mehdi, a foreign affairs expert and senior columnist, emphasized the imperative of capacity building for the effective implementation of CPEC projects. Lastly, Salman Ghani, a senior journalist, lauded PID Lahore's initiative in facilitating such discussions and called for similar debates at the parliamentary level to foster informed decision-making.

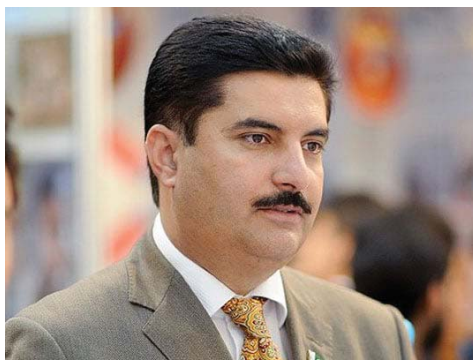
KP governor warns Centre of big resistance in erstwhile FATA, PATA

Monitoring Desk

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has warned the federal government of "big resistance" in erstwhile tribal regions - FATA and PATA - if the promises made to them before the merger to the province were not fulfilled.

"People will raise their voice if there will be no development or promises made to them [FATA] were not fulfilled," he said in an interview with Aaj Exclusive aired on Aaj News on Sunday.

Kundi was asked about the protests in the erstwhile tribal areas. He mentioned that the government had vowed to give three per cent of the National Finance Commission (NFC) to such areas after the merger in 2018.



In 2018, the KP government notified such areas as merged districts. Last month, the provincial government feared that the imposition of taxes in the erstwhile federally and provincially administered tribal areas would cause industrial relocation and unemployment in the region, leading to the resurgence of militancy. According to Kundi, taxation was another issue in such areas. The KP

governor added that he has spoken to the prime minister to talk to all political parties, the business community, traders and the chamber of commerce to resolve the issue.

"If you don't bring out a solution to the issue, then there will be resistance and we cannot afford it," he said and added that he was fighting the issue in the Centre.

Kundi challenges Gandapur for debate

He reiterated his challenge to the KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur for a debate where the former would reveal how the latter came to power and his party won the election in the province amid concerns from the JUL-F.

Kundi claimed that he would present evidence to support his claims.

MoHR enhances regional directorates' capacity for labour, human rights initiatives

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Human Rights is working to develop and strengthen the institutional capacities of Regional Directorates to enhance their performance in core functions, including labour rights and integrating a human rights-based approach to development, said an official here on Thursday.

He emphasized the importance of establishing connections with key provincial stakeholders to gather data on legal, policy, and administrative interventions, as well as budgetary allocations for human rights. Talking to APP, he said that this initiative would support effective strategic planning and reporting on UN Human Rights Treaties and GSP Plus.

He also emphasized that this initiative would improve the human rights situation in the provinces by enhancing the institutional capacities of Regional Directorates (RDs) through adequate provision of human and financial resources, enabling them to fulfill their mandates effectively and independently.

Government mulls increasing petroleum levy to tackle circular debt

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government was exploring various measures, including increasing the petroleum levy on motor gasoline and diesel from the current Rs60 to Rs80 per litre to tackle the rising circular debt.

Top authorities are also considering imposing an additional levy on petroleum products and raising gas tariffs beyond the revenue requirements of gas companies. This would allow the government to address the circular debt, which has reached Rs2.9 trillion in the gas sector.

The government also aims to utilise the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess (GIDC) funds currently held by the Finance Division. Officials are reviewing options to offload inter-corporate debt partly in cash while the rest would be adjusted through book entries, similar to the approach used by former

finance minister Ishaq Dar in 2013 to clear circular debt in the power sector.

The finance ministry, following IMF directives, has refused to allocate budgetary subsidies for the upcoming fiscal year to offset the Rs260 billion loss from the non-recovery of RLNG diversions to domestic consumers. The Petroleum Division has now been tasked with proposing practical solutions to address the circular debt issue.

According to officials, the revenue collected through the petroleum levy is currently used for budget deficit financing by the Finance Division. If the levy is increased by Rs20 per litre, the additional funds could potentially be utilised to pay down the circular debt in the gas sector.

But the government would need to pass a new act through the National Assembly to establish a special levy specifically for retiring the circular debt in the gas industry, the officials added.

SPARC hails SIFC for boosting Pakistan's economy through tobacco tax hike

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) hailed the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and previous work on investing in better economic decisions, and tobacco topped the list when it came to increasing taxes on non-essential items for boosting the 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 percent.

Malik Imran Ahmad country head Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) said, "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 15-29 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." "Revenue from this proposed tax increase will generate billions of rupees for the national exchequer and can then be allocated to various sectors like healthcare, education or infrastructure, which can indirectly contribute to economic growth."

"Tobacco is deadly and tobacco-related illnesses are a significant burden on healthcare systems, annually taking lives of around 166,000 people in Pakistan. So reducing tobacco consumption can alleviate some of this burden, freeing up resources for other areas of healthcare," he added.

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Govt institutions default on electricity bills worth billions

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a shocking revelations, various government institutions turned out to be have unpaid dues of Rs 71.16 billion in terms of electricity bills.

According to the spokesperson of the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), the Azad Kashmir government has tops the list with Rs 54.86 billion in outstanding electricity bills.

Other notable institutions in the unpaid dues list include the Capital Development Authority (CDA) with outstanding dues amounting to Rs

4.63 billion, followed by the Pakistan Secretariat and Cabinet Secretariat with unpaid dues of Rs 1.65 billion and 11.6 million respectively.

Similarly, the federal government-run hospitals and the Ministry of Home Affairs have failed to fulfill their financial obligations of Rs. 279 million and Rs.14.3 million in electricity bills respectively.

The list of financial obligators' extends to various government entities, including the Railways with Rs 295 million, Punjab Police with Rs 13.50 million, and Parliament Lodges with Rs 118 million in account of unpaid electricity bills.

AGPR intensifies efforts amid fiscal year-end surge

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a concerted effort to streamline financial operations as the fiscal year draws to a close, the Accountant General Pakistan Revenue (AGPR) undertook a comprehensive visit to evaluate and enhance the efficacy of ongoing processes. The heightened volume and urgency of financial transactions have necessitated a proactive approach to ensure seamless and timely service delivery.

Recognizing the critical juncture, the AGPR has mandated extended office hours, including operations on Saturdays. This decision aims to facilitate government offices and the public, thereby optimizing the department's capacity to manage the increased workload effectively.

During the visit, the AGPR underscored the dual imperatives of meticulous scrutiny and expeditious service. Emphasizing the importance of striking a balance, the AGPR called for a proficient approach that neither compromises on the rigor of financial checks nor delays the transactional processes.



The directive to remain operational over the weekends reflects the AGPR's commitment to upholding the highest standards of financial governance while ensuring that the urgency of year-end transactions is adeptly handled. This initiative is expected to significantly alleviate the pressure on financial operations, providing a robust framework for concluding the fiscal year on a positive note.

Foreign investment coming back to Pakistan under PM's leadership: Amir Muqam

Adam Khan Wazir

SWAT: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs Engr Amir Muqam here on Sunday said that huge foreign investment had again started coming to Pakistan due to successful policies of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Government that had restored confidence of the international investors.

Addressing party workers here at Malam Jabba, the federal minister said that important MoUs and agreements were signed during the successful visit of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to the brotherly country of China that would largely benefit the people of Pakistan.

Engr Amir Muqam said that investments were also coming from brotherly Islamic countries including



Saudi Arabia and UAE which strongly reflected investors confidence in the economic and foreign policies of Shehbaz Sharif Govt. He said that vast opportunities for investment were existed in agriculture, mines and mineral, tourism and Information Technology in Pakistan especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Owing to the prudent economic, fiscal and trade policies of PML-N Govt, he said that prices of daily use commodities were significantly decreased and the value of rupee against dollar stabilized.

Saudi Authority unveils...

Continued from Page 1

them to the landmarks of the two holy mosques, offering educational content to deepen religious understanding and enhance the spiritual and emotional connection to the two holy mosques.

The authority has mobilized 5,138 workers to ensure the daily cleaning and disinfection of the Grand Mosque, under the supervision of 400 employees operating 24 hours a day. This is carried out with the help of 4,000 pieces of modern equipment and machinery.

Ex-Sindh governor...

Continued from Page 1

of the Pakistan Democratic Movement's government and other issues. "I Conveyed my differences to the party leadership long ago."

The former Sindh governor said

currently he has not decided to join any political party and will make a decision regarding this in the near future.

Muhammad Zubair said PML-N deviated from its "Vote Ko Izzat Do" slogan.

Budget 2024: Govt decides to...

Continued from Page 1

of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and AIDS. Meanwhile, funds were not earmarked for the ongoing project to prevent blindness in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The proposed budget includes: Rs300m for the ongoing IDSR program Rs400m for the 200-bed emergency center in PIMS

Rs30m for the 200-bed gynae center in Rawalpindi

Rs100m for the community health center in Budhana Kalan

Rs100m for the community health center in Bara Imam Islamabad

Rs500m for the upgradation of Jinnah Hospital Islamabad

Rs100m for the Ghurrah Shaahin Zocha Bacha Center

Rs290m for the establishment of a disease control center in Islamabad