



US president's son Hunter Biden found guilty ahead of US elections

US President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden has been found guilty on all three counts against him by a 12-member jury in Wilmington, Delaware, federal court of lying about his drug use to illegally buy a gun. He became the first child of a sitting US president to be convicted of a crime, reported France 24.



Deputy PM Dar calls for an embargo on military supplies to Israel

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday called upon for an embargo on all the military supplies and sales to Israel, besides proposing to consider the deployment of an impartial international force for the protection of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank. In a statement at the High-Level Conference on Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza in Amman, Jordan, the deputy PM... (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Economic Survey 2023-24

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb presenting a copy of Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-2024 to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif prior to its official launch on June 11, 2024.



Photo: PID

President Zardari, PM Shehbaz discuss public relief in upcoming annual budget

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday met with President Asif Ali Zardari where they discussed the country's overall economic situation with a particular focus on extending relief to the people in the upcoming annual budget 2024-25.



assured the prime minister of his support for the national development and achievement of fiscal targets.

Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal also attended the meeting, according to a President House press release.

Prime Minister Shehbaz and President Zardari also deliberated on the development projects to be proposed in the next budget.

President Zardari emphasised that the interests of the low-income and middle class should be protected in the annual budget. He also

The prime minister apprised the president of his recent five-day visit to China.

Economic Survey 2023-24

Pakistan registers 2.38pc GDP growth

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan recorded a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 2.38 percent, up from the envisaged target of 2pc as Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb unveiled the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-24, A.

Aurangzeb said that despite challenges, the country had made significant progress in achieving macroeconomic stability, with a remarkable 30 percent growth in revenue collection, a reduced current account deficit, reduction in inflation and a stable currency. The finance minister said that this situation indicated a remarkable turnaround from a precarious economic situation, characterized by a 0.2 percent GDP contraction, 29 percent rupee depreciation, and shrinking foreign exchange reserves, which had declined to just two weeks' worth of import cover.

He said that the agriculture, dairy, and livestock sectors are expected to remain a key driver of growth in the years to come. The survey comes ahead of the federal budget 2024-25, slated to be presented on June 12 (Wednesday).

Growth and Investment
The finance ministry in its survey report maintained that the investment-to-GDP ratio stood at 13.14 percent in FY2024 compared to 14.13 percent in FY2023 mainly due to 'contractionary macroeconomic policies and political uncertainty'.

It added that the real GDP posted a growth of 2.38 percent in FY2024. The prudent policy management and the resumption of inflows from multilateral and bilateral partners and the gradual economic recovery in the major trading partners turned the negative growth in FY2023 to positive growth in FY2024.

The 'robust growth' in the agriculture sector, the highest in the last 19 years emerged as the key driver of economic growth in FY2024. The prolonged inflationary impact is gradually fading in FY2024. The inflation has been trending downward steadily since the third quarter of FY2024.

Agriculture
The Economic Survey of Pakistan read that the agriculture sector in Pakistan witnessed robust growth in FY2024, with an overall increase of 6.25 percent. The rise in production of important crops (16.82%) is attributed to the production of cotton (108.2%, 10.22 million bales compared to 4.91 million bales), rice (34.8%, 9.87 million tonnes compared to 7.32 million tonnes), and wheat (11.6%, 31.44

million tonnes from 28.16 million tonnes). However, sugarcane and maize declined by 0.4 percent and 10.4 percent, respectively, which can be partially attributed to the crop switching.

As such, the production of both crops is largely comparable, with sugarcane standing at 87.64 million tonnes against 87.98 million tonnes and maize at 9.85 million tonnes compared to 10.99 million tonnes. Other crops have also shown a growth of 0.90 percent as compared to the contraction of 0.92 percent last year because of growth in fruits (8.40%), vegetables (5.77%) and pulses (1.45%). Cotton ginning, having a share of 1.34 percent in the agriculture sector and 0.32 percent in GDP, grew by 47.23 percent on the back of high growth in cotton production.

China visit successful as high-powered Chinese delegation to visit Pakistan soon: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that his recent five-day visit to China from June 4-8 remained successful as a high-powered Chinese delegation would visit Pakistan soon.



"I can say unequivocally that the visit ended with a positive note. During the conversation with the Chinese ambassador at the banquet hosted by the Communist Party Secretary during my visit to Shanxi province, I got a deep feeling that the visit reminded very successful," Prime Minister Shehbaz remarked while appraising the cabinet members of his visit. The prime minister thanked all of his cabinet members particularly Ishaq Dar, Ahsan Iqbal, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Dr Musaddik Malik and Shaza

India wants to solve 'issue of cross-border terrorism' with Pakistan: FM Jaishankar

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar on Tuesday said his country wanted to "find a solution to the issue of years-old cross-border terrorism" with Pakistan.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was sworn in on Sunday for a record-equaling third term at a grand ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the president's palace in New Delhi, attended by leaders of seven regional countries, underlining the government's "neighbourhood first" policy. But relations and problems with China and Pakistan were different, Jaishankar told reporters, after assuming charge for a second straight term. "With Pakistan, we would want to find a solution to the issue of years-old cross-border terrorism. That cannot be the policy of a good neighbour," Jaishankar said. On Monday, leaders of the two countries engaged in diplomacy via X. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as well as his elder brother and former prime minister Nawaz congratulated Modi, in what was Pakistan's first response to the election results from across the border. The exchange was initiated by PM Shehbaz, who extended a succinct congratulatory message on X, saying: "Congratulations to @narendramodi on taking oath as the Prime Minister of India." His brief message was reminiscent of a similar note that PM Modi had sent to him in March. PM Modi responded with a simple acknowledgement: "Thank you @cmshshbaz for your good wishes." The exchange between the leaders expanded with a more detailed message from Nawaz Sharif, who heads the ruling PML-N and had also attended PM Modi's first inauguration in 2014. In response to Nawaz's desire for

collective peace in South Asia, Modi reiterated India's commitment to peace but linked it to a strong stance on security, especially in the context of Delhi's allegations of cross-border terrorism.

In a notable diplomatic snub, PM Shehbaz was conspicuously absent from the list of regional leaders invited to attend Modi's oath-taking ceremony on Sunday, highlighting the lingering chill in relations between the two countries. On ties with China, Jaishankar said India will focus on finding solutions to the border issues with China that have long strained ties between the neighbouring countries. "With regards to China there are still some issues at the border and our focus will be on how to solve them," he said. India and China share a 3,800-kilometre border — much of it poorly demarcated — over which the nuclear-armed nations also fought a war in 1962.

They have engaged in a military standoff since July 2020 when at least 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese troops were killed in the worst clashes in five decades.

Pakistan won't issue passports to citizens getting asylum

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will not issue passports to its citizens who will get asylum in other countries, citing the interior ministry circular. The Ministry of Interior in a letter has said that all those Pakistani citizens who will get asylum in other countries, on whatever basis, would not be issued Pakistani passports. The decision has been taken citing the national security



en terrorists were successfully neutralized & sent to hell while multiple terrorist hide-outs were also busted. Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as the security forces are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Imran Khan ready to break the ice, calls for dialogue

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan has expressed his readiness to forgive the events that have transpired and called for moving forward through dialogue.



"Imran Khan has said that he is willing to forgive and the path of dialogue should be opened," PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan told reporters outside the Adiala Jail on Tuesday. But the party chairman explicitly did not mention whether the three major political parties — PPP, PML-N, and MQM-P — would be approached as the PTI claims

that such parties are the "beneficiaries of the stolen mandate". The former ruling party has long maintained that it would hold talks with the establishment as the power lies there. When journalist Munizae Jahangir told PTI spokesperson Rauf Hasan that the PTI was looking at the judiciary while pinning hope on another institution and closing the doors on political parties, the latter said: "We have hope from

Continued on Page 7

PM Anwar ul Haq announces Rs10 billion social protection fund for Haveli

Bureau Report

FORWARD KAUTA: Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the people of the state have been rendering sacrifices for decades and now the time has come to provide relief to them. The AJK premier made these remarks while addressing a reception hosted in his honour by Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore here today. Speaking on the occasion, the PM Haq said that all the problems of the Haveli will be solved on a priority basis. "Haveli will become a model district", he said. He said that social protection fund worth 10 billion rupees has been established under which financial assistance would be provided to the poor and economically less-privileged people including senior citizens, widows, orphans and transgenders. The PM said the government would provide interest-free loans to skilled and talented women and men so that they can start their business.

On the occasion, the PM Haq,

recalled the former AJK premier Mumtaz Hussain Rathore's significant contribution and selfless services to the state. He also hailed Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore for his vibrant role in the region's politics. He thanked the people of Haveli for according him a warm welcome. The AJK premier also lauded the role of Pakistan army in defending the country. The reception ceremony was also addressed by Local Government and Rural Development Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and others. The PM was accompanied by government ministers including Mian Waheed, Sardar Javed Ayub, Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, Sardar Amir Altaf, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed and others.

Prime Minister Chaudhry Azad Kashmir Anwar ul Haq has said that the government would spare no efforts in solving people's problems at their doorsteps. The PM made these assertions while addressing a reception hosted in his honour by senior PPP leader Sardar Amjad Yusuf here today. Speaking on the occasion, prime minister



Haq said that taxpayers' money would be spent on the welfare of the citizens of the state. Terming corruption as the biggest evil, he said, the government shall not tolerate corruption at any cost. The PM said that his Abbaspur

visit was meant to listen to the public grievances directly and to resolve their problems.

The PM said that he believes not in words but deeds. Appreciating Amjad Yusuf for his urge to develop the area,

the PM said, "This is the hallmark of a genuine political worker that he always thinks and works for the betterment of people of his area, regardless of their party affiliation". The PM said that besides providing cheap electricity the

government was trying to bring essential food commodities including flour within the reach of the poor. Despite limited resources, the PM said that the government was working day and night to provide maximum relief to the people. "AJK being a base camp, cannot afford any kind of chaos or uncertainty", the PM said, adding that disruption of law and order in the state would be tantamount to harming the cause of Kashmir. He said that resolving problems of people of Poonch division was the incumbent government's top priority. The PM, on the occasion, was accompanied by government ministers including Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, Ansar Abdali, Aamir Altaf, Javed Badhanvi, Mian Waheed, Javed Ayub, Pir Syed Mazhar Saeed Shah and others. The ceremony was also addressed by, Government Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and Sardar Amjad Yusuf. Earlier, on his arrival to Abbaspur, Prime Minister Haq was given a rousing reception by Sardar Amjad Yusuf and his party workers.

Relief for common man

ISLAMABAD: Citizens shopping for daily items at Federal Capital. It should be noted that the federal budget is being presented today.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference announces Pakistan rally

Abdul Majeed Tahir

GHAZIABAD: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference under the auspices of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference on June 13, Kashmir will become Pakistan review meeting was held in Dhirkot workers' Muslim Conference Constituency That on June 13, Kashmir will be formed in Poonch Division, the Pakistan rally will be a history-making rally. Pakistan is the destination and better future of Kashmiris. The Muslim Conference cannot make any kind of compromise on the ideology of Pakistan. On June 13, the workers of the Muslim Conference should organize a recitation after



the Fajr prayer. They should perform Navafil while leaving their homes. Pakistan and Kashmir are inseparable and weak to the Muslim Conference. Experienced people have seen with their own eyes that the ideological chaos within the state of Jammu and

Kashmir can not only weaken Pakistan, but the affairs of the state are also going to the wrong side. In the meeting, all the members of the Union Council and the office-bearers, except women. A large number of people participated. Chairman Youth Wing

Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Major Retired Nasrullah Khan, members of District Council, MSF Youth Wing including all members participated in the ceremony. President Muslim Conference thanked all the supporters including other political parties.

Saraiki leaders call for establishment of provincial secretariat in upcoming budget

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Funds should be allocated for the establishment of provincial secretariat in the budget and measures should be announced for the province, mega project should be announced to end deprivation. There will be protests if Saraiki Wasib does not get a share in the federal and provincial budgets according to the population. These views were expressed by Zahoor Dharja, chairman of Saraykistan National Council, Masihullah Khan Jampuri, head of Thinker Forum, and Prof. Parvez Qadir Khan, founder admin of Saraiki Wikipedia, in the press. What happened during the briefing? On this occasion, Malik Zubair Vance, and Saraiki singer Sobia Malik were present. Saraiki leaders said that funds should be allocated for the provincial secretariat in the upcoming budget and the offices of the new province should be established by settling a new city in Thal next to Head



Muhammad Wala. He said that there is a need to implement the declaration of the All-Parties Province of Saraykistan Conference. In the conference, Shahana Shani, head of Khawaja Sarai Association, had announced to come to the streets for the province after Eid. We are with them, Zahoor Dharja, said that Tehreek-e-Insaaf's Aun Abbas Bapi has presented a bill for a province consisting of three divisions in the Senate. It is the work of

the Provincial Commission to decide the name of the province and the boundaries of the province.

The formula was, despite killing the leadership of Tehreek-e-Insaaf, Bajwa is still following the doctrine, said that Senate Chairman Makhdoom Yusuf Raza Gilani said on the occasion of Aun Abbas Bapi's bill that we had passed Kabul province from the Senate, the matter could not proceed due to lack of

majority in the National Assembly. We say that now there is a coalition government of PML-N and People's Party, establish a provincial commission without delay. He said that our demand is also that President Asif Ali Zardari should issue an ordinance for the province of Saraykistan and later get its approval from the assembly. Masihullah Jampuri said that the deprivation of Wasib has reached its extreme. Wasib should be given three tax-free industrial zones, Wasib needs a dozen cadet colleges and Wasib needs half a dozen universities besides motorways and farm-to-market roads. In the budget, money should be allocated for the insurance of Saraiki Wasib crops, the wheat farmers should be compensated for the loss of crores. Prof. Parvaiz Qadir Khan said that steps should be taken for Saraiki education in Wasib, posts of Saraiki lecturers should be given in colleges, Niham and Dham Saraiki syllabus is approved.

International organization addresses lady health workers on fortification of Vitamin A & D

Qayoom Sarohi

KARACHI: An awareness session was organized by the international organization, Nutrition International for the lady health workers/health care providers/community mid wives at Koolhi institute of nursing, District Malir-Karachi. The major purpose of this seminar was to orient lady health workers on the importance of fortification of Vitamin A & D in edible oil/ghee, iron, folic acid, calcium, and iodine for better health and fulfilling the requirement of micro nutrient deficiencies.

Zonal Manager of Nutrition International Mr. Zain Ul Abdin & Mr. Saeed Ahmed shared that the shortage of vitamin A and D in the country is a matter of great concern. To fulfill micro nutrient deficiencies, mill owners have been bound by law in the country for the fortification of vitamin A & D. As per that law no mill will produce edible oil and ghee without fortifying required vitamins. Sindh Food Authority will take strict actions against the mill owners not following the fortification law.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Zain Ul Abdin, Zonal Manager for Karachi shared that lack of Vitamin A & D causes many diseases related to eye and bone weaknesses. For this, during the public awareness sessions, women and men should be aware that open oil should not be used at all and there is a need to encourage the consumption of fortified edible oil which is necessary for the health. Before buying oil see the mark on packing for better health.

Traders Association declares businessman dost scheme as businessman-killing scheme



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Central Organization of Trade Unions of Pakistan has announced a nationwide protest movement for not getting relief in the budget and has declared the businessman dost scheme as a businessman-killing scheme. Chairman Pakistan Central Traders Association Khawaja Salman Siddiqui Said There is still time to negotiate with the Central Traders Organization, the only representative of more than 8 million small traders, and to implement the proposals given to the Finance Minister. And don't throw dust in the eyes of the traders. Fraudulent markets. A person from the same organization is ready to strangle the throats of the traders by becoming the convener of the trader friendly scheme and government offices and government vehicles in 6 major cities in the name of trader friendly scheme. is taking privileges and the other is deceiving the business community by holding press conferences against the businessman-friendly scheme. Central President of Pakistan Traders Association Khawaja Salman Siddiqui, Syed Jafar Ali Shah, Multan President Khalid Mehmood Qureshi, South Punjab Chairman Javed Akhtar Khan, Rawliqat Ali, Tanveer Hussain Langah, Syed Kifayat Hussain, Muhammad Ejaz, Malik Muzmal Khakhi, Kamran Bhatta, Sheikh Altaf, Chaudhry Abdul Manan Gondal, Khawaja Anees, Malik Qaiser Kamboh, Sheikh Nadeem, Sheikh Faisal Mehmood, Shahid Bhatta, Younis Qureshi and others during the press conference. Businessmen are willing to pay taxes and in this regard we have negotiated with every government for the last 36 years to improve the tax system so that the country's economy is stable while more than 22 thousand corrupt officers and officials in FBR are made businessmen. Instead of imposing on the community, the government should directly negotiate with the business community.

Cheezious launches Special Kitchen Tour Series to Commemorate World Food Safety Day 2024

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On World Food Safety Day Cheezious announced the launch of "Special Kitchen Tour Series." This initiative is designed to provide an exclusive, behind-the-scenes look at our kitchen facilities, showcase the stringent Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) we follow, and highlight the extensive measures we take to maintain and elevate food safety standards.

As part of this, Cheezious planned a series of visits with various esteemed institutions to demonstrate our commitment to food safety and share best practices with the community. The teams of Punjab Government Technical Training Institute for Women, School of Public Health, Food Authorities & College of Tourism & Hotel Management (COTHM) visited our Islamabad & Lahore Cheezious Branches. Head of Marketing Cheezious Zohaib Hassan said that "As a brand deeply committed to food safety and quality, we announced our 'Special Kitchen Tour Series' in honor of World Food Safety Day. This initiative allows us to transparently share our rigorous standards and practices with our community and stakeholders. We believe that by opening our doors and showcasing our dedication to excellence, we can inspire confidence and trust in our brand". He further stated that, At Cheezious, we understand the importance of food safety and the vital role it plays in ensuring the well-being of our customers. Our "Special Kitchen Tour Series" is a testament to our ongoing efforts to uphold the highest standards in food safety and hygiene.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings
Fajr3:14 am
Zohr12:07 pm
Asr5:08 pm
Maghrib7:18 pm
Isha9:02 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ5556311-4
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883

Robbers strike same pharmacy twice in Attock

By **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Armed bandits equipped with different weapons robbed a pharmacy twice within 24 hours in densely populated area adjacent to district headquarters hospital (DHQ) located on Attock- Kamra in the limits of Attock Police station on Tuesday. Police sources said that the armed bandits equipped with different weapons entered in to a pharmacy located opposite DHQ hospital in guise of customers in early hours of Tuesday and made the customers and pharmacy staff hostage on gun point and fled with looted booty including cash and cell phones successfully. A group of outlaws again strike in day time in the same pharmacy and looted cash and cell phones in the same style. The Attock chemists and druggists expressed their concern over lawlessness in the city especially targeting the pharmacy and medical stores by the armed bandits and urged regional Police officer (RPO) Rawalpindi to take stock of the situation. They were of the view that police failed to trace the culprits despite provision of CCTV footages of the outlaws to them.

'Caught in the Crossfire: The Inside Story of Pakistan's Secret Services' International Release

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Authored by Brigadier (Retd) Naseem Akhtar Khan, the book "Caught in the Crossfire-The Inside Story of Pakistan's Secret Services" is being internationally released on 31st July 2024. Published through a renowned International Publisher Pen and Sword, UK, the book represents an insight into Pakistan's national security hypothesis from the perspective of an insider who has been part of its first line of defence, as an intelligence operative during past few eventful decades in the country's history.

The author believes that all the international strategic maneuverings in the region mostly rely on information that

is entirely fabricated and portrayed by Pakistan's adversaries to harm its interests. In his opinion, knowing a realistic picture of Pakistan and the Pakistan army in its true perspective, is important not only for people inside the country but also for the international community so that they may pursue their relationships and cooperation in the region based on ground realities.

He thought of writing this book, to share his personal experiences in the field of security and counterintelligence operations during the last four decades, providing virtuous material for analysts to ponder history through an authentic premise and predict futuristic security scenarios based on a realistic perspective.

The story of the power play in South

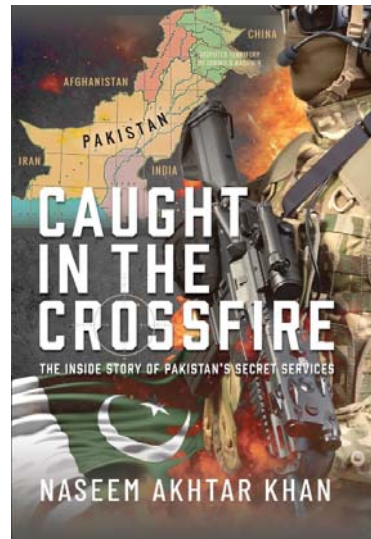
Asia by the regional and international power brokers will be a fruitful read for the strategists to contemplate their future journey through the changing world order more realistically.

To present his arguments with facts and figures in a cohesive manner, the author has presented the narrative in shape of his lifelong experiences suitably interrelated, taking full measures of the individuals, institutions and the organizations that made a strong impression on his life. During the process, an effort has been made to take the readers along the same curve he followed so that they can clearly grasp the dynamics that drive the life of a Pakistani soldier. The book concludes with some thought-provoking arguments for the people to contem-

plate.

The Author, Brigadier Naseem's association with Pakistan Army and its premier intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), spreads over four decades (1969-2010). Besides full-time regimental soldiering in an elite Self-Propelled Artillery regiment of Pakistan army, he served with ISI for more than two decades. His career in the army and intelligence grew side by side all through these years, giving him ample opportunities to experience the best in both the fields during peace as well as in combat operations.

The pre-orders for this book are being accepted at several online platforms including publishers' own website and Amazon amongst others.



Noteworthy

ISLAMABAD: Children unaware of the Day against Child Labour working hard in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Water Shortage Haunts Sujawal's Coastal Population

By **Kamran Khamiso Khwaja**

SUJAWAL: For the past two years, the coastal population of Sujawal district has been plagued by acute water scarcity, primarily due to the irrigation department's slackness and the contractor's failure to complete the lining of the Sher Khana water channel. As a result, 20 dehs in Taluka Jati, Sujawal, have been facing a drought-like situation, with water supply from the main channel suspended for the past two years.

Local residents attribute the delay to the contractor's indifferent attitude and subpar work by laborers engaged in the World Bank-funded project. The concrete lining of the main water channel, Sherkhana Mori, which supplies water to over 100 villages in the coastal areas of Sujawal, has been delayed due to the contractor's lack of effort and



defective work.

The ongoing water scarcity has forced hundreds of villagers to migrate to urban areas in search of better livelihoods, as their agricultural land has become barren due to the persistent shortage of irrigation water. Villagers from the affected areas, like Wali Muhammad Temro, have revealed that they

have not received sufficient water to irrigate their land for the past two years, making it impossible to cultivate seasonal crops like paddy and vegetables.

Pir Bux Dandal, a cattle owner, has lost some of his livestock and has been forced to move to fertile areas in search of greenery and water.

According to social analyst and researcher Haji Zahid Ishaque Sommo, the coastal region has faced water scarcity for over a decade, but the situation has intensified in the past two years due to the incomplete lining of the Sher Khana water channel, which plays a crucial role in fulfilling the needs of the massive coastal population.

Mehfil Sher Khawani held at PAC



By **City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: A poetry recital event was organized at the Punjab Arts Council in Rawalpindi. The special guest of the event was Sajjad Hussain, Director of the Arts Council. The poets who showcased their talents included Raja Nazak Mahmood, Raja Tasawwur Mahmood, Chaudhry Zulfiqar, Tariq Mubeen, Muhammad Rehan Tahir, Muhammad Zaheer, Muhammad Rasheed, Raja Shoaib Khalid, Aqeel Mahmood, and Hafiz Arsalan. Director of the Arts Council, Sajjad Hussain, stated that poetry recitation is a hallmark of the Pothohar region. The main purpose of such events is to promote poetry and literature. These gatherings enhance literary taste and bring people closer to literature. Poetry recitation helps preserve language and culture. The themes of Pothohari poetry recitation are very diverse, including love, natural landscapes, rural life, social issues, and epic tales. Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman mentioned that the platform of the Arts Council is always available for the promotion of art, culture, and literature. Pothohari poetry recitation is an enduring tradition that is an important part of the cultural and literary life of the people of Pothohar.

Shopkeeper arrested for molesting, filming naked boy

By **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: A shopkeeper was arrested for molesting and filming naked a 12 years old boy in Kamra village in the limits of Attock Saddar Police station on Tuesday. Amir Shahzad - a native of mohallah Kassran has reported to police that he works as a painter and his 12 years old nephew who is student of grade 7 works as helper after his school timing. He added that Shoaib Ahmed who also runs a shop near him took his nephew to his shop where he sexually assaulted him and also filmed him naked during assault. Police after medical examination of the victim at district headquarters hospital which has confirmed assault registered a case against the suspect and launched further investigation.

One killed, other injured in target killing case in Fatehjang

By **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: A petrol pump owner was shot dead and his assistant was injured in day broad light target killing case in the limits of Fatehjang Police station on Tuesday. Police sources said that Major (retired) Sher Ali who runs a petrol pump was sitting along with his assistant Muhammad Sajid was sitting at his petrol pump located in Kohat road when two masked persons riding on a motorcycle entered in to his office and showered bullets over them resultantly Mr Ali was died on the spot while Sajid was injured critically. The injured and dead was shifted by rescue 1122 to tehsil headquarters hospital Fatehjang. Police collected the evidences and CCTV footage from the crime scene and launched further investigation.

NHA successfully resolves complicated issues of Peshawar Northern Bypass Project

By **City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Over the past three years, National Highway Authority (NHA) has made remarkable strides in addressing and resolving complex issues related to the Peshawar Northern Bypass project. These accomplishments represent significant progress in enhancing the region's infrastructure, reducing traffic congestion, and promoting economic growth.

One of the major challenges resolved was the issue of land possession in Package-2 and 3A. NHA effectively coordinated with district government officials to address these issues, facilitating smoother project execution. This coordination ensured that land in Mouza Charpariza, Karniza, Daag, Khappa, and Patwar Payan under Package-2 was fully awarded and handed over to the contractor. Similarly, land in Mouza Badezai for Package-3A was awarded and handed over in August 2023, achieving complete land possession for the contractor. NHA also secured approval for the third revised PC-I from the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on December 11, 2023. This revision, required due to enhancements in land and cost components, highlights NHA's commitment to adapting to evolving project needs.

The Peshawar Northern Bypass project offers numerous benefits. It provides an alternative route for through traffic from N-5 and M-1, benefiting localities such as Jamrud, Hayatabad, Landikotal, Torkham, and Afghanistan. Approximately 35% of city traffic, including nearly all heavy through traffic from N-5 and M-1, will be diverted, significantly reducing congestion on major roads like Khyber Road. This diversion will also lead to substantial reductions in vehicle operating costs, travel times, and pollution, promoting a healthier environment.

IIUI President Inaugurates Science Technology & Business Space at new campus

By **City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi inaugurated the Science Technology & Business Space (STBS) at the new campus of the International Islamic University (IIUI) on Tuesday.

The event was attended by key IIUI officials including Vice President Administration & Finance/Academics, Prof. Dr. Abdul Raheman, Vice President Research and Enterprise, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed, Director Business Incubation Centre, Engr. Ahsan Mirza, Incharge Female Campus, Dr. Summiya Chughtai, and Director ORIC, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Amir.

Vice President Research & Enterprise, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed, explained that the STBS aims to provide job and internship opportunities and stimulate economic activities through collaborative projects between academia and industry/market place.



He noted that this initiative is part of the strategic plan introduced by the IIUI President to advance the university's future goals and progress. He added that by integrating start-ups,

faculty spin-offs, and corporate sector presence in the STBS, the university aims to create a robust environment for research, innovation, collaboration and commercialization which is

crucial for national economic growth and development.

STBS, spanning over two floors with a coverage area of 20,000 sq ft, is a pilot project for IIUI's Science, Technology and Business Park. STBS was conceived and developed by the Vice President (Research & Enterprise) as part of the University's enterprise drive with the support of the University's Business Incubation Centre.

On the occasion, Director Business Incubation Centre, Engr. Ahsan Mirza, who is also appointed as first Director of STBS briefed the IIUI President about the industrial front offices, business incubation enterprises and start-ups within the STBS. He discussed how the STBS will enhance knowledge-based activities in the University. Engr. Mirza also mentioned that the STBS is one of the three technology parks established in universities in Islamabad.

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Army school of music hosts soiree

Pakistan Army School of Music hosted a two days' soiree on 5-6 June 2024, in which scholars, artistes, musicians, vocalists, composers, music directors and enthusiasts including students of various genre of music were invited. Located in the verdant hills of Abbottabad, the event was the first of its kind in Pakistan and enabled the participants to get a taste of the Army's hospitality, mingle with some of the great names in contemporary musical culture and learn of the contributions of the school. Established in 1952, the Pakistan Army School of Music was a brainchild of the indomitable soldier cum diplomat Lieutenant General Sahibzada Yaqoob Khan. It was initially operated in Cherat under Captain Donald Keeling's administration. Later, it moved to Lahore and, in 1956, found its permanent home in Abbottabad.

The Pakistan Army School of Music was established with the primary objective of providing musical training to officers, soldiers from the Army, Air Force, Navy and students from friendly Allied nations. Annually, it trains up to 640 students. Over the past 60 years, the school has grown significantly and is now renowned as an internationally acclaimed music institution. Its high standards, discipline and code of conduct contribute to producing exceptional musicians. After rigorous selection, students pursue courses lasting from five months to nearly two years, each faculty led by a qualified and experienced staff.

Army School of Music has a couple of notable alumni of the notable institution, who have made significant contributions to the world of music. One of them is Lieutenant Colonel Abdul Wahab Khan, who was the first Pakistani conductor to lead the Tri-services band in the International Music Festival (IMMF) at Moscow, Russia. Lieutenant General Valery Khalilov (who is the chief of the military band service, chief military conductor of the Russian orchestra since 2002 and a gifted music composer) highly praised Pakistan's band's performance in press conferences and TV interviews as well as on the radio.

In 1992 a group of participants from the Army School of Music performed in Turkey with their celebrated Mehtar band. In 1995 they performed in China. In 2000 they performed in Karachi when IDEAS (International Defence Exhibition and Seminar) was held for the first time. In 2006 they performed at the birthday ceremony of the Sultan of Brunei. In the same year they participated for the first time in the Berlin Music Festival. While in 2007 they took part in Malaysia's 50th Independence celebration.

On a separate note, it is a notable fact that the Pakistan Desert Rangers formed their unique band in 2014, making it the country's first of its kind. Their debut performance during Pakistan's National Day parade on March 23rd in Islamabad left the audience awestruck. The band's eye-catching uniforms, bagpipes and decorative neck and leg bands worn by the camels (all crafted in Sialkot) were extraordinary. Stationed at Moj Garh (100 km east of Bahawalpur), the band operates from an ancient fort. The Army has established a large farm for their 170 camels, where a dedicated team of handlers, veterinary doctors and medics ensures their care and training.

Balancing on the camels' humps while playing bagpipes during marches posed a challenge, but Band Major and Sub-Inspector Muhammad Iqbal successfully completed the training. Some camels are even trained for acrobatic acts, including forming pyramids with riders across three camels. Pakistan now boasts the second camel-mounted military bagpipe band globally, following the Sultan of Oman's Royal Cavalry Band. To achieve international recognition, they aspire to receive specialized training from the Army School of Music.

The theme of the National Music Conference 2024 was "Harmony in Heritage: Unveiling the Musical Tapestry of Pakistan." Various aspects were discussed by the participants including 'Music as a Proponent of Sustainable Peace; National Signature of Defence; and Symbol of Unity'. Presentations on the 'History of Military Music and Significance of Music During War' enriched the experience of the guests. Panel discussion on 'Music as a Profession in Pakistan Music Industry' brought out thought provoking aspects by Sohail Javed, Shuja Haider, Ahmad Jahanzeb, Wajahat Hassan Khan, Imran EMU, Abdullah Badini, Sitar Maestro Ustad Nafees Ahmad Khan and renowned drama and film producer Sarmad Khosat. Interludes by the Army School of Music Band and Drum Solo enthralled the participants.

Visitors got a glimpse of the Abbot Music Studio, which is the only sound facility in Pakistan that offers state-of-the-art technical support as well as an excellent environment that enables artistes to create, develop and concep-

tualize their masterpieces in the peaceful surrounding of whispering Pine trees. The grand finale was a musical concert in which the country's top vocalists and musical instrument players mesmerized the audience. This scribe was invited to speak on the 'Impact of martial songs in motivating fighting forces'. I commenced my talk with the song Mujahadeen e Aflak "Shaheed ki Jo maunt hai wo qaum ki hayat hai..."

The idea behind the production of this indomitable song was highlighted: how Air Chief Marshal Hakimullah, who was the Air Chief, in 1989, tasked me to search for this powerful poem and produce a powerful video, which would motivate the youth of Pakistan to join PAF and the personnel serving in the fighting force to be ready for the supreme sacrifice of their lives for the defence of Pakistan. Searching through various libraries for the epic poem by Abdul Majeed Salik in an era where internet browsing facility did not exist, personifying the poem to PAF, picking a suitable vocalist to render the song in a suitable manner was an uphill task. Alamgir, who was selected to sing the lyrics, recorded it in California and the song was the first digitally recorded audio in Pakistan. Shooting thrilling visuals in a time period, when animation and computer gimmickry did not exist, was a painstaking process and every shot had to be recorded in real-time. The audience, mostly the youth of Pakistan, were fascinated to learn the background of this thirty-five years old epic. Kudos are due for the Army School of Music for hosting a unique soiree.

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Sultan M Hali

On Monday, the United States-drafted text urged Hamas to accept a ceasefire proposal announced on May 31 by President Biden that has already been accepted by Israel, according to the White House.

The text urges both parties to fully implement the terms of the proposal "without delay and without condition". It was adopted by a large majority with 14 votes in favour, and Russia abstaining - choosing not to exercise its veto power.

Gaza must open

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Tuesday called for opening all available routes into Gaza to let humanitarian aid through to the hapless people trapped in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

Speaking in Jordan at an international conference prompted by the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, the UN chief insisted that after more than eight months of intense hostilities, "the horror must stop".

In this regard, he said a comprehensive ceasefire in Gaza linked to the release of all remaining hostages could not come too soon, as he welcomed the Security Council resolution adopted a day earlier seeking an end to the war there. "And I call on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law. This includes facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid both into and inside Gaza, as they have committed. All available routes into Gaza must be operational - and the land routes are absolutely crucial."

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Highlighting the key role played in the battered enclave by the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA - which has been attacked and ostracized by Israeli leaders - the Secretary-General insisted that its presence "will remain critical not only during the conflict, but afterwards".

Latest reports from Gaza show that around 60 per cent of all residential buildings and at least 80 per cent of commercial facilities have been damaged by Israeli bombardment, the UN chief said, with health facilities and educational institutions reduced to rubble.

In addition, more than one million "deeply traumatized children in Gaza need psychosocial support and the safety and hope their schools used to provide", Guterres said, before insisting that "only UNRWA has the capacity, skills, and networks needed to support the Palestinian people to face the immense challenge on health, on education and so much more."

Echoing deep and repeated warning from humanitarians about the scale of the severe emergency across Gaza linked to the lack of aid access, the UN chief noted that "at least half of all humanitarian aid missions are denied access, impeded, or cancelled due to operational or security reasons".

In Geneva, meanwhile, the UN human rights office, OHCHR, expressed profound shock at the impact of the hostage release operation in Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp at the weekend.

OHCHR spokesperson Jeremy Laurence said that hundreds of Palestinians, - many of them civilians - were reportedly killed and injured and that the way the raid was conducted "in such a densely populated area seriously calls into question" whether Israeli forces respected the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, as set out under the laws of war.

AJK is not a Foreign Territory - III

On the other hand, there's IIOJK. Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) has long been plagued by conflict, political instability, and human rights issues. Despite its designation as a "special status" region within India, Kashmiris in IIOJK continue to face numerous restrictions that hinder their rights, freedoms, and aspirations. Understanding these limitations is crucial for comprehending the intricate dynamics in one of the world's most enduring territorial disputes. One of the key issues concerning the special status of Kashmiris in IIOJK is the erosion of special status. In August 2019, the Government of India unilaterally revoked Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir. This action effectively nullified the region's special status and subjected it to direct control by the central government.

AJK's special status is enshrined in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution Act of 1974, which affords the region a significant degree of autonomy and self-governance. However, the relationship between AJK and Pakistan is governed by an interplay of constitutional provisions, legislative acts, and judicial interpretations. Notably, the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Supreme Court Jurisdiction Case (1993) set a precedent. Another significant decision came in 2018 when the AJK Supreme Court deliberated on the powers and composition of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council. The court elucidated the respective roles of the federal government and AJK in matters of governance and administration, reasserting the special status of AJK while acknowledging the overarching authority of the federal government.

Several court cases have addressed the disqualification of members of the AJK Legislative Assembly on various grounds, including alle-

gations of corruption, electoral malpractice, and violation of constitutional provisions. These cases underscore the judiciary's role in upholding the rule of law and ensuring accountability within AJK's political system. The comparison starkly highlights the autonomy granted by Pakistan to AJK while also emphasizing the failure of autonomy afforded by India to IIOJK.

This is not the first instance of Hamid Mir's involvement in such anti-state activities. His stance on missing persons is also highly contentious, as he lends support to all anti-state factions and conflates them with innocent individuals, disregarding the sacrifices of innocent martyrs and the soldiers of our armed forces and law enforcement agencies who lost their lives in combating terrorism. His track record is further shrouded in suspicion, as evidenced by receiving an award in India on behalf of his father and his stance against Pakistan and its military during the incidents and conflicts of 1971, documented on record. When someone garners accolades from the soil

of our adversaries, their credibility within our nation warrants serious scrutiny. His past actions indicate a pattern of leveraging his popularity for nefarious ends, aligning with an anti-state agenda and disseminating false information, propaganda, and negativity. He has made statements aimed at pleasing India and our adversaries, thereby tarnishing Pakistan's reputation. AJK is not foreign territory; it is an autonomous state within Pakistan, and its people cherish the special status and amenities provided by Pakistan. The matter concerning Ahmad Farhad and individuals akin to him falls under the jurisdiction of AJK courts, which operate independently and are not subject to the authority of Pakistani courts. The endorsement of anti-state elements and their dissemination of false and anti-state propaganda raises significant doubts about Hamid Mir's loyalty. AJK exhibits exemplary autonomy, unmistakably reflecting its integral connection with Pakistan rather than resembling a foreign territory. While India moves towards integrating IIOJK into its territory, Pakistan has demonstrated sensible and responsible behavior by granting autonomy to AJK. In fact, through this misguided endeavor, Hamid Mir has attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to question the competence and integrity of AJK court judges. The jubilation expressed by India and its media over Hamid Mir's statement also raises suspicions regarding the underlying motives behind this ill-conceived action.

Hamid Mir's background is characterized by ambiguity. He appears to be aligned with an agenda that is anti-state, often emphasizing issues to gain favor abroad while potentially undermining Pakistan and its institutions. His documented anti-state positions on matters such as the missing persons' problem and the Awami Action Committee's protests are well-known. Moreover, his unfounded and unsubstantiated criticisms of our intelligence agencies and military leadership have been widely publicized. There have been reports suggesting his connections with hostile entities. He has deliberately distorted the statement made by the Additional Advocate General of Pakistan regarding AJK, seemingly to sow discord, mistrust, and misconceptions among the people of AJK and Pakistan. Several months prior, at the literature festival in Muzaffarabad, he also attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to stir up misguided sentiments. Such actions, pursued in pursuit of personal popularity at the expense of national interests, should be strongly discouraged and dealt with firmly. It is imperative for the people of Pakistan and AJK to be vigilant against individuals like Hamid Mir who seek to propagate misunderstanding and animosity as part of foreign agendas.

The people of Pakistan and AJK vehemently denounce such statements and contentions against Pakistan and AJK. There is a call for action to be taken against those who propagate hatred, negativity, misinformation, falsehoods, and false propaganda.

Emergence of Sino-Russia relations and ramifications for the west - I

Arooba Abbasi

Although the burgeoning 'unholy' alliance between Moscow and Beijing may not make a difference to the Western public in the same way as the Gaza genocide did, however, for Western leaders, this aspect is extremely important. At a Summit in Beijing last month, the positions taken by Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping toward the West, especially the United States, have surprised Western policymakers, they signed a joint statement on extending their two countries' comprehensive strategic partnership, describing their connection as a stabilizing force in a tumultuous world. Although they avoided naming outright, they both vehemently denounced the US's hegemonic practices of meddling in the internal affairs of other nations.

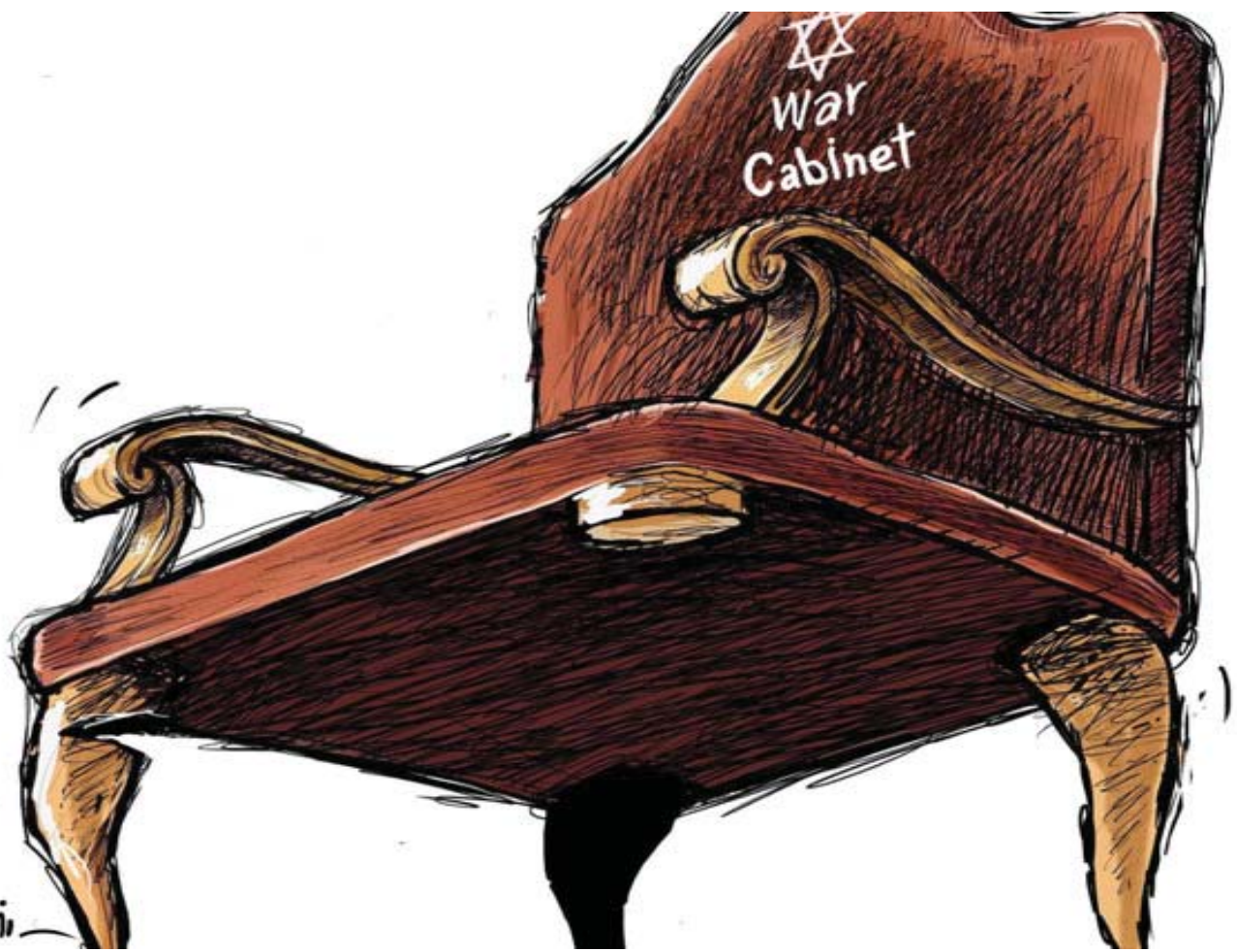
Strategic and Economic Partnership:
 Amid Western sanctions caused by the Ukraine crisis, Xi assured Putin of financial assistance. The year 2022 was characterized by a changing Chinese-Russian relationship to rewrite the global order, Putin's invasion of Ukraine elicited a rapid economic and political response from the West, the point which brought Sino-Russia closer. China acquires 19% of its oil and 25% of its coal from Russia, with coal making up roughly half of China's energy consumption, making Russia the country's tenth-largest trading partner, behind Malaysia. The two nations' bilateral trade reached \$240 billion last year, exceeding the aim of \$200 billion in two-way trade by 2024, all due to China, which has emerged as a crucial economic lifeline for Moscow. Nonetheless, Western countries have expressed disapproval of China's

alleged role in financing Russia's war, citing the country's increased commerce and oil purchases throughout the conflict. When last month the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, visited China he made it clear to Chinese policymakers that China must cease helping Russia; however, the current warmth between the two indicates that Xi and Putin have a history of celebrating major accomplishments together.

Defense Alignment:
 China's main defense partner is Russia. Politically, the larger diplomatic connection has been supported by Russian military assistance and arms supplies. Arms sales have given the PLA access to military hardware such as cutting-edge engines, planes, and air defense systems that it was unable to manufacture on its own. This Russia-China partnership in defense has significant implications for US military dominance in the Indo-Pacific region. China's modernization of its surface combat capabilities and the difficulty for the US to compete with China in the Indo-Pacific region are directly related to Russia's provision of advanced armament technologies, such as the Su-35 fighter jet and S-400 surface-to-air missile systems. However, the two nations further strengthened their military ties, conducting joint war exercises over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea, and setting up ground force training on each other's soil.

Is Liberal World Order in Danger?
 There is cause for concern for the United States of America and the American-led global order in this new period of "unprecedentedly high level of the strategic partnership" between two former Cold War rivals. Since the start of the twenty-first century, ties between both have significantly strengthened.

To be continued



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

Environmental Challenges: The future of human rights and sustainable solutions in a changing world

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: This is the name of the next topic of the IV Samarkand Forum on Human Rights, a traditional international conference to be held in our country on June 13-14, 2024. It is planned to hold three plenary meetings offline and online within the framework of the forum.

The main goal of this year's Samarkand forum is to discuss issues related to the impact of climate change on human rights on a broad scale and on the basis of information analysis. In addition to gaining the necessary knowledge in this field, the participants of the international conference will have the opportunity to exchange experience and get acquainted with the best practices within the international community.

The Forum will focus on developing concrete recommendations and solu-



tions to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change on human rights. The discussion is expected to serve as a forum for experts from various fields to develop effective strategies and approaches that help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and protect the rights of all people in a changing climate.

National organizers of the forum are the National Human Rights Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the "Strategy of Development" center.

Our international partners are the United Nations team in Uzbekistan.

Among our international partners, in particular, the Office of the Permanent Coordinator of the United Nations in Uzbekistan, the Regional Office of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for Central Asia, the Office of the United Nations Development Program in Uzbekistan, the Office of the Coordinator of Projects in Uzbekistan of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as Friedrich Ebert and Konrad Adenauer funds have representative offices in our country.

200 experts are scheduled to participate in the forum. In particular, national and foreign experts, climate specialists, officials of state organizations dealing with climate change issues, civil society institutions, mass media, scientific research centers, companies, business circles and representatives of international organizations were invited.

Expressed thoughts on the 2024-25 budget

MULTAN: Group Chairman of SM Food and Volka Food International, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, expressed his thoughts on the 2024-25 budget as follows: The economic growth target in the 2024-25 budget has been set at 3.6%, with an increase of 1,000 billion rupees in the development budget. The National Economic Council (NEC) has approved an increase of 1,083 billion rupees in the national development budget for the next fiscal year.

According to the budget report, the federal and provincial development budget for the new fiscal year has been approved at 3,792 billion rupees. The provincial development budget is set at 2,292 billion rupees, while the federal development budget is approved at 1,500 billion rupees. The budget documents indicate that an additional 113 billion rupees will be generated this fiscal year due to increased imports in customs duty.

For the next fiscal year, a target of 16 billion rupees under the Workers Welfare Fund is proposed, which is a positive move. There is also a proposal under consideration to increase taxes on import-



ed mobile phones, with the suggestion to impose federal excise duty on them. According to the FBR, there is a proposal to increase PTA tax on imported

luxury mobile phones, which is a good decision as it will boost the sale of local products. Additionally, there is already a 25% GST imposed on imported mobile phones. Due to the existing 25% GST, imposing further GST would be challenging. In our opinion, out of the 3,720 billion rupees, around 1,200 billion rupees in taxes can become part of the automatic system due to inflation and GDP growth, but implementing new tax measures worth 2,500 billion rupees will be a tough task for the FBR.

He further stated that a reduction in inflation has led to a decrease in the overall interest rate, which is encouraging. The inflation rate dropped to 11.8% in May, which is a positive start for the next fiscal year. Due to the positive policies of the State Bank, economic stability has been achieved in the country, and the performance of the FBR is improving, which is an encouraging aspect for the economy. However, the political tension in the country is severely impacting the economy. Therefore, it is necessary to resolve the political conflicts in the country so that the nation can benefit from the budget.

Chinese CG distributes certificates among Chinese language course participants at LCCI

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: LCCI President acknowledges Chinese support in economic developments, eyes more Chinese investment— President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kashif Anwar, expressed his gratitude for the support of the Chinese Consulate In Lahore, which has always patronized the LCCI in every way. He said that the LCCI had been honored with a friendship award by the Chinese Consul General, first for any Chamber in Pakistan, which is a symbol of the strong relationship of the two organizations.

He was speaking at the certificate distribution ceremony for participants of the Chinese language course at the LCCI. Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren was the chief guest of the ceremony



while LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mehmood Ch, and LCCI Executive Committee members Raja Hassan Akhtar and Fareeha Younis and Ahmed Elahi were also present.

Consul General of China Zhao Shiren and LCCI President Kashif Anwar also inaugurated the recently renovated Jinnah Auditorium at the LCCI.

Kashif Anwar emphasized the importance of maintaining good relations with neighboring countries. He highlighted China's consistent support of Pakistan during

challenging times. He also stressed the need to adopt new technology from China and source raw materials to boost Pakistan's exports.

Zhao Shiren emphasized the role of language in bridging gaps and enhancing mutual understanding, noting that 30 million people worldwide, excluding China, are learning the Chinese language. He urged the Pakistani government to include Chinese in the national curriculum, asserting that the language would play a significant role in the future.

He appreciated the good working relationship between the LCCI and the Chinese consulate during his three years as Consul General in Lahore. He praised LCCI President Kashif Anwar for his leadership, which earned him the friendship award, and assured continued support for the Chinese language students and teachers.

Coca-Cola appoints Volkan Öngüç as new Vice President for Pakistan & Afghanistan Region



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Volkan Öngüç has taken charge as the new Vice President for Pakistan and Afghanistan Region of Eurasia & Middle East Operation Unit of The Coca-Cola Company. Volkan's professional experience in commercial management, business development, and sales spans over two decades. His expertise in revenue growth management, both in Turkey and internationally, have been a key asset for the Company since he joined in April 2021.

Speaking about his vision for Coca-Cola Pakistan, Volkan Öngüç said, "I believe Pakistan is a country of immense potential with over \$1 billion invested in the country by the Coca-Cola System. This is truly a second home and has many similarities with my home country Türkiye, such as our love for music. I witnessed it with the launch of Coke Studio Season 15, the iconic musical platform showcasing the incredible talent and diversity of Pakistani music and culture."

Beyond his corporate achievements, Volkan Öngüç is an angel investor and mentor, actively involved in pursuing new business models and entrepreneurship. His passion for technological advancement, coupled with a commitment to personal growth and leadership development, sets him apart as a well-rounded professional.

FPCCI concerned over non-serious attitude in consumption pattern

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry while commented on current economic survey presented few hours which cover the whole fiscal activities seriously concerned over import of luxurious items including mobile phone consumed over US \$ 1.62 billion.

He views that the economic survey is an important document that gives performance of the economy while highlighting various improved and underperforming sectors of the economy. He said present economic survey is a huge documents and need complete examination to understand the performance of the economy of Pakistan during the fiscal year 2023-24. However, I noticed some of the sector remained unachieved against the target that is GDP growth target was set at 3.5 percent while it remained at 2.36 percent. Similarly, the inflation an important segment for which various measures have been adopted but unfortunately the inflation remained 24.6 percent against the target of 21 percent set for the fiscal year 2023-24.

But due to some measures and improved IT sector that supported E-commerce Pakistan exports during the 10 months i.e. July to April grew by 10.6 percent and it is expected to reach nearly US \$30 billion for the whole year. The export for the stated period are US \$ 25.7 billion.

On the other hand, remittances also grew by 3.5 percent to US \$23.8 billion as compared to 23 billion dollars last year in the same period.

President FPCCI said that the performance of the manufacturing and industrial sector is below and at this growth level it may not support job creation and reduction in poverty. I have already informed on various occasion that unless we reduced the interest rates and conducive environment, the commercial activities may not be improved.

Present reduction in 150 basis points by SBP to 20.5 percent interest rates is not supportive for economic and commercial activities. The policy rate should be brought down to at least 15 percent or below. Because at this high interest rate business and private sector is uncomfortable and has weak confidence which reflected in the credit to private sector which was significantly reduced by 40 for the period. Similarly, this effect can easily be seen in 0.1 declining trend in manufacturing sector. Almost major sector shows declining trend such as automobile (37.4%), tobacco (33.6%), computer electronic and optical product (16.0%), textile (8.3%), electrical equipment (7.5%), non-metallic mineral products (3.9%), beverages (3.4%), iron and steel (2.2%) and paper and paper board (2.0%).

President FPCCI stated that negotiation with IMF should be finalized at the earliest to record further advices or corrective and reform measures and possibly to avoid any circumstances of mini-budget. He said that the FPCCI in its budget proposals has strongly suggested for broadening of tax base but the existing taxpayers may not be further burden or squeezed for revenue generation. Because the target for new budget 2024-25 as informed by various sources would be significantly high and business sector would be burdened to meet the targets approximately 12800 billion rupees or any figure around it.

Report on Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy Launched by CLAS & SI

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A report on Pakistan's security and foreign policy titled "Strategy Manifesto on Security and Foreign Policy" was launched at an event in a local hotel in Islamabad says a press release.

This report was prepared by the Centre for Law and Security CLAS, Sanobar Institute (SI) and The Millennium Universal College TMUC after a National Conference where experts came together to formulate a set of 50 recommendations as a way forward for Pakistan's security and foreign policy. A roundtable discussion was held at the launch event, attended by former diplomats and policy experts. Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Information Minister Ataullah Tarrar also attended the roundtable.

Federal Minister for Defence

Khawaja Muhammad Asif delivered the opening note at the Roundtable as Chief Guest. He said that our relationship with China is still a bright spot in our foreign policy. He said that we made wrong choices in the past—most often these were the choices of the dictators for their personal interests. We ended up finding ourselves isolated afterwards. We have sided with everyone in Afghanistan and lost everyone as well. We have lost our foreign policy advantages in many places including the Gulf. We need to formulate a policy which is more relevant to our times and needs. He also said that there is interesting situation after elections in India.

Information Minister Ataullah Tarrar was the Chief Guest at the concluding session. During his remarks, he said that we want a peaceful co-existence with India. Any talks between the two countries can take

place only if they treat each other equally. Regarding government's priorities in foreign visits, he said that we are clear that "government has no business of doing business". He said we are not looking for aid but for investments and we have made it clear to our allies in recent visits. He also said that the Pakistan's recent election at United Nations shows the growing confidence on Pakistan's foreign policy. He said that Pakistan got record number of votes for this UNSC seat election. Pakistan's relationship with Iran has also improved remarkably. "We have gained an ally in the region".

The roundtable was attended by former ambassadors, policy experts and researchers from think tanks and academia. Among the panelists were former Foreign Secretary Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry, CEO Roots Millennium Education Group Dr. Faisal Mush-taq, former Ambassador Naghmana

Hashmi, Admiral (retired) Khan Hisham, Engineer Khalid Bashir and Dr Qamar Cheema. The discussion was moderated by Rehman Azhar, Executive Director for the Centre for Law and Security.

During his remarks Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry highlighted the role of the private sector in bringing forth recommendations for foreign policy. He emphasized that Pakistan is ready for a balanced foreign policy and there should be transparency in its formulation.

Chairman Advisory Board CLAS, Dr. Faisal Mush-taq highlighted the need for educational institutions to come together and promote research in policy-making areas. He said that the expansion of the security domain into the economy and foreign policy requires wider input, especially from civil society.

Admiral (retired) Khan Hisham



said foreign policy needs to be based on a principled stance. Its strategic direction must be very clear. We must take steps to implement policy decisions that can result in robust relationships with other countries.

Former Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi emphasized that Pakistan's foreign policy choices were relevant to the need of the time. We need to straighten our economy to make bold and balanced foreign policy choices. Pakistan should be clear about its strategic relationship with China.

Dr Qamar Cheema remarked that we had not made pragmatic choices in the past. We need change to align our foreign policy with world interests.

Engineer Khalid Bashir said that economic interests should also be a driving force in our policy making. He emphasized that a lot can be done for overseas Pakistanis.

Panelists were presented souvenirs at the end of countable discussion. Rehman Azhar, Executive Director CLAS thanked the audience and speakers for their participation.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
72,589.49	73,252.56
Day's High	Day's Low
73,866.44	72,476.05
Index Value	Change
6,805,191,865	-663.07
Percentage	Time
-0.91%	11 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,147.81	-80.67
Percentage	Time
-0.98%	11 Jun, 4:50 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,663.46	-204.58
Percentage	Time
-0.53%	11 Jun, 2:02 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,134.79	+96.63
Percentage	Time
+0.25%	11 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.73	748.73
Canadian Dollar	204	206
China Yuan	38.38	38.78
Danish Krone	40.14	40.54
Euro	296.25	299
Hong Kong Dollar	35.61	35.96
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	907.92	916.92
Malaysian Ringgit	59.3	59.9
New Zealand \$	170.55	172.55
Norwegians Krone	25.97	26.27
Omani Riyal	723.42	731.42
Qatari Riyal	76.42	77.12
Saudi Riyal	73.1	73.85
Singapore Dollar	203.5	205.5
Swedish Korona	26.4	26.7
Swiss Franc	310.57	313.07
Thai Bhat	7.56	7.71
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.9
UK Pound Sterling	351	353.8
US Dollar	277.7	280.4

ICCI President inaugurates water filtration plant in Super Market

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the water filtration plant of supermarket was dysfunctional for the last three years and when we initiated the task of installation of new water filtration plants in different markets of Islamabad, we also made it functional that's why today the traders as well as the residents of F-6 are deriving its benefit, adding that very soon a huge water cooler will also be installed alongside the plant.

He said this while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the water filtration plant organized by the Traders Welfare Association Super market.

He added that we are serving the community sincerely and devotedly which will continue even after the completion of my tenure as President ICCI. He went on to say that those who are propagating that after September 30, I shall be nowhere must know that this noble cause will continue successively.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari further said that he is in contact with Chairman CDA to determine new routes of the public transport which will not only be beneficial for the public but will greatly help to connect all the markets of



the city.

President TWA Super Market Shahzad Shabbir Abbasi pledged unwavering support to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for the cause of the community by saying that the respect and honour bestowed to traders community in the era of Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari is really praiseworthy.

President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran Ajmal Baloch said that provision of clean drinking water to masses is of significant importance and the financier will surely be rewarded by Allah Almighty.

President Blue Area TWA, Raja Hassan Akhtar while emphasizing trader's unity, reaffirmed community's support to ICCI by

saying that initial work for the installation of a water filtration plant in Blue area has also been commenced.

In his address Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari while describing the Supermarket as the pride of Pakistan said that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will leave no stone unturned to further enhance its business friendly atmosphere by up gradation of all the necessary facilities including the parking lot, security, cleanliness etc.

General Secretary TWA I-8 markaz Zahid Qureshi expressed gratitude to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for the gift of CCTV cameras for the I-8 markaz which has greatly contributed in curbing the crimes by saying that the patronage being provided to the traders of Islamabad by ICCI is a unique and commendable.

General Secretary, Jinnah Super market, Abdur Rehman Siddiqui spoke at length about the ongoing welfare projects for the betterment of the community.

President Jinnah Super market Asad Aziz, Group leader Blue Area Yousuf Rajput, Raja Fayyaz Gul, Chaudhry Nasir Mahmood, and Khalid Chaudhry, Imtiaz Abbasi, Malik Shabbir, Shaikh Abdul Waheed and others were also present.

Stop selling smuggled fuel

KARACHI: During the meeting with Petroleum Dealer Association DG Explosives Abdul Ali Khan announced the start of a vigorous nationwide campaign to stop the practice of selling smuggled fuel after finalizing the lists of wrongdoers.



S&P Global Market Intelligence Foresees Rapid Expansion of Generative AI Software Market by 2028 to \$52.2 Billion

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: As generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology pivots from research to the monetization and product launch stages, the software part of the generative AI market is now forecast to see significant expansion, reaching \$52.2 billion by 2028 with a compound annual growth rate of 58% from 2023, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Published by 451 Research, part of S&P Global Market Intelligence, the Generative AI Market Monitor report highlights an accelerated adoption rate of generative AI technologies across various sectors. This surge

is attributed to advancements in AI models capable of generating new content, including text, images and code, leading to enhanced operational efficiencies and innovative applications in business processes.

"Our thorough and granular market forecast for generative AI software demonstrates the huge potential of this general-purpose technology to transform processes and eventually industries. Organizations around the world are committing resources to take advantage of this shift from traditional AI to generative AI," said Nick Patience, managing analyst of Data, AI, Info security & Risk at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Hosiery exporters reject federal budget for 1% Shariah tax

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The implementation of both the final tax regime and the normal tax regime proposed in the federal budget 2024-25 has been rejected because it will cause difficulties for the exporters and the unjustified intervention of the FBR officials will open the doors of harassment and corruption for the exporters, said Chaudhry Salam Ali. Group leader Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association said while addressing a press conference at the office of the association today. He said that the exporters are already paying 1% final income tax and now it is proposed that from the next fiscal year. Dr. Khuram Tariq, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that this is the first budget that does not include the recommendations of the business community and all measures of this budget are anti-business. Syed Nahid Abbas Central Chairman said that neither the Finance Minister nor the Chairman FBR



or the Commerce Minister consulted us on the Federal Budget proposals 2024-25. Rana Altaf, former senior vice-chairman, expressed concern and said that it seems that the government is now increasing the tax-GDP ratio instead of finding new taxpayers and adding non-taxpayers to the tax net. It wants to put the burden on the existing taxpayers and exporters. It seems that both the government and the FBR have failed to widen the tax net. He says that the export industry is already facing huge challenges as it is liable to pay

several taxes to the Federal Government, Provincial Government and Local Governments, 18% Sales Tax 0.25 Development Surcharge, WWF, EOBI, PESSI. Sales tax and other refunds are delayed and FBR is not following the law in this regard. Pakistan is facing the highest cost ever, which has a huge impact on production and reduces profitability. Syed Zia Alamdar, Javed Aslam, Haji Mohammad Saleem, Hafiz Rashid Mehmood, Shaheen Tabsam, Mian Asif Iqbal and other members also participated in the press conference.

SECP's crack down on illegal personal loan apps continues

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) vigilantly monitors app stores, websites and social media for illegal personal loan apps in order to protect the public from falling into debt traps. "DD Credit", an illegal app found to be reaching out to the public through advertisements on Facebook was reported to the PTA and FIA and was consequently blocked by the PTA.

The SECP, through its efficient inhouse surveillance mechanism has identified 141 illegal apps and reported them to Google, Apple and the PTA for prompt blocking along with referring these apps to the FIA for action in

accordance with the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act of 2016. This coordinated approach has proved instrumental in curbing the proliferation of illegal apps.

These apps pose significant risks to user safety including misuse of personal information/sensitive financial data, fraud, blackmail and harassment etc. The SECP, therefore, warns the general public not to download illegal apps from any website or links shared through email or social media.

An updated list of illegal apps, as identified by the SECP and reported to respective app stores, PTA and FIA, is placed on SECP website for public information.

FrieslandCampina Institute Launches as a Trusted Platform for Healthcare Professionals

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The FrieslandCampina Institute was officially launched in Pakistan by Kashan Hasan, Managing Director of FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL). The inauguration ceremony, held at the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, marks a significant milestone in advancing healthcare professionals' education and nutritional awareness across the region. The Institute in Pakistan aims to equip local healthcare professionals with essential tools and knowledge, particularly about the nutritional value of dairy, enabling them to improve health outcomes across communities.

Having operated successfully in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Nigeria, China, and Vietnam, the FrieslandCampina Institute

now brings its expertise to Pakistan to address critical nutritional issues, including widespread malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

Kashan Hasan, Managing Director of FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan, highlighted the Institute's commitment: "The FrieslandCampina Institute maintains high standards of quality and credibility, ensuring that the information provided is reliable and useful."

Dr. Muhammad Nasir, the Institute's lead in Pakistan, emphasized the unique position of the Institute: "Realizing the overwhelming significance of milk, its contribution to nutrition and health, and the versatility, brought us to the conclusion that Pakistan needs a fact-based, formal, non-branded way of training, communication, and collaboration."

Francis Rieckhoff, Manager of Fries-

landCampina Institute Netherlands, stated: "Our mission at FrieslandCampina Institute is clear and resolute. We believe that by sharing scientific-based knowledge about the role of dairy in a healthy diet, we can significantly contribute to the improvement of the nutritional status and the promotion of safer food consumption throughout Pakistan."

The event was honored by the presence of distinguished guests, including Rana Mashhood Ahmad, Senior Parliamentarian and Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, who expressed his support: "This Institute promises to be a credible source of knowledge and support, very important for nurturing a healthier, more informed generation." Khawaja Inran Nazir, Minister of Primary & Secondary Healthcare Punjab, also supported the initiative: "In Pakistan, we face



the dual challenge of undernutrition and rising non-communicable diseases. Initiatives like this are crucial for our health and nutrition goals." He emphasized: "As Punjab's Minister of

Health, I am devoted to enhancing the health and nutrition of not only the residents of Punjab but also our entire nation. This initiative aligns perfectly with our goals."

GSMA Digital Nation Summit to be held on Aug 7 in Islamabad

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja chaired curtain raiser meeting for the 'GSMA Digital Nation Summit' at the committee room of the Ministry of IT on Tuesday.

GSMA, with the collaboration of Ministry of IT & Telecom, is going to organise the GSMA Digital Nation Summit in Islamabad on August 7, 2024.

Secretary IT Captain (Retd) Muhammad Mahmood, Head of GSMA APAC, Mr. Julian Gorman and Country Lead, GSMA Saira Faisal were also present in the meeting.

Official announcement was made for Digital Nation Summit in the meeting.

The chair was briefed about the goals, themes and expected outcomes of the Summit.

Addressing the meeting, Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima said Digital Nation Summit marks a significant milestone in our journey towards digitally empowered Pakistan. She said government aspired to see Pakistan become knowledge-based economy where innovation and technology drive economic growth and enhance governance.

Shaza Fatima said digital transformation is not just a goal, as it is necessary for our nation's progress. By embracing digital technologies, we can enhance productivity, foster innovation and ensure inclusive growth, she said.

She said present government is fully committed to supporting digital innovation and infrastructure development.

Shaza Fatima said GSMA Digital Nation Summit is a testament to our collective commitment to digital future.

The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary, MoITT Aisha Humera Moriani, Member Telecom Muhammad Jahanzeb Rahim, DG International Coordination (IC) Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi, CEO Jazz Aamir Ibrahim, President and Group CEO PTCL & Ufone Hatem Bamatraf, and other representatives from Telecom industry.

DG Sports chairs an important meeting to review preparations of upcoming Summer Sports Camps

Tahir Amin Malik

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal presided over an important meeting to review preparations of upcoming Summer Sports Camps at National Hockey Stadium here on Tuesday. It was decided in the meeting to establish an information desk for Summer Sports Camps.

Director Admin Dr M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum, Deputy Directors Zahoor Ahmed and Atta-ur-Rehman participated in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Sports Board Punjab (SBP) has established a desk to submit forms for Summer Sports Camps. "Apart from the registration portal, the citizens can



also submit their registration forms in the office of Sports Board Punjab," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Summer Sports Camps will help a lot in the promotion of sports culture across the province. "Summer

Sports Camps are being established in all the divisions of Punjab from June 25 during the summer holidays," he informed.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal further said that the participat-

ing children in Summer Sports Camps will be imparted best sports training under the supervision of expert coaches. "Summer Camp is being organized to provide an opportunity to young children to improve their game in summer vacations."

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal urged the young children to utilise all of their energies for learning of games techniques under the supervision of expert coaches. "Sports Board Punjab will provide all possible facilities to participants of Summer Camps," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Summer Sports Camp will help a lot in tracing fresh talented players from grassroots level. "The young school going children must avail this opportunity to polish their sports skills and improve their fitness at state-of-the-art

Pakistan edge past Canada to stay alive in T20 World Cup 2024

NEW YORK: A combined bowling attack, followed by Mohammad Rizwan's half-century propelled Pakistan to a must-win victory over Canada in the 22nd match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 here on Tuesday.

Set to chase 107, Pakistan amassed the total for the loss of three wickets and 15 balls to spare, courtesy of an anchoring second-wicket partnership between Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan.

Pakistan's new opening pair of Saim Ayub and Mohammad Rizwan failed to give them a decent start as the left-handed batter perished in the fifth over with just 20 runs on the board.

Ayub scored a scratchy six off 12 deliveries.

Babar then joined Rizwan in the middle and the duo anchored the run chase with a gutsy partnership.

They added 63 runs for the second wicket before Babar fell prey to Dilon Heyliger in the 15th over.

He scored a run-a-ball 33 with the help of one four and a six.

Rizwan partnered briefly with Fakhar Zaman, who scored just four and perished on the second



delivery of the 18th over with just three more required.

Usman Khan then hit the winning runs for Pakistan when he guided one towards the midwicket region for a couple.

Mohammad Rizwan remained the top-scorer for Pakistan with an unbeaten 53 off as many deliveries, hitting three boundaries and a six.

Dilon Heyliger led the bowling charge for Canada with 2/18

while Jeremy Gordon made one scalp.

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Sent into bat first, Canada only managed to register 106/7 on the board despite Aaron Johnson's half-century.

Canada had a briefly flying start to their innings as Johnson smashed Shaheen Afridi for back-to-back fours to kick of the proceedings.

However, the associate nation could not carry on the momentum and lost two wickets in quick succession to slip to 29/1 in 5.1 overs.

Canada kept losing wickets at regular intervals but Aaron Johnson stood his ground firm and kept the scoreboard ticking singlehandedly.

The right-handed opener soon brought up his fighting half-century in a dominant

fashion when he smacked Imad Wasim for a six over long-off in the 13th over.

Johnson, however, perished in the next over as he was cleaned up by Naseem Shah's searing delivery.

Aaron Johnson remained the top-scorer for Canada with a 44-ball 52 which featured four fours and as many sixes.

Canadian captain Saad Bin Zafar then put together a scratchy seventh-wicket partnership with Kaleem Sana before falling victim to Mohammad Amir in the 17th over. He scored 10 off 21 deliveries.

Sana and Dilon Heyliger batted cautiously at the backend and added 19 runs amid their unbeaten eighth-wicket partnership to take Canada past the 100-run mark.

For Pakistan, Mohammad Amir and Haris Rauf bagged two wickets each while Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah contributed with a wicket apiece.

The seven-wicket victory propelled Pakistan to third in Group A standings of the T20 World Cup 2024 with two points in three matches while Canada slipped to fourth due to an inferior net run rate.

CM adviser hails female athletes for outstanding performances in games

Sports Desk

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Sports and Youth Affairs, Syed Fakhar Jahan has lauded the outstanding performance of female players in various sports during the recent under-23 Inter-Regional games.

He expressed his commitment to continuing such events in the future, including Inter-Provincial Games and Under-16 Talent Hunt.

He made these remarks as a special guest at a ceremony held here to honor the female players from Peshawar Region who participated in the recent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U-23 Inter-Regional games.



The ceremony was attended by Secretary Sports Matiullah, Additional DG Sports Rashida Ghaznavi, Director Operation Azizullah Khan, Regional Sports Officer Peshawar Kashif Farhan, District Sports Officer Peshawar Miss Gul Rukh, who organized the reception in the honor of the female medalists players and District Sports Officer Charsadda Mishal Malik, as well as the female players and girls who participated in the event.

The adviser distributed awards among the players and praised their excellent performance in the recent games.

He said that the same event was a baseline for the future achievements for the female players and hoped that

the players would continue their such rich performance in future as well with zeal and enthusiasm.

He also appreciated District Sports Officer Peshawar, Gul Rukh for arranging such a reception.

Syed Fakhre Jahan hails the performance of Rashida, the golden girl who won four gold medals in the 100m, 200, 400m and 800m and silver medal in long jump.

She was also declared the Player of the Games.

Rashida, hailing from District Charsadda, was trained and coached by Zia Jan, former national athlete, Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Athletic Coaching and Training Academy.

FIFA President hopes football World Cup 2026 to be the greatest ever

Sports Desk

LAHORE: FIFA President Gianni Infantino has said that the FIFA World Cup 2026 will be the most inclusive and greatest tournament ever in the history of the sport to be hosted by Canada, Mexico and USA in June 2026.

In a press release, showing the FIFA chief standing beside the glittering trophy, issued on Tuesday, Gianni Infantino was quoted as saying that the upcoming mega event will feature 48 countries and be hosted by 16 cities across three countries.

The FIFA World Cup 26 is due to kick off at the iconic Estadio Azteca Mexico City on June 11, 2026 while the final will be played in New Jersey (New York) on July 19.

The Estadio Azteca Mexico City – one of three venues in Mexico along with Estadio Monterrey and Estadio Guada-

lajara – will make history at the tournament, having also hosted the opening matches of the FIFA World Cup 1970 and 1986.

"It will be the first stadium to host three inaugural (FIFA) World Cup football matches," said the FIFA President, adding that "We've never seen this before, and to experience it at an iconic stadium like the Azteca is something very, very special. We all know the epic football matches that have been played there in the past while absolute champions like Pelé and Diego Maradona played and won at the Azteca."

"In two years from now, the world will stand still and watch what is happening in North America. The trophy is already here, ready – we take care of it – and we are all getting ready, gearing up for the competition, preparing everything."

He said a number of qualifying matches are being played as the mile-



stone was reached. Eighteen games were scheduled to take place in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) qualifiers, bringing the second round of qualifying to a conclusion and determining which 18 teams would proceed to the third stage. Matches in North, Central America and Caribbean (Concacaf), and in the Confederation of African Football (CAF) are also scheduled on the day. The ball started rolling in South America in September 2023. The FIFA President said preparations were well on course across the three host nations. "At the host

cities, of course, FIFA is working with the authorities, with the stadium owners and operators, with the local communities," he said of the two Canadian, three Mexican, and 11 US venues. "(There is) fantastic collaboration everywhere. They are looking forward to millions and millions of fans from all over the world. The stadiums are absolutely beautiful."

Talking about the major milestones in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 26 milestones, Gianni Infantino said these include qualifying draws in both Asia and Oceania, adding that 18 team will vie for eight direct slots during the AFC qualifying in September this year while 11 nations will compete for one direct slot in the Oceania Football Confederation from September as well. H said the UEFA qualifying, meanwhile, will take place between March 2025 and March 2026, with 16 berths available for European teams.

Won't be easy for Pakistan to beat Canada, says Aakash Chopra

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Former Indian cricketer and renowned commentator Aakash Chopra asserted that it would be tough for Pakistan to beat Canada as the two teams are set to lock horns in an important ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 clash.



Speaking on his YouTube channel, Aakash asserted that Canada possess a quality fast bowling attack which can make things difficult for under pressure Pakistan.

"You might be thinking about Pakistan's qualification chances. They are not too far behind in net run rate and since these games are being played on such grounds, no team will be able to catch up," stated Chopra.

"It's difficult to beat Canada because they beat Ireland on the same ground. They have decent fast bowling and you also get a left-arm spinner in Saad Bin Zafar," he added.

The former cricketer further revealed that he met numerous Pakistan cricket fans following their national team's narrow defeat against India and they shared that they have been "humiliated".

Aakash Chopra also questioned the selection process of the Pakistan cricket team.

"Pakistan's chances are not yet over although whichever people I met, in Manhattan and at the ground, everyone said they had been humiliated. The situation is very bad and the fans' anger is legit. More than the players, you should be angry with the way Pakistan cricket runs, that which people you select," said Chopra.

"If you felt that after selecting this team, especially this batting, you are making a world-beating team, it's T20, things can and might change, but it doesn't look like that after seeing the team. The batting does not have the might at all, how do you do that? That's Pakistan cricket for you," he concluded.

For the unversed, Pakistan had a disastrous start to their T20 World Cup 2024 campaign as the former champions succumbed to an upset loss against the USA in the campaign opener before falling to a six-run defeat against arch-rivals India in a blockbuster clash on Sunday.

The back-to-back defeats put Pakistan on the verge of an early exit from the T20 World Cup 2024 and they now need to beat Canada to stay alive.

On the contrary, Canada, third in Group A standings of the T20 World Cup 2024, have two points after two matches as they recovered from a thumping defeat against the United States of America (USA) in the curtain raiser to register a shocking win over Ireland.

Pak team departs for Russia to feature in BRICS Games

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: A 7-member Pakistan athletics team has departed for Russia to participate in the Bries Games being held in Kazan from June 12 to 17.



According to Athletics Federation of Pakistan President, Brig (R) Wajahat Hussain, the team includes five athletes and two officials.

The athletes are Shajar Abbas (100m and 200m races), Gohar Shahbaz (100m race), Abdul Muheed (400m race), Sohail Amir (1500m and 5000m races), and Abdul Qadir Khan Marwat (javelin throw).

The team will be accompanied by Manager Imdadullah Memon and Coach Rana Sajjad Ahmed Khan.

Hussain expressed hope that the national team will perform outstandingly in the event.

This is a great opportunity for Pakistan's athletes to showcase their talent and bring laurels to the country.

The BRICS Games is a prestigious international sporting event that brings together athletes from all over the world.

Pakistan team departs to Tajikistan for FIFA WC qualifier

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan national football team has departed for Tajikistan on a special Pakistan Air Force plane from Nur Khan Air Base.



The team's flight schedule was affected twice due to technical issues, but they have finally departed for Dushanbe. Pakistan is set to play against Tajikistan in the FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifiers round 2 match today at 8 pm Pakistan time.

Mirpurkhas hosts second wheelchair tennis coaching camp

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Mirpurkhas Tennis Association, in collaboration with the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), has launched a month-long Wheelchair Tennis Coaching Camp at Citizen Gymkhana. This initiative is part of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Wheelchair Tennis Development Program.



Building on the success of a four-month camp held from September to December 2023, this new camp aims to further develop wheelchair tennis in the region. Key supporters include Gulistan-e-Mazoreen Mirpurkhas and the management of Citizen Gymkhana.

The camp was inaugurated by Muhammad Khalid Rehmani, Vice President of the Pakistan Tennis Federation and a member of the Asian Tennis Federation's Wheelchair Tennis Committee. During the opening ceremony, Rehmani announced plans for another camp in October 2024. He also invited the two top wheelchair tennis players from Mirpurkhas to participate in the National Wheelchair Tennis Event in Karachi later this year.

Cabinet meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Cabinet approves legislation to establish Digital Commission, Pakistan Digital Authority

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Tuesday principally approved the Digital Nation Pakistan Act 2024 providing to establish the National Digital Commission and Pakistan Digital Authority besides ensuring digitization of national economy and paperless governance.

The cabinet which met under the chair of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, asked the law ministry to carry out the required review of the Act, which also aimed at digitizing the services sector in accordance with international stand-

ards.

Under the Act, the National Digital Commission would act as a policymaking organisation, to be headed by the prime minister and comprising federal and provincial members.

Moreover, a Pakistan Digital Authority would be established to achieve the objectives of Digital Pakistan.

Being a corporate entity, the Authority would have financial and administrative autonomy.

Apprising the members of his recent visit to China and his meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, the prime minister

mentioned his conversation with Chinese leadership on second phase of CPEC-II.

He said that a high-powered Chinese delegation would visit Pakistan to further expand the bilateral cooperation.

He told the meeting that B2B meetings were held between the businessmen and investors of Pakistan and China at the Pakistan-China Business Forum in Shenzhen.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said the government would send around 1,000 youngsters to China for professional training in innovations and technology in the agriculture sector.

Moreover, Huawei would

also annually train 200,000 Pakistani youngsters in different fields of information technology, he added.

The federal cabinet approved the appointment of members of the National School for Public Policy from both the public and private education sectors.

On the recommendation of the human rights ministry, a cabinet committee was constituted to initiate the appointment of a member from Islamabad in the National Commission for Human Rights.

The meeting principally approved The Arbitration Bill 2024 and relevant consulta-

tion with the provinces under Article 144 of the constitution, and the signing of a MoU between the National Accountability Bureau and Sri Lanka's Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption to promote cooperation against bribery and illegal flow of money.

The federal cabinet endorsed the decisions of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises taken on May 13 and 20, 2024, the Economic Coordination Committee's decisions of May 23 and 27, 2024, and those of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases made on June 5.

Present government made several achievements on foreign policy front: Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the present government after coming to power had taken initiatives which resulted in many achievements on foreign policy front.

Delivering his speech on the occasion of launching ceremony of the report on national security and foreign policy, he said that foreign policy was top priority of the present dispensation.

"We are a responsible nuclear country and our importance in the world cannot be denied," he said, adding Pakistan believed in peace not war.

The minister said Pakistan was recently elected a non-permanent member of



the United Nations Security Council with 182 votes which was a demonstration

of its successful foreign policy. "We have trade relations with Iran, and the late Irani-

an President's visit to Pakistan was also successful", he maintained.

He said earlier a high-level Saudi delegation also visited Pakistan tapping investment potential.

Tarar said that 68 per cent of Pakistan's population comprised youth and focus on technical training was topmost priority of the government.

He said recently Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made a historic visit to China with renewed determination.

The minister remarked that Pakistan was a huge market in the field of information technology, adding that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor was being upgraded.

He said that Huawei which had set up two Safe City projects in Pakistan, had offered to provide free

of cost training to 200,000 Pakistani information technology professionals per year.

The minister said that the government's priority was also economic security, adding "Thanks to government initiatives, the economy is on the path of recovery. Foreign exchange reserves are improving and the rupee is stabilizing. The rate of inflation has decreased significantly in the country."

He said that the Special Investment Facilitation Council had played an important role in that regard.

Tarar said that the slogan of the present government was aid not trade.

"In the past we heard about cricket and agriculture diplomacy", he said, adding that the foreign policy initiatives of the present government had ended the isolation of Pakistan.

Deputy PM Dar calls for an embargo on military supplies to Israel

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday called upon for an embargo on all the military supplies and sales to Israel, besides proposing to consider the deployment of an impartial international force for the protection of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank.

In a statement at the High-Level Conference on Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza in Amman, Jordan, the deputy prime minister urged that they must ensure the immediate withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from Gaza in accordance with resolution 2735.

At this critical juncture, he said they must undertake concrete steps to effectively redress the situation.

Spelling out the need of urgent steps, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that they must ensure the ceasefire called for by the UN Security Council was complete, durable and unconditional.

It must also halt the violence in the West Bank; he said, adding that



it should step up the provision of humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered Palestinians in Gaza and meet their needs for food, medicines, energy and other essential supplies.

The deputy prime minister stressed to enlarge their support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and respond to the flash appeal issued by the UN in April.

"The demonization of UNRWA and the UN must be halted. All donors who have suspended support to UNRWA must reverse their decisions, and all others should enhance their assistance," a press release quoted him as saying.

SC orders shutdown of all restaurants in Margalla Hills National Park

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has ordered the closure of all restaurants operating within national parks, including Monal restaurant, located in the scenic Margalla Hills National Park.

A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, heard an appeal against an Islamabad High Court decision from January 11, 2022, which had favored the Monal group.

During the hearing, Chief Justice Isa questioned the competence of Capital Development Authority (CDA) officials, demanding a detailed list of all restaurants operating within the park. He expressed concern about the CDA's lack of awareness regarding the presence of numerous restaurants and commercial activities within the protected area.

The CDA's lawyer presented a

report detailing all structures within the park, but the Chief Justice pointed out that the report included the Pakistan-China Sports Complex and the National Art Council, raising further questions about the CDA's understanding of the park's boundaries.

The court rejected the CDA's report and summoned the Chairman of the



CDA.

The Supreme Court ruled that all restaurants within the national park must be completely dismantled within three months. While the court acknowledged the need to relocate affected restaurants, it emphasized that commercial activities are not permitted within the park.

Income tax calculator for FY 2023-24

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government increased the income tax rate for people earning Rs200,000 or above per month in the federal budget for the fiscal year 2023-24.

The government also reduced the number of tax slabs from seven to six. This means an additional tax burden for people earning Rs500,000 per month or above.

The new tax slab took effect from July 1 and higher tax detection began with salary employees received in

August.

In some cases, the take-home or net salary for bosses will be slightly more than what their immediate juniors will be drawing from their payroll accounts, even if on paper they enjoy a visible higher income.

How the new tax rate have affected your post-tax earnings and how much tax you will be paying annually, you can instantly calculate using the calculator below.

We have also reproduced the next tax slab as laid out in the finance bill for FY 2023-24.

Defence spending, govt salaries to go up in Rs18 trillion budget

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government is set to present a federal budget worth Rs18 trillion rupees to the National Assembly today, with a focus on bolstering defense spending, introducing new taxes, and reforming the pension system.

The budget is expected to include a 10-15% increase in salaries for government employees. A significant portion of the budget, Rs2.1 trillion rupees, will be allocated to defense.

The budget document reveals a projected Rs9.5 trillion for interest and debt payments, while non-tax revenue is estimated at an initial figure.

The government is expected to introduce new taxes and increase the tax

burden by eliminating sales tax exemptions. Proposed increases in sales tax on various goods, withholding tax, and customs duties are anticipated.

The government aims to collect Rs12.9 trillion in tax revenue. To achieve this, the budget proposes a 5% sales tax on petroleum products, a 1% increase in GST, and the elimination of unnecessary tax breaks, among other measures. This is expected to generate an additional Rs2 trillion in revenue.

The budget projects over Rs1050 billion in revenue from petroleum levies. The elimination of unnecessary sales tax exemptions is expected to generate an additional 5.5 trillion rupees in revenue.

State Bank of Pakistan cuts key rate to boost economy Pakistan's budget



will aim to set stage for IMF bailout

The budget proposes imposing sales tax on agricultural goods, seeds, fertilizers, tractors, and other equipment. A 10% sales tax on food, medicines, and stationery is also being considered. The budget allocates Rs800 billion for subsidies in the energy sector.

Pension reforms are proposed, including the introduction of a voluntary contributory pension system for

new recruits. Retired employees are expected to receive pensions for 20 years instead of lifetime benefits.

The duration of family pensions is proposed to be reduced to 10-15 years, while the daughter's pension is set to be eliminated, and commutation benefits are expected to be reduced.

The budget allocates Rs827 billion for infrastructure, Rs253 billion for energy, Rs279 billion for transport and communication, Rs206 billion for water projects, Rs280 billion for the social sector, and Rs45 billion for healthcare.

The budget also allocates Rs93 billion for education and higher education, Rs75 billion rupees for SDGs, Rs42 billion for agriculture, Rs28 billion for governance, Rs79 billion