

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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RAWALPINDI



PTI-led govt should have been allowed to complete tenure, says PML-N's Javed Latif

More than two years after toppling former premier Imran Khan-led government via a no-trust vote, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) stalwart Javed Latif revealed that his party was not in favour of bringing a no-confidence motion, saying the former ruling party should have been allowed to complete its five-year tenure.



PM's aide lauds Punjab CM for enforcing plastic ban, urges other CMs to follow suit

Coordinator to PM on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam said that imposing of ban on plastic bags in the Punjab by the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was a long-awaited move to deal with hazardous effects of plastic on the environment and human health. She said that the Punjab chief minister has enforced a comprehensive ban on manufacturing, distribution and sale and purchase of plastic all over the province ... (Details on Page 3)

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Meeting

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding law & order and security projects in Islamabad on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Citizens' protection, security top priority, says PM Shehbaz

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif affirmed the protection of citizens and foreigners in Pakistan as a paramount state priority during a high-level meeting on Sunday.

The session, which reviewed ongoing security and law-enforcement projects in Islamabad, underscored the government's unwavering commitment to maintaining law and order.

The prime minister emphasised that any negligence in safeguarding citizens and upholding the law and order would not be tolerated.

He ordered an inquiry into the delays affecting completion of the Islamabad Model Jail and directed that the project be expedited to meet modern standards. Additionally, he mandated the establishment of a professional training institute and hospital within the jail premises.

In his directives, the prime minister called for consultations with Chinese experts to form the Special Protection Unit in the capital. He also stressed the need for a state-of-the-art forensic lab as part of the Islamabad Safe City initiative.

PM Shehbaz also highlighted the importance of merit-based recruitment and the adoption of advanced technologies across all security projects in Islamabad to align with international standards.

The meeting featured comprehensive briefings on various aspects of Islamabad's security infrastructure, including the Islamabad Model Jail, Islamabad Safe City, the Federal Counter Terrorism Department, and the Special Protection Unit. Updates were also provided on the Islamabad National Facilitation Centres and the K-9 Unit, aimed at enhancing detection of narcotics and explosives.

Asif, Tarar slam PTI for opposing Operation Azm-i-Istehkam

PTI Chairman Gohar says Parliament should be taken into confidence

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Two members of the treasury benches slammed on Sunday the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for allegedly opposing the newly approved counterterrorism campaign Operation Azm-i-Istehkam as the former ruling party called for taking Parliament into confidence before taking any such decision.

"We do not want to take any step that can be targeted under the guise of political interests. If they have any objections, then God-willing, when that issue will be put before this House, they can also speak on it," Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said in his speech during the National Assembly session convened for to hold debate on the budget.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved a reinvigorated national counter-terrorism campaign by launching the operation



'Azm-e-Istehkam' as the South Asian country deals with the rise in terrorist attacks.

"Azm-e-Istehkam will integrate and synergise multiple lines of effort to combat the menaces of extremism and terrorism in a comprehensive and decisive manner," according to a statement issued after the Central Apex Committee on National Action Plan (NAP) in Islamabad.

It was approved with the consensus of all stakeholders including provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, a high-ranking Chinese official who visited Pakistan earlier this week also highlighted security as the foremost challenge threatening the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) future.

"Security threats are the main hazards to CPEC cooperation. As people often say, confidence is more precious than gold. In the case of Pakistan, the primary factor shaking the confidence of Chinese investors is the security situation," Liu Jianchao had emphasised.

But the PTI was of the view that Parliament should be taken into confidence before any intelligence-based or full-fledged operations in certain districts or villages or tehsils.

The opposition wanted to speak on a point of order that the "military leadership, as has been done in the past, give an in-camera briefing and detail the situation," he added.

When Asif started his speech, SICMNAs chanted "military operation unacceptable" slogans. They then staged a walkout from the assembly but were later persuaded to return by government members. The defence minister reminded

the PTI that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, who also belongs to Imran Khan's party, was present in apex committee meeting.

"They [opposition] are standing with the terrorists by protesting here today. They are protesting against the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and the army that is still making sacrifices to [counter] terrorism. They have not backed off from their May 9 stance even today," the minister said.

He added that the government would take such a proposal to the cabinet and hopefully in Parliament. "We don't want to take any such step which can be made an excuse for political interests. If they have any objection, they can speak about it when it comes in Parliament"

'Any apex committee cannot supersede Parliament'

Continued on Page 8

Govt ready to incorporate positive, constructive suggestions in budget: Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that the government was ready to incorporate positive and constructive suggestions from the Opposition in the budget for 2024-25.

Participating in the budget debate, he mentioned that it had been a tradition for the Opposition parties to present a shadow budget for decades. "When we and the PPP were in the Opposition in the past, we used to bring shadow budgets. We proposed how we could improve the budget presented by the government," he added.

In the shadow budget, he added that both parties suggested ways to reduce taxes and subsidies and provided more relief to poor people.

The minister criticized the Opposition members for 'making judgments' without thoroughly reviewing the budget document.



Highlighting the budgetary proposals, he said that the government had increased the salaries of government employees by 20 to 25 percent and raised the minimum wage.

He questioned the Opposition's objection to the government's decision to bring non-filers into the tax net and noted that the government had reduced electricity tariffs for the

industry. The minister pointed out that currently, Pakistan has foreign reserves to cover two months, compared to only 15 days during the PTI regime. He also mentioned the remarkable performance of the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

Condemning the objectionable language used by Sunni Ittehad Council member, he remarked that the same member used to call Nawaz Sharif as "Aqa" when he was in the PML-N.

The minister recalled that Maryam Nawaz Sharif was arrested in front of her father, and Faryal Talpur was arrested in a hospital; both could have fled but they chose not to do so.

Regarding the minorities, he said that he represented about 70,000 Christian voters in his constituency. He stressed the need to end the trend of street justice and criticized the Opposition for not supporting a resolution in the House for the protection of minorities.

Govt to hold in-camera briefing on Operation Azm-e-Istehkam

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Responding to the criticism of opposition, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Azam Nazeer Tarar on Sunday informed the National Assembly that the government would arrange an in-camera briefing in the parliament for the lawmakers on security issues, including Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

Speaking on the NA floor, Tarar while referring to the leadership of the Sunni Ittehad Council said: "Your Prime Minister [Imran Khan] has not attended the in-camera briefing on security issues in the parliament, but my Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, along with the cabinet, will attend the in-camera briefing."

The minister said that the government will call an in-camera session to take all the political parties into confidence on the country's security issues.

Azam Nazeer Tarar said that in the past the prime minister was refusing to sit with the opposition, but Prime Minister, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif wants to take all the political parties into confidence and work together on the issue.

He said that the resolution and legalisation presented in the Parliament are significant for national security and defence which is not only an issue of the government.

The minister said that the sanctity of the house is very important which all the stakeholders want to take care of, and the government wants to take all the political parties along with it.

The announcement came after a meeting of the Central Apex Committee of National Action Plan, which was chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

PM's recent visit to China highly significant in Pak-China friendly relationship: Ahsan Iqbal



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal said that the recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China was termed highly significant in the context of Pak-China friendly relationship.

He expressed these words while talking in a programme aired on a private news channel the other day.

He said he had been participated along with the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in all meetings there in China.

He said that Chinese leadership was very enthusiastic and committed to help Pakistan in

different ventures.

He said that it was Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's wish to enhance Industrial-level contacts with China to promote industrialization between the two states.

Minister said that we had focused on enhancing business-to-business relationships to promote the industries.

He said that China's leading telecom company, Huawei, would become a strategic partner of Pakistan in the transformation of the Pakistani economy to a digital economy.

He was also optimistic that the company would provide IT training to 0.3 million Pakistani youth.

While talking about the gains in the larger context of CPEC he said China was committed to starting five corridors in the upgraded version of CPEC in Pakistan.

Continued on Page 8

Aseefa Bhutto slams Budget 2024 in maiden NA speech

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In her first maiden National Assembly (NA) speech, PPP MNA Aseefa Bhutto Zardari criticised the tax-laden Budget 2024 and the current economic situation in Pakistan, highlighting record-high inflation and unemployment.

Speaking on the NA floor on Sunday, Aseefa Bhutto - daughter of President Asif Zardari and sister of Bilawal Bhutto - noted the budget 2024 does not represent the public and should have provided relief for farmers and ordinary citizens.

She remarked that the public had high hopes for the budget, but it fell short of their expectations, calling for collective action to improve the lives of the masses.

The PPP lawmaker emphasised the need for national unity, urging that tolerance



and patience be demonstrated through actions rather than just words.

She highlighted the intolerable long hours of load shedding during extreme heat and stressed the importance of bolstering support for farmers, advocating for a fresh start in the political arena.

"We must advance initiatives to support the common man," Aseefa Bhutto asserted. "Strengthening farmers, laborers, and vulnerable groups is crucial. Farmers face significant challenges such as floods and wheat import issues. It is imperative to offer facilities to the country's poorest citizens."

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif meets delegation of Allied, Tech Valley & Google

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chromebooks will be assembled in Punjab in collaboration with Australian firm Allied," Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif took an Important decision in a meeting with a delegation of Allied, Tech Valley, and Google for Education. She added, "Google ID will be provided free of cost to 50,000 students of government schools in Punjab."

Madam Chief Minister said, "1000 teachers of government schools will be given free digital certification courses." She added, "Free certification courses project for 15000 university students will also be launched. Google for Education will support for a fee of \$10.5 million dollars." She highlighted, "Decision in principle has been taken to launch Digital School on Wheels project in Punjab." The delegation led by Regional Head Paul Hutchings agreed to participate in the project.

Possibilities of collaboration in digital education projects, smart classroom and digital education ecosystem

were assessed in the meeting. Both sides agreed to seek technical support from Google for Education to compile authentic data of out-of-school children.

Madam Chief Minister was briefed by Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat that students of government schools in Punjab will be able to log in through Google ID. She was apprised, "University students will be given certification in antivirus, artificial intelligence and other courses."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was briefed, "By obtaining Level One and Level Two certificates, students will be able to easily get jobs around the world." She was also briefed, "Two pilot projects of Schools on Wheels will be launched in a few weeks, in which students will be able to study by logging in with their Google IDs."

Delegation of Google for Education expressed interest in Punjab government's first official autism school project. Most of the related issues including research, innova-

tion in schools were also discussed in the meeting. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also briefed the Google team about Punjab government's IT initiatives. She said, "Through IT certificates, the youth will be enabled to get employment in local and global market." She added, "Punjab Government is committed to working with Google for Education for the improvement of education system in the province."

Regional Head Google for Education Paul Hutchings said, "We are keen to work with the Punjab government to facilitate access to digital education. The Chief Minister and her team will feel happy working with them in Punjab." He added, "The efforts of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and her team to lead the education system in Punjab on the path of innovation are commendable."

The visiting delegation included Google for Education's Chris Hart, Haris Sufian, Allied Corporation CEO Aaron Sether Jackson, Operations Lead Junaid Shahab, Tech Valley CEO Umar



Farooq, Marketing and Communication Lead Nashwa Abrar, and Outreach and Coordination Manager Madiha

Mongol. Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, Chief Secre-

tary Zahid Akhtar Zaman and other relevant officers were also present on the occasion.

Need attention

ISLAMABAD: After heavy rain and hail in the federal capital, the roads are looking like ponds. A serious problem of water drainage, the rains controverts the CDA's tall claims.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan People's Party is a middle class party: Punjab Governor

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Punjab Governor Sardar Salim Haider Khan was greeted with a warm welcome by showering flowers on his arrival at the public meeting of the Pakistan People's Party in Jand.

Addressing the meeting ceremony, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that I am very grateful to you for gathering here and honoring me. Elected, which is an honor for generations to come, the child governor of Attock

Pakistan People's Party is a middle class party. On the vision of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, a small zamindar was made the governor instead of a farmer. Governorship is a challenge. We have to convince ourselves to work for the country and the people



of Punjab.

I salute you

For the first time, you met good people who respected you. PPP is a party of martyrs and workers. Many big people in PPP took ministries and

went away. It is necessary to beautify the generations.

Governor Punjab has done digitization for engineering university campus for tehsil Jand. Inshallah the classes of the university campus

will be started from the month of September.

While the friends of the Muslim League always criticized the performance, those who have been in power since the creation of Pakistan have been moving around the Dialysis Center in Pandigheb with the support of the benefactors instead of government expenditure.

But it is obligatory to take steps to build NICD hospital for victory war. May Allah give me the courage to take steps for you. From the meeting, the leader of Constituency PP 4 Pindigheb Sardar Rashtat Khan Sudhriyal, Hanma Malik Asghar Khan of Constituency PP 5, Sardar Saifdar Khan Advocate Sardar Faizan Khan, the son of Governor Punjab, also spoke on this occasion and thousands of party workers participated #

Sardar Attique rejects Indian PM Modi's visit to occupied Kashmir

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/DHIRKOT: President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that the Kashmiri people reject Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit. Salt is equal to the wounds of Kashmiris. Kashmiris will continue to struggle against the occupation of India till the achievement of independence. He said while talking to the workers at Mujahid First House Ghaziabad. He said that millions of Indian troops are terrorizing in Jammu and Kashmir and innocent Kashmiri youth are being martyred. At present, human rights in occupied Kashmir are serious. Violations are on the rise every day innocent youths are being killed. Atrocities and terrorist acts have increased dramatically. Kashmiris have been facing curfew sanctions since August 5, 2019. The special status of Kashmir has also been abolished by eliminating 35A. We reject Indian Prime Minister Modi's visit to occupied Kashmir. India has always been using various tactics to deprive Kashmiris of the right to self-determination through oppression and India has abolished Kashmiris' right to self-determination and UN resolutions. From a visit to occupied Kashmir, it has started the reform process for the people of Kashmir which will give the people of Kashmir a praise and praise will be the destiny of Modi. Citizens' murderer and an attack on the identity of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is an imperialist ruler.



Holy Mass to commemorate martyrs' sacrifices is in Faisalabad



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: On the occasion of the twelfth Sunday of the year in the Catholic Cathedral Church, under the leadership of Bishop Dr. Andreas Rehmat, the Holy Mass is benefiting from the Holy Sacrifice and spiritual message to the believers. All the martyrs who witnessed terrorism in the Holy Mass in particular, special prayers were requested for peace and security of the family of the soldier Haroon William who died in the Karam explosion and the family of the citizen who died in the police station on alleged blasphemy in Swat.

Faisalabad administration has played important role in keeping city clean on Eid-ul-Azha: Alhaj Naseer

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Central President of Cloth Board Ittehad Group Pakistan, Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra, while talking to the media, has said that Commissioner Faisalabad Silwat Saeed on the cooperation of the security and district administration, especially the Deputy Commissioner, to keep Faisalabad city clean on this Eid-ul-Azha. RPO, CPO, CO of Municipal Corporation and MD Waste Management Company Faisalabad have played a full role in the leadership while Administration of Faisalabad has also played their role in the right way. On the occasion of this Eid-ul-Adha, the arrangements made for cleanliness, especially in the big cities of Punjab, were very good.

This was the reason why the atmosphere was not foul on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha in all small towns and villages. This is the first time in the last five or six years that the administration has been seen acting in this manner on the occasion of sacrifice. The manner in which the government has been active in the matter of cleanliness on this Eid-ul-Adha and the relevant institutions are seen working means that the manpower is there, the resources are also there, and at the same time cleanliness is maintained across the province. There are resources to be had but this capacity and resources are not utilized, these resources are not taken advantage of, all these organizations and their employees may be receiving free salaries and doing work for someone else. live Whatever you say, but on this Eid al-Adha, the Punjab government has succeeded in keeping the province clean.



Performing Hajj brings peace to the heart. Alhaj Abdullah

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Every year on the 8th to 12th of the Islamic month of Dhu'l-Hijjah, Muslims come to visit the city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia and perform the special worship there. The rituals are called Hajj.

In the religion of Islam, Hajj is obligatory for every able-bodied adult Muslim once in his lifetime. Muhammad Nadeem Vohra Chairman Excise and Taxation and Vice President Anjuman Tajran City Sikka Group Faisalabad Alhaj Abdullah Nawaz Vohra Central Senior Vice President Cloth Board Etihad Group Pakistan in his office after performing Hajj.

He told the media while welcoming him. He has further said that obligatory Hajj has five conditions: The first



condition is to be a Muslim, Hajj is not obligatory on non-Muslims and it is

not permissible for them to perform Hajj rituals.

The second condition is common sense, Hajj is not obligatory on a mad madman. The third condition is puberty, Hajj is not obligatory on a minor child.

The fourth condition is freedom, Hajj is not obligatory on slaves and slaves. The fifth condition is affordability. The meaning of affordability is that Hajj is obligatory only on those people who have the physical and financial ability to do it (if there is a woman, Sharia Muharram is also required). On this occasion, Abdullah Nawaz Wahar has said that during the Hajj, I prayed for the health and safety of Khawaja Shahid Razaq Sikka and also prayed to Allah for its improvement in the business downturn in Pakistan.



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Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:14 am
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Asr 5:11 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:06 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

Islamabad Art Gallery to organize a reference in memory of Mansoor Rahi on June 28

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Art Gallery (IAG) would organize a reference in memory of Mansoor Rahi, a celebrated artist whose recent passing left an indelible mark on the global art landscape.

To commemorate his legacy and contributions to the world of art, Head of IAG, Prominent artist and Former Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah said that IAG would organize a special event for the remembrance of Mansoor Rahi.

He said that the event would be attended by prominent artists who shed light on Rahi's life and career.

Mansoor Rahi was the leading abstractionist painter of Pakistan and his teaching and influence have led to the emergence of a larger number of prominent artists than any other teacher artist.

In earlier years of his career Mansoor Rahi caught eye for cubism paintings and adopted the discipline in his paintings. It is clearly dominant in his previous series. However Mansoor Rahi painting style has changed on various stages of his life.

From 1969, his style changed, though it was evolving in the same direction.

PM's aide lauds Punjab CM for enforcing plastic ban, urges other CMs to follow the suit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam said that imposing of ban on plastic bags in the Punjab by the Provincial Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was a long-awaited move to deal with hazardous effects of plastic on the environment and human health.

The PM's aide said in a press statement on Sunday that now, that the Punjab chief minister has enforced a comprehensive ban on manufacturing, distribution and sale and purchase of plastic all over the province in its strict form, we also urge other provincial governments to follow the suit so as to make Pakistan plastic-free country.

"Achieving plastic-free Pakistan is an extremely challenging goal, but it is possible with coordinated efforts by all provincial governments to completely ban manufacturing, distribution and sale and purchase of plastics in its all forms and manifestations at all levels,"

Romina Khurshid Alam remarked.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif enforced the province-wide ban on plastics on June 5, a move deliberately coincided with the World Environment Day marked every globally on the same day.

The Punjab chief minister had announced weeks before that the provincial plastic ban policy would be strictly enforced, particularly in hotels, restaurants and eateries, citing the detrimental effects of plastics on the environment and public health and stating that "No to Plastic" campaign is core of the anti-plastic policy, which aims at reducing environmental pollution and promoting eco-friendly initiatives.

The PM's aide on climate change Romina Khurshid recalled that when the ban on plastics was being imposed in the Islamabad under a relevant law, all the provincial, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir governments were requested by the federal government to impose plastic bag in their respective



provincial and admirative territories as a part of the federal government's 'Plastic-Free Pakistan' campaign.

She emphasized that plastic waste has become a major source of various kinds of pollutants, contaminating land, water bodies and oceans and it takes hundreds to thousands of years to decompose, leading to long-term pollution.

Highlighting adverse impacts of plastics on the marine life, she PM's aide Romina Khurshid said that plastics in the ocean harms marine animals through ingestion and entanglement. Microplastics, tiny plastic particles, are ingested by marine organisms, entering the food chain and affecting biodiversity, she added.

She said further that the production and disposal of plastics contribute to climate changing greenhouse gas emissions. Because, plastic production relies heavily on fossil fuels and incineration of plastic waste releases carbon dioxide and other harmful gases.

"Developing and promoting/adopting the use biodegradable plastics, adopting recycling technologies and alternative materials would significantly mitigate the negative impacts of traditional plastics in our lives," Romina Khurshid suggested and added, the present PM Shehbaz Sharif-led government is committed to weeding out plastics from our environment and making efforts to adopted the afore-mentioned solutions.

The government was already incentivizing the production and use of biodegradable and eco-friendly alternatives to plastic. Manufacturers and retailers are encouraged to transition to sustainable materials, with tax benefits and subsidies provided to support this shift, she highlighted.

Return

ISLAMABAD: Peoples coming back to twin cities after spending Eid holidays at their native towns.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Seminar on great martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and his companions

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Under the auspices of Tehreek-e-Ittehad-e-Ummat Pakistan, a seminar was held at a local hotel in Islamabad to commemorate the lofty goals of the Union of Islamic Ummah and to pay homage to the great martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ibrahim Raisi and his companions, while presenting a tribute to the resilient mujahideen of Palestine. Speaking at the seminar, the organizers emphasized that President Ibrahim Raisi was an exemplary leader for the world's leaders. He was extremely ascetic, humble, and hardworking, who despite orphanhood, poverty, and a challenging life, rose through hard work and served his people. Through public service, he became a beloved leader of the Iranian people. His demise left millions grieving; he was a scholar and wise leader, foreseeing the future. He clarified Pakistan's position



on the Palestinian cause and demonstrated leadership in challenging imperial forces. The organizers concluded that presenting homage to Shaheed Ibrahim Raisi means fulfilling his work and mission completely. Among the attendees were Agha Majid Mashki, Director of Cultural Relations Iran, Chairman of Tehreek-e-Ittehad-e-Ummat Pakistan Syed Anjad Hussain Naqvi, Deputy of the Royal Court Ali Ratah Hootar and Sajjada Nashin Bari

Imam Pir Syed Haider Gilani, Pir Ajaz Chishti, Khalifa-e-Mujaz Darbar-e-Aliya Pakpatan Sharif, Pir Azmat Sultan Qadri, former President of ARY News and senior journalist Abid Abbasi, Pir Muhammad Hasib Ahmad Nadiri, Pir Saeed Ahmad Naqshbandi, Allama Farhat Kazmi, and analyst Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director ISI. Special guest Agha Majid Mashki, Director of Cultural Relations, Iran, said in his address that the Islamic Revolution of Iran stands against oppressive regimes worldwide. Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Revolution, declared America the world's greatest terrorist. Iran was subjected to the killing of seventy thousand people, but Iran thwarted all these deadly plots and emerged victorious despite all the challenges and constraints, including sanctions. Today, we are manufacturing missiles and drones, astonishing colonial powers. Iran will stand with the oppressed of the world with full force. The source of all these successes lies in the teachings of the Holy Quran. Chairman of Tehreek-e-Ittehad-e-Ummat Pakistan Syed Amjad Hussain Naqvi said that President Ibrahim Raisi was a shining star in the entire Islamic world. He was a brave man. Pakistan's unconscious rulers did not have the power to address this courageous leader in the joint parliament. Syed Ibrahim Raisi was a leader of broad vision

Domestic and International 400,000 Over Tourists Visit Galiyat During Eid-ul-Adha Holidays. Shahrukh Ali

Sohail Abbasi

ABBOTTABAD: Director General Galiyat Shahrukh Ali Said During the Eid-ul-Adha holidays, more than 400,000 tourists visited Galiyat, including foreign tourists from several European countries and China. Over the five days of Eid-ul-Adha Holidays, more than 400,000 tourists entered Galiyat, and more than 50,000 vehicles arrived from across the country.



The guests were warmly welcomed by GDA field staff, Abbottabad police, tourism Department police, and the district administration Of Abbottabad. Tourists visited various attractions, including Miranjani Peak, Mushkpuri Top, Pipeline Trek, and enjoyed adventure activities at various parks in Nathiagali.

On the direction of Director General Galiyat Development Authority (GDA) Mr. Shahrukh Ali GDA field staff was available 24/7. The GDA control room operated in collaboration with the Tourism Department Police and Rescue 1122 to ensure an enjoyable and peaceful vacation for the tourists and to assist them in any difficulty or emergency.

Prior to the Eid-ul-Adha vacation, public wash rooms were made functional as part of tourist facilitation, water supply was operational for tourist needs, and waste bins were installed at various points to ensure Galiyat remained clean. Sanitation staff was deployed along all roadsides to maintain cleanliness and keep Galiyat green.

In collaboration with the Traffic Police Abbottabad, GDA implemented a parking and traffic management plan to avoid any traffic hurdles for tourists and the local community, ensuring a smooth flow of traffic during the Eid vacation.

PTDC launches campaign to promote responsible tourism in the mountain areas of Pakistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), in collaboration with Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan (STFP), has initiated a comprehensive public awareness campaign aimed at promoting responsible tourism in Pakistan's mountainous regions.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of PTDC, highlighted that the campaign seeks to raise awareness among tourists regarding eco-friendly practices when visiting Pakistan's breathtaking mountain areas. He emphasized the detrimental impact of irresponsible tourist behavior, such as littering, which not only harms the natural environment but also jeopardizes the local cultural heritage and traditions.

"While tourism has brought economic benefits to local communities, it has also led to environmental pollution, resource depletion, and overcrowding," Mr. Rana noted. "Our campaign, themed 'Let's Green our Summer Vacations', aims to educate tourists on the principles of Responsible Tourism. By adhering to our guidelines and code of conduct, tourists can minimize their footprint and ensure that socio-economic benefits reach local residents."

The joint initiative by PTDC and STFP includes the development of guidelines disseminated through various media channels, including print, electronic, and social media platforms. These guidelines outline practical steps for visitors to preserve the fragile natural ecosystems and respect local cultures. Aftab ur Rehman Rana also proposed that provincial governments implement robust waste management systems at tourist sites and enforce strict anti-littering measures, including fines, to curb environmental degradation caused by tourism activities.

Pakistan's Begging Dilemma

The Print reported in 2024 that more than 4 lac beggars moved to Karachi merely during the Holy month of Ramzan. The beggary system, a phenomenon having deep socioeconomic and cultural roots, is an ongoing concern in Pakistan, it does not reflect the nation's economic inequalities and inefficiencies but also poses significant challenges to social welfare and urban administration.

Beggaring has a long history in South Asian societies, where charity was seen in both pre-Islamic and Islamic cultures as a noble deed. But what was formerly intermittent and accepted in culture has now become a widespread socioeconomic problem. Over the decades, rapid urbanization, population growth, and economic challenges have contributed to the proliferation of beggary in Pakistan, now it becomes a profession rather than a necessity for pickpocketing in the name of poverty and Muslim-brotherhood.

According to Dawn, there are an estimated 38 million beggars out of 245 million of Pakistan's population. On average, a beggar in Karachi collects around Rs2,000 per-day, compared to Rs1,400 in Lahore and Rs950 in Islamabad. The national daily average stands at Rs850 per beggar. Another recent report reveals that these beggars collectively extract Rs32 billion daily in the name of charitable donations from the public pocket. It amounts to a shocking Rs117 trillion annually, which is approximately \$42 billion. Additionally, the Overseas Ministry of Pakistan has reported that a significant number of beggars are moving abroad. In 2023, 90% of beggars arrested in foreign countries had identified as Pakistani origin.

The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-24 reported that the unemployment rate in Pakistan stands at 6.3% in 2024, with an unemployment population of 4.51 million that is significantly higher. Moreover, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), reported in May 2024 that the inflation rate soared to over

11.8%, however it is only documented but the real figure is extensively high. Similarly, this ratio was the highest recorded 29.18% in 2023 making it difficult for many households to survive. These economic conditions provide fertile ground for the enhancement of the beggary system in the country.

A survey conducted by the Punjab government in 2021 estimated that there are over 10,000 beggars in Lahore alone, with similar numbers reported in other major cities. This data highlights the extensive reach of the issue, affecting not just the individuals directly involved but the broader urban population as well.

Beggary system complicates urban management and planning. Public spaces like parks, markets, mosques, shrines, and transportation hubs often

become hotspots for beggars, affecting the usability and attractiveness of these areas. Beggars are frequently treated with a mixture of contempt and sympathy that lead them to be further marginalized. This humiliation impedes efforts to integrate them into society and address their underlying issues, while beggary itself does not significantly strain the economy. Additionally, the presence of organized begging syndicates diverts potential economic contributions from more productive activities.

Various initiatives have been undertaken by the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to address beggary. Pakistan Baitul Mal was established in 1992 to alleviate poverty through various initiatives, including providing support to the destitute, widows, orphans, individuals

with disabilities, and other vulnerable members of society. Laws such as the Punjab Vagrancy Ordinance (1958) and the Sindh Children Act (1955) exist but are often inadequately enforced. Insincerity, corruption and lack of resources hinder effective implementation to prevent such activities. In Punjab, the government has established Child Protection Bureaus to rescue child beggars and provide them with education and psychological support. These institutions work in collaboration with law enforcement agencies to dismantle begging organizations that exploit children.

Similarly, the government has established rehabilitation centres and vocational training programs aimed at reintegrating beggars into society. However, these efforts are often unsuccessful due to inadequate funds and poor administration. Moreover, numerous NGOs work to provide food, shelter, education, and healthcare to beggars. But unfortunately, they are unsuccessful in erad-

icating the curse of the beggary system from society. It has been observed that the state does not have serious intention to eliminate such a curse from society because the state itself has benefited from such activities.

To address these challenges, a multi-faceted approach is required such as enhancing the capacity and integrity of law enforcement agencies to demolish organized begging networks and enforce existing laws. Implementing policies to reduce unemployment and inflation and expanding social safety gains to support vulnerable populations. Allocating more resources to rehabilitation programs and ensuring their proper management and accountability. Educating the public about the negative impacts of giving money directly to beggars and encouraging donations to reputable charities instead.

Writer is Post Graduated from NIPS, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He can be reached at aliasad326@gmail.com



Analysis

Asadullah Mahesar

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**
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 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
 Email: spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

Goodbye to Freedom of Speech and Expression

Yesterday (22.06.2024), the Prime Minister read a statement during a high-level apex meeting held to seek his approval for the new and updated National Action Plan. He read the written statement placed before him verbatim, whereas he usually prefers to speak extempore using lofty words that often recycle. Part of his statement, loaded with expressions that have future consequences on freedom of expression, speech, and press, conveyed the message of upcoming laws, rules, and regulations intended to further curb the already limited freedom of expression, speech, and press in the country, despite being unrelated to curbing terrorism.

Unlike his usual self, he ensured that he read each and every word placed before him. He stated, "For a long time, Pakistan's social space has been bloodied by enemies of the country to create conflict among our people, spread confusion, and distort and stigmatize the national narrative, bringing, God forbid, disrepute to the country. Under the constitution, everyone has freedom of speech and freedom of expression, but it's wrongful use, flouting and tearing apart the constitution, and spewing venom against Pakistan's progress, development, security, and stability could not be a bigger crime against the nation and the country."

The key word used here is "enemy." The enemy could be foreign countries, our immediate neighboring countries, foreign intelligence agencies, or it could be those Pakistanis who allegedly were blamed for attacking the armed forces' installations on May 9th. In plain terms, this includes PTI leadership considered as masterminds, the workers, supporters, and activists who abetted, facilitated, and

executed the attacks, and all those political activists who are criticizing the government and armed forces of Pakistan on social media from within the country and outside the country.

If this is the scenario, then all the foreign governments and foreign agencies and Pakistani expatriates operating outside the country, who allegedly are poisoning the social space, will be outside the jurisdiction of the purported new laws, rules, and regulations. Therefore, for all practical purposes, these laws will be made only for those Pakistanis who are still residing within the country.

Common logic dictates that the people of a country, no matter how gravely and contemptuously the sitting government and its institutions perceive them, should not and cannot be termed as enemies. Therefore, the Prime Minister should have used proper and appropriate vocabulary while distinguishing foreign elements hostile to the country and domestic critics.

He could have rephrased it as follows: "While foreign adversaries seek to undermine our nation's stability, we must also consider the impact of domestic actions that can weaken our collective resolve. Criticism is a fundamental right enshrined in our constitution, but when it crosses the line into spreading misinformation and inciting division, it becomes detrimental to our progress and security. Therefore we will introduce measures to target the malicious use of media by those seeking to harm Pakistan's interests, both externally and internally."

Another question which arises is that

given the existence of over 52 laws that directly and indirectly govern the media, and which have already granted extraordinary powers to both Federal and Provincial governments to control traditional and social media, often using brute state power to target journalists and media persons without following official procedures, and considering that Pakistan is already ranked 150th out of 180 countries on the Freedom of Press Index, what additional powers and actions does the government thinking to acquire by enacting new laws?

Hypothetically, presuming that the government might be thinking of introducing the National Media Regulation and Accountability Act aimed at enhancing licensing and registration requirements for all media organizations, including digital platforms. The licensing process could involve stringent vetting criteria to ensure compliance with national security standards, granting the government greater control over which entities are allowed to operate.

One component of the act could be to require all media outlets, including social media platforms, to implement government-approved content moderation tools to filter and remove content deemed harmful or seditious in real-time.

Additionally, media organizations could be required to submit periodic reports on their content moderation activities to a central regulatory body enabling the government to maintain oversight of media content and ensure that potentially harmful information is swiftly addressed. The act may also include national secu-

riety and public order clauses that criminalize the dissemination of any content which criticizes the armed forces and government. Violations would result in severe penalties, including heavy fines, suspension of licenses, and imprisonment for responsible individuals to serve as a deterrent against the publication of content that the government deems harmful. The government may establish a National Media Oversight Committee comprising government officials, security agency representatives, and select civil society members aligned with the government's interests to enforce regulations, issue fines, and recommend the suspension of licenses.

Additionally, the government would fast-track the establishment of special media courts to handle cases of non-compliance swiftly and to ensure that actions against media entities are executed efficiently, minimizing delays in enforcement.

Government in partnership with technology firms is and will invest in advanced surveillance and content analysis technologies to monitor media activities comprehensively to further strengthen the government's oversight mechanism and maintain robust control over media content ensuring that national security and public order are maintained.

While these measures would enable the government to control and filter content that it perceives as contemptuous and against its vested interests, they would simultaneously gravely wound one of the most important pillars of the state: the media, an indispensable pillar of a vibrant and functional democracy.

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

Global conflict, natural disasters drive record displacement

A senior UN official has said that there are twice as many internally displaced people today as there were ten years ago – the largest numbers ever recorded.

Robert Piper, the Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement, said that the current global figure of 76 million represented those who have "lost their homes, livelihoods, their communities and in some cases, their legal identities, because of wars, disasters like earthquakes and floods, and other weather-related disasters."

Internally displaced people (IDPs), unlike refugees, have not crossed international borders. While some return home relatively quickly, tens of millions get trapped in long-term displacement of five to ten years or longer.

This protracted displacement is typically the result of conflicts and war, it was pointed out. Meanwhile, millions more are displaced due to natural disasters as floods, storms, earthquakes, and wildfires ravage countries around the world.

The most recent figures gathered by the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) revealed that 68.3 million people remained internally displaced due to conflict and violence. An estimated 9.1 million people were displaced within Sudan, the largest internally displaced population ever reported.

This was followed by Syria (7.2 million), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (6.7 million).

In war-torn Gaza, more than eight in 10 people have been displaced, amounting to 1.9 million civilians. Haiti has also experienced record levels of displacement, with 600,000 people forced to leave their homes, double from last year.

Meanwhile, civil strife in Myanmar has left the vast majority of the three million IDPs there without proper shelter, and without access to food and water, according to independent UN expert Paula Betancur.

Addressing the Human Rights Council in Geneva on Friday, Ms. Betancur also cited a lack of accountability for human rights abuses as a key driver of displacement, while calling for the Human Rights Council's Member States to acknowledge the "individual stories of loss, resilience and hope" behind the record numbers of displaced.

While the UN's humanitarian teams helped as many as 50 million IDPs last year, Piper has called for more to be done to create sustainable solutions.

The Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement aims to break this long-term displacement pattern and create durable solutions, to better prevent new displacement crises from emerging and to ensure those facing displacement receive effective protection and assistance.

The Agenda set out 31 concrete commitments, and 22 different UN agencies have signed up for it. Piper also appealed to Member States to create an intergovernmental forum to address the issue in a more cross-sectional way, rather than relying too heavily on the work of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).



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

Positive Steps towards Regulating Social Media - I

In the era of abundant information, propaganda emerges as a formidable tool employed by diverse actors to shape narratives, sway public opinion, and tarnish the reputations of nations and their armed forces. Motivated by political agendas, ideological leanings, or vested interests, propaganda campaigns wield significant influence, sparking discord, fostering distrust, and unsettling societies. It is crucial to discern and counteract the clandestine dissemination of misinformation aimed at smearing countries and their military establishments.

Country's armed forces often find themselves at the forefront of propaganda onslaughts. Entrusted with the crucial task of defending national security and upholding state sovereignty, these institutions frequently face false portrayals aimed at undermining their integrity, professionalism, and dedication. Such propaganda endeavors might distort military endeavors as unwarranted aggression, depict soldiers as oppressors or aggressors, or propagate baseless conspiracy theories to erode public faith in the armed forces. Yet, it is imperative to differentiate between legitimate critique and malicious propaganda. While constructive criticism acts as a constructive force for accountability and improvement, propaganda thrives on distortion, manipulation, and deceit, aiming not for dialogue but for division and distrust. By

conflating criticism with propaganda, adversaries aim to discredit genuine concerns and obscure reality. Furthermore, propaganda against a nation's armed forces often transcends mere misinformation, employing psychological warfare tactics to demoralize troops and diminish civilian support. By vilifying soldiers, propagandists seek to sap the morale of both military personnel and the general populace, weakening resolve in defending against external threats and preserving national sovereignty.

In today's interconnected digital sphere, social media platforms serve as bustling hubs of discourse, where information circulates freely, and voices from all walks of life resonate. However, this digital realm is not impervious to manipulation and exploitation, as evidenced by the rampant spread of anti-state and anti-military propaganda across these platforms. From twisted narratives to outright fabrications, the proliferation of such propaganda poses a substantial challenge to national security, public confidence, and societal harmony. The accessibility and anonymity facilitated by social media platforms provide fertile ground for the swift dissemination of anti-state and anti-military propaganda. With just a few clicks, individuals can propagate incendiary content to wide audiences, amplifying misleading narratives and fostering skepticism towards government institutions and

military forces. This ease of dissemination empowers malicious actors, including foreign adversaries, extremist factions, and disinformation networks, to advance their malevolent agendas via social media. A pivotal driver behind the propagation of anti-state and anti-military propaganda on social media is the virality of content. Sensational or emotionally charged posts tend to attract more attention and engagement, prompting algorithms to prioritize their dissemination across users' feeds. This phenomenon, termed algorithmic amplification, fuels the rapid spread of false or misleading information, heightening societal tensions and eroding trust in democratic institutions. Moreover, the echo chamber effect prevalent on social media platforms exacerbates propaganda proliferation by reinforcing existing biases and polarizing perspectives. Users often tend to be drawn to content that reinforces their existing beliefs or ideologies, fostering self-reinforcing bubbles where misinformation can thrive without challenge. This trend not only exacerbates societal rifts but also renders individuals more vulnerable to manipulation by propagandists who exploit these susceptibilities. Additionally, the spread of anti-state and anti-army propaganda on social media is facilitated by a lack of transparency and accountability in content moderation processes. Despite platforms' efforts to combat misinformation and hate speech, enforcement mechanisms often prove inadequate, allowing harmful content to evade detection.

To be continued



Analysis
Abdul Basit Alvi

Tourists flock to Galiyat on Eid days amid great fun, laughter

Fakhar-e-Alam

Amid hide and seek between the sun and clouds over Thandyani hills, tourists thronged to Galiyat to enjoy pleasant change in the weather during Eid days in the picturesque mountains resorts of Pakistan.

Arrived with cooked food, fruits and tents for camping at the picturesque Thandyani resort, Zeeshan Khan's family, an employee of the KP government department, was rejoiced after visiting their dream tourists' resort to enjoy trekking and adventure sports during Eid holidays.

Enjoying the national song "Dil Dil Pakistan" along with his children and other family members on his music system, Zeeshan Khan and his brother Ehtisham Khan were busy in hammering and fixing tents' bolts at a suitable place at Thandyani to spend few days in its relaxed environment without any charge.

Like Zeeshan Khan, hundreds of thousand families and tourists arrived at northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially Malakand and Hazara divisions including Galiyat and Thandyani on Eid days to explore its waterfalls, gushing rivers, Saiful Malook, Ansoo, Dudipath and Mahoodhand lakes and colonial era tracks besides enjoying the expansive trout fish and water boating in River Kunhar at Kaghan and Khanpur dam at Hariapur.

"Despite recent rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces, the response of tourists, adventurers

and adventure sportsmen in Malakand and Hazara during Eid holidays was very impressive," Saad Khan, the spokesman of Cultural and Tourism Authority told APP.

He said thousands of tourists and adventure sports enthusiasts visited Malakand and Hazara divisions during vacation of Eid exploring its breathtaking beauty. Dir Upper, Malam Jabba Swat, Galiyat including Thandyani and Nathiagali, Chitral Lower including Kaslah valley and Kaghan and Naran including Saiful Malook and Ansoo lakes in Manshera district were the most visited destinations during Eid holidays.

He said that domestic tourists' response to Swat during eid days was higher than last year due to enhanced roads infrastructure and Swat Expressway. Tourists families from other cities including Karachi, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore have visited Swat in large numbers during Eid days due to better roads connectivity and enjoyed trout fish besides water rafting and paragliding in Kalam.

Tourism has started growing in KP due to better roads connectivity. To promote sustainable tourism, Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZ) would be developed at Mankiyal Swat, Thandyani Abbottabad, Ganol Manshera and Madaklasht Lower Chitral.

These ITZs would be constructed with an assistance of the World Bank. ITZs Thandyani and Mankiyal would be connected with Swat and Hazara motorways through link roads that would open up entire Malakand and Hazara for tourists and make Pakistan

a hub of international tourism.

KP government had signed 44 memorandum of understanding worth USD 8 billion with international firms during Dubai Expo 2022. To promote skiing sports, the government has taken a principle decision to establish ski resorts at Kaghan, Chitral and Swat.

Four new hill stations including one each in Chitral and Abbottabad besides two in Kaghan would be developed.

The spokesman said construction of four colonial era tracks between Thandyani-Nathiagali having 8,200 feet height, Thandyani-Biringali track, Dagri Bangal-Meera Jan-Nathiagali track and Kaghan-Mahmnoor track starting from Singkayari to Kund Bangla and onward to Shaheed Pani Nadai Bangla to Musa Ka Musllaha were in pipeline.

Waterfalls is a big source of attraction of tourists and the government decided to develop Lamchar, Sajkot, Noori, Chajjan Hariapur, Jarogo Swat, Lanchar Dir and Umbrella Abbottabad waterfall on modern lines to bolster ecotourism.

Jarogo Abshar, Sulatar Swat, Lashkargas Broghal and Surlapur Shandur in Upper Chitral, Kumrat Dir Upper, Kalam, Lilowani and Alpuri Shangla, Samani top Hangu/Orakzai, Laram top and Bin Shahi in Lower Dir were selected for establishment of new camping pods.

Besides construction of the theme park at Hundi Swabi, he said the government policies have helped improve Pakistan's international travel from 89 to 83 in the international place and tourism development index, which was a great honour for the country.

Uzbekistan: a focus on promoting reading

Ramzidin Nuridinov

Libraries play a key role in education, culture, and community development, providing an invaluable resource for accessing knowledge, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting intellectual growth. In the modern information society, they remain an important institution that promotes the education and self-development of people of all ages.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasised during the opening ceremony of the People's Library under the President of the Republic of Turkey in Ankara: "Intellectual potential, high morale is what makes a nation strong. The source of this invincible power is books and libraries – the great invention of mankind".

At the present stage, education has become one of the most important areas of state policy. The government of the Republic of Uzbekistan pays special attention to the development of this sphere, recognizing its key role in the prosperity of the country. In recent years, the republic has achieved significant success in the educational domain. These achievements are aimed at modernizing the system, improving the quality of education and training, and expanding access to education for all citizens of the country.

At the same time, special attention is paid to the promotion of reading and the fostering of the reading culture of the population. And in the Presidential Decree adopted on September 13, 2017, "On the program of comprehensive measures to develop the system of publishing and distributing book products, improving the culture of reading", clear goals are outlined for the creation

of an effective system of information and library services to the population, which served to move this area to a new stage of development and contributed to raising the level of social and information culture and the role of libraries, made it possible to develop and implement modern innovative and educational technologies that increase the competitiveness of Uzbekistan in the world market.

In addition, the Presidential Decree "On further improvement of information and library services for the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted on June 7, 2019. The main goals of the decree are:

- improving the regulatory framework in order to ensure high-quality social guarantees to the population for information and library services;
- development of information and library institutions taking into account modern requirements;
- promoting the sustainable development of information and library services for the population in the regions;
- strengthening the material and technical base of information and library institutions;
- development of public-private partnerships in the library sector, a network of private and electronic libraries;
- expanding cooperation with Internet resources that specialize in distributing electronic books to improve the efficiency of libraries and the efficiency of servicing (including paid) users;
- ensuring the safety of information and library institutions and the safety of information and library collections as part of the national and world cultural heritage;
- formation and enhancement of the information culture of society, sustain-

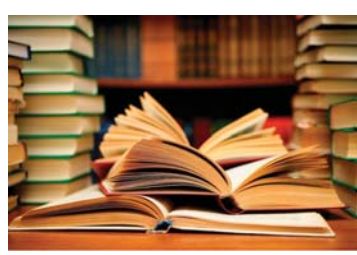
able interest in national history and culture, enhancement and promotion of a reading culture;

- staffing information and library institutions with qualified specialists.

The adoption of this decree expands the range of services in the country, including access to electronic resources and holding cultural and educational events, as well as improving staff qualifications and introducing modern methods of user service. In addition, these changes not only contribute to the development of the information society and economic growth by attracting investment in education and culture, but also promote the formation of a literate and informed society, which is an important step in the development of the country.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers dated December 14, 2020 approved the National Program for the Development and Support of a Reading Culture for 2020-2025, which includes the publication of quality books that meet the spiritual, educational, artistic and aesthetic needs of the population; supporting the activities of publishers and artists, publishing children's literature; translation of the best examples of national and world literature; simplification of the organization of book sales; improving the delivery system for newly published books and distribution of information sources; expansion of international cooperation in the field of online ordering of foreign work, their delivery and distribution.

In turn, it should be noted that within the framework of the "Uzbekistan-2030" Strategy, special attention is paid to the popularization of masterpieces of Uzbek and world literature. The country's leadership strives to instill in citizens a love of reading and ensure access to libraries and



information services for everyone.

The Strategy "Uzbekistan-2030" puts forward such main goals as increasing the number of young book lovers to five million, the annual creation of 100 works of art and 50 books for children and adolescents, the publication of the multi-volume book "Uzbek adabiyoti khazinasidan" ("From the Treasury of Uzbek Literature"), the 100-volume book "Jakhon Bolalar Adabiyoti Durdonalari" ("Pearls of World Children's Literature") in Uzbek, as well as the digitalization of a book fund of almost 40 million books.

On November 28, 2023, there was signed the Presidential Decree "On measures to implement the project "A Thousand Books for Youth", aimed at creating a system for translating books popular in the world into Uzbek, that contribute to increasing the intellectual and scientific potential of the younger generation.

At the same time, within the framework of the "Olympiad of Five Initiatives", the following 5 projects in the field of reading and intellectual games are annually implemented: "Young Reading Family", "Poetry Competition", "Young Reader", the intellectual game "Zakovat" and the project "Example of Foreign Languages". These projects increase the interest of young people in reading books and help expand logical thinking and knowledge through intellectual games.

The "Young Reader" and "Young Reading Family" competitions are important events held to promote reading, the spiritual enrichment of youth, and increase their intellectual potential. This competition serves to increase interest in books among young people and expand their knowledge and horizons.

Also, within the framework of the project "A Thousand Books for Youth", the Agency for Youth Affairs will have to work on acquiring rights to use works from authors, translating them into Uzbek, and preparing for printing and publishing books on the basis of a state order and at the expense of the State budget (with the exception of books, published for state higher educational institutions).

Two stages have been established for translation into Uzbek and the publication of popular books in the world. First: a preliminary list of books is formed annually by the Expert Council. Second: the preliminary list is posted in the information systems of the Agency for Youth Affairs for selection by the population by voting, and thus the final list is formed.

The list of books published annually must include at least 20 percent of popular science works. The rights to the works prepared for publication will belong to the Agency for Youth Affairs, which will provide them free of charge to publishing houses.

It is also planned to create and ensure the continuous operation of a special mobile application that accumulates literature in the Uzbek language and provides the population with free access to a wide range of information. On the recommendation of the Expert Council, the works will be distributed to information and library institutions (including libraries of public and administration authorities),

and electronic versions will be donated free of charge to the Alisher Navoi National Library of Uzbekistan and the relevant institutions of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan for wide use by readers.

The necessary spiritual, legal, material, and technical basis has been created in the Republic to develop children's literature and improve the quality of textbooks and teaching aids. The country's publishing houses have increased the publication of works by authors of world and Uzbek children's literature. In accordance with a number of documents adopted to promote book reading, systematic measures are being taken in all regions to popularise literature among children and adolescents. Over the past four years, a number of presidential decrees and government resolutions have been adopted to guide the country's publishing, printing, and bibliographical information institutions.

Thus, bibliographical information services play a critical role in ensuring public well-being by providing citizens with easy access to information, knowledge, and culture. In addition, the development of digital services, collaboration with communities, and the use of new technologies strengthen the role of libraries as centres of learning, information, and communication. This helps to enhance the capabilities of people and stimulates their desire for education. The development of the potential of information and library services contributes to lifelong learning, self-improvement, cultural and spiritual enrichment of the population. This is of crucial importance for modern society.

Writer is Expert of the Development Strategy Center.

A precise, legal strike on 'Taiwan independence' separatists

Xinhua

BEIJING: With a set of judicial guidelines targeting diehard "Taiwan independence" separatists, China on Friday revealed a new weapon, precise and legal, to defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The guidelines on imposing criminal punishments on diehard "Taiwan independence" separatists for conducting or inciting secession were jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the ministries of public security, state security, and justice and took effect upon release.

The guidelines can be regarded as a refinement and supplement to the country's Anti-Secession Law. By clarifying the criminal nature of "Taiwan

independence" separatist acts, their criminal liabilities, and the procedure to impose penalties, it draws the bottom line and facilitates law enforcement. In the long run, it will undoubtedly play an effective role in advancing reunification across the Taiwan Strait.

This move came against a backdrop of escalating tensions across the Strait triggered by repeated separatist attempts made by those advocating "Taiwan independence," particularly since the island's new leader Lai Ching-te, who holds a stubborn separatist stance, took office in May.

This judicial document surely serves as a blow to Lai and his fellow separatists. It allows Chinese courts to bring diehard "Taiwan independence" separatists to trials in absentia. In the most severe cases, a convict may receive death

sentence.

It also acts as a warning and deterrent to external forces who would not keep their hands off affairs related to Taiwan. Those who are found to have colluded with any foreign or overseas institution, organization or individual in conducting or inciting secession, would be given a harsher punishment.

Despite being a stern action against separatists, the document draws a clear line between a few stubborn separatists and the rest of Taiwan people. Under the influence of the "Taiwan independence" ideology and due to political differences between the two sides, some in Taiwan may have a misguided understanding of their identities and the nature of cross-strait relations. They are given chances to free themselves from misunderstandings and be aware of the harmfulness

and danger of separatist activities.

For over 70 years, although the two sides of the Strait have yet to achieve complete reunification, China's sovereignty and territorial integrity have never been divided.

The historical facts and the legal ground for the facts that both sides of the Strait belong to one country and people on both sides of the Strait belong to the Chinese nation have never changed and will not change.

A peaceful and prosperous future for people on both sides of the Strait hangs on a strong and reunified nation. In order to facilitate reunification, separatists must face criminal prosecution.

High hopes are placed on people of Taiwan to have a clear mind, weigh the pros and cons, and stand on the right side of history.

Non-Fiction: A History of The Era

News Desk

Autobiographies of men of stature are not just descriptions of the events that took place in their lives but also of the era they lived in, along with an analysis of those events. And they also serve as documents that complement the history of that age.

Such is the autobiography of Mahmood Shaam, a veteran journalist and poet, with over 60 years of experience in the news media.

Titled Shaam Bakhair, this voluminous book of more than 800 pages tries to capture 80 years of Shaam's life. It begins with him saying in the first few pages that he finds nothing beautiful in his childhood, which 'normally' is a joyous and beautiful time in one's life. But that is understandable in his case, as his childhood witnessed severe trauma during the 1947 partition of the Subcontinent.

And as it is about the important events of the life of a journalist having such vast experience, the autobiography naturally contains information and facts that are important and not known by most people.

Shaam's story begins with his migrating to Pakistan in 1947. He writes about sitting in the bogie of a freight train along with his mother, which had been forcibly halted. They heard shouts of a riotous mob from either side and soon there was blood everywhere. But there was also respite, he says, as it was a journey from slavery to freedom which, however, still remains a dream for him in this country, as we learn later in the book.

Shaam's family arrived in Lahore and settled down in Jhang, a city where he received his school and college education, and which played a big part in shaping his personality and laying the foundations for his career as a writer and journalist. Gradually, despite difficult financial circumstances, he managed to get into Government College Lahore (Government College University now) and, during this time, he also got his first job, as a proof-reader.

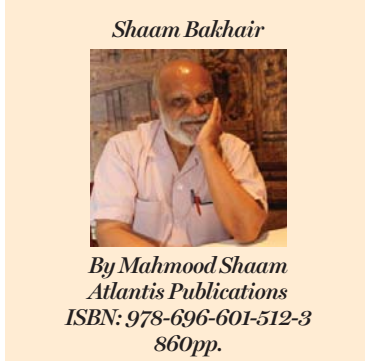
As he was quite interested in reading and writing from the very beginning, Shaam started writing for Urdu magazines. And so gradually began his career in journalism, a journey from being a sub-editor at different newspapers to becoming a reporter and, finally, the editor of Jang, the largest and one of most influential Urdu news publications of the country.

During his career, he saw both highs and lows, which he documents in some detail. He also remained connected with many influential personalities of the time. And being a journalist of such stature, Shaam also interviewed a number of prominent personalities from within Pakistan and abroad. He also travelled in multiple countries in

[77] years together, we [the people of Pakistan] are still very far away from each other. The distance is the same as it was in August 1947. It is a painful reality."

As a journalist, Shaam also visited East Pakistan during its turbulent relationship with the western wing of the country, and has included in the book a chapter about it that is worth reading. It can be helpful especially for those who are interested in doing research on the events and happenings that led to the 'fall of Dhaka.' The events described by Shaam are his own personal observations.

Censoring newspapers and barring their sale in certain areas was a common practice during dictatorships



Shaam Bakhair
By Mahmood Shaam
Atlantis Publications
ISBN: 978-696-601-512-3
860pp.



all continents, which are detailed in the book and sometimes makes it read like a sort of a travelogue.

As for his analysis and opinions in the book, he makes us aware, from the very beginning, of how powerful people and the 'establishment' took hold of the country and its affairs. They did what suited them best and have been doing so ever since.

Shaam also talks about how religion was brought into the country's politics, how it was misused and how all of that brought issues such as extremism, violence and polarisation in society. Furthermore, all of those issues were left unresolved, he says – the negative effects of which the Pakistani nation is still facing.

In a chapter on violence based on ethnic and linguistic issues, particularly in Sindh, he draws a disheartening conclusion as he writes: "After spending

in Pakistan and Shaam has written about how the media coped with such issues.

There are two sections on the Mutta-hida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and its leader Altaf Hussain's rise and fall, in which he talks about the violence that took place in Karachi. Shaam's opinion is that Karachi was deprived of competent leadership and made unstable just because of wrong policies and the carelessness of those in the corridors of power.

Shaam also questions, at different points, the legitimacy of the armed forces' intervention in politics. He has quoted a speech by former president and prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that he delivered at Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's mausoleum on September 11, 1971. During the speech Mr Bhutto is quoted as saying: "Ae mere Quaid, bata ye jarnailon ki

Ambassador Amna holds meetings with women professionals, community, chartered accountants



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Amna Baloch on Saturday held meeting with the Pakistani women professionals in Luxembourg and acknowledged their professional acumen.

She also assured embassy's commitment to support their endeavours, Pakistan Embassy in Belgium posted on X.

Ambassador Amna holds meetings with women professionals, community, chartered accountants

Separately, the embassy convened a consular camp for the facilitation of Pakistani community in Luxembourg. The ambassador addressed queries of the community during the Khuli Katcheri and ensured redressal measures. The ambassador also met with Luxembourg based representatives of chartered accountants of Pakistani origins and discussed the institutional approaches for the organizing the financial professional community in Luxembourg, showcasing of Pakistani talent in the financial sector and strengthening of diaspora linkages with the stakeholders, another post on X said.

Jamate-Islami protests against the increased electricity rates: Dr Safdar Hashmi

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Under the auspices of Jamaat-e-Islami Multan, on the appeal of Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Hafiz Naemur Rehman, like across the country, in all small and big cities of South Punjab, including Multan, the Jamate islami workers protested against the increase in electricity rates, inflation and increasing load shedding, the fake government came. Slogan against IMF and Federal and provincials Budget Expensive electricity rates Load shedding, slave government of IMF and IPPs must go home now. This system of oppression is destroying the country. Privileges of the elite should be abolished and relief should be given to the people. Amer-e Jamaat-e-Islami District Multan Dr. Safdar Hashmi address to the protestors, and media talk, organized by Jamaat-e-Islami Multan, a protest was held in front of the Multan Press Club against the increase in electricity prices and severe load-shedding. Hafiz Aslam, Mian Asif Ikhwan, Khawaja Asim, Dr. Khalid Rashid and others were also present on this occasion. Addressing the protestors, Dr. Safdar Hashmi said that there is lawlessness in the country, the fake government has failed to provide relief to the people and is the first in the slavery of the IMF. Pakistan is actually ruled by two dynasties, PML-N and PPP are two sides of the same coin, they accuse each other during the day and enjoy joint bar bq parties at night.

Power cut causes flight chaos at UK's Manchester airport

LONDON: Manchester Airport, the third-busiest in Britain, cancelled over 100 flights affecting thousands of passengers Sunday following a major power cut.

At least 20% of all outgoing and incoming flights were cancelled, a Manchester Airport spokesperson said, adding that it expected further disruption.

Earlier aviation analytics firm Cirium said 66 departures and 50 inbound flights had been cancelled with easyJet experiencing the largest number of cancellations.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
78,810.49	78,801.53
Day's High	Day's Low
80,059.87	78,169.02
Index Value	Change
15,054,633,137	+8.96
Percentage	Time
+0.01%	21 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,237.72	-34.74
Percentage	Time
-0.42%	21 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,145.08	+10.32
Percentage	Time
+0.026%	21 Jun, 1:11 pm GMT-4

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.98	748.98
Canadian Dollar	202	204
China Yuan	38.4	38.8
Danish Krone	40.15	40.55
Euro	294.3	297.9
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.7	917.7
Malaysian Ringgit	59.07	59.67
New Zealand \$	170.98	172.98
Norwegians Krone	26.38	26.68
Omani Riyal	723.75	731.75
Qatari Riyal	76.53	77.23
Saudi Riyal	72.85	73.6
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.68	26.98
Swiss Franc	315.21	317.71
Thai Bhat	7.59	7.74
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.8
UK Pound Sterling	352	355.5
US Dollar	277.8	280.7

Elites again given safe passage in this budget, masses squeezed

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Sunday that many conditions of the IMF have not been fulfilled in the recent budget, due to which the acquisition of new loans may be in danger.

He said that allocating 1400 billion rupees to the developmental schemes is tantamount to cruelty to the people.

Relief could have been given to the people by cutting unnecessary development projects, but this will not be done due to political reasons.

Talking to the business community Shahid Rasheed Butt said that last year, 950 billion rupees were earmarked for development projects, of which not even half could be spent.

Still, Rs 1400 billion has been allocated this year to reward the favourite politicians, busi-



nessmen, and bureaucrats. Direct taxes have been given excessive importance, which will increase poverty and misery, while the reduction in government expenditure has been neglected, and expenditure has been

increased massively.

Politically motivated development projects will reduce government revenue, which will not be acceptable to the IMF, he observed.

Several hundreds of billions of rupees of concessions have been given to industries, which clearly violates the commitments made to the IMF.

He said that making essential items expensive and giving safe passage to the elite is against the country's interests, which should be considered.

He noted that how the government continues to take money from regular people to enrich state employees is ridiculous.

For instance, the national assembly and senate's combined budget increased by 101 percent, from Rs 9.9 billion in 2022-2023 to Rs 19.98 billion.

Not only is a 25 percent pay boost for government workers planned, but the state has also

chosen to provide them with loans and advances to increase their financial capabilities further.

This amount is currently budgeted at Rs40 billion, a 300 percent increase from Rs10 billion in last year's budget.

The projected debt-servicing figure, at Rs 9,775 billion, is almost 150 percent higher than the 2022-2023 budget, with domestic debt servicing standing at Rs 8,736 billion, an increase of 154 percent from 2022-2023.

The fact that negative policies based on self-serving attitudes have created a financial void for Pakistanis and future generations. The rulers responsible for the situation are bent upon damaging the economy for political purposes.

If interest rates were to fall, those in power would be able to borrow even more money so that they could continue to spend it on themselves while issuing flowery statements for the masses, he said.

Price hike

ISLAMABAD: Vendors selling vegetables at Sector G-10 Sunday Bazaar in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Vegetables, pulses, fruits, milk and meat are far from the reach of white people

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sarfaraz Mughal, a prominent social and business leader, while discussing the recent situation, has said that the burden of foreign debt and its interest has badly affected our country and people due to which petroleum products, electricity, basic necessities like gas, medicines have become so expensive that their because the price of everything is skyrocketing, inflation has made it impossible to breathe, government spending is also contributing to this process, no one has any plan to eliminate the country's debts and the country is swamped by



inflation.

No one has any plan to give Sikh breath to the trapped masses. Economists are busy trying to serve the public by creating new methods in taxes, electricity, gas, medicines and petroleum products.

Meat etc. has gone away. It is time for the government to think about it

SCO Launches Rawalakot's Premier Software Technology Park

Bureau Report

POONCH: Special Communications Organization (SCO), in collaboration with University of Poonch, introduced its latest marvel in digital world - the Software Technology Park in Rawalakot, inaugurated today. The ceremony was led by Major General Umar Ahmad Shah, HI(M), Director General of SCO, with esteemed guests and academic professionals in attendance.

Managed by SCO, the third premier IT Setup in AJ&K, Rawalakot Software Technology Park aims at catalyzing the region into a hub for startups, tech companies, and research institutions, fostering collaboration and innovation within an advanced IT ecosystem. The IT setup will create jobs for AJ&K's youth, enabling them to acquire specialized IT skills and bolster local workforce. Additionally, it will spur economic growth and prosperity in region and contribute to country's overall development.

In his inaugural speech, Major General Umar Ahmed Shah, HI(M), DG SCO,



stated, "The Software Technology Park Rawalakot, third in AJ&K alongside seven more Freelancing Hubs of SCO, underscore our resolve to facilitate creativity & innovation. These set ups provide robust IT

environment, create job opportunities, and foster socio-economic benefits in remote areas. I am optimistic about the positive impact of this initiative for empowering youth and boosting local economy."

Cement exports increase 40.46% to \$236.797 mln in 11 months

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The exports of cement witnessed an increase of 40.46 per cent during the first eleven months of the financial year 2023-24, as against the exports of the corresponding months of last year.

The cement exports from the country were recorded at US \$236.797 million during July-May (2023-24) against the exports of US \$168.583 million during July-May (2022-23), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

In terms of quantity, the exports of cement also surged by 66.78 per cent going up from 3,707,427

metric tons to 6,183,117 metric tons, according to the data.

Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the exports of cement also witnessed an increase of 78.23 per cent during the month of May 2024 as compared to the same month of last year.

The exports of cement from the country during May 2024 were recorded at US \$32.251 million against the exports of US \$18.095 million in May 2023.

On a month-on-month basis, exports of cement also increased by 28.62 per cent during May 2024 when compared to the exports of US \$25.074 million in April.

PFC demands strict action against timber mafia

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) has urged the government to take decisive action against the timber mafia to protect the wealth of country's forests.

Highlighting the rampant illegal cutting of trees and logging, the PFC Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq told media men here Sunday that the timber mafia is a threat to Pakistan's ecological balance and emphasised the urgent need for strict enforcement of forestry laws and the implementation of sustainable practices. He urged the government to strengthen the legal framework governing forestry and enhance the capacity of enforcement agencies to effectively combat illegal logging.

This includes deploying more forest rangers; utilizing modern surveillance technology; and imposing major penalties on those found guilty of illegal



timber activities, he added. Moreover, the council called for the promotion of reforestation and afforestation initiatives to restore degraded areas and improve forest cover. He said through concerted efforts and strong policy interventions, Pakistan can protect its natural heritage and promote sustainable development.

The furniture sector, which relies heavily on timber, is also affected by the activities of the timber mafia. Illegal logging disrupts the supply chain, inflates raw material costs, and undermines the efforts of businesses committed to sustainable practices.

Kashif Ashfaq noted that supporting legal and sustain-

able timber sources is essential for the long-term viability of the industry and the conservation of forests. He stressed the importance of raising public awareness about the impact of deforestation and encouraging community participation in forest conservation efforts. He said the council believes that Pakistan can safeguard its forests for future generations.

The CEO said forests are a vital natural resource, providing numerous ecological, economic, and social benefits. They play a crucial role in carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and climate regulation, however, the unchecked activities of the timber mafia have led to significant deforestation, posing severe environmental risks. The PFC feared that if these destructive practices are not curbed, the country could face grave consequences, including increased soil erosion, reduced water quality, and loss of wildlife habitats.

Xinhua

BEIJING: The overall brand strength of Chinese companies has increased by 17 percent from 18,035 to 21,150 year-on-year from 2023 to the first half of this year, reaching a new high in history, according to the Kantar BrandZ 2024 Chinese Global Brand Builders report.

Jointly compiled by the international market research firm Kantar and Google, the report, released on Thursday, surveyed global consumers from 11 international markets on their opinions about Chinese global brands. The brand strength scores were calculated, taking into account three major factors: meaningful, difference, and salient.

Grades of "meaningful"

and "difference" for each brand are calculated based on the feedback of surveyed consumers. The "salient" is calculated by combining consumer behavior data, including traffic to a brand's official website, the number of active users of a brand's App, and the brand's search index on Google and YouTube.

The significant increase in the overall brand strength of Chinese companies highlighted the vitality of Chinese brands in the global market, said Doreen Wang, CEO of Kantar Greater China and global chair of Kantar BrandZ.

Wang also noted that the combination of China's industrial chain ecosystem and innovative technology has become a new competitive strength for Chinese global brands.

Premium number plates to be auctioned on THIS date

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Sindh Excise Department will hold a 'historic auction' of premium number plates for vehicles to generate revenue from the choice number fee mechanism.

According to details, the Excise Department will hold a 'historic auction' of premium number plates on June 29 at a local hotel in Karachi. Interested participants can register now for the event.

The auction will feature premium number plates in the Platinum, Gold, and Silver categories. Representatives from car manufacturing companies have also been invited to the event, according to provincial minister Sharjeel Memon.

Premium number plates have unique features, such as personalised property that can be inherited, transferable to another vehicle, Computerised National Identity Card-based registration, applicable to any private vehicle, reusable on any vehicle, customisable colour shades for platinum numbers (except prescribed colours), and transferable to another CNIC for a prescribed fee.

The three categories are:

'Platinum' number plates have a maximum of three characters and a base price of Rs2 million.

'Gold' number plates have a maximum of five characters and a base price of Rs1 million

'Silver' number plates have a maximum of seven characters and a base price of Rs50,000.

Gold rates decrease by Rs.1,400 per tola

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The price of per tola of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,400 and was sold at Rs.241,500 on Saturday against its sale at Rs. 242,900 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 1,201 to Rs.207,047 from Rs. 208,248 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.189,793 from Rs. 190,894, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

Per tola and ten gram silver also went up by Rs. 100 and Rs. 85.76 and was sold at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$43 to \$2,320 from \$2,363, the Association reported.

Miller reprimanded for breaching ICC code of conduct

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: South Africa player David Miller has been handed an official reprimand for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during a Super Eights Group 2 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 against England at the Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium in St Lucia on Friday.

Miller was found to have breached Article 2.8 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "showing dissent at an Umpire's decision during an International Match."

In addition to this, one demerit point has been added to Miller's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in 24 months, said a press release.

The incident occurred in the 19th over of South Africa's innings. Miller played a full toss from Sam Curran and expected it to be called a 'no ball' for height. When it was not declared a 'no



ball', he showed dissent at the umpire's decision by signalling to review the decision when it could not have been reviewed.

Miller admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Jeff

Crowe of the Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Match Referees, so there was no need for a formal hearing.

On-field umpires Chris Brown and Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid, third umpire Joel Wilson and fourth umpire

Chris Gaffaney levelled the charge.

Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 per cent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points.

Afghanistan creates a new history after defeating Australia by 21 runs

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Afghanistan created history after defeating Australia by 21 runs in the Super 8 stage of the World Twenty20 Cup Cricket being played simultaneously in West Indies and America after an interesting match.

It is the first victory of Afghanistan against Australia in any format. The biggest upset and with this success, Afghanistan's chances of reaching the semi-finals have increased because Afghanistan will now face Bangladesh in Group One, as well as Australia's last match against India.

If India and Afghanistan win these matches, both will reach the semi-finals. There is also an interesting situation in Group 2. England has to play against America and the West Indies has a match against South Africa as well.

If both win their matches, West Indies can enter the semi-finals based on run rate. Likewise, if England and West Indies win the remaining two matches, then three teams - England, West Indies and South Africa - will have four points each. West Indies' emphatic win against South Africa means that if they lose by any margin, they will lead with a higher net run rate than South Africa.

Afghanistan's hopes of reaching the semi-finals remain, Afghanistan can create new history by defeating Bangladesh. Australia's Pat Cummins became the first to take two T20 World Cup hat-tricks during the Super Eight match against Afghanistan in Kingston, St.



Vincent.

It was the second hat-trick in two matches for Cummins, who took a hat-trick against Bangladesh in the previous Super Eight match. After dismissing Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan on the last ball of his third over, Cummins in the last over of the innings, he dismissed Karim Jannat and Gulbuddin Naib on consecutive balls and has created a world record in the World Cup. The first major upset of the Super 8 stage of the ICC T20 World Cup has come to light, Afghanistan avenged their World Cup 2023 defeat after defeating Australia by 21 runs.

The entire Australian team was bowled out for 127 runs chasing Afghanistan's 148 runs. At one stage when Maxwell was playing, victory was certain. MATCHES CATCHES WIN THE well-illustrated Afghanistan team who did superb fielding as well and did not miss catches.

In pursuit of the target, the Kangaroos did not have a good start, Travis Head was bowled by Naveen-ul-Haq for no runs in three balls, and T20 specialist David Warner could only score 3 runs. Captain Mitchell Marsh's resistance was limited to just 12 runs, Glenn Maxwell was the most prominent batsman who played an innings of 59 runs, and Marcus Stoinis' innings could not go beyond 12 runs. Adam Zampa scored 9 runs. Gulbuddin Naib was the outstanding bowler from Afghanistan who hunted 4 Australian batters, Naveen ul Haq also dismissed 3 kangaroos, Rashid Khan, Azmatullah Umarzai and Mohammad Nabi got one out each.

Australia won the toss and invited Afghanistan to bat first. Afghanistan scored 148 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in the allotted 20 overs. The openers from Afghanistan made a century partnership, but the partnership of 118 runs in 15.5

overs.

However, the team could not make a big score. Rahmanullah Garbaz scored 60 and Ibrahim Zardan scored 51 runs, Karim Jannat scored 13 runs. On behalf of the Kangaroos, Pete Cummins scored a hat-trick by scoring 3 players. Adam Zampa took 2 wickets and Marcus Stoinis took 1 wicket.

In the previous match, the Indian bowlers have continued their good performance in this tournament. Batting first, the Indian team made a big score of 196 runs in 20 overs, in response to which the Bangladesh team could only score 146 runs. Hardik Pandya and Kuldeep Yadav were the heroes of Team India's win. Hardik took a wicket with a half-century.

Team India defeated Bangladesh by 50 runs in a one-sided manner at the ground in Antigua. Batting first, the Indian team made a huge score of 196 runs in 20 overs, in response to which the Bangladesh team could only score 146 runs. Hardik Pandya and Kuldeep Yadav were the heroes of Team India's win. Hardik took a wicket with a half-century. Kuldeep Yadav bowled brilliantly and took 3 wickets for just 19 runs in 4 overs.

With a big win over Bangladesh, it is now certain that Team India will reach the semi-finals. Team India has won 2 matches and their net run rate is also amazing. Now the Indian team will face Australia on June 24. However, Team India will want to win this match as well, to stay on top of the points table, it can take advantage of it in the semi-finals.

Afghanistan's win over Australia spices up Group 1 semi-final race

A Sports

SAINT VINCENT: Afghanistan's stunning 21-run victory over Australia on Saturday has ignited the semi-final race of Group 1 of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 Super Eights.

Australia's victory over Afghanistan would have propelled them, alongside India, into the semi-finals of the ongoing mega event but the Asian side avenged their ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 defeat to make things tough for the former champions.

Inaugural champions India currently lead the Group 1 standings with four points in two matches and a net run-rate of +2.425.

Whereas, Australia, despite their loss against Afghanistan are second in the standings with two points in two games, ahead of Afghanistan, who boast a similar record but an inferior



net run-rate.

The upset brought Afghanistan back into contention to seal

their first-ever semi-final berth in Men's T20 World Cups as they now need to beat Bangladesh in

their last Super Eights fixture, scheduled on June 25.

If Afghanistan beat Bangla-

des and Australia lose to India then they, alongside India, would advance into the knockouts.

But if Australia defeat India in their remaining Super Eights fixture on June 24 they would be favourites to advance into the semi-finals regardless of the Afghanistan-Bangladesh fixture's result, considering their superior net run-rate.

Notably, India are all but certain to qualify for the T20 World Cup 2024 semi-final as a defeat against Australia would not dent their chances much unless the Mitchell Marsh-led side humble them with a hefty margin and Afghanistan blow away Bangladesh in a similar manner.

Mathematically, India can only crash out of the semi-final race if Australia and Afghanistan win their respective Super Eights matches with a margin of over 120 runs.

Pak athletes to participate in Children of Asia Games



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: A nine-member Pakistani athletics team is set to depart for Russia on Monday (June 24) to feature in the 8th Children of Asia Games, scheduled to take place from June 25 to July 7.

According to Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP) President Brig (R) Wajahat Hussain, Chaudhry Asghar Ali Gul will lead the team as Chief of Mission, while Madam Nazima Azhar Samdani will serve as the coach.

The team comprises seven talented athletes including Ghulam Murtaza, Muhammad Sharif, Iqra Riaz, Anaya Ahsan Feroze, Alina Asif, Zanoreen Qayyum, and Zarlina Wasim.

He said the team was selected through rigorous trials, and he was optimistic that the players will return home with medals after a stellar performance in the event.

The 8th Children of Asia Games will be held in Russia from June 25 to July 7, and Pakistan's participation is expected to be a significant milestone in the country's athletics history.

Top firms interested for premier football, futsal competitions

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Normalization Committee has announced that multiple reputable advisory firms and consultants have expressed interest in the bidding process for Mens, Womens and Futsal Leagues.

The PFF NC was looking to hire a Financial Advisory firm/consortium to conduct a bidding process for the award of rights to operate the Mens, Womens and Futsal Leagues, said a press release.

The enthusiastic response highlights the growing recognition to uplift the standards of football and futsal in Pakistan. The PFF NC had previously announced a call for proposals, inviting firms with significant expertise in legal, technical and financial domains to participate in the competitive bidding process.

The selected advisory firm or consortium will play a crucial role in conducting thorough market analysis, organising strategic pre-bid meetings, developing comprehensive financial models and evaluating bids to provide final recommendations to the PFF NC.

With categories for both men and women, the upcoming events would include a Men's Football League/Championship, a Women's Football League/Championship, and Men's and Women's Futsal Leagues/Championships. These initiatives aim to create a competitive environment for football and futsal in Pakistan.

The PFF NC encourages all interested firms to take advantage of the remaining time to submit their expressions of interest. Firms were invited to email their intent to PFF by July 8. Following this deadline, all interested parties will be invited to a preliminary meeting to discuss the final submission of their technical and financial proposals.

Donkey cart race held in Karachi to revive traditional sports



The position holders received their prizes from Mayor Wahab who stated the donkey cart racing is a part of Karachi's ancient and heritage. He appreciated the love of the people of Lyari for sports and their efforts to preserve their cultural heritage.

The mayor expressed his commitment to providing opportunities for youth to engage in positive activities through sports.

He further hailed the donkey cart race as a cherished aspect of Karachi's cultural heritage, praising the people of Lyari for keeping this tradition alive despite economic challenges.

He acknowledged their love for sports and dedication to preserving their cultural identity, which is deeply rooted in the port city's history.

Addressing the occasion, Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi emphasised the need to promote sports activities in the City of Lights, which will help provide positive opportunities for the youth of the metropolis.

Alongside the donkey cart race, the sports festival features cycle race, hockey tournament and other events, aiming to promote positive activities for the city's youth.

According to a commissioner's spokesperson, the event was fully funded by a private organisation. The sports festival has several other tournaments including tennis, squash, cricket and basketball.

Pakistan cricket team in crisis over off-field, T20 World Cup

Czechangez Khan Jadoon

The Pakistan cricket team's reputation has been marred by a series of controversies and disappointing performances, particularly in the ICC T20 World Cup. As they prepare to participate in the 2024 tournament in the USA, their history of inconsistent gameplay, off-field issues, and corruption allegations has led to a tarnished reputation in the cricket world.

Inconsistent Performance: Pakistan's performance in the T20 World Cup has been marked by unpredictability. They have struggled to maintain a stable lineup, with frequent changes in the squad and an over-reliance on veteran players. This lack of cohesion has resulted in disappointing losses, including a dismal performance in the 2022 T20 World Cup in Australia.

Off-Field Issues:

The team has been plagued by conflicts between players and the Pakistan Cricket Board

(PCB). The PCB has faced criticism for its poor management and lack of transparency, leading to tensions between the board and the players. This internal strife has negatively impacted the team's morale and performance.

Bowling Action Controversies:

Pakistan has faced scrutiny for their bowling action controversies. Several Pakistani bowlers have been accused of illegal bowling actions, leading to suspensions and fines. This has raised concerns about the

team's adherence to ICC regulations and their commitment to fair play.

Corruption Allegations:

Pakistan has faced allegations of spot-fixing and match-fixing. In the past, several Pakistani players have been implicated in corruption scandals, damaging the team's reputation and leading to a loss of trust among fans and the cricket community.

Security Concerns:

Pakistan's ability to host international matches has been compromised due to security

issues. The team has been forced to play home series in neutral venues, disrupting their preparation and affecting their performance.

Political Interference:

Political interference has also affected the team's performance. The PCB has faced government intervention, leading to changes in the team's management and selection policies. This has resulted in a lack of stability and consistency in the team's performance.

Lack of Investment in Domestic

Cricket:

Pakistan's domestic cricket structure has been neglected, leading to a lack of investment in grassroots cricket and a dearth of young talent. This has resulted in a reliance on veteran players and a lack of depth in the team.

Poor Leadership:

Pakistan has struggled with poor leadership, with captains and coaches failing to inspire the team and make strategic decisions. This has led to a lack of direction and an inability to

perform under pressure.

In conclusion, the Pakistan cricket team's reputation has been tarnished by a combination of inconsistent performance, off-field controversies, bowling action issues, corruption allegations, security concerns, political interference, lack of investment in domestic cricket, and poor leadership. As they prepare for the 2024 ICC T20 World Cup in the USA, the team faces an uphill battle to redeem themselves and restore their reputation in the cricket world.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Interior ministry approves deployment of FC in AJK

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has approved the deployment of the Frontier Constabulary (FC) in Azad Kashmir, following a request from the Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq.

During a meeting at the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad, the two leaders discussed the security situation and law and order in Azad Kashmir.

The meeting also touched upon the political situation and the budget for the new fiscal year in Azad Kashmir.

Interior Minister Naqvi assured the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir that the federal government will provide full support to maintain peace in the region and will work to improve security arrangements.

"We are fulfilling our promises to the people of Azad Kashmir," said Naqvi. "The Government of Pakistan stands

with the Azad Kashmir government and its people. We will provide all possible cooperation for the prosperity and development of Azad Kashmir."

Prime Minister ul Haq expressed his gratitude to the federal government for taking immediate action to address the issues.

The deployment of the FC is expected to enhance security measures and contribute to maintaining peace and stability in Azad Kashmir.

First human milk bank suspended after Dar-ul-Uloom fatwa

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's pioneering Human Milk Bank, established at the Sindh Institute of Child Health and Neonatology (SICHN), has been suspended following a new fatwa issued by Dar-ul-Uloom Karachi.

The suspension comes after the institute sought further guidance from the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) regarding the project.

The milk bank, which was launched with an initial fatwa from Darul Uloom Karachi, was designed to provide breast milk to premature infants who lacked sufficient maternal nutrition. However, a revised fatwa dated June 16, 2024, has led to the suspension of the initiative.

SICHN, in a statement, cited recent religious decrees from prominent scholars and Madaris as the reason for the suspension, stating their commitment to respecting religious and cultural sensitivities.

Karachiites protest against inflated bills, loadshedding

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Protests against loadshedding and overbilling erupted at 22 locations across the city, with the central protest taking place near the Kala-pull following a call by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI).

Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi, Munim Zafar Khan, addressed the main protest rally, highlighting the ongoing issues faced by Karachi's residents due to K-Electric's operations.

Munim Zafar Khan criticized the power distribution company, stating that despite promises of affordable electricity during privatization, the company has failed to deliver.

He pointed out that while the number of consumers has increased, K-E's production has decreased.

He highlighted that the citizens of Karachi are lack of electricity, gas, and water and questioned the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) recent stance against K-Electric, asking why they were silent before.

Police arrest 40 people involved in Swat lynching incident

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Authorities have decided to launch a large-scale operation to apprehend those involved in the Swat lynching incident, with 40 people already being arrested.

According to sources, police is using videos of the incident to make the arrests.

Police has already arrested four people on Saturday from Swat, including two brothers. More arrests are expected soon.

A mob had lynched a man and set him on fire after he was suspected of desecrating the Holy Quran in a Swat hospital. The mob had also set fire to a police station.

A case regarding the incident has already been filed including terrorism clauses.

China has asked Pakistan to 'put your house in order': Ayub

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub has claimed that China has asked Pakistan to make necessary reforms for national economic progress and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

"The Chinese minister, who visited Pakistan, has informed Pakistan that stability and security were important for CPEC. Such a statement explains that we have been asked to put your house in order," he said in his speech during the NA session on Saturday.

He was referring to the statement of Liu Jianchao, China's minister of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. At the CPEC Pakistan-China Political Parties Forum, he said that internal stability was essential for Pakistan's development. According to Ayub, three things were essential for regional autonomy: national unity, a credible defence capability, and a strong economy.

In his speech, he also wondered about the Inter-Services Public Relations' budget. "I had asked that the intelligence agencies, especially the ISI, should tell us where their budget is being spent"

Asif, Tarar slam PTI for opposing Operation Azm-i-Istehkam

Continued from Page 1

PTI's Gohar Khan said that the apex committee of any level cannot supersede the august House as Parliament was supreme.

"We want that despite strong reservations that strangers are sitting [on treasury benches] that Parliament's supremacy remains intact and any decision should be taken with this House's consensus and recommendation," he said.

For this reason, Gohar added that the PTI demanded that the federal government give an in-camera briefing to the House and that any action should be taken after the lawmakers' recommendation.

While speaking about the government's resolution, he said that there were some websites where blasphemy was committed every day and urged the government to take action against them.

Gohar advised the federal government to hold control of FIRs from the provinces as the latter were dependent on the Centre institutions to resolve the issue. According to the PTI chief, it was an issue of the federal government.

"I asked them to don't make it person-specific as you say that crowd should not lynch people, I asked them to add that any institution should not lynch us," he said and claimed that their members were being daily lynched.

PM's recent visit to China highly ...

Continued from Page 1

He said that the first corridor would be a 'corridor of growth' bringing rapid economic growth to Pakistan, and the second corridor would be a 'corridor of livelihood' under which socioeconomic programs would be developed, poverty would be eradicated, and jobs would be created.

Speaking about the third corridor, which he called the "corridor of innovation, we had a special focus on artificial intelligence (AI) and as everyone knows that the world was far away in this sector and China was also competing with the world, we would take advantage from Chinese's experts and make Pakistan more reliable and self-sufficient in this sector.

Solar Energy

AE Power chief says green energy can help Pakistan meet its energy needs



Spokesman Report

Rana Abbas CEO, AE Power said that Solar energy offers significant economic benefits. Shifting towards solar power can reduce Pakistan's dependence on imported fossil fuels, leading to a decrease in the foreign exchange burden. Additionally, solar energy creates new job opportunities in the installation, maintenance, and manufacturing sectors of the solar power industry. He talking to Daily The Spokesman via telephone from Munich, Germany

Rana Abbas Ceo AE Power is on the visit of Germany (Munich) to participate in Intersolar Europe World's leading Solar Exhibition

He said Pakistan has ideal climatic conditions for solar power generation, with over nine hours of sunlight in most parts of the country. Utilizing

just 0.071 percent of the country's area for solar photovoltaic (solar PV) power generation would meet Pakistan's electricity demand, according to the World Bank.

But currently, only 5.4 percent of Pakistan's installed power generation capacity of 39,772 megawatts comes from renewables like wind, solar and biomass, while fossil fuels still make up 63 percent of the fuel mix, followed by hydropower at 25 percent, according to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA).

Rana Abbas said as solar technology continues to evolve, the cost of solar panels and installations is decreasing, making it a more accessible and attractive option for both individual households and businesses.

Environmental sustainability is another major advantage. Solar energy production generates minimal pollution, unlike traditional fossil fuel-based power plants that emit harmful greenhouse gases and pollutants.

Embracing solar power can significantly contribute to Pakistan's efforts to combat climate change and create a cleaner environment for future generations. Furthermore, solar panels require minimal water for operation, a crucial consideration in a water-scarce



country like Pakistan.

Despite its numerous advantages, the current state of solar power adoption in Pakistan remains limited. High upfront costs associated with installing solar panels can be a barrier for individual households and small businesses.

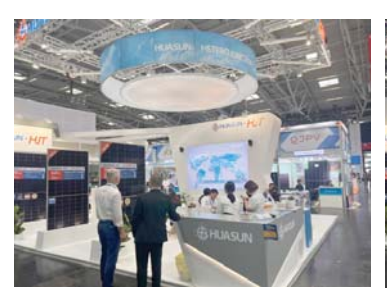
Limited access to financing options further hinders widespread adoption. Additionally, the lack of a robust net metering system, which allows individuals to sell excess solar energy back to the grid, discourages investment in solar solutions.

Furthermore, the existing power grid infrastructure in Pakistan faces challenges in integrating large-scale solar power generation. The grid requires upgrades and modernization to handle the fluctuating nature of solar energy production. A lack of awareness and education about the

benefits of solar energy among the public also impedes wider adoption.

To unlock the full potential of solar energy in Pakistan, a multi-pronged approach is needed. Government initiatives aimed at providing subsidies and tax breaks for solar installations can make them more affordable for individuals and businesses.

About AE power he said that "AE Power was established in 2012 with a mission to power Pakistan through alternate energy solutions. With an extensive experience of 350 MW of sales and over 1000+ installations across Pakistan; we work relentlessly to deliver sustainable, innovative and cost effective with the best industry practices at competitive prices. We work with a team of architects, engineers and electricians to provide our customers highly engineered turnkey solar energy solutions from kW to MW scale projects."



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Registered Office: AE Power/AE Solar
Head office: Near kangniwala bypass G.T Road Gujranwala, Pakistan
Phone: +9255 / 4555400
Email: info@ae-power.pk/abbas@ae-power.pk

CONTACT US

Rana Farhan- Director MENA & PAKISTAN | 0323-3182009
Rana.Farhan@huasunsolar.com | Pakistan@huasunsolar.com

www.huasunsolar.com
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