



Shehzad Roy requests PM Shehbaz to reverse sales tax on books

Renowned singer and philanthropist Shehzad Roy has said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif assured him that the decision to impose a 10% sales tax on books in the federal Budget 2024-25 will be reviewed. Taking to his X handle, the singer said that he also requested the premier and Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal to reinstate the 25% tax rebate for teachers.



Tax culture has to be made respectable: President FPCCI

President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Atif Ikram Sheikh, while talking about the budget anomalies, has said that 30% tax will be imposed on the money kept in the bank by non-filers, thirteen trillion rupees will be collected in a day. Expenses will have to be eliminated. Privatize everything in one year. We have proposed a five-line one-pager tax form. They should implement it. (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Zilhaj 18, Tuesday, June 25, 2024

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily_spokesman

Daily Spokesman Vol: 18, Issue: 73

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Interactive Session

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman Gates Foundation, Mr. Bill Gates in an interactive session in NEOC on Monday.



Photo: PID

PM Shehbaz, Bill Gates for continuing efforts to eradicate polio, strengthen health system

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chair of Gates Foundation Bill Gates on Monday agreed to continue working together to not only eradicate polio, but also to strengthen health systems across the provinces, and to ensure prosperity for all Pakistanis, especially women and girls.

During a meeting at the PM House, the prime minister reiterated the firm commitment to eradicating polio as it remained the highest priority for the government and emphasized that all resources of the state

would be employed to provide security to the polio workers.

"I will personally monitor national efforts until the crippling disease is wiped-out from our soil."

Bill Gates visited Pakistan at the invitation of the prime minister which he extended during his meeting with him in Riyadh on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum.

Welcoming Mr Gates on his visit to Pakistan, the prime minister updated him about the government's efforts to achieve economic stability and key advances in digital financial services, increased health

coverage, climate change adaptation and efforts to eradicate polio.

The prime minister deeply appreciated the Gates Foundation's valuable support for the government's initiatives to digitize the economy.

A digitized eco-system of the entire government structure would result in enhanced revenues that would help improve governance and the government would be able to spend more on public welfare schemes, he added.

PM Shehbaz underlined that both the Government of Pakistan and Gates Foundation shared many goals including closing

the gender gap, increasing health coverage, improving food security, climate change adaptation, and financial inclusion. He updated Bill Gates about key metrics of the progress made and the challenges faced in these areas.

Thanking the Gates Foundation for being the largest donor for the polio eradication programme, the prime minister outlined a robust and focused strategy to counter threats of increased wild poliovirus infections and the actions needed to overcome the challenge to completely wipe out the disease in Pakistan.

Bill Gates thanked the prime minister for his continued dedication and personal interest in eradicating wild polio from the country. He also expressed his confidence that with a sustained vaccination campaign and firm commitment of the government, polio eradication drive would get back on track to end polio following the recent surge in environmental detections.

Bill Gates also underscored how Pakistan's deployment of data science tools and digital technology were important resources to continue to improve the lives of Pakistanis across the country.

President Zardari appoints three judges to SC

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday approved the appointment of three judges to the Supreme Court, stated a notification issued by the Law Ministry.

According to the notification, President Zardari approved the appointments of Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi, Justice Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan, and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan as judges of the Supreme Court.

Following his approval, the Law Ministry released the notification confirming the appointments of the three judges. It is noteworthy that the Judicial Commission had recommended the appointments of these judges.

The oath for the three newly appointed judges in the Supreme Court will be administered by Chief Justice Qazi



Faez Isa.

The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) is a supreme body that recommends the appointment of judges to the SC and HC. Currently, 14 judges are discharging their duties in the SC.

The body is comprised of CJP as its chairman, two most senior judges of the SC and the two most senior chief justices of High Courts as members.

PTI 'committed suicide' by joining SIC, says CJP Isa

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa on Monday asked during SIC reserved seat case hearing why Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) committed suicide by joining the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC).

The Supreme Court (SC) full court headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa is hearing the SIC's plea against Peshawar High Court verdict on reserved seats.

During the hearing, CJP Isa remarked that they should remember the time when we gave them the election date, saying that "it was you (PTI) who tried to delay the elections and filed a petition in the Lahore High Court in this regard."

The Chief Justice also mentioned that a three-member bench of the Supreme Court had failed to conduct elections.

He pointed out that Imran Khan, the founder of PTI and Prime Minister, did not hold intra-party elections.

CJP Isa emphasized that the constitution is clear on

reserved seats and no judge can make decisions outside of the constitution. The Chief Justice said that either they should follow the law or throw it in the trash, and no one should not pick and choose which laws to follow.

CJP Isa asked asking why they would join another party if PTI is still considered a political party. "If this argument is accepted as true, then why did you commit suicide by joining another party?" the CJP remarked during a hearing.

SIC's lawyer, Faisal Siddiqui, argued that the ECP had wrongly interpreted the constitution and ignored the natural limits of constitutional interpretation.

The Chief Justice asked the lawyer to explain how the SIC could get reserved seats according to the constitution and the law.

Justice Jamal Mandukhel also questioned why reserved seats should be given to those who didn't even contest the election. Justice Irfan Saadat noted that the SIC's arguments would render the words in the constitution ineffective, as the SIC is not a political party.

Operation Azm-e-Istehkam will lead to more instability: Fazlur Rehman

Bureau Report

QUETTA: JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday termed the newly announced counterterrorism operation called Azm-e-Istehkam a 'destabilising initiative' that will further weaken Pakistan. Addressing a press conference here, the senior politician said that this is not Operation Azm-e-Istehkam but rather operation 'Adm-e-Istehkam', which he believes will make Pakistan even more weaken.

Fazlur Rehman stressed the equality of all citizens under the same national identity, asserting, "Our history is about fighting against slavery. Did we achieve Pakistan to be the slaves?"

He regretted that the state had almost no writ in the country, adding that the armed militant groups were carrying out operations in areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. He also castigated the 'one-sided decision' for launching another operation, asserting, "What is the Apex Committee? Democracy and Parliament have lost their case."

The JUI-F chief emphasised the need for a new approach to ensure Pakistan's stability and security. He also expressed concern over the growing divide between the people and the state, saying the government is treating its citizens as enemies.

Fazal announced that his party will launch a movement for the protection of Pakistan, which he said is facing internal and external threats. He also called for unity among political parties, saying they should put aside their differences and work together for the country's survival. The presser came after a meeting of the Central Apex Committee of National Action Plan, which was chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "The prime minister approved a reinvigorated and re-energised national counterterrorism campaign through the launching of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, with the consensus of all stakeholders including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, symbolising the national resolve to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement issued after the meeting.



Military operation as necessary as it was in past: Yusuf Gilani

Spokesman Report

JHELUM: Senate Chairman Yusuf Raza Gilani on Monday backed the newly announced counterterrorism operation 'Azm-e-Istehkam', saying that military operation to combat terrorism is as necessary as it was in the past.

Speaking to journalists here, the PPP leader expressed support for the military's actions in Swat and Malakand, saying there was no other option.

Gilani also praised the military's efforts in eliminating terrorism, saying that nearly two million people affected by military operations are currently living in camps.

The remarks came as opposition parties, including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), have opposed the Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, announced by the government to combat terrorism.

The launching of the operation was announced in a meeting of the Central Apex Committee of National Action Plan, which was chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

"The prime minister approved a reinvigorated and re-energised national counterterrorism campaign through the launching of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, with the consensus of all stakeholders including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, symbolising the national resolve to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement issued after the meeting.



Operation was not mentioned in apex committee, claims Gandapur

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has claimed that nothing was clear about the counterterrorism campaign Operation Azm-e-Istehkam as there was no mention of any kind of operation in the apex committee.

"A name 'Azm-i-Pakistan' was discussed in the apex committee, but the word 'operation' was not included with it. The committee had outlined a policy to eradicate terrorism. I want to meet the military leadership and talk about the operation," he told reporters in Rawalpindi on Monday.

"The discussion was about peace and security, and providing incentives."

On Saturday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved the reinvigorated counterterrorism Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

"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 in Islamabad on Saturday.

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

Gandapur clarified that he had not met with the army chief or the spy agency head and reiterated that he wanted to meet the military leadership to talk about the operation.

The provincial chief minister added that he had no contact with the federal government institutions. He alleged that former army chief General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa had a plan with PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif or the United States to topple the PTI government.

ANP also opposes Operation Azm-e-Istehkam



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: After PTI and JUI-F, the Awami National Party (ANP) also opposed Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, declaring it 'unacceptable' under any circumstances.

In a statement, ANP chief Asfandyar Wali Khan voiced opposition to the military operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), saying that the party has reservations and questions about the operation.

Khan said that the ANP has sacrificed more than anyone else in the fight against terrorism, but they cannot support the operation due to their concerns. He emphasised that a national action plan should be implemented before launching any operation.

He also criticised the presence of 'facilitators' in the province, saying that they are being given a free hand to operate. He mentioned the names of PTI founder Imran Khan, Qamar Bajwa, and others, alleging that they are behind the facilitation of extremist elements.

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

"The prime minister approved a reinvigorated and re-energised national counterterrorism campaign through the launching of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, with the consensus of all stakeholders including the provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, symbolising the national resolve to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement issued after the meeting.

Eid-ul-Adha cash prizes awarded to workers of Waste Management Company

Syed Nadeem Kazmi

MULTAN: On the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, cash prizes were distributed by the in honor of the Workers and officials of the Waste Management Company Multan for their excellent performance During Eid-ul-Adha Cleaning Operations. Organized a function in honor of the Workers and officials Of Waste Management Company and along with other social leaders Bau Jameel, Asif Mehmood Qureshi, Zulfiqar Haider, Saifur Rahman, Khurram Chand, Baba Taj, Zonal Incharge of Waste Management Company Sajjad Bhatta and other workers of Waste Management Company showed excellent performance.



cially Commissioner Multan Miss Maryam Khan, Director General Waste Management Authority Multan Shahid Yaqub and Deputy Commissioner Multan. He said that the way the officers of the Waste Management

Company, in which Anwarul Haq Anwar-ul-Haq and his staff have won the hearts of the people of Multan with tireless hard work regardless of the hot weather. This is unprecedented. And thanks

to this hard work, the dreams of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz have come true for a clean Punjab. West in Multan The chairman of the management company Mian Rashid Iqbal and other officials also pay tribute

On Eid-ul-Adha, Days. Political and Social leader Asghar Khan praised the efforts of Divisional and District Government Multan espe-

Drugs-free Pakistan guarantees bright future for coming generations: Shahid Ansari



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Shaor Development Organization under the supervision of Anti Narcotics Force Punjab and Multan. Officials of Anti-Narcotics Committee and Civil Society Forum Shahid Mahmood Ansari. Malik Muhammad Yusuf. Iqbal Khan Baloch Khawaja Yasin, while holding a press conference regarding the organization of the three-day World Anti-Drug Day celebrations, said that a drug-free Pakistan is actually very important for a better and bright future of the new generation, so to end the epidemic of drugs, we Everyone will have to fight together, especially the youth will have to protect their parents from this. Teachers, scholars and the media have to play a practical role in this regard to make the homeland drug-free. Events Consciousness Development Organization. Anti Narcotics Committee. And are being organized under the auspices of the Civil Society Forum. The purpose of these events is to awaken public awareness. Women and students will be organized at the community level to curb the growing trend of drugs. Because the dire situation regarding drug addiction in the country at the moment is that approximately 7.6 million people are currently addicted to drugs and only 30 thousand people have access to treatment facilities. Drug use is on the rise at an inexplicable rate, with 86 percent of boys and girls starting drugs because of the influence of their friends and groups, 90 percent because of academic pressure, and 88 percent because of curiosity, the report also stated. He said that the number of people suffering from drug addiction every year is 40,000 which is no less than an alarm bell. On the other hand, social organizations are also standing firm on the front of public awareness. Sahib. And CPO Multan also salutes the efforts of Mr. Sadiq Ali Dogar, who are doing for the treatment of drug addicts and their rehabilitation and rehabilitating addicts. He said that drugs in Multan To remedy the trends of various sports tournaments should be organized and the government should allocate maximum funds to populate the sports grounds and expand the facilities along with the expansion of the DRC.

Pakistan Cotton Ginners strike to ratify demands on cotton



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) has started a nationwide strike to approve the demands as per the decision taken in the general body meeting yesterday and the purchase of cotton (strip) has been stopped across the country. The association has displayed its list of demands on panaflexes and banners outside the ginning factories. The general body meeting of the PCGA has announced a nationwide strike until a new consensus is reached and the demands are jointly approved. According to the declaration of CGA, sales tax on Khul and Binola should be completely abolished. The increase in fixed charges on electricity should be withdrawn immediately. Considering the ginning sector as a core part of the textile sector, electricity charges should be imposed at a discounted rate. The policy of electricity (CONNECTION & DISCONNECTION) should be implemented as before and There should be no change in this policy. Fixed and capacity charges should not be levied during power disconnection. Excise, highways and property tax should be abolished from generating industry. NHA' highways tax should be collected from the ginning factories located on the highways according to their working days and vehicular traffic instead of the whole year basis and full implementation of the Cotton Control Act should be ensured in all cases.

LONGi Pakistan Celebrates Eid by Distributing Qurbani in Sanawan



Commerce Desk

SANAWAN, PUNJAB: In a heartfelt celebration of Eid-ul-Adha, LONGi Pakistan team proudly distributed Qurbani to the residents of Sanawan on the second day of Eid-Ul-Adha. This charitable act underscores LONGi's unwavering commitment to social responsibility and community care. Eid-Ul-Adha, a time of reflection, sacrifice, and generosity, provided the perfect opportunity for the LONGi Pakistan team to give back to the community. The distribution of Qurbani meat aimed to bring joy and support to local residents, ensuring that everyone shared and celebrated the spirit of Eid. "This act of sharing reflects our commitment to caring and giving back to the community. We are grateful for the opportunity to bring joy and support to those around us," stated Khalil Ur Rehman, Marketing Manager at LONGi Pakistan. "Wishing everyone a joyous and prosperous Eid filled with peace and happiness." The residents of Sanawan welcomed the gesture with warmth and gratitude, highlighting the positive impact of community-focused initiatives. LONGi Pakistan team's dedication to corporate social responsibility (CSR) continues to foster strong community relations and contribute to the well-being of society. LONGi remains committed to supporting and uplifting communities through various CSR activities. The Qurbani distribution event is a testament to the company's values and its mission to create a positive and lasting impact on society.

Extreme heatwave

KARACHI: Rescue workers at a mortuary shifting the bodies of the people who died of extreme heatwave in port city in last two days. 17 people have died across Pakistan, mostly in Provincial Capital, due to unprecedented heatwave in last two days.



Photo: Online

People's party lawyers celebrate the Benazir Bhutto Shaheed's 71st birthday

Syed Nadeem Kazmi

MULTAN: Senior Leader of Pakistan Peoples Party and former Judge and Former President High Court Bar Multan Habib ul lah Shakir, Advocate hosted in the District Bar Hall in connection with the 71st birthday of the first woman Prime Minister of the Islamic world and martyred Chairperson of the People's Party Ms. Benazir Bhutto.



The cake was cut. Addressing the anniversary ceremony, Habibullah Shakir, Advocate said that Pakistan is currently facing a serious economic and political situation. To solve these problems, we must seek guidance from the thoughts of Ms. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. He said that Mrs. Benazir Bhutto was a philanthropic person and not only felt the pain of the people of the earth but also tried till the last breath to solve them.

He further said that the history of People's Party is full of sacrifices. The trained party workers under his leadership are always striving for the stability and security of Pakistan. Inflation from the country. He is trying to end unemployment and injustice, he stressed on

the provision of basic rights equally to all the citizens of the country and added that the application of Article 25 of the Constitution to all sectors and institutions is indispensable for the stability of the country. Member of Pakistan Bar Council. Mirza Aziz Akbar Baig also

emphasized on the use of the political philosophy of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed for the country's problems and advised the young lawyers to play their role in establishing the supremacy of the Constitution in the country by adopting the thoughts and ideas of Mrs. Benazir Bhutto. He also paid tribute to the political struggle of People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto. General Secretary Anis Mehdi Zaidi. President District Bar Multan Imran Khakwani. General Secretary Syed Arif Hasan Shah. Nasheed Arif Gondal. Mian Muhammad Ashfaq Hussain Advocate Supreme Court. Syed Athar Shah Bukhari. Azim-ul-Haq Pirzada. Allah Nawaz Venus. Wasim Mumtaz. Javed Iqbal Ansari. Iqbal Mehdi Zaidi. Iqbal Sargana. Salim Shehzad. Shahbaza Dogar. Mehrooz Shakir Abdullah Tahir and other lawyers also participated.

Shah terms Modi's remarks regarding Kashmir as unrealistic

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINAGAR: Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party Shabir Ahmed Shah, while terming Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks regarding Jammu and Kashmir as unrealistic, has said that peace in the subcontinent was inescapably linked to settlement of Kashmir dispute in line with the UNSC resolutions. In his message from Tihar jail, the incarcerated leader, said that Modi's third term in the office as prime minister of India presents him a unique opportunity to resolve age-old disputes

and ease tension in South Asia. Urging prime minister Modi to cease this golden opportunity, Shah said that it was high time that the incumbent government should revisit its Kashmir policy and adopt a pragmatic approach to find out a peaceful solution to the Kashmir conflict that has been the main cause and consequence of unrest in the region. Rather than fomenting trouble in its neighborhood, Shah said that India must shun its hegemonic policy to



ensure peace and stability in the subcontinent. Commenting on Modi's speech he delivered during his recent visit in Kashmir, Shah, said that the Indian Prime Minister's attitude towards Jammu and Kashmir was unrealistic. He said that India must realize the reality that it cannot subdue Kashmiris by the dint of force. Referring to the Indian premier's speech, he said that Modi's mantra of peace and development in Kashmir was nothing but a fig leaf to cover its barba-

rism and brutality, loot and plunder of state resources. Terming the contents of the Indian Prime Minister's speech as far from the facts, Shah said, "Had the people of Jammu and Kashmir taken such things seriously, hundreds of thousands of young and old Kashmiris might not have embraced martyrdom nor would have they been suffering in prisons today." Terming freedom from India's illegal occupation as the only way forward, Shah said that Kashmiris have burnt down their boats. Kashmiris, he said, have never accepted the India's illegal control over their motherland.

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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:15 am
Zohr	12:10 pm
Asr	5:11 pm
Maghrib	7:22 pm
Isha	9:06 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7

Budget Anomalies

Tax culture has to be made respectable: President FPCCI

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Atif Ikram Sheikh, while talking about the budget anomalies, has said that 30% tax will be imposed on the money kept in the bank by non-filers, thirteen trillion rupees will be collected in a day. Expenses will have to be eliminated. Privatize everything in one year. We have proposed a five-line one-pager tax form. They should implement it. Five crore people will come into the tax net. We don't want a non-filer category, just a filer category. It is necessary that the business community stands with the country and the nation. The businessman-friendly scheme is good, but the non-bailable warrants are reprehensible. The tax culture has to be made respectable.

Patron Chief Aptama and former caretaker minister Gohar Ijaz said that the solution to the country's problems is not with the IMF, but with the businessmen and industrialists. Banks should first deduct 30% on the non-filer's money, then withdraw the money from the bank. When it is 30% for businesses, why is the

non-filer's money kept in the bank safe from it? Terminate the agreement with IPP, we will bear the consequences. We will take it, otherwise everyone will die. Bring the business community together. We will build a transmission line for you. In the country, electricity is being sold at 60 rupees per unit. No one can buy electricity at 60 rupees per unit. IPPs contracts should be converted to take and pay. The contracts of IPPs should be terminated, two thousand billion rupees are being paid in terms of capacity, electricity transmission lines have not been installed in the country, will those who make such wrong policies be punished? Debts will not end by taking more loans but by setting up industries, by increasing exports, by adopting a tax culture. Even with sixteen percent tax to GDP, we are not getting enough. We don't see any action on how the costs will be reduced. The demand of the federation is that if they are imposing so much revenue on us, then the government should reduce its expenses to 4.33 percent of tax to GDP. The interest rate in the region is up to seven percent. Please be assured that the interest rate will not be more than twelve percent next year. Thirteen



trillion tax will be given by the business community, but the government will have to make important decisions. If agricultural land is a provincial matter, then the federal usher system should be

adopted. On this occasion, Pattern Chief UB SM Tanveer, Senior Vice President Saqib Fayyaz Magu, Vice Presidents Zaki Ejaz, Tariq Jadoon, Aoun Ali Syed,

Chairman Capital Office Karim Aziz Malik, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail Hussain, Mian Zahid Hussain, Ahmed Jawad, Habibullah Zahid and others were also present.

Anjam Aqeel demands inclusion of locals in CDA board

ISLAMABAD, JUN 24 (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz's Anjum Aqeel Khan said on Monday that local representatives should be included in the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Housing Foundation boards.

While participating in the general budget debate, he said that representation on these boards would hopefully enhance the performance of the departments.

He said that the stalled development of CDA sectors would accelerate with these incentives.

Highlighting issues of water, health, and education in the federal capital, he urged the government to address these issues as a priority.

He called for a parliamentary committee to be constituted to examine who has worked for development, good foreign policy, and the construction of motorways and roads.

New Development

ISLAMABAD: Electric Buses have been allocated for different routes, Bus stop sign boards mentioning the timings and Feeder Route numbers as FR-1,2 been erected on different points in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Reception in Honor of Maintenance, Water Supply Wings, and Sanitary Staff of FGEHA

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Director General of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), Captain (Retd) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, held a reception to honor the Maintenance, Water Supply Wings, and Sanitary Staff who provided their services during Eid-ul-Adha in Islamabad's Sectors G-13 and G-14/4. He expressed his appreciation for their dedicated efforts in ensuring uninterrupted water supply and sanitation services to the residents and allottees during the festive period.

In his address, Captain (Retd) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal emphasized the significance of the staff's contributions towards the dignity and progress of the Housing Authority. He commended the successful implementation of the zero water shortage operation, which involved the provision of one million gallons of water during Eid to meet the residents' needs. This achievement, he noted, has strengthened the residents' confidence in the institution.

The Director General assured that all employees and officers serving the Housing Authority sectors and honorable allottees will continue to receive recognition and encouragement at all levels. He stated that the performance of the relevant sections will be closely monitored during the months of July and August, with potential honorariums awarded for continued excellence.

AIOU celebrates Golden Jubilee

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has completed 50 years of its educational journey (1974 to 2024). Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, had decided to celebrate the Golden Jubilee by organizing 24 events throughout the year (January to December 2024). In this regard, seminars, conferences organized by various departments, alumni ceremony, education expo and Islamabad, Punjab and KPK chapter of convocations were held. Convocation of Balochistan and Sindh chapters is in the pipeline.

A two-day International Conference on Modern Trends in Chemistry was held on February 14 and 15, a two-day International Conference on Research and Practices in Education on February 28 and 29, while a three-day International Conference on Ijtihad Bil Maqasid was held on May 22-24, 2024. The 37th annual international conference of Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) will be held on October 15-17, in which more than 100 vice-chancellors, rectors, professors and around 250 national-level education experts and researchers of open universities of Asian countries will present papers. The 2nd International Conference on Cultural Dialogue is being held on 2nd and 3rd July 2024.

Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said that till now more than 50 lac students have been graduated from AIOU and there is hardly a household in Pakistan that doesn't have a student from Open University. On the Golden Jubilee of the AIOU, Dr. Nasir Mahmood has expressed his determination that we will play an active role in bringing the out-of-school children into the educational network.

ABHI Partners with MasterCard to Enhance Financial Accessibility

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mastercard, a global technology company in the payments industry, has partnered with ABHI, an embedded finance platform, to introduce the Mastercard-enabled Salary Advance Cards for the first time in Pakistan.

ABHI users will be able to order this card via the ABHI app, 24/7 call center, or through the HR departments of their associated companies, enabling them to access earned salaries conveniently. This collaboration will enhance the accessibility of international and domestic online payments for ABHI's Earned Wage Access (EWA) users.

At the core of this partnership is a joint commitment to empower individuals and drive positive transformation in Pakistan's financial landscape, marking a milestone in the development of payment infrastructure. By leveraging Mastercard's technology, ABHI will enrich its products



and services to ensure safe and quick transactions for its users. As the two companies unite to advance financial wellness across the region, this partnership signifies a leap toward fostering a

secure digital economy.

"While the digital economy is revolutionizing the financial landscape of Pakistan, we at ABHI are dedicated to empowering individuals and businesses through our innovative products. By introducing Salary Cards powered with Mastercard's technology, we're initiating a new era of seamless transactions for working individuals across the region.

With Mastercard-powered ABHI Salary Cards, our users will gain the ability to conduct both local and international transactions directly from their Earned Wage Access. The partnership with Mastercard embodies our shared vision for a more inclusive financial future, where everyone has access to convenient and secure financial solutions," said Ali Ladhubhai, Co-Founder and COO of ABHI.

Federal Budget and Taxes

A Conspiracy to Turn Pakistan into a Famine-Stricken Country Like Somalia and Africa, Says Sarhad Business Alliance

Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Business Alliance, Hayatabad Industrialists Association, Peshawar Small Chamber, and the entire business community of the province have condemned the alarming increase in federal budget and taxes as anti-national, anti-trader, and anti-economic development. They warned that if these measures are implemented from July, within a month, industries will close, commercial businesses will halt, and there will be an unstoppable wave of inflation and unemployment, potentially leading to civil unrest and disobedience. They demanded the federal government to reconsider these policies to prevent the situation from becoming

worse than in Somalia and Africa, causing the remaining few industrialists to shift their businesses abroad. Otherwise, there will be widespread unrest, chaos, crime, insecurity, and a significant increase in unemployment.

These views were expressed during a joint press conference at Peshawar Press Club by the Chairman of Sarhad Business Alliance Syed Zahir Ali Shah, former Presidents of Sarhad Chamber Sharaifat Ali Mubarak, Muhammad Ishaq, Dr. Yousaf Sarwar, former provincial ministers Malik Meher Ilahi, Adnan Jaleel, Haji Bakht Mir, Abidullah Khan, Haji Waheed, Mamoor Khan, Nisarullah, Syed Akbar Mohmand, President of Hayatabad Industrialists Association Bakhtiar Khan, Faisal Kakakhel, Pres-

ident of Peshawar Traders Chamber Ghulam Bilal Javed, along with Ghulam Hussain Chand, Baba-e-Tajir Amin Hussain Babar, Arshad Siddiqui, Sirajuddin, Abdul Hameed Gruwara, Major Arshad, Minhaj Badshah, Manzoor Ilahi, Abiduddin, Malik Zahoor, Shah Rukh Duranpur, Abdul Haseeb Chughtai, and other members of the provincial business community.

They emphasized the need to strengthen and organize the business community of Peshawar and the entire province, making Sarhad Chamber a strong institution for the whole province with the cooperation of its members. They highlighted the decaying electricity system in the country, already years behind other

nations, now further burdened by the increase in electricity tariffs and oppressive taxes on every sector. They mentioned that under the pretext of fixed charges, not Rs. 2000, but Rs. 2500 per kilowatt along with tax is being imposed, which will completely paralyze the industrial sector within a month. Not only industries but all businesses will also be affected. Imposing a tax of Rs. 1000 per meter on homes is an extreme act of cruelty. The people, already driven to suicide, with no business, zero investment, struggling to afford food, and unable to pay for medical treatment, millions of children deprived of education, unemployment at its peak, mental health issues rampant, and trade

most non-existent, are being pushed

to the brink with such tax burdens. They expressed concern that it seems there is a plan to shut down Pakistan's industries and trade, turning it into a famine-stricken country like Somalia and Africa. They noted that the general export and jewelry tax has been increased from 1% to 29%, with additional super tax, despite the fact that this sector brings foreign exchange into Pakistan. The increased taxes will make exports more expensive, ultimately shutting down the sector. Prices of essential items like stationery and medicines will skyrocket from July, with tax increases on all these items, including a rise in tax on medicines from 0.5% to 2.5%, despite the fact that people are already dying without

treatment due to the inability to afford medicines. An 18% sales tax will be applied to surgical equipment and other tools, and a 45% tax on property, along with a 5% federal excise duty, making it impossible for anyone to build or buy a house. The construction industry is also drowning in taxes, making home-building unaffordable.

They warned that the federal government must reconsider all these issues and immediately cut the lavish expenses of the Prime Minister's House, government offices, and national and provincial assemblies by 60%, as the burden should not fall solely on the public and business sector. Otherwise, the situation will spiral out of control, making Pakistan comparable to Somalia and Africa.

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PTI's Fate Hangs on Form vs. Substance

As usual, the people of Pakistan experienced history in the making while witnessing the live proceedings of the Supreme Court of Pakistan today (24.06.2024), with the full bench of the Supreme Court versus one knight, Salman Akram Raja, representing an Independent Candidate during the hearing of an appeal filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) against being deprived of the reserved seats for women and minorities in the National Assembly.

I had all sympathies for Raja Sahib, who faced pinching, exploratory, and incisive questions bombarded at him by all members of the bench. Each judge had his own understanding, niche, and approach to the issue and was trying to steer the discussion his way, making things even more difficult for the counsel, who was representing Ms. Kawal Shauzab, an active member of the PTI and an aspirant for nomination on special seats for women in the National Assembly.

National Assembly, allowing independent candidates to join it and be allocated proportional special seats for women and minorities.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah gave him another hint to file an appeal against the decision of the registrar Supreme Court, who had returned the PTI's appeal against the misinterpretation of the supreme court's judgment by the election commission, even now, and let the court adjudicate the appeal and gave its decision.

Justice Mansoor was referring to a protracted legal battle which PTI fought after it was denied the symbol BAT on January 15, 2024 by the Election Commission (ECP-123). PTI then appealed to the Lahore High Court on February 1, 2024 (LHC-456), and the Peshawar High Court on February 20, 2024 (PHC-789), but both appeals were dismissed. Subsequently, PTI approached the Supreme Court of Pakistan, where the Registrar returned their petition on technical grounds on March 5, 2024 (SCR-101). PTI did not file an appeal against this decision, effectively ending their legal efforts to contest the elections.

According to the judges, PTI is currently not a party to the impugned matter. Although, in this instance, PTI cannot be heard, its point of view in the impugned case is of paramount importance. They stated that even now, PTI can file an appeal before the Supreme Court against the decision of the Supreme Court Registrar. This would bring the entire matter before the Supreme Court, allowing for a proper appreciation of the issue. Consequently, the Supreme Court would then be in a position to properly address the matter.

Justice Athar Minullah also gave Raja Sahib a hint and encouraged him

to divulge the truth which deprived PTI from the level playing field while contesting Election-2024 implying the elaborate incidents of brute state force used against PTI candidates during the entire election process. Raja sahib did not appreciate the hint due to his over-fixation with his line of arguments and continued to insist on technicalities.

This gap was however, filled in by a Press Talk during break in the supreme court's proceeding, by Kanwal Shauzab who was flanked by Senator Faisal Javaid who now supports a beard and looked rugged but fresh. She said that State brute force was used to snatch the nomination papers of the candidates when they approached the Returning Officer for filing nomination papers. The nominator and seconder were harassed and abducted.

She added that PTI candidates were even barred from entering the premises of returning officers which prevented many of the PTI candidates from even filing the nomination papers. The state forces were used in many other forms. The PTI candidates were subjected to intimidation, harassment, and unlawful arrests, with many experienced violence and assaults. PTI also reported obstruction of their campaign activities, including denial of permits for rallies and restricted movement, constant surveillance and intimidation tactics, media censorship, and blackouts to limit their reach.

Additionally, PTI blamed the Election Commission for manipulating the election results in favor of their opponents, including denial of their party symbol and disqualification of candidates, vote rigging and tampering, with ballot stuffing and manipulation of vote counts. The Election Commission unfairly dismissed or delayed, restricting their access to justice.

But unluckily these assertions could not be made part of the court proceedings.

During the entire hearing the Chief Justice was trying the justify supreme court's decision which deprived the PTI from its symbol BAT and intervened several times to keep the argument in line with his own bent of mind. But the brother judges seemed to ignore what the chief justice was trying to achieve, and continued a barrage of questions which visibly annoyed the Chief Justice.

During one of the such incidents, Chief Justice despite saying time and again that PTI is not party to the impugned case painted a scenario where, all the independent candidates had instead of joining the SIC had joined the PTI. He charged Raja Sahib and PTI of inaction, misjudgment and of committing critical legal and constitutional lapse which deprived them not only the party but also the political capital attached to it.

During the discussion an important concept of form and substance came under discussion. In legal parlance, the concept of "form and substance" distinguishes between the procedural aspects of a legal matter (form) and its core issues and merits (substance).

Form relates to technical compliance with legal procedures, such as proper filing and adherence to deadlines. Substance focuses on the actual facts, rights, and legal principles involved in the case, aiming for substantive justice.

Courts must balance these aspects to prevent technicalities from overshadowing the core issues. During a Supreme Court hearing, this concept might address whether a case should be decided based on procedural technicalities or the fundamental rights and justice at stake, ensuring that both procedural integrity and substantive justice are achieved.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Justice Athar Minullah and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah were urging Raja Sahib to take a holistic approach to the issue. They advised him to avoid getting embroiled in technical and complicated matters, instead emphasizing the importance of respecting and restoring the mandate and will of the people. They repeatedly hinted that he should highlight the misinterpretation of the Supreme Court's judgment by the Election Commission, which led to PTI being denied the right to act as a party.

They also suggested that Raja Sahib request the court to take suo moto action under Article 184 to reverse the misinterpretation of the Supreme Court's judgment by the Election Commission. This action would restore the correct interpretation of the judgment and bring all subsequent actions and reactions in line with it. This would effectively mean that PTI would be restored as a party in the

UN urges actions against mis- and disinformation, hate speech

The world must respond to the harm caused by the spread of online hate and lies while robustly upholding human rights, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Monday at the launch of the UN Global Principles for Information Integrity.

Speaking one year after the unveiling of his report into information integrity on digital platforms, the UN chief put forward a framework for coordinated international action to make information spaces safer and more humane, "one of the most urgent tasks of our time".

"The spread of hatred and lies online is causing grave harm to our world," he said, addressing the media at UN Headquarters, in New York.

The UN's own humanitarian and peacekeeping operations are at risk, as its personnel deal with a "tsunami of falsehoods" and "absurd conspiracy theories", the UN chief added.

False narratives and lies breed cynicism and undermine social cohesion and sustainable development, he said.

He asserted that everyone should freely express themselves without fear of attack and be able to access a wide range of views and information.

"No one should be at the mercy of an algorithm they don't control, which was not designed to safeguard their interests, and which tracks their behaviour to collect personal data and keep them hooked," he said.

The Global Principles aim to empower people to demand their rights, help protect children, ensure honest and trustworthy information for young people, and enable public interest-based media to convey reliable and accurate information, Guterres added

The Principles evolved through wide-ranging consultations with UN member states, the private sector, youth leaders, media, academia and civil society.

They focus on building trust and resilience, ensuring an independent and pluralistic media, creating healthy incentives based on factual information, enhancing transparency and research, and empowering the public.

Key recommendations include urging governments, tech companies, advertisers, and media to avoid using or amplifying disinformation and hate speech. At the same time, governments should ensure timely access to information, support an independent media landscape, and protect journalists and civil society.

Tech companies should prioritize safety and privacy, apply consistent policies and support information integrity, especially around elections – while stakeholders involved in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) should ensure its safe, responsible and ethical deployment factoring in human rights.

Furthermore, tech companies should move away from business models that rely on algorithm-driven advertising and prioritize engagement above human rights. Instead, they should prioritize user privacy and safety.



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

Positive Steps towards Regulating Social Media - II

Furthermore, the utilization of bots, trolls, and fake accounts by propagandists complicates efforts to mitigate propaganda dissemination, as these entities exploit platform algorithms to amplify their messages while evading detection. The impacts of unbridled anti-state and anti-army propaganda on social media are profound, posing grave threats to national security, social unity, and the principles of democratic governance. By instilling doubt in governmental bodies and military establishments, propaganda erodes the pillars of democracy, diminishing public trust in legal frameworks and escalating societal divisions. In extreme scenarios, it has the potential to incite civil unrest, political upheaval, and even violent conflicts, as witnessed in various global regions.

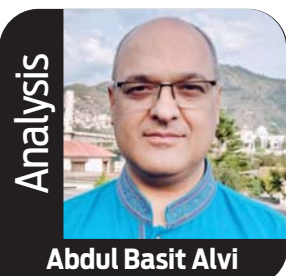
In an era characterized by the instantaneous dissemination of information, social media serves as a double-edged sword. While it fosters unparalleled connectivity and avenues for expression, it also acts as a fertile ground for false propaganda aimed at undermining nations and their armed forces. Addressing this challenge necessitates a multifaceted strategy that tackles the underlying causes of misinformation while safeguarding the principles of free speech and digital democracy.

enhance their content moderation endeavors to swiftly identify and eliminate false propaganda. This entails the deployment of sophisticated algorithms to detect suspicious content, alongside investments in human moderators to assess complex cases. Establishing transparent reporting mechanisms is imperative to enable users to effectively flag misinformation. Collaborating with reputable fact-checking entities can significantly mitigate the dissemination of false propaganda. Integration of fact-checking tools into social media interfaces empowers users to verify the accuracy of information before sharing it. Additionally, forging partnerships with fact-checkers aids platforms in staying abreast of emerging propaganda trends and devising more effective moderation strategies. Platforms should strive for greater transparency in their algorithms to mitigate inadvertent amplification of false propaganda. Offering users insights into content prioritization in their feeds fosters a deeper understanding of the information ecosystem, enabling informed content consumption and sharing decisions.

Educating users on the perils of false propaganda and equipping them with critical thinking skills is crucial in combating its spread. Social media platforms can develop educational materials, such as tutorials and interactive quizzes, to educate users on identifying

misinformation and evaluating source credibility. Furthermore, promoting media literacy within educational institutions and communities fosters a more discerning online populace.

Governments and military bodies can launch strategic communication initiatives to counter false propaganda with accurate information. By actively engaging with the public and debunking misleading narratives, they can foster trust and resilience against manipulation. Leveraging social media influencers and credible spokespersons amplifies the reach and efficacy of these campaigns. Considering the global reach of false propaganda, international collaboration is essential for its effective mitigation. Nations can exchange expertise, intelligence, and technological innovations to counteract propaganda networks that transcend borders. Multilateral efforts aimed at fostering responsible online conduct and safeguarding democratic principles can act as a barrier against propaganda dissemination. Policymakers need to craft comprehensive regulatory frameworks that hold social media platforms accountable for their involvement in disseminating false information. This might entail implementing strategies to combat misinformation, such as mandating platforms to identify or limit the visibility of questionable content. Nevertheless, it's imperative to strike a balance between regulatory measures and the preservation of free speech and digital liberties. Social media platforms should prioritize user welfare and societal harmony in their design decisions. Integrating ethical



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Electoral Reforms: Prospects & Challenges

Reforms to the electoral system have a significant impact on how equitable and effective democratic processes are. They seek to address problems like representation, corruption, and disenfranchisement of voters. This article examines the possible advantages and difficulties of putting election reforms into practice. Several benefits of electoral reforms can greatly improve the democratic process. The advancement of representation and fairness is one of the main advantages. Reforms can ensure that election results more truly reflect the will of the people by implementing ranked-choice voting and proportional representation, which will lessen the power of large parties and give voice to smaller, frequently underrepresented groups.

These adjustments may also lessen the impact of nasty campaigning and motivate politicians to look for wider backing. Another significant benefit is a rise in voter involvement; measures like automatic voter registration and longer voting times facilitate voting by making it simpler for voters to cast ballots, which raises turnout and engagement. Other advantages include increased electoral integrity and openness. In order to avoid fraud and guarantee accurate results, voting infrastructure needs to be updated and strengthened. This will increase public confidence in the system. Furthermore, more competitive elections and fairer representation can result from minimizing gerrymandering through independent redistricting commissions. Comprehensive voter education initiatives

that go hand in hand with reforms have the potential to increase voter knowledge and enhance democratic participation and decision-making. All things considered, electoral reforms have the potential to fortify democracy by establishing a more transparent, equitable, and inclusive election system.

Reforms to the electoral process hold promise for improving political systems' representation and fairness. A more representative and balanced administration can be achieved, for instance, by switching from first-past-the-post to proportional representation, which can guarantee that political parties receive seats in proportion to the votes they earn.

Rebuilding public confidence and perception is essential to the electoral reforms' effectiveness. Campaigns of deception and false information have the potential to erode public trust in the reform process and its results. To foster confidence and support for reforms, it is imperative to educate the public and uphold transparency. A significant obstacle is political resistance because those in power frequently profit from the status quo and are hesitant to endorse changes that might jeopardize their positions. Bipartisan agreement on reform initiatives is challenging to accomplish because of partisan disagreements, which further complicate the process.

Financial and logistical limitations present further difficulties. Electoral system overhauls can be financially expensive, and a seamless transition requires overcoming administrative and technical challenges. This involves investing a lot of money and time in planning and

training staff members as well as updating equipment. A noteworthy obstacle is the heterogeneous electoral requirements of various communities and areas. Because political, social, and economic settings differ, what works in one place might not be appropriate in another. It can be difficult to adapt reforms to local settings while upholding standards of justice and honesty; this calls for a great deal of customisation and consultation. Moreover, striking a balance between security concerns and technical improvements is a special difficulty. While updating voting technology can increase accuracy and efficiency, cybersecurity issues are often brought up. To keep the public confident in the democratic process, new technology must be protected from hacking and other types of manipulation.

Reforms to the electoral process strengthen democracy by encouraging participation, justice, and representation. Automatic voter registration, ranked-choice voting, and proportional representation can all improve public preferences and boost voter turnout. Transparency and trust are increased by upgrading voting procedures and bolstering anti-corruption measures. Fairer elections are ensured through independent redistricting, which lessens gerrymandering.

Public education and cooperation can assist get beyond obstacles like logistical limitations and political opposition. In the end, election changes are essential to building a just, open, and accessible system that accurately represents the people's will and bolstering democratic institutions and confidence.

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China ready to push ties with Poland to higher level: Xi

Xinhua

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday pledged China's willingness to work with Poland to push bilateral relations to a higher level and inject more stability and certainty into a turbulent world.

Xi made the remarks while holding talks in Beijing with Polish President Andrzej Duda, who is on a state visit to China.

Noting Poland was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China, Xi said bilateral relations have maintained steady progress since the two countries forged diplomatic ties 75 years ago.

Since China and Poland decided to upgrade their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership eight years ago, exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in various fields have expanded and deepened in an all-round way, benefiting the two peoples, he added.

Noting that great changes are unfolding globally in an unprecedented way, Xi said China is ready to work with Poland to adhere to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, uphold the original aspiration of establishing diplomatic ties, continue the traditional friendship, push bilateral relations to a higher level, and inject more stability and certainty into the turbulent world.

The key to the enduring relationship lies in that the two nations can draw wisdom and strength from their respective national history and cultural traditions, and independently develop their bilateral friendship, Xi said.

The two sides should continue to adhere to the China-Poland friendship featuring mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and mutual learning, understand and support each other's efforts to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, jointly oppose the Cold War mentality and camp confrontation, safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core, and promote an equal and orderly global multipolarization and an economic globalization that benefits all, Xi said.

Xi urged the two sides to make good use of such mechanisms as the China-Poland Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee to strengthen strategic coordination and planning of cooperation in various fields, promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, advance cooperation in major projects such as the China-Europe Railway Express, and strengthen cooperation in trade, agriculture, digital economy, green industry and clean energy.

China welcomes more high-quality agricultural and food products from Poland into the Chinese market, supports the expansion of two-way investment, and hopes Poland will provide a fair, just, and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises, Xi said.

China has decided to adopt a 15-day unilateral visa-free policy for Polish citizens, Xi said, adding that both sides should vigorously promote exchanges in culture, youth, academia and media.

China is willing to work with Poland and other countries to promote

the sustainable development of the China-Central and Eastern European Countries cooperation mechanism, and advance the healthy and stable development of China-EU relations, he added.

Duda said President Xi's state visit to Poland in 2016 was an important milestone in the development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries.

The Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi represents huge development opportunities for Poland, and the Belt and Road cooperation has strongly propelled Poland's infrastructure construction and economic development, he said.

Poland greatly appreciates the principles China adheres to in international affairs and its contributions to world peace and development, Duda said, stressing that Poland firmly adheres to the one-China principle.

Poland is willing to advance the Belt and Road cooperation with China, deepen exchanges and cooperation in economy and trade, agriculture, infrastructure, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges, and expand cooperation in new areas such as innovation, digital economy and new energy vehicles, he added.

Duda said Poland is willing to maintain close multilateral communication and coordination with China to further develop their comprehensive strategic partnership and contribute to world peace and stability.

Noting that Poland will assume the rotating presidency of the EU in the first half of next year, Duda said Poland is willing to play a constructive



role in promoting EU-China relations and advancing cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries and China.

The two sides also exchanged views on the Ukraine crisis.

Xi stressed that China's position on the Ukraine crisis is to promote peace talks and political settlement. At present, efforts should be made to avoid further escalation of the conflict, cool the situation down and create conditions for peace talks. "This is in the interests of the international commu-

nity, including Europe."

China opposes some individuals using the normal trade between China and Russia as an excuse to divert focus and smear China, Xi said, adding that China encourages and supports all efforts that contribute to a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and promotes the building of a balanced, effective, and sustainable European security architecture. China is willing to continue playing a constructive role in the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis in its own way.

After the talks, the two heads of state jointly witnessed the signing of multiple bilateral cooperation documents in economy, trade, agriculture and more.

The two sides also issued the Action Plan on Strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Poland (2024-2027).

Prior to the talks, Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan held a welcome ceremony for Duda and his wife. A welcome banquet was also held for the guests in the evening.

Ghulam Nabi Nowshahri passed away

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: It is with sadness to announce the demise of Moulana Ghulam Nabi Nowshahri who was suffering from kidney disease for the last few years. He was a parliamentarian, social activist, a Dayee, leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Indian occupied Kashmir and an educationist. He was an observer and a direct participant of Kashmir's struggle for freedom since early 1950's. He was an elected member of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly and a close associate of Syed Ali Geelani and Mohammad Ashraf Sehrayee and represented both of them while residing in Pakistan. He was 80 years old.

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai said "I had the honor of meeting with Moulana Nowshahri Sahib on May 23, 2024 during my last visit to Pakistan along with Dr. Waleed Rasool, Professors at Riphah University, Islamabad and Sanaullah Bhat, a close associate of Nowshahri Sahib and In charge of Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu & Kashmir in Azad Kashmir".

He said "I found Nowshahri Sahib



very resolute to mention, "Fai sahib, the people of Kashmir initiated the struggle against Indian occupation. They fully supported it and offered unimaginable sacrifices. They might have made mistakes. After all they are

human beings. But they are determined that they cannot forsake their cherished goal of Azadi." He continued, "Jamaat-e-Islami tried its best to do whatever they could. But it was banned. Its members were incarcerated for years. Educational

institutions were closed down. Now, it is on your shoulder and your colleagues, Dr. Mir Sahib, Dr. Dhaar Sahib, Dr. Roufe Sahib and other colleagues (Sathy) to move the movement forward."

He became extremely emotional when he said, "Fai Sahib, I may not see you again but my message to all my colleagues is do not let the people of Kashmir down. Hold on to the cause of Kashmir, despite the oppression, suppression and brutality of Indian army."

Nowshahri Sahib felt little uneasiness when he told us that we should avoid factionalism at all costs. We owe it to our sacred cause that has been consecrated by the blood of more than hundred thousand martyrs. He added that factionalism will bring lasting discredit to all those who are involved in the freedom struggle.

We honor the illustrious life of courage and fearlessness and salute his commitment and dedication for the cause of Kashmir. The people of Kashmir will never forget the selfless contribution and the tireless efforts of Moulana Nowshahri Sahib. We will miss him a lot! May Allah pace his soul in Jannatul Firdous! Ameen.



Pakistani Journalist Kamal Siddiqi honored

News desk

KARACHI: Pakistani journalist Kamal Siddiqi @Tribunian received the prestigious Journalists Courage and Impact Award today at the East-West Media Conference in Manila, Philippines.

He was among seven recipients honored for their dedication to journalism and press freedom, often in difficult circumstances. Siddiqi's insightful writing and

commitment to truth have educated and inspired countless readers, setting high standards in journalism.

The citation to honour him highlighted his work in the print, digital and broadcast media and his contribution to excellence through media education and trainings. His work in regional networking of journalists and to media freedom were also mentioned. He is the first Pakistani journalist to receive this award.

Pakistani mangoes arrive in China, delighting e-commerce shoppers with sweet flavors

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: Chinese consumers are able to enjoy the sweet taste of Pakistani mangoes, as 800 cartons of the prized fruit arrived in China.

This shipment, weighing over 3 tons (3,200 kilograms), marks the latest collaboration between Zhitong Batic Ltd in Guangzhou, China and MERA PC Solutions in Pakistan.

The mangoes, renowned as the "King of Fruits" in Pakistan, are available for purchase through various Chinese e-commerce platforms, including JD.com's Pakistan Pavilion, Douyin shops, and WeChat accounts. This is the first batch of mangoes imported by Zhitong



Batic company this year. They hit the shelves in China at a price of 168 yuan per carton, inclusive of express delivery. Each carton contains mangoes with a net weight of 4 to 4.2 kilograms.

Cindy Chen, regional director of the company, told local media that they had carefully selected two varieties, Sindhri and Chaunsa, which are widely considered the tastiest in Paki-

stan. "Pakistan boasts over 300 mango varieties. We partner with premium mango orchards, providing guidance on variety selection, cultivation techniques, harvesting, and packaging," said Chen. "Pakistani mangoes are grown naturally, using traditional methods and naturally fermented fertilizers without artificial growth enhancers or bagging. This ensures a pure mango flavor that Chinese consumers love."

To maintain the unique taste of Pakistani mangoes while ensuring smooth logistics, a rigorous process is followed from orchards to consumers. Mangoes are harvested, heat-treated and packed before being trans-

ported by cold chain to Pakistani airports for air shipment to China. Domestic delivery in China is then handled by SF Express, ensuring freshness and quality.

The company once faced challenges in preserving the freshness of mangoes during transportation. These issues were addressed through various trials, including proper packaging, employment of air cushions and specialized preservation methods.

By combining pre-sales with swift customs clearance and delivery, customers now receive mangoes that are not only fresh but can also be stored at room temperature for up to 13-15 days, allowing them to ripen naturally and achieve optimal flavor.

President of Mongolia highly appreciates Uzbekistan's innovation potential



News Desk

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN: The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and the President of Mongolia, Khurelsukh Ukhua, visited the Technopark in Tashkent.

This innovative complex was established at the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan to develop industrial cooperation and produce high-tech products.

Currently, there are 16 production sites operating here, with total investments exceeding 365 million dollars.

The President of Mongolia was presented with a wide range of high-tech products manufactured at the technopark, including household appliances, electronic meters, elevators, water pumps, industrial air conditioners, refrigeration equipment, and much more.

It is worth noting that the products manufactured at these enterprises under well-known international brands are in high demand both domestically and internationally.

Both leaders emphasized the importance of further developing cooperation between leading enterprises of Uzbekistan and Mongolia, as well as exchanging experience in implementing advanced technologies.

Telephone conversation between the Presidents of Uzbekistan and Russia takes place



News Desk

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held a telephone conversation with President of Russia Vladimir Putin.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed condolences regarding the terrorist attacks in Dagestan, conveyed words of support to the families of the victims, and strongly condemned this act of violence.

He also emphasized readiness for active cooperation with relevant structures in tackling common security challenges. During the conversation, the leaders discussed the practical implementation of agreements reached during President Putin's visit to Uzbekistan from 26-28 May 2024.

Additionally, the Presidents reviewed the schedule of upcoming events and contacts within multilateral organizations.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
78,232.09	78,810.49
Day's High	Day's Low
79,388.11	78,167.43
Index Value	Change
10,671,105,756	-578.40
Percentage	Time
-0.73%	24 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
8,281.55	+43.83
Percentage	Time
+0.53%	24 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
39,385.91	+235.58
Percentage	Time
+0.60%	24 Jun, 1:54 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
38,804.65	+208.18
Percentage	Time
+0.54%	25 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.58	748.58
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.35	38.75
Danish Krone	39.91	40.31
Euro	293.5	297.2
Hong Kong Dollar	35.67	36.02
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	907.74	916.74
Malaysian Ringgit	59.07	59.67
New Zealand \$	170.38	172.38
Norwegians Krone	26.38	26.68
Omani Riyal	723.26	731.26
Qatari Riyal	76.5	77.2
Saudi Riyal	72.95	73.85
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.5	26.8
Swiss Franc	311.53	314.03
Thai Bhat	7.58	7.73
U.A.E Dirham	75.05	75.85
UK Pound Sterling	348.5	351.45
US Dollar	277.6	280.5

IMF's silence on government spending is shameful: Dr. Hanif Mughal

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said on Friday that the Federal Budget combines assumptions, expectations, and contradictions.

He said it would be impossible to achieve the goals set in the budget, and the budget would not lead to economic development, but the economy would shrink further.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said that the rich class has been spared, while the poor and middle class have been targeted in the budget, which will further reduce their purchasing power and affect production.

He added that the IMF always insists on taxation but does not call for reductions in government spending, which is reprehensible.

In a statement issued here, Dr. Hanif Mughal said that the government wants to



increase the growth rate to 3.6 percent, but with the steps being taken, it will be impossible to achieve a growth rate of 2 percent.

The policymakers are repeating the mistake of considering enhanced taxation on the

masses as the resolution of the problem. By increasing the salaried class tax, it is claimed that the government will receive 85 billion rupees more from them, but in reality, they will receive about 150 billion rupees more.

Imposing sales tax on goods and medicines, etc., will further reduce the purchasing power of the people, which will result in reduced demand and production.

Increasing the federal excise duty on cement will affect construction activities and reduce employment opportunities. He said five percent of federal excise duty has been levied on the sale of property, which is illegal, and the courts will overturn it.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said that instead of this unconstitutional decision, it would have been better if the sale and purchase of files in the property sector had been brought under the tax as the imposition of capital gains tax on the non-filers working in the property sector

would not help the government improve tax collection.

Tax on inherited property has also been increased, which is regrettable. Making cars and stationary more expensive will also affect the middle class and the economy.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said that pensions are being called a burden, but they have not been taxed because rulers need to save the influential pensioners who receive hefty pensions.

He said that the budget has unrealistic targets that are impossible to achieve, which is why, after a few months, the IMF will issue an order to impose more taxes, but even this will not solve the problems.

For the sake of sustainable development, the government ought to replace the continuous use of traditional budgeting hitting the poor and middle classes with a method that is both encouraging to businesses and encouraging to individuals, he demanded.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Delegation of technology company ZTE called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Monday.



Photo: Online

TECNO CAMON 30 LOEWE Edition Launched at a jaw Dropping price

News Desk

LAHORE: TECNO Pakistan, the innovative technology brand, has just launched the groundbreaking LOEWE. Design Edition of the new CAMON 30 Series. Manufactured in collaboration with LOEWE, the German high-end TV and audio brand, this new addition to the CAMON 30 series presents modern users with a supremely stylish and sustainable choice utilizing waste coffee grounds creatively repurposed in the making of the smartphone's back cover.

It features a striking, nature-inspired green color-blocking shade that reflects the brand's commitment to provide sustainable and stylish designs and products to its users.

With TECNO's advanced technologies in material innovation and LOEWE's excellent craftsmanship

and expertise in premium product design, this new product combines innovative eco-friendly features and captivating aesthetics with the flagship imaging technology of the CAMON 30 Series.

You can enjoy professional-grade videography and photography with exceptional quality from its powerful 50 MP camera, delivering outstanding performance in any lighting conditions, elevating your imaging experience.

The front camera has a high-resolution 50-megapixel eye-tracking sensor with autofocus, offering three unique modes: vlog mode, makeup mirror mode, and live video streaming.

ICCI's 2 day 'All Pakistan Chambers' Presidents Conclave' kicks off today



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry launches its 2 day 'All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conclave' today, uniting federal ministers, 70 plus chambers Presidents, ambassadors, diplomats, industry, business leaders, educationists and media persons.

The programme also includes presentations on 'Tax policies and outcomes', 'Budget and response on tax reforms', investment climate for sustainable indus-

trial development, 'regional trade landscape, challenges and opportunities'.

In a statement issued here on Monday, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that it is at the credit of the ICCI that it took the initiative to organize first APCPC in 2020 to bring Presidents of all Chambers of Commerce & Industry at one platform to discuss the key issues of business community and put forward proposals to the government for resolving them and now it is once again all set to convene the second APCPC on June 25,

26, 2024.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari added that on the occasion, the concerned federal ministers would also take the business community into confidence about the government's measures to promote ease of doing business in the country.

He expressed optimism that APCPC would prove instrumental in building more confidence between the government and the business community to put the economy of Pakistan on the path of sustainable economic growth.

CCP and ICAP join hands to implement compliance framework on Competition Law

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) join hands to develop a compliance framework on Competition law to be adopted by CA professionals working in various sectors of the economy.

This latest session held in ICAP Lahore was attended by CEO, CFOs, Board members, entrepreneurs, professionals from finance, marketing and legal fraternity. A comprehensive presentation was made by CCP officials and a brief video was also displayed on core components of the Competition law.

Addressing the session, Mr. Salman Amin - Member CCP emphasized that CCP is committed to foster open competition in all spheres of commercial and economic activities. He also highlighted the benefits that emerge for the economy and consumers as a result of open competition.

Later, Mr. Ahmed Qadir (DG-CCP) in

his presentation elaborated on component of the Competition Law. The presentation covered the key pillars of the Competition Act and the overall benefits of maintaining a competitive environment.

An important feature of the CPD event was an interesting panel discussion that had representatives from legal, marketing, finance, petroleum sectors. The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Ammara Gondal, NRC-ICAP. Ms. Afshen Rizavi of the Pakistan Advertisers Society (PAS) discussed the self-regulation in marketing practices and PAS's collaboration with regulator (CCP) in developing a code to self-regulate advertising practices in Pakistan. Ms. Rida Aslam Bhatti from law firm RIAA Barker Gillette highlighted the constitutional aspect of having open and equal opportunity to a fair competition. Engineer Khawaja Atif Ahmad from the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association highlighted issues within the petroleum sector and emphasized the need for CCP's intervention and facilitation in certain

practices. Mr. Noshawan Khawaja (FCA) stated the importance of understanding Competition Law for financial advisors while rendering of advice to their clients on various aspects, including on merger and acquisition and in due-diligence. Later participants had an interactive session with panellists and senior officials of CCP.

In the end Mr. Zeeshan Ijaz, Vice President of ICAP, expressed the gratitude and the benefits of this seminar on Competition law as it again leads to ethical practices and fair competition in the economy. He thanked CCP and ICAP teams for collaborating and structuring such an interactive and engaging session. On proposal from the council members of ICAP, it was agreed that a joint working group from CCP and ICAP will draft the checklist on the Competition law and will be used by CA professional working in various sectors of economy as CEO, CFOs, Board members, risk managers etc. This will be of great assistance in their informed decisions on various facets.

Consultation Paper Published on the Real Estate Investment Trust Regulations, 2022



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan has published a Consultation Paper to invite feedback/suggestions on potential improvements in the Real Estate Investment Trust Regulations, 2022 (REIT Regulations).

The paper is part of SECPC's efforts to modernize the regulatory ecosystem in catering to evolving REIT landscape within the country and aligning the REIT Regulations with international benchmarks. The analysis has been carried out on the basis of consultations with relevant stakeholders, including RMCs and trustees.

Potential areas where refinements have been proposed include streamlining the procedure for registration of trust deed and REIT Scheme, rationalizing the timelines for transfer of

real estate/shares of SPV in the name of REIT scheme and expedient listing of REIT Schemes; overall designed to make REITs a vibrant capital market asset class. Reasons for identification of each potential area has also been provided to facilitate stakeholders in sharing their feedback.

Suggestions are also being invited for enhancing the functions of RMC and trustee, mitigating regulatory arbitrage between different REIT structures and measures for enhanced adherence to Shariah governance framework.

Stakeholders are encouraged to submit their feedback/suggestions on the potential improvement areas along with any other suggestions at REIT. Feedback@secpc.gov.pk by July 05, 2024 to July 09, 2024. The consultation paper can be accessed from the SECPC's website.

5th Int'l Interest-Free Banking & Takaful Conference will be held in Ethiopia



Spokesman Report

DUBAI, UAE: AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics (CIBE) is honored to organize 5th International Interest-Free Banking & Takaful in Ethiopia. The event is successfully held for many years in Ethiopia for the betterment of the socio-economic conditions of the rural and urban areas of the country. It will be held at Hyatt Regency, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 25th - 26th July 2024. The forum will be followed by Post Event Workshops on Operational, Technical and Shariah Aspects of Interest-Free Banking and Takaful on 27th July 2024. More than 20 international speakers would give their valuable contribution in the topics of discussion. The banking and financial industry of Ethiopia and the surrounding areas will actively participate in the conference to gain ample knowledge of the interest-free financial sector and solutions to the escalating problems of the society. This event will be held in association with Ethiopian Reinsurance. Participants are high profile personnel for 20 countries e.g. from central banks, banking and financial sectors of Ethiopia and rest of the African countries, microfinance and insurance industry.

Mr. M. Zubair Mughal, CEO, AlHuda CIBE (the organizers of the event) thanked the supporters and the sponsors in advance for their continuous trust on them and the unprecedented support for the event that is much needed to achieve the milestone. Ethiopia has a largely rural population, which makes access to financial services a challenge and digital solutions ideal. Approximately two third of Ethiopians live on less than the poverty line, with 62% of Ethiopians employed in the agriculture sector, according to World Bank data. Making gains among these groups is key to improving Ethiopians' financial lives. He said that interest-free banking and finance is the best alternative to change the lives of the poor.

PCB chairman stresses strengthening domestic cricket

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has emphasized the need for strengthening domestic cricket in the country.

Presiding over an important meeting regarding quality of domestic cricket at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) Gaddafi Stadium here on Monday, he said various tournaments will be organised from the club level to the national level.

The meeting lasted for three hours during which domestic cricket structures of various high-performing cricket nations were reviewed. The Chairman PCB gave principled approval to the plan aimed at promoting quality domestic cricket.

COO PCB, Salman Naseer, CFO PCB, Javed Murtaza, and directors of International Cricket, High Performance Centers, Domestic Cricket, PSL,



Commercial, and other relevant PCB officials attended the meeting.

The Chairman emphasised the promotion of quality domestic cricket at all levels. He directed that promising players must be groomed professionally and stated that excellent coaches should

train the new talent to enhance their skills. Performance, fitness, and merit will be the key criteria for advancing players, he added.

The participants also decided to improve the standard of coaching in the upcoming domestic cricket season

and to review domestic contracts. A master coach will be appointed to train domestic cricket coaches. It was also discussed that players must participate in domestic cricket tournaments to be considered for the national team selection. Furthermore, the selection criteria for the national team will be strictly based on performance and fitness showcased in the domestic events.

The meeting also decided to adopt zero compromise policy on merit, performance, and fitness. The meeting decided to hold tournaments for all three formats of the game to promote quality domestic cricket in the 2024-25 season. The chairman also highlighted the need for urgent efforts to unearth new talent at the grassroots level. He reiterated that investment in new talent will promote cricket at the grassroots level and yield positive results.

Summer Sports Camps begins today

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Summer Sports Camps will begin with an opening ceremony scheduled to take place at Punjab International Swimming Complex on June 25 (today). Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar will inaugurate the 40-day Summer Sports Camps in the presence of a large number of participating children and their parents.

DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal shared this information while presiding over an important meeting at National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

Director Admin M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Director Zahoor Ahmed and Ataur Rehman participated in the key meeting. Director Admin M Kaleem gave detailed briefing to



DG Sports Punjab about preparations and other key features of Summer Sports Camps.

Addressing the meeting, Pervez Iqbal said that so far more than 1,000 children have been registered for Summer Sports Camps, which will continue till August 3, 2024. "Expert coaches have been engaged to train the participating children in Summer Sports

Camps. These coaches will impart training to camp probable in 12 games including athletics, archery, badminton, table tennis, hockey, football, tennis, swimming, cricket, karate, taekwondo and gymnastics in Lahore and six games in other divisions of Punjab".

He further said that male and female children aged 5 to 16 years are eligible to take part in Summer Sports

Camps. "Punjab Youth Affairs Department is also conducting yoga classes for parents particularly mothers accompanying their children during the Summer Sports Camps. This initiative will also help a lot in improving the fitness of mothers of young camp participants besides ending their feeling of boredom during the training session of their children".

First time ever Pak Contingent Taking part in games in Russia under Intl Military Sports council



Sports Desk

TOOLA, RUSSIA: For the first time ever a Pakistani sports contingent comprising cadets from 3 Military Colleges are participating in multiple sports events

organised in Russian City, Tula under the auspices of Intl Military Sports Council. The opening ceremony was held today at Tula, Russia, witnessed by Russian Dy Def minister, Mr Evkurov Yunys-Bek as guest

of honour. Brig Muhammad Asif Khan, Pakistan's Defence Attaché to Russian Federation attended the ceremony.

Delegation comprises 3 officers and 15 Cadets from Military college Jhelum,

Military College Murree and Military College Sui.

Sports events will include many track events, volleyball, basketball and Boxing competitions. The sports Events will be conducted from 24 Jun to 30 Jun 2024.

Malaysia to host 3-day Pakistani Tape Ball Cricket contest

Sports Desk

MIRPUR: For the first time in Malaysia's history, the city of Kuala Lumpur will host a three-day Pakistani tape ball cricket tournament titled "Meri Cricket Meri Jeet," starting on June 28.

This highly anticipated event is organized in collaboration with Bank Al Habib and IPG, a press release said on Monday.

The tournament will feature regional teams from various parts of Pakistan, including Swat Cheeta, Swabi Champion, Sialkot Badshah, Rawalpindi Express, Buner Bahadur, Karachi Heroes, Lahore Sherdil, and Peshawar Leopards.

Entry to the "Meri Cricket Meri Jeet" festival will be free for cricket fans, with special programmes arranged for families and children.

Pakistani cricket legends Sarfraz Ahmed, Rashid Latif, and Imran Nazir



will attend the event to encourage and support the players.

The event will also feature a lucky draw with various prizes, including a grand prize of a return air ticket to Pakistan.

Fans that catch the ball outside the boundary will have the opportunity to

take pictures with the legendary Pakistani cricketers.

A joint meeting involving representatives from mainstream Pakistani media houses in Malaysia, the Malaysia Pakistan Business Council, and other dignitaries was held at a renowned Pakistani restaurant in Kuala Lumpur.

The meeting, chaired by Dato' Sri Nazir Mira Salam, Chairman of the Malaysia Pakistan Business Council, reviewed arrangements to promote a positive image of Pakistan through the cricket festival and to strengthen the bonds between the people of Malaysia and Pakistan.

The meeting also discussed plans to welcome Pakistani cricket superstars Sarfraz Ahmed, Imran Nazir, and Rashid Latif.

Dato' Sri Nazir Mira Salam and other officials thanked the organizers

for elevating Pakistan's profile abroad and invited the Pakistani community in Malaysia to attend the event in large numbers.

To entertain the community, renowned Pakistani singers Jabran Raheel and Sofia Kaif will perform at the festival.

The meeting was attended by officials of the Pakistan Business Council Malaysia, including Humayun Habib, Muhammad Saleem, Muhammad Shuja, Irfan Latif Seifi, Waqar Ahmed Khan, Dato' Muhammad Jamil, MS Athar Qureshi, Haji Wajid Ali Khan, and several prominent social personalities and journalists.

Thousands of Pakistanis residing in Malaysia are expected to attend the event with their families and friends to witness the much-anticipated tournament featuring national heroes of Pakistan.

Pakistan Dodgeball Federation holds first official workshop in Lahore to promote the sport



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: First Official Dodgeball Workshop Organized by Pakistan Dodgeball Fede The Pakistan Dodgeball Federation has proudly concluded its first official workshop in Lahore, marking a significant milestone in the promotion and development of dodgeball in the country. This two-day event, held at MTEA, featured comprehensive coaching and referee courses, with active participation from male and female officials from across Punjab.

The primary objective of the workshop was to raise awareness and foster enthusiasm for dodgeball, ensuring the sport's growth at both grassroots and competitive levels. The event was inaugurated by esteemed dignitaries, including the President of the Pakistan Dodgeball Federation, Mian Rizwan, Executive Director of the Pakistan Baseball Federation, Moazzam Khan Klair, Secretary of the Pakistan Federation Baseball, Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, Founder of Pakistan Dodgeball in Pakistan, Aamir Bhatti, and PRO Amjad Nawaz Khan.

Khalid Ameer Ahmed Khan, a notable dodgeball official, expressed his gratitude to all participants for their dedication and enthusiasm. He delivered an enlightening lecture on the intricacies of the sport and the objectives of the workshop, setting a positive tone for the event. "The energy and commitment shown by all attendees are truly commendable. This workshop is a pivotal step in establishing a strong foundation for dodgeball in Pakistan," Khan remarked.

The workshop is scheduled to conclude tomorrow at 10 PM, leaving participants equipped with valuable knowledge and skills to further promote dodgeball in their respective regions.

Waseem Khatri bags Pakistan Scrabble C'ship title

Sports Desk



KARACHI: Pakistan's ace Waseem Khatri on Monday won the 36th Pakistan Scrabble Championship that concluded at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi.

Khatri emerged as the National Champion after a hard fought battle lasting three days. The defending champion Hassan Hadi was unable to compete this year due to his professional engagements, said a press release.

This is the 11th national title for Waseem confirming his status as the best scrabble player ever produced by Pakistan.

The former world youth champion Ali Salman was the runner-up and his younger brother Affan Salman finished 3rd. An open tournament was also organized on the 3rd and last day which was attended by 110 players.

In the Beginners category, Syed Hussain emerged as the winner while the Novice category was won by Hammad Asif and the Recreational category was won by Syeda Munhal.

Virat Kohli bags unwanted T20 World Cup record with duck against Australia

Star India batter Virat Kohli's poor form continued as he was dismissed for a duck during their Super 8 fixture against Australia in the T20 World Cup 2024 on Monday.

After being put to bat first, Kohli and skipper Rohit Sharma opened the inning for India, however, their partnership was a very short one as the right-handed batter was dismissed in the second over of the inning.

Virat Kohli attempted a pull shot on the fourth delivery of Jos Hazlewood's second over, but mistimed the shot. Tim David took a brilliant catch running backwards and ended the batter's stay at the crease with a five-ball duck.

India edge past Australia to book T20 World Cup 2024 semi-final spot

GROS ISLET: Rohit Sharma's swashbuckling 92, followed by a combined bowling effort led India to beat Australia and qualify for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 semi-finals here at Darren Sammy National Cricket Stadium on Monday.

Chasing a daunting 206-run total, Australia could accumulate 181/7 in their quota of 20 overs despite Travis Head's half-century. Australia had a shaky start to the pursuit as they lost David Warner (6) in the first over with just six runs on the board.

Following the early hiccup, Mitchell Marsh joined forces with Travis Head and the duo launched a counterattack.

They raised 81 runs in just 41 deliveries before Marsh fell victim to Kuldeep Yadav as Axar Patel took a blinder just inside the square leg boundary.

Marsh made important contribution for Australia with a 28-ball 37 which included three fours and two sixes.

Travis Head and Glenn Maxwell then put together a quick partnership for the third wicket, adding 41 runs to the total until Kuldeep castled the latter on the first delivery of the 14th over.

Maxwell made 20 in 12 balls, laced up with two fours and a six. Australia then lost another wicket, exactly an over later, when Marcus Stoinis (2) fell prey to Axar Patel while attempting to play a reverse sweep.

The 2021 champions suffered a massive setback to their run-chase when their mainstay Head was outclassed by Jasprit Bumrah's slower delivery in the 17th over with 56 still required. Head remained the top-scorer for Australia with 76 off 43 deliveries, hitting nine fours and four sixes.

His dismissal halted the flow of runs for Australia and they lost two more wickets in the next over, allowing India to seize control. Australia eventually succumbed to a 24-run defeat which dented their semi-final hopes.

Arsheep Singh led the bowling charge for India with three wickets, followed by Kuldeep with two while Bumrah and Axar chipped in with a wicket apiece.

Put into bat first, India registered 205/5 on the board, courtesy of Rohit Sharma's baton charge.

Polio-free Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman Gates Foundation Mr. Bill Gates on Monday.



Photo: PID

PM expresses resolve for polio-free Pakistan; lauds Gates Foundation's dedication

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reiterated that the federal government along with all the provincial governments resolved to eliminate the menace of Polio forever and said that they were fully committed to control its spread through collective efforts.

Addressing a meeting of the National Task Force on Polio Eradication, the prime minister said that the polio eradication campaign in the country was progressing positively and they were close to eliminate polio but unfortunately, things turned negative as the virus returned back in certain parts of Pakistan, still it did not show that they had failed in their efforts.

Chairman Gates Foundation Bill Gates, ministers, senior officials and relevant authorities were present during the meeting.

The prime minister assured Bill Gates that the government was fully committed 'to continue its efforts in our own interests to protect lives of our children and make them healthier.'

He said that during the last six months, they ran two nation-wide polio eradication campaigns successfully along with five others targeting the polio hit areas.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also stressed that they would have to act swiftly to produce results in the coming days and months.

All the newly formed federal and provincial governments had completely resolved that they would spare no efforts to control this menace, he added.

The prime minister told Bill Gates that they held a holistic security conference the other day and held lengthy discussions to counter surge of terrorism and other relevant security issues.

71st birth anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto celebrated

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider, speaking at a large gathering in Attock on the 71st birth anniversary of Benazir Bhutto at district council. He expressed that the people of Attock have a deep love for the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). He highlighted the historical successes of the PPP in Attock and mentioned the difficult times during Musharraf's era when the party weakened. He pointed out the unfortunate situation where despite spending millions on the building of the Agricultural University in Attock, local students were deprived of educational benefits. He emphasized continuing the mission of Shaheed Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and expressed gratitude to President Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto for appointing him as Governor from Punjab's last district.

The event, hosted by Imdad Malik, started with the recitation of the Quran and Naats. Prominent PPP leaders, including the district president Sardar Ashar Hayat, former candidate NA 49 Khurram Shazad, former candidate pp-2 Sardar Zulfiqar Hayat, Former candidates pp-3 Sadar Haider Ali Khan and other prominent figure of PPP Attock, were present on stage. Sardar Saleem Haider pledged to



establish an Engineering University in Jand and an NICD hospital in Fateh Jang. He praised his nephew, Sardar Haider Ali Khan, for bringing local issues to his attention. Senior journalist Raza Naqvi discussed challenges faced by the Attock Press Club and presented detailed documents regarding building administration issues. Regarding this issue Chairman Attock press club Sheikh Faisal Javed, Chairman central union of journalist Rana Shaukat, President Pakistan Journalist association Tariq Mehmood, secretary General Qamar abbas, coordinator Naimat khatak and other journalist were also present.

Budget 2024-25: Senate recommends Rs 45,000 minimum wage

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Senate of Pakistan approved recommendations for the federal budget 2024-25, asking the government to fix the minimum monthly wage for labourers at Rs 45,000.

The upper house approved 128-point recommendations presented by the Senate Standing Committee on Finance Chairman Saleem Mandviwala.

The recommendation also included the reduction of indi-

rect taxes by 50 percent and an increase in direct taxes. The Senate also recommended the government to exempt 660 CC cars from customs duty just like the electric cars.

The upper house also recommended that taxes on the construction sector must be abolished. The other recommendations included the introduction of a one-window operation for overseas Pakistanis to invest, imposing uniform taxes on imported and local solar panels and the reduction



of taxes on eight stationery items.

The Senate also recommended the federal government to identify organisations pretending to be charity bodies to evade taxes. The upper house also demanded an exemption of taxes on poultry feed to avert an increase in chicken prices.

The Senate also recommended the reduction of GST on some medical equipment and medicines.

Earlier, the Finance Ministry hinted at accepting most of the budget recommendations put forward by the Senate.

Sources privy to the development said that a significant progress was made regarding passage of the Finance Bill from the Senate of Pakistan.

The decision was taken in a meeting between Finance Minister Muhammad

Aurangzeb and the Senate Standing Committee on Finance Chairman Saleem Mandviwala.

The sources said that during the meeting, Muhammad Aurangzeb and Saleem Mandviwala discussed issues related to the budget passage.

Senator Saleem Mandviwala apprised the finance minister about the Senator's grievances on the budget. The Senate Standing Committee on Finance chairman demanded some amendments to the Finance Bill.

Aurangzeb assures consideration to PBC budget proposals

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Monday assured Pakistan Business Council (PBC) that its recommendations would be considered in the finalization of the budget for FY 2024-25 to whatever extent possible.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, a delegation of Pakistan Business Council (PBC) led by Chairman PBC, Shabbir Diwan called on the minister. Minister of State for



Finance and Revenue Ali Perviz Malik, Chairman Federal Board of Revenue

(FBR), Malik Amjed Zubair Tiwana also attended the meeting.

The PCB delegation appreciated the ongoing efforts of government and discussed the

Federal Budget 2024-25 with the finance minister.

They also presented specific suggestions and tax proposals for consideration.

The minister acknowledged and thanked the PBC for their insights.

He also highlighted the FBR's ongoing efforts aimed at broadening the tax base and bringing retailers in tax net.

Aurangzeb assured that decisions would be made through mutual consultation to ensure favorable outcomes for both the public and the business community.

CM Balochistan stresses immediate launch of Azm-e-Istehkam Operation in Balochistan

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, on Monday called for the immediate launch of the Azm-e-Istehkam Operation in Balochistan to eliminate terrorism and safeguard the lives of innocent citizens.

"I fully support the launch of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam in Balochistan as miscreants have jeopardized the lives of the innocent people. To establish the writ of the government, it is essential to vigorously combat the anti-peace elements," he said while speaking to the media. Expressing his concern over the recent rise in terror acts, he stated that the government is committed to protecting the lives of the people. "No one would be allowed to disrupt peace and further their foreign agenda under the guise of nationalism." "Those involved in the killing of innocent people will be pursued and brought to justice." The Apex Committee of the National Action Plan recently approved "Operation Azm-e-Istehkam" to eliminate terrorism and extremism across the country.

Aleem for expediting work to materializing JVs with Chinese companies

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday said that joint ventures between Chinese companies and Pakistani business organizations must be undertaken as soon as possible for which the relevant departments should complete their homework immediately and submit a report subsequently.

A high level follow-up meeting on the Prime Minister's recent visit to China was held under the Chairmanship of Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan and Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, said a press release.

The meeting reviewed progress



on joint ventures of Chinese and Pakistani Companies and important aspects were discussed. Similarly, developments on bilateral trade issues and the status of B2B activities and MoUs were also came under discussion. Aleem Khan further said that other Chinese companies which have not yet signed MoUs should also be contacted by Pakistani companies so that the visit to China can be made more fruitful.

Minister of Commerce Jam Kamal Khan said that Pakistani Embassy in China should conduct

purposeful meetings with the business groups of both countries so that bilateral trade affairs can be further expanded.

Trade Officers of the Pakistani Embassy from Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Guangzhou briefed the meeting on the progress made so far. Officers from various ministries including Petroleum, Health, Industry, Information, Power Division and Information Technology also attended the meeting and presented their reports regarding PM's recent visit to China.

Ambassador Anna appreciates women role in diplomacy



Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg Anna Baloch on Monday lauding the contribution of women in diplomacy, said that

their contributions, often behind the scenes, drove meaningful change across borders. The ambassador, in her message on the occasion of International Day for Women in Diplomacy, said that it was a time to acknowledge the role of women in global policy and affairs.

She said that it was inspiring to see more women joining Pakistan's Foreign Service, indicating a promising future for the country's diplomatic corps. "As we recognise these professionals, let us celebrate every woman who steps forward to represent us on the world stage," the ambassador remarked.

NCSW to hold dialogues on key issues of health, climate change, law & education

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) is holding a series of participatory dialogues to bring together representatives from across Pakistan to deliberate and determine the way forward on key issues related to health, climate change, law and education.

"Under Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar's leadership, the Commission is taking lead to undertake a critical analysis and collaborative solution seeking to addressing critical issues affecting women in Pakistan," an NCSW new release said.

Between June 25-28, the NCSW will have dedicated sessions and group deliberations on health, climate

change, law reforms, and education. Each session will explore specific thematic areas that have been prioritized with key stakeholders, and work with provincial government representatives, civil society, UN partners, and experts to collate specific immediate actions that the government should undertake to see improvement of our gender indicators.

In partnership with UNFPA and Pathfinder, the health, climate and laws sessions will take into account inter-sectional issues that disproportionately impact women and girls.

The final conference on education, in collaboration with UNICEF and the British Council, will examine barriers to education and propose strategies to promote inclusive and equitable learning opportunities.