Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Pakistan, China poised to embark on new phase of cooperation in IT, Telecom sector: Minister IT

Minister of State for IT Pakistan and China are Iron brothers and share a deep rooted friendship which has been nurtured over decades by successive generations of leaders and peoples of the two countries. (Details on Page 5)



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Trilateral Summit

Astana: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with the President of Turkiye H. E. Recep Tayyib Erdogan and President of Azerbaijan H. E. Ilham Aliyev on the occasion of an inaugural session of Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit



PM proposes tripartite mechanism to further strengthen Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan economic, commercial cooperation

Spokesman Report

ASTANA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday proposed to establish tripartite institutional mechanisms particularly in economic and investment areas to further strengthen Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan trilateral econom-

ic and commercial cooperation. Sharing his views during an inaugural session of Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit held on the sidelines of the Shanghai Coopera-

fraternal ties with Azerbaijan and Turkiye which were grounded in deep-rooted cultural, historic and religious bonds as well as mutual respect and support towards each other on core issues.

PM proposes tripartite mechanism to further strengthen Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan economic, commercial cooper-

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in an inaugural session of Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit tion Organization (SCO) Summit, alongwith President of Turkiye the prime minister underscored H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan and

that Pakistan deeply valued its President of Azerbaijan H. E. Ilham Aliyev, on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit.

The summit was attended by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, President of Turkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Heydar Aliyev.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the convening of inaugural session of Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Meeting at the summit level, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He termed it as a natural

progression of trilateral engagements amongst the three brotherly Muslim countries which shared a similar outlook on a host of issues of mutual interest and

common concern. While noting excellent trilateral cooperation in political, parliamentary and defence domains since the First Trilateral Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the three countries held in Baku in 2017, he affirmed Pakistan's commitment to working together with Turkiye and Azerbaijan to elevate the tripartite cooperation into a strong multifaceted partnership across all areas of mutual

interest including economic, energy, tourism, cultural, educational, technology and innovation, healthcare and environmental

Emphasizing strong bonds of friendship and robust people-topeople contacts amongst the three countries, the prime minister also outlined significant potential for collaboration in the areas of culture, tourism, academia as well

as science and technology. Pakistan, Turkiye and Pakistan have previously held trilateral consultations at the level of foreign ministers, speakers of parliaments and defence personnel.

PM expresses satisfaction at growing Pak, Russian ties marked with shared desire



跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that it was heartening that ties between Pakistan and Russia were growing and strengthening through a shared desire and mutual resolve

On X account, the prime minister posted, "Had a cordial meeting with President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation on the sidelines of SCO meeting in Astana today. We exchanged views on bilateral cooperation in multiple areas of mutual interest.

of both countries.

coming years. Continued on Page 3

No option but to tax agriculture and property: Aurangzeb

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Finance Minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb, has reiterated the government's determination to impose taxes on agriculture and property, asserting that the current system cannot function without these sectors contributing to the tax net.

Speaking on the news program "Spotight" today, Aurangzeb emphasized the need for provinces to participate in social protection initiatives and contribute to the national revenue pool.

He highlighted that 60% of the federal government's collected revenue is allocated

Aurangzeb described the current budget as a roadmap for the future, stating that Pakistan cannot sustain a tax-to-GDP ratio of 9.5%. The government aims to increase this ratio to 13%

He acknowledged public concerns regarding the category of non-filers, stating that it is a unique phenomenon in the world Aurangzeb reiterated his previous statement, emphasizing that the government has pushed prices to such a level that non-filers will be forced to reconsider their status. He expressed his intention to eliminate the term "non-filer" from the Pakistani lexicon in the

Imran Khan, Qureshi, others acquitted in ECP protest case

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The District and Sessions Court in Islamabad has acquitted former Prime Minister Imran Khan, former Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and other accused persons in a Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) protest case.

When the Election Commission of Pakistan disqualified Imran Khan in the Toshakhana reference in 2022, PTI workers took to the streets in various parts of the country and blocked roads by burning tires at multiple locations. However, the situation escalated when clashes broke out between the police and PTI workers with also usage of tear gas at the border between Punjab and the federation Faizabad Interchange.

Judicial Magistrate Yaser Mahmood had filed cases against Imran Khan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Sheikh Rasheed, Shehryar Afridi, Faisal Javed, Raja Khurram Nawaz, Ali Nawaz Awan, and Asad Qaiser at the Aabpara Police Station.

Advocate Sardar Masroof Khan and Ansar Kiani represented Khan, Rasheed, and the others in the court proceedings.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Terrorism Court has sought a report from the Adiala Jail superintendent regarding the production of Imran Khan in the judicial complex vandalism Continued on Page 3 cases at the Judicial Complex.

Naqvi pays tribute to policemen martyred in Kandhkot attack

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday condemned the attack on a police check post in the Kacha area of Kandhkot and paid tribute to the two policemen who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

He praised the police who valiantly countered the attackers, resulting in the death of one of the attackers.

The minister expressed his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyred policemen, saying," We equally share their grief".

He prayed to the Almighty for early recovery of the injured and patience to the bereaved families of martyred policemen.

President for women empowerment, improving access to financial services

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for financial autonomy of women and improving their access to financial services and credit to encourage women entrepreneurs. He added that economic empowerment of women would not only strengthen them financially but would also help uplift their families, besides contributing to the national economy. He said that banks should support women entrepreneurs as well as enhance their representation in the banking sector.

The President gave these remarks while talking to the Group Chief Executive of the Standard Chartered Bank (SCB), Mr Bill Winters, who along with his delegation called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today.

The delegation briefed the President about SCB's contributions to Pakistan's economy, the development and evolution of the banking industry, and the socio-economic development of the country.

Welcoming the delegation, the President highlighted that Pakistan had taken steps to protect the environment and promote forestation. He informed that the Govern-



ment of Sindh had planted mangrove forests and earned millions of dollars by trading carbon credits in the international market. He suggested that investing in the climate sector would help protect the environment. He also called for investing in the agricultural sector as well as financing infrastructure projects in the country, especially small dams, barrages and power plants. He said that banks should extend financial services and loans to farmers to increase their access to agricultural inputs.

The President congratulated the bank on the completion of 160 years of successful operations in Pakistan. He said that the bank had played a commendable role in the evolution of the country's banking sector. He expressed the hope that SCB would continue to play a crucial role in Pakistan's economy, besides expanding its operations in the

All parties to be taken on board on Azm-e-Istekham' operation: Rana Sana

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday said that all the political parties would be taken on board before launching "Azm-e-Istekham" operation.

Keeping in view the wave of terrorism in KPK and other parts, "Operation Azm-e-Istekham is need of the hour", he said while talking to a private television channel.

Opposition parties should bring their point of view regarding operation at the forum of Parliament, he said. We hope that all the political parties including Opposition would have the same opinion on launching the operation, he added.

Commenting on dialogue with Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI), he said that the Prime Minister on the floor of the house had given clear statement and offered dialogue with the PTI for resolving political issues.



Expressing dismay over the stubborn attitude of PTI chief, he said his negative agenda is the main hurdle in talks process. He advised PTI's party to avoid politics of agitation and come forward for talks with the government.

In reply to a question about flaws in the system, he said it is the responsibility of all the political parties to bring the suggestions at the parliamentary forum so that we could amend the system for bright future of Pakistan. He said dialogue is the only way out to address all the issues.

Former senator Hidayatullah killed in Bajaur blast

Correspondent

BAJAUR: A remote controlled bombing claimed the lives of a former senator and at least four others in Bajaur on Wednesday.

The bombing targeted former Senator Hidayatullah, who lost his life. The attack took place in Damadola.

Four other men, identified as Irfan, Yar Muhammad, Sami-ur-Rehman and Nazar Deen were also killed in the

All five bodies were shifted to the District Headquarter Hospital.

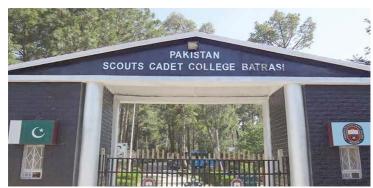
Hidayatullah was travelling for an election campaign for his nephew in PK-22 when his vehicle was attacked.

He remained a member of the Senate from 2012 to 2024 and also served as the chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Aviation. He was elected as an independent candidate.

In Scouts cadet college, contract for mess given to wanted persons without proper checks

👺 Nasir Ali Tanoli

MANSEHRA: In Scouts Cadet College Batrasi, the contract of cadet mess was given to the desired persons with the collusion of the college administration. Sources said that the principal of the cadet college and others had given the contract to the people they liked by disregarding the role regulation, which was first complained about by the other employers on the citizen portal. After which the district administration has immediately started an inquiry against the contract of cadet mess given in the Scouts cadet college while the Assistant Commissioner Mansehra has summoned the cadet college administration yesterday along



with the complete records and the form according to NIT. They are sent in the mail, but received here by hand.

According to the sources, the admin-

istration had earlier technically failed these contractors, but after the alleged

laxity, the contract was issued to them.

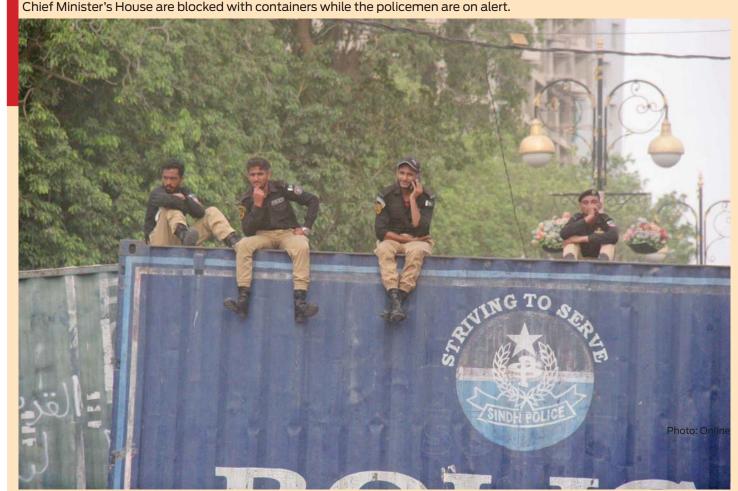
A case of 420 has already been regis-

tered in Apara police station.

Technical Engineer of C&W Department was not called in this tender Mansehra. According to sources, the local theaters were returned from the college gate without the form and told that the tender has been cancelled.

The most important thing is that checks are never made with any tender, call deposits are made, but here two checks are made with two tender forms, and one is made with a call deposit, while other such things are done. There are many things in this contract from the Cadet College administration which makes it very suspicious. Yesterday the Assistant Commissioner called the college administration after which the real facts will come out.

KARACHI: During the protest demonstration under the Sindh Journalist Alliance at PID Chowk, the roads leading to the



"Mineral deposits of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa"



llah Almighty has given Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and all Pashtuns in general such light in the form

of natural landscapes that add to its beauty and charm-go to any country in the world, the beautiful valleys of Pakistan. It is found in hot deserts, deep seas, icy rocks and vast deserts, and the blessings that have been expressed in this country of God are impossible to find in any other country in the world. According to local media and reports, there are more than 10,000 billion dollars worth of natural resources on Pashtun land, including Balochistan's natural resources, coastal areas and geographically important areas. And even there is no mention of unrest on the state writ stake as much as it is regarding these areas. At present, Kacha area is connected with India. No, while the situation in the Pashtun Baloch land is different, in this regard, in the southern

Pashtun areas, where oil and gas, chromite, fluorite, marble or emerald, coal, uranium, gold, copper, nephrite, etc. There are vast reserves of natural ore in the corner i.e. currently Shaban Quetta, Qamar Din, Loralai, Harnai Shahrg, Sibi, Daki while North Kirk Swat has 70 million carats of the best emeralds and 220 carats are worth \$4000 to \$6000 in the market. up to 40 tons of fluorite was extracted from Khyber in one year. 65000 million mcf of gas was extracted from Kirk in six months. 1935 tons of nephrite were extracted

200 million tons, Swabi block has 100 million tons of marble. Mohmand has 1,360,000 tons of marble exported. Chitral, South Waziristan and South Pashtunkhwa produce 640,000 kg of Chalgoza annually, which fetches Rs 18,000 per kg in China. 30,000 to 35,000 vehicles pass through the Kohat tunnel daily and the tax per vehicle is 80 to 450 rupees, and it is controlled by NLC. 5000 tons of coal per day from Dhaka district of North PashtunKhwa, 350,000 tons of coal per year from Dara Adam Khel. Similarly, five to ten thousand tons of coal, marble, and various minerals including

in Mohmand this year. Malakand has annually. The quantity available is every year, which is controlled by an unknown, the success rate of an oil well being about one in ten of oil in the Arab countries. Well whereas in Pashtun Khwaja Waziristan every third well is successful. According to unconfirmed estimates, there is so much oil in Miran Shah Dawar Tapi and Khadri Seeman that can meet the needs of the entire Pakistan for 40 years. While the estimate of oil and gas reserves in Musakhel Lawalai, Zhob of South Pashtun Khwa is unknown. Similarly. 36000 million tonnes of copper is found in Datta Khel Tehsil of North Waziristan Dawar Mohammad Khel. Battani's valley oil field produces 1,000



Quetta, Daki, Shahragh and other areas of South PashtunKhwa. Bunir and Mardan have 2 billion tons of

Chitral has one billion tons of marble. Korma alone has 2 million tonnes of coal, along with iron gas and good marble. Pirghar in Upper Waziristan has vast deposits of copper, gold and uranium. A ton of copper costs \$7,000. There are large deposits of coal in the mountains of Gomal. In Bajaur, 85,000 tons of marble, and 1,550 tons of chromite are exported

chromite are extracted annually from to 3,000 barrels of oil and 1 to 5 million cubic feet of gas. In addition, Amen Tarbela Dam produces 4,000 to 5,000 MW of electricity, which can be used in 50 large factories and Tarbela. Pashtunkhawa can earn billions of dollars from the dam. Not only that, if several power plants are built on the Abasin river, thousands of megawatts of electricity can be generated at extremely cheap rates. 1 to 2 rupees per unit. While the electricity generated from the water of Gomal is separate, gas worth one and a half billion dollars is extracted from Shivi in Waziristan

organization. Pashtunkhwa homeland is full of blessings. There are millions of tons of marble and other metals in the areas of South Pashtun Khwaja from Boston to Zhob, while their agriculture, livestock and gardens can be exported not only to the entire country but also to neighboring countries. If it is reviewed, with a small part of its reserves, many countries like Pakistan can be changed into the most prosperous in the world And as much water as the Baloch belt is from the sea. By saving ten billion dollars spent on imports, he could get many times more dollars by exporting, but that would have been

the case. Because these areas have the worst unrest in history. And all the time the state has to take the help of the army in these areas. It is justified about the areas rich in these natural resources that a neighboring country has a hand in, while now it is also being said that it also includes the Khawarij, whose elimination is mandatory wherever it is. Presently, the satisfactory answers to the questions of Pashtun Baloch are not coming out due to which it is impossible to utilize these resources. Among these many questions, one question is that if Pakistan is with India, which has occupied the power of occupied Kashmir. And India has been made equal to all the angry forces against the integrity of Pakistan, that is, India is responsible for all the unrest in the country.

If there can be negotiations instead of war, then how can these nations be talked about in the form of operations instead of negotiations while staying within the country's constitution, at that time the parliament or the leaders kept away from the parliament were invited for negotiations. can be By which the country can start its stalled journey towards peace and prosperity and surpass the advanced countries in the region. In this regard, if the constitution can be suspended for dictatorship, then a new For social contract because Parliament cannot suspend.

Government of Punjab seeks cooperation from religious scholars for Muharram peace



S Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Government of Punjab seeks cooperation from Religious scholars of all sects for peace. The district administration has been given full authority for the prevalence of peace. Commissioner Multan Division, Marryam Khan, expressed these views while presiding over a meeting of the Divisional Peace Committee. She stated that the Municipal Corporation has been tasked with preparing the routes for Muhar-

Tenders for repairing the procession routes have already been issued to ensure quality work. The C&W Department has been brought on board, and the Punjab Highway Department will handle all the patchwork. Coordination with MEPCO officials is ongoing to correct improperly hanging wires along the routes, and instructions have been given to avoid load shedding and address low voltage issues in the relevant areas. Commissioner Marryam Khan emphasized the installation of street lights along the procession routes for the convenience of mourners. WASA has been tasked with replacing manhole covers.

RPO Multan Captain (Retd.) Sohail Chaudhry announced that during the first 10 days of Muharram, 910 processions and 3182 gatherings will take place. A comprehensive security plan has been formulated to ensure peace and order during Muharram, with over 10,000 personnel on duty across the division.

Qari Hanif Jalandhari highlighted that Muharram teaches tolerance, patience, and brotherhood. Pakistan is a land of peace. Ali Raza Gardizi stressed that eliminating religious extremism is essential for peace. Mazhar Gilani emphasized the crucial role everyone must play in maintaining a peaceful atmosphere. Allama Farooq Khan Saeedi called for action against the spread of unverified, inflammatory content on social media. Mazin Abbas Chawhan stated that Muharram is a sacred month, and peace is the need of the hour.

Members of the Divisional Peace Committee affirmed their commitment to promoting peace. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Waseem Hamid Sindhu, CPO Sadiq Dogar, Additional Commissioner Abdul Jabbar, Syed Asghar Ali Naqvi, Engineer Sakhawat Ali, Sahibzada Anwar ul Haq Mujahid, Khawar Hussain Bhutta, Inayat Ullah Rehmani, Allama Abdul Haq Mujahid, Syed Aoun Raza Shamsi, Maulana Zubair Ahmed Siddiqui, President of the Chamber of Commerce Mian Rashid Iqbal, along with DCs, DPOs, and scholars via video link. The meeting concluded with prayers for the country's peace and progress.

Enforcement of new criminal laws will lead to further erosion of civil liberties in Kashmir: DFP

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party has expressed serious concern over the passing of three criminal laws by the Indian parliament saying that the enforcement of these laws would lead to further erosion of civil liberties especially in disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement issued here today the DFP spokesman advocate Arshad Iqbal said that these new criminal laws grant unfettered powers to the law enforcement agencies that have been already enjoying blanket immunity under various draconian laws.

While referring to the misuse of anti-terror laws in Kashmir by the Indian security agencies, Iqbal said that there was an apprehension that induction of these laws would lead to further erosion of civil liberties in the restive region where human rights situation had exacerbated due to lack of proper accountability mechanism.

He said that the most worrying aspect of these laws was that there were no checks and balances or safety provisions to prevent the misuse of these criminal laws by the security agencies. "Granting sweeping powers to the security agencies under these laws can open up floodgates to human rights abuse in Kashmir where draconian laws such as PSA, UAPA, AFSPA and

other anti-terror laws are grossly being misused", he said. The DFP spokesman appealed to the human rights bodies to take effective notice of the matter and raise the issue with the government of India and other relevant international forums.

Terming Kashmiris' ongoing struggle as a legitimate political struggle, he said, it was high time that the Indian government should accept the ground reality in Kashmir and realize the fact that genuine freedom movements with a massive public support cannot be subdued or suppressed by the dint of force.

Urging the Indian government to shun its policy of intransigence, he said that a meaningful and result oriented dialogue between all the stakeholders to the Kashmir dispute was the only way forward to resolve this lingering dispute once and for all.

CABI organizes Review and Validation Workshop for Organic Standards and Framework of Accreditation for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: CABI International, an international inter-governmental non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing livelihoods through the application of scientific expertise in agriculture and environmental problem-solving, convened a significant workshop in Islamabad on July 2-3, 2024. The workshop, titled "Review and Validation of Organic Agriculture Standards and Framework Accreditation for Pakistan," brought together a diverse group of representatives from various organizations including MNFS&R, PARC, PNAC, PSQCA, academia, BCI, testing laboratories, NGOs, textile industries, OCA, WWF, Lok Sanjh Foundation, Control Union, GCL,

Dr. Babar E. Bajwa, CABI's Senior Regional Director Asia, underscored the critical need for a well-defined and actionable plan to implement the accreditation process at the national level. CABI reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the growth of organic agriculture in Pakistan and expressed its eagerness to continue collaborating with stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the revised standards and accreditation framework.

Vice President of Pakistan Central Cotton Committee, Dr. Yousaf Zafar stated that the government is actively engaged in the promotion of organic cotton. An organic policy is currently in progress and is anticipated to be finalized within the coming months. This policy is expected to facilitate the establishment of domestic regulations and standards in this regard.





Namaz Timings

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindia	/
Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 &
& Rescue Services	4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police92	70601-20
Wassas Dal	

Women Police Ctations

Stations		
Islamabad	922259	
Rawalpindi	9270601-20	

ENQU	IRY
hi Ambulance	
A Flight Info	114
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ilway Inquiry	117
ilway Exchange .	9270831-5

HOSPITALS

110011	
CMH	561111
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MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
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RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS Water Tanker Service

E-7, F-10 & F-11 G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..9266316 Wapda Islamabad......9217579-80 Sui Gas Complaint..... 119, 9272249 Wasa Water Tank ...0331-5022125

PM expresses ...

Continued from Page 1

We also discussed the regional and international issues."

The prime minister is on a two-day visit to Astana Kazakhstan, to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Council of Heads of State (CHS) and SCO Plus summits.

Earlier, on the sidelines of these summits, he met with President of Russian Federation Vladimir Putin.

Naval War College to train maritime experts in Faisalabad: Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood

FAISALABAD: Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood SI(M) Commander Central Punjab and Commandant of the Pakistan Naval War College Lahore visited Faisalabad and discussed chances of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan Navy and Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). He had a meeting with Dr Khurram Tariq, President FCCI on diverse issues and briefed him about the Naval War College Lahore. He said that it organizes a two week long national security workshop every year in December which is participated by academia, senators and parliamentarians in addition to the business community. "The ultimate objective of this workshop is to highlight the importance of maritime in our overall economy", he said and invited Dr Khurram Tariq to participate in the upcoming workshop in addition to delivering a lecture on relevant topics. He said that this workshop would play a key role in bridging the gap between navy and business community. He said that generally said that the current IT ecosystem has

state-owned-entities are making loss es but Karachi ShipYard and Pakistan Naval Shipping Corporation are earning profit for the last two decades. About war college, he said that 40% of its students belong to different countries which is a pride for Pakistan. Dr Khurram Tariq underlined the economic importance of maritime trade and said that he had direct relations with the Pakistan navy during floods of last year.

He also stressed the need to upgrade the fishing system in Pakistan as our sea has abundance of unique species of fishes. About Faisalabad, he said that it has one of the largest industrial estates but only 20% of it was colonized so far. He also mentioned his slogan that worker's children should not be a worker and said that he has adopted all workers welfare schools in Faisalabad to provide quality education to the children of workers. He said that Akhuwat and TNF had established the first boarding school in Faisalabad while he had launched a project under the title of Cyberabad to promote IT and AI. He



quality training and deficient and irrelevant syllabus.

He was optimistic that FCCI would play a key role in overcoming these discrepancies. He said that in the second phase of this project, the busi-

some inherent flaws including lack of ness community would be involved so industrialists as the skilled IT workers that they could exploit AI to upgrade their existing industrial units in addition to establishing their own IT houses. He said that Pakistan is producing ample to Admiral Azhar Mahmood who also of raw material and its value addition is possible with direct involvement of

could not have enough finances to establish their own AI companies. Later Dr Khurram Tariq presented FCCI shield reciprocated by doling out a picture of War College and its memento.

Independence Day

ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain and Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to Pakistan, Andrei Metelitsa cutting the cake on the occasion of the Independence Day the Republic of Belarus and the 30th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Belarus and Pakistan at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.



LNG supply chain arrangement gets the CCP's nod

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has granted approval until December 2025 on the LNG supply chain component of the Share Purchase Agreement (SPA) signed between M/s Diamond Gas International Japan Co. Ltd and M/s Bison Energy FZCO.

Diamond Gas International, a Tokyo-based company, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mitsubishi Corporation with specialization in marketing, trading and shipping of LNG. Presently, it holds 100% share in two companies established in Pakistan, named Tabeer Energy (Pvt) Limited (TEPL) and Tabeer Energy Marketing (Pvt) Limited (TEMPL). Both entities have been licensed by OGRA for construction of LNG terminal and for sale of Gas in Pakistan, respectively. Meanwhile, Bison bidding documents on existence of Energy FZCO, a UAE-based energy

developer and investor with portfolios has also specified that in case of any in Europe, Eastern-Asia and Australia

is acquiring both TEPL and TEMPL. An SPA has been signed between Diamond Gas and Bison Energy in December 2023 for sale/purchase of shares of TEPL and TEMPL. Now, Mitsubishi intends to continue to be part of Pakistan's LNG supply chain after the selling of shares of TEPL and TEMPL to Bison Energy.

In terms of the SPA, Bison Energy has granted the right to Diamond Gas International to be part of procurement process for supply of LNG post acquisition of TEPL and TEMPL. The CCP, while granting the exemption, has included conditions that inter alia include transparency and fair competition to be ensured in the LNG procurement process by both Diamond Gas and Bison Energy with adequate disclosures made in the LNG the referred arrangement. The CCP

change in the regulatory regime for TEPL and TEMPL or change in the pipeline capacity allocation for new LNG terminal by Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) on 8 Oct 2021 and later by Federal Cabinet on 27 Oct 2021, the matter will be subject to CCP's review to access the implications, if any, in the relevant market. Moreover, this exemption granted does not entail any approval on downstream commercial agreements in LNG supply chain as those are distinct from this arrangement approved by

While allowing time-bound exemption along with conditions therein, CCP aims to facilitate 'relevant market' to have more certainty in LNG supply chain with an international group like Mitsubishi Corporation be part of process to match and quote best rates for LNG supply in Pakistan. Mitsubishi Corporation is engaged in large-

scale investment in LNG infrastructure and is a shareholder in twelve LNG producing projects globally with an annual production of around 12.12 Million Tonnes Per Annum.

The CCP grants exemption under Section 9 of the Competition Act, 2010, ensuring that such exemption offers and translates into economic benefits that outweigh any anti-competitive effects besides promoting technical and economic progress.

It is envisaged that this exemption will further pave the way for future foreign direct investment with opportunities of ease of doing business for an undertaking that intend to be part of Pakistan's economic growth trajectory. Besides, it is expected that the technical and commercial growth of Pakistan's energy sector will broaden under the referred arrangement with venues opened for B2B arrangements and agreements downstream the LNG/ gas supply chain in Pakistan.

AKU, US Mission Celebrate Climate Action Fellows in KP



KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED), in collaboration with the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, honoured its Climate Action Fellows and showcased their groundbreaking action plans at an event in Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The top 10 plans will receive funding for implementation, a significant step towards creating a more sustainable and resilient future. This marks a significant milestone in the "Raise Awareness and Inspire Action on Environmental Protection" project.

KP is inhabited by 30 million people and is categorized by hot summers and mild winters in the southern part and extreme cold climate in the northern part. Climate change has intensified extreme events like forest fires, water scarcity, sanitation issues, and urban flooding in the province. Furthermore, the rapid melting of ice and snow caps, along with erratic weather events, is severely impacting agriculture and livelihoods.

The project, running from September 2023 to October 2024, aims to equip educators in KP with the knowledge and skills necessary to nurture a culture of environmental stewardship. Through scholarship and inquiry-based learning, teachers are implementing action projects within their schools and communities, encouraging hands-on approaches to environmental education.

U. S. Consul General Peshawar Shante Moore said the AKU-IED partnership underscores the U.S. commitment to environmental protection and education in KP. "By empowering teachers, we are fostering a generation of environmentally conscious individuals who will drive positive change in their communities," he said. "Through the U.S. Embassy's Green Alliance initiative, we aim to create a more sustainable future."

One of the key elements of the project is the engagement of key stakeholders and policy makers in KP to support and promote climate change $\,$ education. Mr Abdul Akram, Additional Secretary Education, Government of KP, remarked: "Teachers in our country hold the key to unlocking knowledge and a sustainable future. Through climate change education, they can motivate the next generation to act, innovate, and solve pressing environmental issues."

As the project progresses, AKU-IED remains dedicated to building a network of environmentally conscious educators. Through continuous support and collaborative efforts, this initiative aims to make a lasting impact on environmental protection and climate resilience in KP

No option but to tax agriculture and property: Aurangzeb

Responding to a question regarding companies (DISCOs) with profesthe possibility of reduced electricity bills, Aurangzeb acknowledged that emphasized that the chairmanship it would take time to see results. He of these boards should be entrusted highlighted the government's plan to a private sector individual.

Continued from Page 1 to replace politically appointed individuals on the boards of distribution sionals from the private sector. He

Promoting Chess game must for enhancing cognitive skills: Romina Khurshid Alam

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister Romina Khurshid Alam has said that chess is recognised globally for its benefits in enhancing cognitive skills and critical thinking among its players. However, encouraging chess at various levels including at educational levels can significantly help foster interest and participation among people of all

ages to promote the game in the country. Addressing as a chief guest at the Mian Sultan Khan National Chess Championship Pakistan event, the PM's climate aide said, "Chess is a classic board game that's been around

of people worldwide. It's a game of and mental agility, the PM's coordinator strategy and tactics where two players, each controlling 16 pieces, compete to capture the opponent's king."

The event was organised here on Wednesday by the Headstart School Gulmohar Campus Islamabad to encourage students to develop their cognitive skills and critical thinking.

Romina Khurshid Alam said that this championship, with over 140 participants from across Pakistan, is a vital platform for promoting chess and nurturing young talent.

The Prime Minister's National Mind Sports Initiative, the largest of its kind, reflects our government's commitfor centuries and is played by millions ment to fostering intellectual growth

'Our government has opted WHOLE OF THE GOVERNMENT APPROACH and we are integrating climate change awareness and sustainability through educational programs, sports, art on side and policies, planning, and climate finance on the other," said Romina Khurshid Alam.

Ms Khurshid Alam called for need to promote national the chess game by establishing more local chess clubs in the country, where players would meet regularly to play, learn, and compete. These clubs can offer structured tournaments, coaching sessions, and social gatherings centered around chess.



Besides, Introducing chess into school curricula or after-school programs and setting up chess clubs in schools could also help students develop critical thinking, concentration, and social

skills while fostering a love for the game, she added.

Earlier, Shedding light on the legacy of Asia's first Chess Grandmaster, PM's coordinator Romina Khurshid said that

Mian Sultan Khan was a pioneering figure in chess and represented the subcontinent globally in the early 20th century, inspiring players across Pakistan and Asia.

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India must combat 'dangerous' Islamophobia trend in the country

akistan has told the United Nations General Assembly about India's "abysmal" treatment of religious minorities, with a forceful call for New Delhi to reverse the "dangerous" Islamophobic trend in the South Asian country, as also advocated by U. N. human rights experts,

"Can the representative of India justify the recent incident where a BJP leader openly threatened to slaughter 200,000 Muslims," Pakistani delegate Rabia Ijaz asked India's representative who earlier accused Pakistan of mistreating its minorities, while also alleging that it was involved in terrorism.

"We witnessed India's leadership's unabashed use of anti-Muslim rhetoric for political gain, including their Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) calling Muslims 'infiltrators' during one of his (recent) campaign speeches. Moreover, Hindu priests have openly called for genocide of Muslim minorities in India," Ms. Ijaz, a second secretary in the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said while exercising her right of reply to the Indian representative during the 193-member Assembly's debate on "Responsibility to Protect (R2P)."

India's representative, Kajal Bhat, a counsellor in the Indian Mission to the UN, made the allegations in response to Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram's sharp speech on Monday in which the Pakistani envoy, apart from New Delhi's atrocities in Jammu and Kashmir, also highlighted the grave human rights abuses of Muslim's in India.

"Muslims face systematic, officially sanctioned, discrimination, violence and oppression," Ambassador Akram said. "The law-enforcement and judicial machinery was complicit in this oppression as lynching of Muslims by cow vigilantes and RSS thugs goes unpunished", the ambassador said.

Ms. Ijaz, the Pakistani delegate, reacting to the allegations by the Indian representative, said, "Our leadership swiftly intervenes, condemns the acts (involving minorities), and ensures swift justice for the perpetrators.'

In sharp stark contrast, she said, India's leadership was bent on escalating communal tensions, pointing out that India stands out where the government not only endorses but is complicit in these serious crimes.

"There is a glaring lack of political will to curb these atrocities in India, unlike Pakistan's unequivocal stance in similar circumstances," the Pakistani delegate remarked, noting that UN human rights experts issued a statement in March stating, "We are alarmed by continuing reports of attacks on religious, racial and ethnic minorities, on women and girls on intersecting grounds, and on civil society, including human rights de-

"Instead of making vitriolic remarks and fabricating information with no evidence against my country, they (Indians) should better address the concerns being consistently raised by the UN experts and reverse the dangerous Islamophobic trend in their country," she said.

About the Indian representative's reference to the 1971 events, Ms Ijaz said those were not a question of genocide but of India's foreign aggression and attack on national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan.

Pakistan's Path to Leadership in the SCO

Qamar Bashir

in Astana, Kazakhstan from 3rd to 4th July on the central theme of "Towards a SECURE SCO," attended by the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Shahbaz Sharif, will focus on several key themes and objectives aimed at enhancing regional cooperation and addressing global challenges including Security, Economic Development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity, and Environmental Protection.

Th theme encapsulates the SCO's broader goals of fostering peace, stability, and prosperity among its member states China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, besides several observer states and dialogue partners that participate in various activities and meetings within the organization.

The SCO, encompassing major powers such as China and Russia, holds significant influence due to its vast landmass, substantial population, and abundant resources. The total landmass under SCO is 34.5 million square kilometers which is 23% of the world landmass. With over 40% of the population, abundant energy resources, robust service sector and a growing technological landscape, significant military, economic, and political weight, makes the SCO a formidable counterbalance to Western influence, particularly that of the United States and NATO, allowing the SCO to present a unified front on various global issues.

While the SCO currently focuses on economic, political, and security cooperation, its potential to evolve into a NATOlike military alliance exists. The organization already engages in joint military exercises, counter-terrorism efforts, and regional security initiatives. As geopolitical tensions rise, the SCO could formalize its military cooperation mechanisms, transforming into a more robust security alliance. This evolution would however depend on the geopolitical dynamics and

The SCO has its downside as well. Its primary focus on Central Asia, South Asia, and East Asia, lacks direct representation from Europe, North America, and significant Middle Eastern countries, impacting its global influence and reach. This regional composition limits its ability to influence global geopolitics comprehen-

sively and misses out on diverse perspectives from these regions, affecting the depth of discussions on global issues like climate change and international security. Moreover, the absence of major Western economies restricts deeper economic integration

into the global economy and limits opportunities for technological and scientific collaboration. Additionally, the lack of coordination with major global security frameworks like NATO can reduce the effectiveness of anti-terrorism efforts.

By participating in the SCO conference, Pakistan aims to leverage its strategic location and historical ties with member states to further regional connectivity and economic integration, contributing to the overall stability and development of the Eurasian region.

The SCO provides Pakistan with an ideal platform to shift from seeking aid to showcasing its strengths and assuming a leadership role. By leveraging its vast and underutilized land in regions like Balochistan and KP province, and managing its mighty glaciers to provide year long abundant water supplies, Pakistan can enhance its agricultural output and become a key exporter of agro-products to SCO countries and position itself as a leader in food security and sustainable resource management.

Pakistan, with its young and cost-effective workforce, burgeoning IT sector, and vast natural resources, is poised to significantly benefit from and contribute

hanghai Cooperation Organi-sation (SCO) conference held grate their military policies more closely. to the Shanghai Cooperation Organ-isation (SCO). The country's growing Pakistan shou number of IT-literate men and women are providing valuable services globally and can also market their services in the SCO member countries, enhancing Pakistan's reputation as an emerging tech hub.

The fully functional yet underutilized Gwadar port stands out as a critical asset

for Pakistan. As a warm water port, it can provide essential access to the sea for landlocked Central Asian countries, fostering regional trade and connectivity. Establishing peace in Afghanistan and connecting Pakistan with Central Asian countries via land routes can significantly enhance Pakistan's

geo-political and economic leverage. By capitalizing on these routes, Pakistan can facilitate trade, energy transit, and people-to-people exchanges, driving economic growth for itself and the region. In turn, this will solidify the SCO's role in promoting regional integration, stability, and development.

If Pakistan wants to become the most influential member of the SCO, it should first put its house in order by taking steps like ensuring strong political stability and robust governance. Stable political institutions and effective governance are critical for consistent participation in SCO activities and commitments. Additionally, aligning with the SCO's principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity, and pursuit of common development is essential.

Pakistan must demonstrate economic strength by fostering a strong and growing economy, promoting trade relations with other member states, and investing in regional economic integration initiatives. Effective management and utilization of its natural resources, including energy resources, agriculture, and technological advancements, will bolster its standing

Pakistan should also enhance its counter-terrorism capabilities, contributing to the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) through intelligence sharing, joint exercises, and training programs. Besides, active participation in joint military exercises and security cooperation initiatives with other SCO member states can solidify Pakistan's role as a security leader within the organization.

Strengthening diplomatic engagement with other SCO member states through active participation in meetings, summits, and forums, and playing a mediating role in regional disputes will further enhance

Promoting cultural, educational, and people-to-people exchanges by establishing academic partnerships, cultural programs, and scholarships for students from SCO countries can build soft power.

Investment in infrastructure projects that enhance regional connectivity, such as transport corridors, railways, and ports, developing logistical capabilities, including efficient transportation networks and trade facilitation, is vital for supporting regional trade and economic integration.

Actively proposing and participating in regional development initiatives, such as poverty alleviation programs, sustainable development projects, and technological cooperation, can demonstrate Pakistan's commitment to regional progress. Additionally, contributing to regional energy security through cooperative projects in energy production, distribution, and technology will enhance Pakistan's influence within the SCO.

By taking these comprehensive steps, Pakistan can significantly improve its standing and influence within the SCO, contributing to the organization's goals of regional peace, stability, and development.

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



Motives behind Initiating Operation Azm-e-Istehkam - I

has faced a resurgence of devastating attacks occurthe country. This wave of violence on public places such as markets, life and posed serious challenges to cause mass casualties and instill insenational security and stability. To curity among the population. understand this troubling trend, it is essential to explore its underlying with its military and law enforcement

the responses from both the government and the international community.

Pakistan long struggled with ideoloextremist gies promoted by militant groups, which exploit grievances related governance,

to recruit disaffected individuals. The capabilities and prosecute militants geopolitical dynamics of South Asia, effectively. Pakistan also collaborates particularly the volatile situation in neighboring Afghanistan, have also spilled over into Pakistan. The withdrawal of international forces from border terrorism and prevent funding Afghanistan and subsequent power shifts created a vacuum that extremist groups have exploited, worsening persist in achieving sustainable peace regional instability. Economic disparities, limited educational opportunities, and high unemployment further contribute to the fertile ground for Relations with neighboring countries, radicalization.

diverse tactics and targets. There has disputes heightening tensions. The

political figures, activists, and reliterrorism, with frequent and gious elements, aiming to disrupt governance structures and spread ring across different parts of fear. Suicide bombings and attacks has resulted in significant loss of mosques, and schools continue to

The Pakistani government, along causes, the nature of the attacks, and agencies, has implemented various

strategies to combat terrorism. Operations like Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad have targeted militant strongholds in tribal and urban areas. aiming to dismantle terrorist networks and restore peace. Anti-terrorism laws

have been strengthinequality, and perceived persecution ened to improve law enforcement with international partners, particularly in intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism efforts, to combat crossof extremist activities.

Abdul Basit Alvi

Despite these efforts, challenges and security. Political divisions and governance issues undermine comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies. particularly India and Afghanistan, The recent surge in terrorism in further complicate the security land-Pakistan has been characterized by scape, with border conflicts and proxy

recent years, Pakistan been an increase in assassinations of humanitarian impact of terrorism, including displacement and psychological trauma, necessitates long-term rehabilitation and social integration

Recently, Pakistan has witnessed

tragic incidents that underscore the ongoing threat of terrorism nationwide. These attacks, characterized by their brutality and indiscriminate targeting of civilians, serve as stark reminders of the difficulties Pakistan faces in addressing extremism effectively. For instance, in June 2023, a devastating bombing in Peshawar's busy market area claimed the lives of more than 50 people and left many others injured. Such attacks demonstrate the ruthless tactics employed by terrorists to instill fear and destabilize communities. In March 2022, armed militants launched an assault on a hospital in Quetta, Balochistan, leading to a tragic standoff that resulted in the deaths of dozens, including medical staff and patients. This brutal attack underscored the vulnerability of public institutions and the difficulties faced by security forces in thwarting such devastating assaults.

Similarly, in September 2021, a suicide bombing during Friday prayers inside a mosque in Karachi shocked the nation, claiming numerous lives and injuring many worshippers. This incident starkly illustrated how religious spaces are vulnerable to terrorist violence and highlighted the callous disregard for innocent lives exhibited by extremist groups.

To be continued

Future Of Pak-US Relations in Contemporary Evolving Dynamics

Hamna Obaid

critical juncture, shaped by an evolving geopothe rise of China as an emerging super power and a close ally of Pakistan, the dynamics of Pak-US relations

demand a strategic recalibration. This relationship, historically rooted in security concerns, must now adapt to a broader spectrum of economic, diplomatic, and regional factors. Considering contemporary situation, the most rational approach for Pakistan is to maintain its strategic relationship with China as well

as maintaining good relations with the US. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan has been a significant turning point, ending a chapter of intense military cooperation but opening up new avenues for collaboration.

The immediate priority for both nations remains ensuring regional stability and preventing the resurgence of extremist groups. This shared interest in security provides a strong foundation for future engagements.

However, the overarching context is the US-China rivalry. Pakistan's strategic partnership with China, exemplified by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has brought substantial investments and infrastructural development to Pakistan. For the US, counterbalancing China's influence without alienating Pakistan is a delicate task. The US can offer competitive economic incentives and technological partnerships to provide Pakistan with alternatives, thereby fostering a more balanced geopolitical stance.

Economic cooperation is a promising area for strengthening Pak-US ties particularly considering Pakistan's economic crisis. Recent high-level dialogues have highlighted mutual interests in trade, energy, and education. The US can enhance its economic footprint in Pakistan by investing in sectors such as technology, renewable energy, and higher education. This approach not only addresses Pakistan's developmental needs but also aligns with US strategic interests by providing an alternative to Chinese investments.

For instance, initiatives like the US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor aims to enhance educational exchanges and

s Pakistan and the United States look to the research collaborations, fostering goodwill and capacity future, their bilateral relationship stands at a building between HEC and universities of USA. Similarly, supporting Pakistan's renewable energy projects can help litical landscape and domestic challenges. With mitigate climate change impacts while reducing Pakistan's energy dependence on any single country.

Diplomatic engagements are crucial for managing the complexities of Pak-US relations. Regular high-level dialogues

and people-to-people exchanges can build trust and understanding. Moreover, multilateral platforms offer opportunities for collaboration on global issues such as climate change, health, and counterterrorism. By engaging Pakistan in these forums, the US can encourage a more balanced foreign policy stance from Islamabad. In 2023, US and Pakistan held the first ministerial discussions in 7 years under the US-Pakistan Trade and Investment Framework (TIFA), the primary

mechanism for overcoming barriers to bilateral trade and enhancing commercial relationships.

Pakistan's internal economic and political stability is vital for any sustained bilateral relationship. The US can play a supportive role by providing development aid, facilitating trade access, and encouraging governance reforms. Such efforts can help Pakistan navigate its economic crises and political instability, creating a more conducive environment for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Challenges to February 2024 elections are still unresolved and in such situation, coop-

The future of Pak-US relations hinges on a pragmatic approach that recognizes the complexities of the current geopolitical environment. By focusing on diversified cooperation in economic, security, and diplomatic domains, both countries can build a resilient and balanced relationship and can revitalize their ties. The strategic competition with China presents challenges, but it also offers opportunities for the US to engage Pakistan more constructively and comprehensively. As both nations navigate this intricate landscape, a relationship rooted in mutual respect and shared interests will be essential for fostering regional stability and global cooperation.

Writer is student of BS IR at FJW

Pakistan, China poised to embark on new phase of cooperation in IT, Telecom sector: **Minister IT**

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for which has been nurtured over decades by successive generations of leaders and peoples of the two countries.

and China is not merely one of bilateral cooperation but also a proof to the economic growth and technological advancement, she said while addressing 'EuroAsia Digital Economy Forum' in Beijing, China on Wednesday.

She said CPEC remain a central pillar of our bilateral cooperation and stands as a testament to the enduring friendship and strategic cooperation between our two nations underpinned by mutual respect and shared goals of

clear that the integration of digital technologies and the promotion of a robust digital economy will play a key role in but essential, she maintained. propelling this monumental initiative to even greater heights, she said.

shared vision for a prosperous future a vibrant ecosystem of startups, skilled

"As we embark on the next phase of CPEC under the guidance of the lead-IT Pakistan and China are Iron brothership of our two countries, the governers and share a deep rooted friendship ment of Pakistan is taking a holistic approach by involving the private sector alongside government entities. With the Special Investment Facil-The relationship between Pakistan itation Council (SIFC) on board to ensure security and utmost facilitation, both Pakistan and China are poised power of collaboration in nurturing to embark on a new phase of cooperation in the IT and Telecom sector." Minister of State for IT said through strategic partnerships, joint ventures, and knowledge exchange initiatives, we aim to leverage each other's strengths to unlock new opportunities for growth and development.

The realm of Information Technology and Telecommunications holds immense promise for both Pakistan and China. In an increasingly inter-As we look towards the future, it is connected world, where digital innovation drives progress, our collaboration in this field is not just beneficial

Shaza Fatima said Pakistan's IT and Telecom sector has witnessed remark-She said CPEC is a beacon of our able growth in recent years, fueled by and a model for international coop- professionals, and supportive govern-

ment policies. Similarly, China's technological prowess is globally recognized, with its innovative companies leading the way in areas such as telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and e-commerce.

She said under the new government, we are working towards our digital transformation in three verticals: the digital economy, digital governance, and digital society. Pakistan is increasingly adopting digitalization to keep up with the fast-evolving environment. This provides a huge investment and collaboration opportunity for Chinese companies in Pakistan particularly in the areas of IT infrastructures, Cloud computing, IT & IT enabled Services, BPOs and Call Centers, and Chip/smart devices manufacturing, and smart cities, among others, she added.

She said both Pakistan and China can work together to serve internationally by leveraging each other's strengths.

She said this EuroAsia Pakistan Digital Economy Forum serves as a catalyst for fostering meaningful collaborations as this forum will provide a platform for companies from both countries to explore joint ventures, share best practices, and engage in knowledge exchange.



Saudi eases access for Pakistani tourists with revised visa requirements

跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Saudi, one of the top international destinations for Pakistani travellers, has eased tourist visa requirements with immediate effect, where applicants can now submit a bank statement showing a minimum monthly credit amount of USD 750 or its equivalent.

Pakistani tourist arrivals to Saudi grew 43% in 2023 compared with the previous year. Saudi is aiming to welcome 2.7 million Pakistani visitors in 2024. To accommodate this growing demand, Saudi is making it easier for Pakistani travellers to obtain the visa prior to travel through one of six Tasheer offices established across Pakistan in Peshawar, Quetta, Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, and Multan.

The Tasheer offices offer a conver port delivery. Travellers can schedule explore Saudi for up to 96 hours. Visa those coming for personal visits such each year.



an appointment on the Tasheer website on arrival is available for those travel- the Red Sea, to the ancient marvels

and user-friendly experience, including the transit visa which is available for visa application guidance, biometric travellers arriving in Saudi via Saudia

one-year multiple entry visa for Paki- busy calendar of events through winter enrolment, status tracking, and pass- and Flynas, where they can transit and stani travellers. This is a specific visa for is attracting more and more tourists

as attending weddings or functions or visiting friends or family. Holders of this visa can enjoy multiple visits to Saudi within a 12-month period, allowing them to explore the country's vibrant cities, cultural richness, and natural wonders all year round.

Pakistani travellers with the one year multiple entry visa can also perform Umrah, underscoring Saudi's commitment to fostering spiritual journeys and cultural exchanges.

Making it easier to get a visa will encourage more Pakistani travellers to not only visit their friends and family and perform Umra but will also encourage them to explore Saudi; from Riyadh's vibrant cityscape, Jeddah's cultural richness, hidden treasures of lers who hold a valid and used UK, US of AlUla. Saudi is a year-round destination with several regions offering In the past year, Saudi introduced the a cooler escape in summer while the

Alif Holdings' Toor Hotel Apartments Commence Operations this July 2024 in Bahria Town

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd, a leading real estate and development company is delighted to announce the grand opening of Toor Hotel Apartments, a premier hospitality project, commencing operations in July 2024. Nestled in the pristine area of Bahria Town, Lahore, Toor Hotel Apartments offers an exquisite blend of the flexibility of an apartment with the services of a 3-star

Toor Hotel Apartments is designed for guests who appreciate the flexibility of apartment living combined with the comprehensive services of a hotel and to provide a home-away-

from-home experience, allowing guests to book stays for a day, a week, or longer, similar to the convenience of hotel or Airbnb accommodation

Alif Holdings is excited to welcome its first guests from July and looks forward to providing exceptional hospitality and a memorable stay at Toor Hotel Apartments.

Gender policy in Uzbekistan – an important criterion for ensuring human rights

democratic society is the protection of human rights and the provision of equal opportunities for all in public life and administration. Gender equality is an essential component of this, as it ensures equal protection of rights and freedoms for individuals.

The Constitution of Uzbekistan states that all citizens enjoy equal rights and freedoms, regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, religion, beliefs, social origin or social status. Article 58 states that men and women have equal rights, and the state provides equal opportunities for both genders in managing society and state affairs.

These principles of equality and social justice are reflected in all laws and regulations, ensuring that everyone has equal access to opportunities and rights. This includes gender equality, which is essential for a fair and just society.

It should be noted that, in recent years, more than 40 legislative documents and important conceptual programs have been adopted within the framework of which efforts have been made to create equal rights and opportunities for women and men, strengthen the role of women in government and community leadership, provide necessary conditions for education, vocational training, employment, and create decent working conditions. These efforts also aim to increase women's participation in economic life and protect them at the 78th session of the United against various forms of harassment and violence.

antees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men" provides for the prevention of country and noted that the share gender discrimination and the of women in public administra-

he main feature of a provision of equal participation for all in public administration. The Law on Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence establishes mechanisms to end various forms of violence against women and to provide protection and assistance to victims.

The "Strategy for achieving gender equality in Uzbekistan until 2030" approved by the decision of the Senate of the Oliv Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan on May 28, 2021, envisages a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the principle of equality between women and men in all spheres and levels of decision-making and implementation. Also, the strategy serves to ensure the promotion of gender equality in economic, political, and social life in order to create conditions for the realization of equal rights and opportunities for men and women and to observe fundamental human rights.

Due to this, gender policy in our country has become an important factor in society and state development. Concepts such as "gender equality", "gender and development", "gender balance", and "the role of women in social and political life" are expressed in the development of program documents and all normative legal documents in our country.

In practice, the results are even more significant. In particular, the reason for the gender policy is that in the last seven years, the share of women in public administration in Uzbekistan has increased from 27% to 35%. In his speech Nations General Assembly, the President of the Republic of In particular, the law "On guar- Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, summarized the systematic efforts to achieve gender equality in our

tion reached 35% for the first

Moreover, in our country, 32% of the deputies in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis and 25% of the members of the Senate are women. The number of women entrepreneurs has doubled, and the number of women who have started their own business has exceeded 205 thousand. Hundreds of thousands of women were trained in trades and entrepreneurship. Among the population employed in health care and education, the share of women is 77 percent, in the economy and industry, it is 46 percent. The number of girls studying in higher education institutions has increased by six times; more than half of the students are

Uzbekistan has ratified the main international human rights treaties and conventions related to gender equality. Our country joined the Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and undertook to eliminate discrimination and ensure the full development and well-being of women. Uzbekistan has also ratified the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, which set strategic goals for achieving gender equality, and has been effectively fulfilling the relevant obligations. Therefore, the systematic

measures taken in this regard are duly recognized by the international community. In particular, in the World Bank index, Uzbekistan was listed among the 5 fastest developing countries in the world in the field of gender equality. In addition, Uzbekistan ranked

18th out of 195 countries with a 69.7 in the "Open Data Watch"

organization's Open Gender Data Index, and was ranked among the

In the policy of ensuring

gender equality in the public service, increasing the weight of women in public administration, in particular, issues of forming a team of potential female leaders

are of priority. It should be noted that after the introduction of open competitions by the Public Service Development Agency, practically the same requirements were set for everyone. The human factor between the employer, personnel department representatives, and candidates was limited. Equal opportunities are guaranteed

This, of course, further expanded the opportunities for women to enter the civil service. If we base our opinion on the numbers, earlier women made up 5-8 percent of those who

entered the civil service, now women make up about 34 percent of the winners of the competition.

To be more specific, 2.1 million applications have been received in open competitions to date, of which 20% are women. 56,500 of our citizens won these contests. and 19,670 of them (35 percent) were women.

The first direction of ensuring gender equality in the personnel policy is to attract the most potential women to the civil service, to increase the attractiveness of the civil service for them, and the second major direction is to hire highly skilled people in the management of the civil service - "HiPo" (High potential) is to systematically prepare female

personnel for leadership positions and to form a corps of "Women According to many sociologists, a professional leader is a person who has certain charac-

of 145 women was improved. teristics for successful management, regardless of gender. For

effective management, it is not the role of the leader in gender relations, but the presence of professional competences such as the ability to correctly set priorities in solving the problem, to direct and towns. In turn, through this, the team, and to fully achieve the goals based on the rational distribution of resources, is considered important.

of vertical segregation, the low proportion of women in highranking positions, and the problem of the "glass ceiling"our women have to work in more middle and senior management situation, we can point out the high responsibility of leadership, and for this reason, the professional qualifications, knowledge, and potential of women are not in accordance with the relevant leadership position.

In order to form specialists into good leaders, it is necessary to develop the necessary soft skills in effective work with personnel and making optimal decisions in management, development of human resources, innovation, and as a result of the full and critical and systematic thinking,

and leadership competencies. Therefore, our agency, in cooperation with the Family and Women's Committee and the Academy of Public Administration, launched the "Women's School of Leaders" educational program aimed at preparing the most potential women working in state bodies for leadership.

Until now, on the basis of this program, he has a high professional potential, is active in the implementation of reforms, and is active in various fields of public administration. The qualification

that by the Decree of the President Law

of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-81 dated March 1, 2022, the position of women activists was introduced in every neighborhood in all cities, towns, villages, the President created a practical school for the formation of women leaders. Currently, there are about 9.400 women activists However, due to the problem at the lower level, and 207 women are working as deputy governors, heads of family, and women's

Those who have achieved invisible barriers to advancement the highest results according to the KPI system by the State Service Development Agency positions. As a reason for such a are included in the National Personnel Reserve and are purposefully prepared for senior leadership positions.

departments at the middle level.

As a result of the above-summarized measures implemented on the basis of today's gender equality policy, a unique national model of preparing women for leadership is being formed in our

In conclusion, a strong legal basis for gender equality policy has been formed in our country. correct implementation of these norms in life, we are making progress recognized by the international community. On this basis, it can be noted that gender policy in Uzbekistan serves as an important criterion for ensuring human rights.

Dilfuza Makhkamova,

Head of the Department of the Agency for the Development of Public Service under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Farangiz Avazbekova, Chief Inspector of the Agency for the Development of Public Service under the President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan;

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation			
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index			
Current	Prev. Close		
80,233.67	79,552.88		
Day's High	Day's Low		
80,405.23	79,697.25		
Index Value	Change		
16,194,301,598	+680.79		
Percentage	Time		
+0.86%	3 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm		
Europe: FTS	E 100 Index		
Index Value	Change		
8,171.12	-49.92		
Percentage	3 Jul 4:35 nm		
-0.61%			
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average			
Index Value	Change		
39,308.00	-23.85		
Percentage	Time		
-0.061%	3 Jul, 1:11 pm GMT-4		
Asia Pacific: Nikk	sia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change		
40,580.76	+506.07		
Percentage	Time		

- p		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.22	748.22
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.29	38.69
Danish Krone	40.03	40.43
Euro	294.3	297.75
Hong Kong Dollar	35.63	35.98
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	907.71	916.71
Malaysian Ringgit	58.99	59.59
NewZealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	26.14	26.44
Omani Riyal	722.87	730.89
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	73.15	73.95
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.27	26.57
Swiss Franc	309.01	311.51
Thai Bhat	7.55	7.7
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.8
UK Pound Sterling	350	353
US Dollar	277.9	280.7

+1.26%

3 Jul, 3:15 pm

GMT+9

Telenor Microfinance Bank receives prestigious ISO/ IEC 27001:2022 Certification

E Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB), operator of Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform easypaisa has been awarded the prestigious ISO/IEC 27001:2022 by Risk Associates, a leading certification body accredited by UKAS.

The certification marks a significant milestone in the bank's commitment to data security excellence. Key stakeholders from both organizations attended, including Aziz A. Rahim, Chief Operating Officer, and Hashim Mufti, Head of Business Development & Strategy from Risk Associates. TMB/easypaisa was represented by Muhammad Rizwan Ikram, Chief Risk Officer; Mustapha Salim Lotia, Head of Information Security; and Muhammad Ali, Head of App & Infra Security.

During the ceremony, Aziz A. Rahim, Chief Operating Officer, Risk Associates presented the ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification to Muhammad Rizwan Ikram, Chief Risk Officer, and Mustapha Salim Lotia, Head of Information Security, TMB/easypaisa. In recognition of their contributions, certificates, and shields were also presented to the core team members

Congratulating the team on receiving the prestigious certification, Kashif Ahmed, Acting President & CEO TMB/ eayspaisa, commented, "Receiving the prestigious ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification is a testament to our robust risk management protocols and reaffirms our commitment to maintaining standards of excellence in data security.

"We congratulate Telenor Microfinance Bank on this significant achievement, setting a new benchmark for data security in Pakistan," commented, Aziz A. Rahim - Chief Operating Officer, Risk Associates, "This certification reflects TMB's proactive approach to information security and its continuous efforts to uphold the highest standards of data protection."

Govt will bear consequences of heightened instability, says Mian Zahid Hussain

ISLAMABAD: Mian Zahid Hussain, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and a former provincial minister, stated on Wednesday that the recent federal budget is causing various sections to protest and it is driving the country towards deindustrialization.

He said that the people have lost trust in authorities' promises, including that of the Finance Minister.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the gap

between the people and the government is widening, which needs to be bridged. Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that continued

load shedding of electricity is adding to people's He said that such a budget has never been

presented in the history of the country in which milk for infants has also been made expensive.

Thousands of items now face additional customs duty, regulatory duty, withholding tax, and sales tax, which will significantly raise

business costs and inflation.

He pointed out that by eliminating the fixed tax regime and imposing sales tax on their local supply, the FBR has left the exporters, who bring \$30 billion into the country annually, at their mercy.

In some cases, there has been ruthless discrimination between government employees 1200 billion rupees. and general masses which will never be accepted.

He observed that in these circumstances, the Finance Minister has said that whenever the economy improves, the income tax on able to various issues. the salaried class will be withdrawn, but the increasing government expenditure can never help improve the economy.

According to Mian Zahid Hussain, the people's income has been steadily declining for several years, while taxes continue to rise, leading to a decrease in their disposable income. As a result, millions of people are struggling to meet their basic needs, including food.

Electricity rates are higher than in developed countries, where laborers earn handsome salaries, he informed.

According to Mian Zahid Hussain, reforming the electricity sector could have saved 1200 billion rupees, and privatizing failing government institutions could have saved another

Mian Zahid Hussain also stated that oil marketing companies now enjoy exemptions rather than a zero rating, and the elimination of their tax input adjustment has left them vulner-

There will now be an 18 percent sales tax on homeopathic and Unani medicines, as well as a 1 percent sales tax on allopathic medicines. There is a need for reforms in the budget, he

He warned that maintaining the budget in its current form will increase economic instability in the country, making even government supporters unable to defend it.

Crest of FPCCI

Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI presenting Crest of FPCCI on behalf Sheik Atif Ikram President FPCCI to Esperanza Gomez Jelalian Executive Director, Asia. Mr Mohammed Hanif Channa Minister (Trade & Investment), Mr Wajihullah Kundi Ecnomic Minister, Mr Bilal Akram Shah Counsellor, Mr Sheikh Saddique Founder President & Chairman USPICC, Mr Najeeb Aslam Ambassador Trade & Investment FPCCI and Mian Zahid Chief Editor Dunya Newspaper USA are also present at the occasion in Pakistan Embassy Washington DC USA



PM's initiative to appoint prominent businessmen as honorary Ambassadors is commendable: Ahsan Bakhtawari

Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Bakhtawari has commended the decision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to appoint 48 eminent businessmen as honorary Ambassadors. He said that the business community also hails the government's decision of taking it on board for the purpose adding that the government should also give formal representation to the business community at other important policy-making forums including the FBR. community in the standing can be included at the consul-

Speaking to a delegation of businessmen at the Chamber House yesterday, President ICCI said that the business community is the biggest stakeholder of country's economy. It is also generating respectable employment for millions of people. Services of those businessmen who are paying billions of rupees as tax must be recognized at the state level which will create a sense of security and pride in the business community.



committees of the Senate and government should ensure the and finance so that suggestions representation of the business from the business community

tative level and effective policy

can be formulated. He added that the business community should also be granted representation in the Board of Directors of FBR to resolve the issues like broadening the tax net, enforcement of new taxes, recovery matters can be resolved amicably. The ICCI President further said that the government claims that tax refund cases worth billions of rupees are stuck across the country and if the relevant Chambers are taken on board o the issue, all such matters can be resolved promptly and effec-

Banks of Azad Jammu & Kashmir see recordhigh end of FY 2024

Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: For the first time in the AJK Bank history. Deposits of Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir have increased to more than Rs 38.5 billion with a record increase of Rs 16 billion in the first half of the year 2024. This was revealed in a extraordinary meeting presided over by President/ Chief Executive Officer Shahid Shahzad Meer at the Head Office last day. It was stated that due to effective business strategy, teamwork, honesty and good intentions of the staff, the institution is achieving significant success in all departments. The total December 2023 were 24.14 billion rupees, which is the highest level with an impressive increase of 60% in the the bank.

last 6 months. The CEO paid tribute to his team for their high performance, best utilization of their services and dedications. Mr Shahid Meer also expressed his determination that more success will be achieved due to the hard work and dedication of the staff, their strong commitment to the organization, and the tremendous support of the customers. It is worth mentioning here that along with the historic increase in deposits, the bank is also surpassing all business targets including profitability, domestic remittances, assets. He thanked the support and trust of all stakeholders including the deposits of the bank on 31st government and respected customers. He expressed his determination to speed up the development journey of

Vehari Chamber protests federal budget on unjustified taxes on cotton, rice



Malik Salem Shahid

VEHARI: President Vehari Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Khalid Hussain Said The federal government's budget has attacked the business of farmers and industrialists by imposing unjustified taxes

on cotton and rice crops. The press conference o Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed serious concerns about the current budget, calling the taxes and other taxes in electricity bills cruel. While holding a press conference, he said that the Chamber of Commerce should be withdrawn.

and Industry is an organization of the government and is taking steps for the promotion of industries, but the current government has faced severe difficulties. If the government accepts our demands, the country will develop if the series of strikes continues Then it will not be good not only for the people but also for the country. They said that the budget for 2024-25 has been presented, especially with reference to cotton, the way the government has targeted it is regrettable. The taxes that have been imposed

Proclamation to tax the affluent proved to be a political catchphrase

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said on Wednesday that the budget had disappointed the masses and businesses and pleased

He said the anger in the masses is which can have severe political conse-

The budget has exposed the reality of the economic managers' bold statements and has also curtailed the chances of any economic improve-

ment, he added. Talking to the party workers, Dr Hanif Mughal said that the budget

had made no progress towards equitable taxation and sustainable government expenditure as promised.

Rather, the taxation system has become more cruel. At the same time, government expenditure has reached up to 25% of the GDP and is increasing.

Half to two and a half per cent withincreasing due to budgetary measures, holding tax has been imposed on flour and other wheat products, which is unacceptable. This will increase the price of a 20 kg bag of flour by 40 rupees and other wheat products by 200 rupees per bag.

He informed that the SPI data for the week ending 27 June indicates that the heaviest burden was borne by those earning an income from



22,899 to 29,517 rupees per month,

followed by those earning 29,518 to While these two income groups

eration is that these two groups would nonetheless suffer a decline in their disposable incomes.

The income of these groups would decline given that the ambit of sales tax has been widened to include essential items, including milk and stationery. It is fair to assume that their kitchen budgets must be revisited and stark choices made.

Even though no tax has been imposed on retailers, the increase in taxes on real estate has been restricted to ordinary citizens. In contrast, the rulers have drastically increased their

The assembly members will be given would remain exempt from income five hundred billion rupees in the name

tax, what needs to be taken into consid- of the development budget, a political bribe.

All this looting is done when efforts are made to take another loan from the IMF. The country has reached the

extreme of economic fall due to the wrong priorities of the ruling class and the continued plunder of national

He said that according to economic experts, the real benefit of the new agreements for obtaining more loans will benefit the corrupt mafia. At the same time, the people will bear the

burden. In these circumstances, national development and luring local and

foreign investment is a self-delusion.

Maham, Anisa to feature in

ISLAMABAD: Maham and Anisa would depart for Seoul, South

Korea from Lahore on Thursday to represent Pakistan at the World

a female cycling coach, and Anisa, a talented rider, from lyari karachi

would represent Pakistan at the World Cycling Centre, said a press

Maham would participate in the UCI Level-II training program,

Maham Tariq performed outstandingly at the World Special Olympics in Germany, where she trained children from Pakistan. Under her guidance, special children won four gold medals, four

President Pakistan Cycling Federation, Syed Azhar Ali Shah, extended his best wishes to both Maham and Anisa. He reaffirmed

PCFs commitment to providing full opportunities to female athletes

We are proud to support our female athletes and coaches,

emphasizing the importance of their development in the sport.

further enhancing her coaching skills and expertise while Anisa will

showcase her cycling prowess at the international training course.

The Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF) announced that Maham,

Summer Camp of table tennis is underway at NPSC **Gymnasium Hall**

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Sports Board Punjab's Summer Sports Camp of table tennis is underway at Nishtar Park Sports Complex (NPSC) Gymnasium Hall as per directions of Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal here on Wednesday.

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal in a statement on Wednesday said that the Summer Camps are useful activity and it will play a key role in fresh talented players from all parts of

improving the game skills of the school going boys and girls. "Sports Board Punjab has arranged qualified coaches camp probable in Summer Sports Camps"

Director General Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal further said that the 40-day Summer Sports Camp is definitely a revolutionary programme and it will play a significant part in locating



for imparting latest training to young the province. "Our expert coaches are also imparting modern training to school going boys and girls in all divisions of the province".

Dozens of young school going children of 5 to 16 years of age are attaining top level training in the table tennis Summer Sports Camp being conducted under the supervision of qualified coaches Yasir ance with their nutritional requirements.

Bhatti and M Waheed.

The expert coaches are imparting advance multi-balls training to camp probables with special focus on physical stretching and other relevant activities. Besides this, the coaches also taught the school going children about their diet plan, which has been designed in accord-

Hardik Pandya crowned top T20I all-rounder

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Hardik Pandya's heroics in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup has seen him become the No.1 ranked all-rounder in the latest ICC Men's T20I Rankings update.

Pandya rose two places to go level with Sri Lankan star Wanindu Hasaranga as the top-ranked men's T20I all-rounder. The Indian all-rounder, who made a big contribution in the final with the crucial wickets of Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller, had a good tournament with bat and ball and becomes the first Indian man to reach No.1 in the category.

He made impactful cameos down the order with the bat and made breakthroughs with the ball when the team needed him to. He finished with 144 runs at a batting with Marcus Stoinis, Sikandar strike-rate of over 150 and also took 11 wickets.

final when his decisive blow go out of the top five. - the wicket of Klaasen -



Hardik went on to bowl the tense final over and defended 16 runs to help India win the T20 World Cup title

There were other movements in the top 10 of the T20I all-rounder rankings, Raza, Shakib Al Hasan and Liam Livingstone rising up by

the game swung the contest. Nortje rose up by seven places to joint-eighth. Among other with the bat.

to a caree-best second spot to go just behind top-ranked Adil Rashid with 675 rating

India's star fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah, who won the Player of the Tournament award at the T20 World Cup, for his 15 wickets, moved up by 12 spots to go just outside His most important perfor- one spot. Mohammad Nabi the top ten, his highest posimance, though, came in the moved back by four spots to tion since the end of 2020.

Kuldeen Vaday entered the

beneficiaries were Arshdeep Singh, who moved up by four spots to a career-best No.13 after topping the wickets chart at the T20 World Cup, and Tabraiz Shamsi, who moved up by five positions to

There wasn't too much movement in the top ten of the batting rankings with one minor change in South Africa skipper Aiden Markram with South Africa on top of bowling rankings, Anrich ings, moving up by three spots after an ordinary tournament

reach the top 15.

Asian Taekwondo champion goes missing in Lahore



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Muhammad Hamas, a national and Asian Taekwondo champion, has been missing for a week, prompting his family to file a kidnapping case with the Nawab Town police station in Lahore.

Hamas' father, Muhammad Zareef, reported that his son received a call from an unknown person. After the call, Hamas went to gate number two of his university, where he was reportedly taken away by several individuals in a white car.

Zareef has appealed to the police to take immediate action to locate his son and alleviate the family's distress.

Hamas, a resident of Dinpur, Dera Ismail Khan, has a long history of success in Taekwondo, having won multiple national titles in both junior and senior categories.

Most recently, on November 2nd, 2023, Hamas secured a gold medal in the 48kg category at the Comebacks Asian Open International Taekwondo Championshin, defeating fellow Pakistani compet Among the men's T20I top ten of the bowling rank- dropping down by two points itor Salman Khan in the final. The family is urging authorities to investigate the case thoroughly and ensure Hamas' safe return.

ensuring they have access to the best training and competitive He said all expenses for this program would be covered by the Korean Cycling Federation and thanked President Korean Cycling Federation and Edward, Director of WCC-Korea, for consistently providing training opportunities for PCF cyclists and coaches over

Sports Desk

Cycling Centre (WCC).

silver medals, and two bronze medals.

Pakistan-India Champions Trophy clash date revealed: reports



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan and India are set to lock horns in a highly anticipated ICC Champions Trophy 2025 clash on March 1 at Gaddafi Stadium in Labore, according to Indian media report citing an ICC Board member.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has reportedly submitted the schedule for the Champions Trophy to the International Cricket Council (ICC), which is approved by all the participating countries except India.

"The PCB has submitted the draft of the 15-match ICC Champions Trophy. Seven games in Lahore, three in Karachi and five in Rawalpindi," an ICC Board member said.

Notably, India is scheduled to play all their matches in Lahore. The host Pakistan is placed with India, Bangladesh, and New Zealand in Group A, while Group B features England, South Africa, Australia, and Afghanistan, according to the proposed schedule.

Pakistan coach Gary Kirsten submits 'confidential' report to PCB on team's performance

LAHORE: Pakistan's white-ball coach Gary Kirsten has submitted a "confidential" assessment report on the national side's disastrous performance in the recently concluded T20 World Cup 2024 to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), sources told Geo News on

The report, the sources added, has been sent to PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi who will review the document highlighting players' fitness, discipline and game awareness among other things that led to the team's early exit from the mega event.

The development comes as the Green Shirts failed to even make it to the Super Eight stage of the World Cup after suffering an upset loss against the minnows United States followed by a defeat against arch-rivals India. The Babar Azam-led side only managed to win matches against Canada and Ireland which were insufficient to propel the team to the next stage of the tournament.

Carlos Alcaraz coasts into Wimbledon third round

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz recovered from an early stumble to sweep into the third round of Wimbledon on Wednesday, dispatching Australia's Aleksandar Vukic in straight sets.

The third seed dug deep to take the opening set against his 69th-ranked opponent before shifting impressively through the gears to win 7-6 (7/5), 6-2,

From 5-2 up in the first set, the Spaniard briefly lost his way to trail 5-6.

However, with the pressure on, Alcaraz broke back to force a tie-break and from then on it was one-way traffic.

The 21-year-old broke twice in the

second set and repeated the feat in set three, pounding a total of 42 winners.

Alcaraz, who beat Novak Djokovic in last year's Wimbledon final, wrapped up victory in one hour, and 48 minutes. Vukic defeated then-17-year-old

Alcaraz in qualifying at Roland Garros

in 2020 but could not repeat the feat on

the grass at the All England Club. "I'm really happy about my performance today," said Alcaraz. "The first set was the key for me. He served for the

set, then I played a really good tie-break. "In the second set and third set, I played a really high level so I'm really happy about it."

The three-time Grand Slam champion is bidding to become just the

sixth man after Rod Laver, Bjorn Borg, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic to win the French Open and

Wimbledon titles back to back.

He next faces Frances Tiafoe, the American player he defeated in five sets in the semi-finals of the 2022 US

The Spaniard said he would "put on a show" against Tiafoe, ranked 29th.

"I'm going for him," he said. "We played a really good match in the US Open.

"I know he is a really talented player, a tough one, even tougher on grass with his style. Good volley, good slices. It is Open on his way to his first Grand Slam going to be a very difficult match for me.

"I'm ready to take that challenge."

All-round Isuru Udana powers Galle Marvels to victory over Colombo Strikers

Sports Desk

PALLEKELE: Isuru Udana scored a quick-fire half-century, followed by two wickets to lead Galle Marvels to a narrow victory against Colombo Strikers in the Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2024 clash here on Wednesday.

Galle Marvels, while defending 179, removed opening batter Shevon Daniel (7) in the third over. Muhammad Waseem joined Rahmanullah Gurbaz and scored 16 off 9 before falling

Maheesh Theekshana. Meanwhile, Gurbaz, who scored a 17-ball 29, was castled

by Zahoor Khan on the last ball of the powerplay with 57 runs on the board.

Glenn Phillips (26) then added 24 and 25 runs with Sadeera Samarawickrama (16) and Thisara Perera (18) respectively to keep his side in the hunt.

However, Galle Marvels' bowler kept picking wickets at regular intervals to keep things under control.

Dunith Wellalage came out to bat with 63 required off 33 and he struck two boundaries off his first two balls off Sahan Arach-

He waged a lone war and

played a quick 45-run knock from 26 balls with the help of five boundaries and two sixes before falling on the final ball of the innings, thus losing by seven

Udana bowled the final over, defending 11 runs and returning with bowling figures of 2-34. Meanwhile, Arachchige and Theekshana also claimed two wickets each.

Earlier, Niroshan Dickwella gave Galle Marvels a flying start with a one-sided opening partnership of 71 runs with Alex

However, they soon slipped

to 77-3 as Binura Fernando removed Hales, while Dickwella fell prey to Shadab Khan after scoring an 18-ball 50 with six boundaries and three sixes.

Shadab Khan dismissed Janith Liyanage (2) and Tim Seifert (12) in his next over to reduce Galle Marvels to 86-5.

Arachchige and Udana joined hands after another wicket to construct a 79-run stand for the seventh wicket.

to 173 before Matheesha Pathirana sent Arachchige back after he had scored 35 off 27.

Udana top-scored with 52



They pushed the team's total runs from 34 balls with five the Marvels at 179 in 20 overs. boundaries and three sixes. Fernando picked the wicket of Udana, followed by a run-out and Zahoor Khan's wicket to bundle

Shadab Khan topped the wicket-takers' chart with four wickets, while Fernando claimed three.

position at the top of the LPL 2024 points table with two victories in as many games, while Colombo Strikers are sitting in Galle Marvels solidified their the second position.

The Spokesman

Exercise-2024 Rawalpindi: Group photo of participants during the Pakistan-US Infantry Rifle Company Exchange Exercise-2024 under-

PM, Uzbek President reaffirm commitment to multifaceted relations between two countries

Spokesman Report

ASTANA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Wednesday reaffirmed commitment to the multifaceted relations between the two countries and expanding of mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, connectivity, defence, security, culture and people to people contacts.

The two leaders expressed confidence that operationalization of Preferential Trade Agreement and Pakistan-Uzbekistan Transit Trade Agreement would further enhance bilateral trade and economic



with the Uzbek president on (SCO) Summit being held press release. the sidelines of the Shanghai here in Kazakhstan, PM

The prime minister met Cooperation Organization Office Media Wing said in a tance of Uzbekistan as a

transit point for trade expan-Recognizing the impor- sion for other countries the also discussed.

two leaders agreed to focus on this particular area and to this end initiate an examination of the various options available. Karachi Port connectivity to Tirmez was also discussed to enhance trade between the two countries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed Pakistan's eagerness to see a prosperous Central Asia and enhanced regional connectivity.

The two leaders also discussed the situation in Afghanistan and the common interest of both Pakistan and Uzbekistan for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan which could be a partner in the development and prosperity of the

The early realization of Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway Project was

Pakistan-United States Infantry Rifle Company Exchange Exercise-2024

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan-United States Infantry Rifle Company Exchange Exercise-2024 is a bilateral joint exercise in Counter Terrorism tions. domain to exchange tactical skills at combating menace of terrorism at sub unit level.

Pabbi with participation of Infantry Commanding Kharian Garrison.

companies from both sides.

The exercise is aimed at sharing Counter Terrorism experiences besides refining drills procedures vital for Counter Terrorism opera-

The scope of Exercise envisages attaining marksmanship skills during urban warfare by under-Two weeks long exercise standing best practices adopted at commenced on 29 Jun 2024 at sub unit level. The inaugural event National Counter Terrorism Centre, was witnessed by General Officer

Minister Finance meets with the CEO of Standard Chartered Bank and Team



Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Group Chief Executive of Standard Chartered Bank PLC Mr. Bill Winters called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at Finance Division today. Standard Shaikh and Head CCIB Pakistan Mr Arslan Nayeem were also present in the meeting.

Mr. Bill Winters appreciated the ongoing efforts of the Government of Pakistan to bring about economic stability and the significant improvements in macroeconomic indicators. He also acknowledged the strides made in the banking sector and appreciated the government's initiatives in this regard. Expressing the bank's eagerness to assist Paki- pering with multilateral institutions

new products and financial instruments tailored to meet the evolving needs of the Pakistani market.

The Finance Minister appreciated Mr. Winters visit to Pakistan, which signifies Standard Chartered's commitment to the country. He reiterated the government's focus Chartered Pakistan CEO Mr. Rehan on stimulating economic growth by committing to streamline processes and ensure a stable regulatory environment. He highlighted Pakistan's enhanced foreign exchange reserves and the robust performance of the stock market. The Minister also mentioned the government's focus on areas of mutual interest such as climate financing, SME and youth loan schemes, aimed at promoting inclusive growth and development. The Minister thanked Mr. Winters Standard Chartered's commitment and his team for presenting his to supporting Pakistan's economic proposals on improving Pakistan's aspirations, Mr. Winters highlighted domestic banking industry, partstan in accessing international capital and enhancing Pakistan's access to markets. He proposed introducing international capital markets.

Sardar Attique called on Prime Minister AJK

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan called on Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq here today. On the occasion, the

duo discussed in detail the prevailing political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir and other issues of mutual concern

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Haq voiced his serious concern over the worsening situation in Occupied Kashmir and stressed the



expose barbarism and brutalneed for adopting a coherent ities inflicted on innocent and

and consistent approach to unarmed Kashmiris in the tional intransigence, the PM occupied territory. Referring to India's tradi-

said that Indian government's stubborn attitude amounts to a

violation of the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir.

He said that the Kashmiri people had neither accepted India's illegal control over their motherland in the past nor would they become a part of any such process in the future.

He said that there was a dire need to adopt a unified stand on the issue of Kashmir to raise it effectively at the international level.

The duo agreed to work together with other political stakeholders to sensitize the world about the early resolution of Kashmir in line with wishes and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Punjab govt greenlights 'luxury housing' for bureaucrats

Bureau Reprt

LAHORE: Despite a tight budget, ture Development Authority of bureaucrats in Punjab have been granted approval for luxurious homes, adding to the already existing perks of luxury vehicles.

The decision, which has been met with public outcry, involves the construction of 27 luxurious homes at a cost exceeding Rs1.64 billion.

Plans are in place to increase the number of homes to 29, potentially pushing the total cost beyond Rs2

The luxurious residences, which fueling public discontent.

will be built in DHA Phase 9, will be constructed by the Infrastruc-

The homes will feature doublestory structures, as well as water tanks and offices.

The project has a deadline of one year and nine months for completion. The IDAP has been instructed to obtain approval for any necessary amendments to the plan.

The news comes on the heels of the government providing luxury vehicles to senior officials, further

Belarusian President to visit Pakistan for Signing **MoUs with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif**

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The President of Belarus will visit Pakistan in October to sign multiple Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. This announcement was made by Mr. Sergey Lukashevich, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, during a meeting with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan.

The meeting, held at the Minister's office, was attended by the Ambassador of Belarus to Pakistan Mr. Andrei Metelitsa, Secretary of Commerce Ahsan Ali Mangi, and other officials and diplomats.

Lukashevich sion meeting in mid-September to enhance bilateral trade relations.

praised Belarus's advancements in tractor manufacturing and

lighted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's new approach to building trust within the business community both domestically and internationally. Additionally, Mr. Lukashevich

mentioned that 35 Pakistani businessmen will visit Belarus in July for a food and agriculture exhibition. Minister Khan emphasized the opportunity to attract investments to Pakistan, citing the relocation of Service Tyre Company from China to Pakistan.

Furthermore, Malaysia and Gulf countries have shown interest in Pakistan's halal gelatin and meat industries, respectively. Minister Khan also revealed that a Chinese electric vehicle (EV) announced a Joint Trade Commis- manufacturer plans to enter the Pakistani market through a joint venture with a local power Minister Jam Kamal Khan company. He noted the growing interest of mobile phone manufacturers and food industries in agricultural machinery. He high- investing in Pakistan.

Minister Briefed Media on Privatization



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Privatization/Chairman Privatization Commission, Abdul Aleem Khan held an interactive/briefing session with the senior Journalists from leading newspapers today at the Privatization Division, Islamabad. The journalists were briefed regarding the government's policy, plan and strategy for privatization. They were apprised on the developments on the ongoing transactions including PIACL, Roosevelt Hotel, HBFC and the First Women Bank. The Federal Minister declared that the government is committed to openness and transparency in all of the privatization transactions. All the bidding will be telecast live for everyone to see. The Minister expressed that PIA offers a very good opportunity for its great potential that only requires fresh the interaction.

investment. The Federal Minister praised the pilots of the national airline for being thorough professionals and experts in their field. The Federal Minister lamented the delays in privatization of certain entities in the past and pointed to the fact that these delays have already costed losses that amount in billions of Rupees. The Federal Minister also apprised the journalists that the government has made up its mind on the privatization of DISCOs where three entities i.e. HESCO, PESCO and SEPCO will be offered for long term concession while six entities, IESCO, FESCO, GEPCO, LESCO, MEPCO and HAZECO will be completely privatized through sale and the Ministry of Privatization will initiate the process in due course in consultation with Power Division. The Secretary, Privatization Division and the Secretary, Privatizabuyer to earn profit given that PIA has tion Commission were also present during

minister.

Hafiz Naeem launches JI's movement for people's rights

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Hafiz Naeem ur tricity bills. Rehman on Wednesday announced to launch "Haq do Awaam ko" move-

Speaking at a news conference in Islamabad, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Hafiz Naeem demanded decrease in tax rates and power tariff.

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer said that his party would start a "historical sit-in" in the capital against the government to raise voice for a common man suffering the most from recently passed budget.

"We have a very clear agenda, the sit-in will not be for a single day," JI chief said. "Why don't you slap taxes on landlords," JI leader questioned the prime minister and the finance

He lamented that people were giving taxes on everything, adding he added.

that the government was dropping bomb on the masses in form of elec-"Assembly members' salaries have

been increased. Now a fake tug of war (Noora Kushti) will start after passage of the budget," he said. He asked the government to abdi-

cate privileges given to ruling elite, urging that sacrifices should be given by elite instead of masses. He said, "we are in contact with

the alliance named Tahaffuz-e-Aaeen-e-Pakistan," Hafiz Naeem said. "The Jamaat-e-Islami doesn't want to stand by the confused people," he said.

"We will not join any election alliance nor become the part of any alliance," JI leader said. "We don't want the angry people go to some other side. JI doesn't want to be standing with confused people on such a time,

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