



**Joe Biden withdraws from 2024 US presidential race**

President Joe Biden has announced his withdrawal from the 2024 US presidential election race after fellow Democrats doubted his ability to beat Republican candidate Donald Trump following the first debate. In a letter addressed to the American people on Sunday, Biden, 81, expressed his gratitude for the honour of serving as president, ... (Details on Page 5)



**How did Nasa pull off flag hoisting on moon for Apollo 11 mission?**

Jack Kinzler, chief of technical services at NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center (now Johnson Space Center), was given the task to create a flag that would appear to wave in an airless lunar environment, India Today reported. It sounded impossible but Kinzler and his team fulfilled the task. They created a telescoping flagpole with a horizontal crossbar at the top. The flag was attached to this crossbar and hemmed along the top edge to create a sleeve.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Groundbreaking ceremony**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif unveiling a plaque during the groundbreaking of Jinnah Medical Complex on Sunday.



Photo: PID

**Pakistan strongly condemns attack on its consulate in Farnkfurt**



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday strongly condemned attack by a gang of extremists on its consulate in Frankfurt, Germany on Saturday (July 20) and the failure of the German authorities to protect the sanctity and security of the premises of its consular Mission.

"Under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 it is the responsibility of the host government to protect the sanctity of the consular premises and ensure the security of diplomats," a statement issued by the Foreign Office said.

It added that in yesterday's incident, the security of Pakistan's consulate in Frankfurt was breached, endangering the lives of its consular staff.

"We are conveying our strong protest to the German Government."

Pakistan urged the German Government to take immediate

measures to fulfill its responsibilities under the Vienna Conventions and ensure the security of the diplomatic missions and staff of Pakistan in Germany.

"We also urge the German authorities to take immediate measures to arrest and prosecute those involved in yesterday's incident and hold to account those responsible for the lapses in security," the statement added.

Earlier, the Pakistan Embassy in Germany on its official X handle also condemned the reprehensible vandalising act at Pakistan Consulate General in Frankfurt by miscreants on July 20, 2024.

"We are in contact with the German authorities to ensure such a situation doesn't arise again and the miscreants face legal consequences," the embassy said. It also appealed to its community to remain patient and calm.

**Gov't determined to provide 100% free medical facilities to deserving patients: PM**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said the government was determined to provide state of the art free healthcare facilities to the deserving patients from across the country.

Addressing a groundbreaking ceremony of Jinnah Medical Complex here, the prime minister said the Complex was going to be the region's one of the best medical center where the deserving people would get 100% free medical treatment.

"This is the gift of the coalition government not only for

the residents of the Rawalpindi and Islamabad but for the people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan as well," PM Shehbaz Sharif said.

Gov't determined to provide 100% free medical facilities to deserving patients: PM

He said once completed, the medical complex would offer the world's best healthcare facilities with various sections of diseases related to heart, kidneys, lungs, cancer and others. Furthermore, he said a modern first aid emergency section would also be established at the hospital with facility of air ambulance service for

patients belonging to hard areas.

He said the nursing schools and laboratories would also be established in the hospital and the deserving patients would avail 100% lab tests facility.

The prime minister emphasized that this was the same model envisioned by PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to provide free medical facilities only to the poor and on-payment facilities to the well-off people at the same place.

He specifically thanked Chairman HBL Sultan Ali Allana and Prince Rahim Agha Khan for providing technical consultancy support free of cost for

the project. He paid tribute the decades-long services of the Agha Khan Foundation for the country.

He directed the authorities concerned to complete the project in one year. "Although one year is a challenging deadline for the huge project but with determination and hard work, it was quite possible. He also issued directives to continue work on the project round the clock to meet the deadline. He assured that there would be no funding problems from the government side.

PM Shehbaz Sharif also express his gratitude to the Islamabad Chief Commissioner Ali Randhawa for providing land

for the project.

He also thanked finance minister, finance secretary and planning minister for their support for the project.

As regards compensation to the land affected people, the prime minister directed to provide one window facility to the affected people to resolve their problems without any delay.

Health Coordinator Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, MNAs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Hanif Abbasi and Raja Khurram Nawaz also spoke on the occasion.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar was also present on the occasion.

**Pakistani students in Bangladesh stranded without help or supplies**

**Abdul Rehman**

DHAKA: Pakistani students continue to be stranded in Bangladesh and are running out of resources due to the ongoing protest over job quotas.

A student named Huzafa told over the phone that he and his fellow Pakistani students have no supplies left. He confirmed that the students have contacted the High Commission but their situation remains dire.

According to details a total of 130 Pakistani

Continued on Page 8

**PTI workers opened fire in Bannu protest: Tarar**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has accused the PTI-led Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government of politicizing the recent Bannu incident, alleging that PTI members were involved in the protest rally that led to civilian casualties.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Information Minister Attaulah Tarar claimed that the PTI attempted to disrupt the peaceful protest and incite violence. He alleged that armed individuals within the protest opened fire, resulting in the deaths and injuries of civilians.

Tarar criticized PTI Chairman Imran Khan for failing to condemn the inci-



dent and for spreading misinformation about direct firing on protesters. He further accused the PTI of fabricating evidence, including using images of children from another country to claim they were victims of the violence.

The minister questioned the impartiality of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's

decision to form a commission to investigate the incident, stating that the presence of PTI members in the protest raises concerns about their ability to conduct a fair probe.

The protest, organized by the trader community, was held to demand action against armed groups operating in Bannu and surrounding areas.

The federal government maintains that the situation in Bannu is stabilizing, but accuses certain political forces of attempting to exploit the incident for political gain and spread misinformation.

The PTI has vehemently denied the allegations, rejecting the federal government's claims of their involvement in the violence.

**Asif Kirmani quits PMLN**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Asif Kirmani, a former political secretary to ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, has announced his resignation from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

In a statement, Kirmani expressed his dissatisfaction with the party's leadership and current political direction.

Kirmani, who had served as Nawaz Sharif's close advisor during his 2013-2017 tenure, stated that he has been distanced from the party's political activities for some time. He criticized the PML-N government's handling of the economy, highlighting the rising cost of living and inflation that is burdening the people. He also accused the party leadership of celebrating their "ineffective governance" while the public suffers.

In a direct message to Nawaz Sharif, Kirmani stated, "Nawaz Sharif Sahib! All is not well." He did not reveal any plans to join another political party but promised a detailed explanation of his decision in the near future.

**Altaf Hussain secures legal victory against MQM-P: Geo News**

**Monitoring Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The UK Court of Appeal has ordered the MQM-Pakistan (MQM-P) to pay MQM founder Altaf Hussain £65,000 (approximately Rs23.3 million) in legal costs, Geo News reported.

The ruling comes after a unanimous decision by a three-judge panel at the Court of Appeal's Civil Division, which accepted Hussain's appeal and overturned an earlier decision that had favored the MQM-P leaders.

The court has also permitted the release of £77,760 into Hussain's lawyer's account, which he was

previously asked to deposit after a single bench judge had ruled against him.

It is common practice for courts to order the losing party to pay costs to the claimants or winning party, especially when the defendant opposes requests or applications.

MQM-P spokesperson Mustafa Azizabadi stated that Hussain would soon be launching a claim of over £100,000 against the MQM-P for the legal costs incurred during the initial stage of the trial before the insolvency and companies Judge.

MQM-P leader and the

claimant in the case, Syed Aminul Haque, has confirmed that he would instruct his London-based lawyer to comply with the court orders.

The legal battle stems from the 2016 defection of MQM-P leaders from Altaf Hussain, who has been

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**Barrister Saif condemns 'politics' over Bannu incident**

**Bureau Report**

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Minister Barrister Saif has condemned attempts to politicize the recent incident in Bannu, stating that some rejected political figures are trying to exploit the situation for their own gain. He emphasized that the province, already deeply affected by terrorism, cannot afford any major incidents.

In a statement, Barrister Saif asserted that the public is aware of the negative intentions of those seeking to spread unrest. He assured the public that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, is closely monitoring the situation in Bannu.

Barrister Saif highlighted

that the Chief Minister immediately dropped all other engagements to focus on Bannu after the incident. He stressed that preventing any major untoward incidents in Bannu is the provincial government's top priority, and the Bannu administration is continuously keeping the Chief Minister informed.

"We have also pressed them (German Govt) for taking immediate measures to arrest and prosecute those involved in yesterday's incident and hold to account those responsible for the lapses in the security," it was further added.

The Information Minister revealed that negotiations are ongoing between a committee comprising local administration and social elders. He stated that peace has been restored in Bannu since the start of these negotiations, and the committee will work to ensure lasting peace in the region. A meeting between the committee and the Chief Minister is expected soon.

# Business community in South Punjab protesting against IPPs' contracts: Mian Rashid Iqbal

**Quaratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: President and General Secretary's Of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Multan Addressing the Press Conference in Multan. He Said Business community of South Punjab, especially Multan, has been protesting against the contracts awarded to IPPs. Chamber of Commerce and Industry Multan, DG Khan, Khan-eval, Jhang, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur and Wahari Chambers including All Pakistan Cotton Manufacturers Association, All Pakistan Bed Sheet and Upholstery Manufacturers Association, All Pakistan Oil Mills Association, Pakistan Crops Officials of Protection Association, Solvent Extractors Association, Oil Mills Association, Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry have demanded from the government through a press conference held at Multan Chamber of Commerce and

Industry that revaluation of IPPs. And audits should be conducted, their assets should be investigated as well as contracts should be canceled immediately. Mian Rashid Iqbal, president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Multan said that after the federal budget, it has become impossible to do business in the country, business conditions are getting worse day by day. Economic situation is deteriorating due to political instability. The mark-up rate is at an all-time high of 20.5 percent while the inflation rate has touched 11 percent. The markup rate should be reduced to 12 percent. New taxes were introduced in the federal budget, which is causing concern among the business community. SRO 350 is unworkable which is affecting the supply chain. The rate of withholding tax has been increased which is creating new problems. Khwaja Muhammad Yusuf,



Mirza Zafar Iqbal, Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, Sheikh Muhammad Faisal Saeed, Syed Iftikhar Ali Shah, Ihtshamul Haq, Muhammad Fazil, Syed Asim Shah, Mian Fazl Elahi Sheikh, Sheikh Muhammad Faisal Saeed, Syed Iftikhar Ali Shah, Ihtshamul Haq, Sohail Haral, Khawaja Badr said

that the business environment in the country should be immediately improved and the size of the government, which is too big, should be reduced. The loss-making institutions run by the government should be transparently privatized, which will reduce the burden on the exchequer.

## Press conference

MULTAN: City Police Officer DIG Sadiq Ali Dogar, SSP Operations Rana Zahid Ali and SSP Investigation Muhammad Ashraf addressing to the Press Conference on Sunday.



Photo: Spokesman by Asim Tanveer

## Multan Police in action against criminals

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: City Police Officer DIG Sadiq Ali Dogar and SSP Operations Rana Arsalan Zahid, SSP Investigation Muhammad Ashraf and Other Police Officers Addressing the Press Conference in Police Line. He Said Multan Police Action Against Criminals Station. Police Sadar, Jalalpur

Pirwala and New Multan arrested 15 operatives, including five members of the Abbas Tahim gang, wanted in other incidents including theft, robbery, concealment, masquerading and injuring during robbery and seized more than 1.18 million worth of money. The stolen goods include 10 motorcycles, jewelry, livestock, mobile phones and millions of rupees in cash.

Special teams were formed under the supervision of SSP Operation Multan Arslan Zahid in which SP Sadar Division Shamsuddin, SDPO Jalalpur Peer Wala Bashir Ahmed Haraj, SHO Jalalpur Police Station Inspector Haider Hussain, Sub Inspector Baqir Shah, ASI Fiyaz, Constable Ijaz Aziz and Constable Rafiq along with their other teams

traced and arrested the wanted gang. Apart from this, the New Multan police arrested 10 members of four gangs and confiscated property worth 75 lakhs, which includes 5 thousand Saudi Riyals, 500 dollars, 12 talas of jewelry and 26 lakh rupees in cash. CPO Multan Sadiq Dogar gave prizes to the police teams for their good performance

## Sardar Yunus Khan Niazi elected President Burhan Muzaffar Wani Shaheed Press Club for the year 2024-25

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Election results of Burhan Muzaffarwani Shaheed Press Club have been announced by Election Commission Press Club Chief Election Commission Advocate Zawar Hussain Naqvi Secretary Election Commission Raja Zafar Missile Secretary Election Commission Chand Mubarak Hashmi and Assistant Election Commission Syed Barkat Hussain Shah announced their press conference here yesterday. Accord-

ing to the press release issued by newly elected President it was said that the nomination papers of the office bearers were collected on the appointed date and time, thus no other members submitted their nomination papers on the appointed date and time and upon examination, the papers of all the office bearers were declared complete. Managing



body of Burhan Muzaffarwani Shaheed Press Club for the year 2024-25.

12 office bearers were declared uncontested for 2024-25, including Sardar Muhammad Yunus Khan Niazi President Saqqa Awan Senior Vice President Iftikhar Ahmad Abbasi General Secretary Qazi

Syed Biyad Hussain Shah Kazmi Vice President Javed Mir Vice President Abid Qureshi Additional General Secretary Liaquat Syaqt Hussain Abbasi Secretary Finance Qazi Mohammad Hafeez Abbasi Joint Secretary Kuniza Batul Secretary Information and Fayyaz Ahmed Liaison Secretary were appointed. All the journalists present in the press club congratulated the elected officials and the Secretary Election Commission issued the notification.

## Sardar Attique visits Muzaffarabad to discuss Neelam rally

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference President and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan visited the capital Muzaffarabad yesterday, participated in various events and met with the officials of the Muslim Conference. Regarding the rally in Neelam with the officials of Muzaffarabad Division Detailed discussion. Former Minister Sham-im Ali Malik, Central Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed, Chairman Youth Wing Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Chairperson of Women Wing Samia Sajid Raja, Former Candidate Assembly Sajjad Anwar Abbasi, Chairperson of Students Wing Maimona Kayani Advocate, City President Sheikh Maqsood Ahmed, Member District Council Bagh Nasreen Akhtar Raja, City General Secretary Sajjad Qureshi, Youth Wing City President Zeeshan Anwar Abbasi, Haris Abbasi met with the President Muslim Conference.



President Muslim Conference said that a strong and prosperous Pakistan is the center of our hopes and destination. After Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Bagh, the workers should ensure their participation in the rally in Neelam. He said that a strong and stable Pakistan is the guarantor of the freedom of Kashmir.

## Electricity thieves attack Mepco sub-divisional officer in Multan

**Asim Tanveer/Syed Nadeem Kazmi**

MULTAN: According to Superintendent Engineer (SE) Mepco Multan Circle Engineer Amjad Nawaz Bhatti Said the murderous attack of electricity thieves Criminals on SDO Bosan Road Sub-Division Mepco left him seriously injured. SDO Bosan Road Sub Division Mohammad Bilal was stabbed on the neck with a sharp knife fortunately the stab hit the face and the lower lip was cut. Many people were stealing electricity by installing direct coils in Basti Adawala. When the Mepco team took action and unloaded the tanks, the villagers attacked them. In the presence of the police, the agitators attacked the Mepco team, dragged the SDO out of the vehicle and tried to kill him. Other crew members were also assaulted, their clothes torn and protective equipment taken away. Named accused Shafiq Raza, Shaukat Hussain, Ahmed Nawaz, Imran, Najaf etc. also incited others to attack when they were caught stealing. Ahmad Nawaz pulled the SDO out of the car and attacked him. After the incident, the police mobile reached the spot on the information of the policemen who were with the team and took the team out. Musa Pak Division Ghulam Mohiuddin Maitlan demanded action from the top police officers. Late at night Alpa police station registered a case and started the operation and arrested two accused. The accused Ahmed Nawaz, Shafiq Raza and Shaukat Obhaya are still absconding. Police are raiding for more arrests.



## Pakistan People's Party AJK demands to break of coalition over seventh constituency

**Bureau Report**

LIPA VALLEY/ MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir has demanded for breaking the government alliance in Azad Kashmir with President Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Chairperson of Political Affairs Ms. Faryal Talpur party's senior central leader Chaudhry Riaz and the party's separation with the support of Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq immediately.

Strongly demanding the withdrawal of corruption and misconduct in the seventh constituency, against the non-implementation of the 16-point charter of demand, they announced a protest rally on July 31 in Tunnel Chowk of Tehsil Headquarter Lipa Valley, while Prime Minister Chaudhry

Anwar-ul-Haq While appreciating the creation of an investigation committee on the large-scale corruption scams and abuse of power in the education department, yesterday, Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir Tehsil Lipa emphasized the need to form an investigation commission in the scams in hydro projects as well.

In the important meeting of the Valley, the construction of constituency seven and the unfair distribution of development, appointments, exchanges and development schemes, expressing concern about looting, the mega project of tunnel construction, the construction of a 50-bed hospital in a separate constituency, the establishment of Lipa Development Authority, the bogs of electricity. And the unjustified ban imposed on the dysfunctional forest system, strict accountability for

the fake and fictitious actions for the appointment of teachers of the Holy Quran and NTS is indispensable for the broader national public interests.

Former Central Deputy Secretary Information of Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir Shaukat Javed Mir, Secretary General Faisal Rathore, senior leader Chaudhry Riaz, Member District Council Bashir Alam Awan, Former General Secretary District Jhelum Valley Malik Ahmad Nawaz, Members of Local Council Siddique Ahmed Sheikh, Roshan Awan, Azhar Mir, Khawaja Farooq raised their hands in the presence of Allah Almighty for the unity and unity of the Muslim Ummah. Ahmed, Professor Maqbool Sheikh, Abdul Aziz Mir, Maqbool Mir, Abdul Rehman Sagar, Qari Rafiq Rehman, Subidar Arif Mughal, Abdul Rehman

Awan, Shafi Awan, Shabbir Mir, Qari Iqbal, Nimardar Ashraf Mir Irshad Qureshi, Syed Moazzam Shah, Khwaja Muhammad Maqbool, Habib Butt, Manga Butt, Khurshid Mir, Liaquat Awan Ali Hussain, Latif Awan, Rafi Sheikh Chaudhary Ghulam Rasool Mumtaz Khokhar Azam Sheikh, Umcer Malik, Shahzad Butt, Leader of the People Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Daughter of East Ms. Benazir Bhutto and party.

The fifty-five-year-old struggle, service and interpretation of the rights of the people were praised in wonderful words through a one-hour resolution, determined to continue the struggle for the freedom of the indivisible unitary state of Jammu and Kashmir spread over eighty-four thousand and twelve square miles until the last breath.





Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:34 am  
Zohr ..... 12:14 pm  
Asr ..... 5:10 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:16 pm  
Isha ..... 8:54 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**PIAF concerned as Pakistan major export markets show poor growth**

City Desk

LAHORE: Raising grave concern over the poor performance of the exports the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has said that country's major export markets did not see any significant growth in importing goods from Pakistan in the financial year ended on June 30 this year.

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol, quoting the latest figures, stated that the exports to the US largely remain dissatisfied while those to China registered a slight decline. Exports to the UK posted marginal growth during the fiscal under review, according to the country-wise export data released by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan.

The US remained the top export market for Pakistani goods in the financial year ended on June 30, 2024, with exports totaling \$5.286 billion compared to \$5.239 billion last year, showing a slight growth of 0.9 per cent. China followed with imports of \$2.559 billion, compared to \$2.614 billion, recording a negative growth of 2.1 per cent. While the United Kingdom fell to third place with imports of \$2.015 billion from Pakistan during the fiscal against \$1.943 billion, showing a growth of 3.7 per cent.

The PIAF chairman pointed out that administrative measures to curb imports, leading to raw material shortage for the industry and resultantly lower production, were the main reason for the plunge while the slowdown in global demand amid monetary tightening was another reason, he said.

**Muqam visits residence of PIO, offers fateha for departed soul of his father**

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Engr Amir Muqam here Sunday visited the residence of Principal Information Officer (PIO), Mubashir Hassan and offered fateha for the departed soul of his father, Ghulam Sabir who passed away due to protected illness on Saturday.

Engr Amir Muqam expressed his deep condolences over the sad demise of the father of PIO and prayed Allah Almighty to may rest the departed soul in eternal peace.

He also prayed patience and fortitude for the members of the bereaved family.

Senior bureaucrat Ahmad Hassan and officer of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Peshawar, Aftab Hassan, the sons of late Ghulam Sabir were also present.

Meanwhile, people from cross section of the society including officers of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, civil



officers, journalists, media professionals, lawyers and civil society are coming to the residence of Mubashir Hassan and offering fateha for eternal peace of his father.

Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud, District Police Officer

Mardsn Zahoor Afridi and General Manager PTV Asad Naqvi besides others also offered Fateha.

The Qul of late Ghulam Sabir will be held at BISE Colony, Jamrud Road in Peshawar on Monday.

**Enjoyable**

ISLAMABAD: A view of Musical Fountain at Faisal Avenue in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

**Pakistan and Finland need to increase the trade ties**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Finland need to increase the trade ties between the two countries as much as possible. It has been ensured that all possible measures will be taken by Minister Consulor, Deputy Head of Mission of Finland Embassy in Pakistan Mr. Anssi Kulberg and Chairman Standing Committee for Tourism and Hospitality Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Trade and Small Industries Mohammad Rauf Raja, Member Tourism & Hospitality Committee Syed Sadat Hussain and Raja Muhammad Mudassar during a meeting, the Deputy Head of Mission of Finland appreciated the sentiments of goodwill from Pakistani businessmen and the cooperation between the two countries at the commercial level. He described the proposals for business promotion as positive and said that Finland always welcomes such practical recommendations and opportunities will be provided to the businessmen of the two countries to promote mutual trade. Mohammad Rauf Raja said on



this occasion that the Explore Finland conference will be held in Islamabad this month, in which the businessmen of Pakistan and Finland will be invited to participate and increase the current trade volume between them. B2B and B2C meetings will be held on the occasion. Sadat Hussain Shah said that there are wide possibilities of

trade development between Pakistan and Finland in various fields and the exchange of trade delegations at different levels with the cooperation of the governments of both countries will bring economic benefits. Development goals will be achieved, he mentioned the development of tourism sectors in this regard.

**DPO Shafiullah Gandapur inaugurates new branch of D Watson Chemist Mansehra**



Correspondent

MANSEHRA: D Watson Group has launched a new branch in front of DHQ Hospital, Mansehra, inaugurated by DPO Mansehra Shafiullah Gandapur. The ceremony was attended by prominent figures, including Zafar Bakhtawari, Chairman of D Watson Group, Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, President of Mansehra Chamber of Commerce, Haji Haroon Rasheed, President of Anjuman Tajran Mansehra, Wajid Ali, President of Mansehra Chemist and Druggist Association, and a delegation from Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

DPO Mansehra Shafiullah Gandapur praised the establishment of D Watson Chemist, stating that it will provide quality medicines and convenience to the people of Mansehra, previously having to travel to Abbottabad for such services. He commended Zafar Bakhtawari for this initiative, acknowledging D Watson Group's reputation as a national brand with a proven track record.

Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, President of Mansehra Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the success of D Watson Group's previous branch in Mansehra and expressed optimism about the new branch's potential to facilitate consumers with quality medicines and essentials. He also noted Mansehra's strategic location as a gateway to northern regions, making it an important hub for tourists and locals alike.

Haji Haroon Rasheed, Patron-in-Chief of Anjuman Tajran Mansehra, and Wajid Ali, President of Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association Mansehra, also appreciated the launch of the new branch, acknowledging D Watson Group's commitment to providing quality medicines and promoting business in areas like Mansehra.

The inauguration of D Watson Chemist in Mansehra marks a significant milestone in the region's healthcare and business landscape, ensuring access to quality medicines and services for the local community.

**Anjum Nisar says economy needs persistent, sound economic management**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's (FPCCI) Businessmen Panel (BMP) has said that instead of excessive borrowing, including the recent IMF \$7 billion financing, the Ease of Doing Business was vital to put the country's economy back on track.

In a statement issued here, BMP Chairman and FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar stated that providing affordable electricity would assist in lowering production costs, thereby benefiting the public. He stated that rising imports and a widening trade deficit posed a serious threat to economic growth and must be addressed urgently.

He said that with continuous hike in cost of production in the country, what the Pakistan's economy really needs is persistent and sound economic management, asking the authorities for undertaking economic reforms and improving the regulatory environment for better Ease of Doing Business level to boost foreign investment so that financial stability can be achieved in the long-run.

The BMP chief urged the power ministry to identify system constraints and communicate targets to all concerned departments in order to launch a wartime effort to upgrade the transmission system.

Mian Anjum Nisar alleged all previous governments for extensive borrowing of forex during last five years to meet local expenditure, which had increased the burden of foreign debt of Pakistan substantially, instead of making serious efforts to enhance the ranking of Ease of Doing Business Index of Pakistan, as it is must to attract foreign as well as local investment and high economic growth.

**CBD Punjab CEO Pushes For Expedited Completion Of Walton Road Project**



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: CEO Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), Imran Amin, chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of the Walton Road Upgradation Project. This pivotal initiative is set to significantly enhance the infrastructure of Punjab's provincial capital. The meeting was attended by Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab Riaz Hussain, Director of Architecture and Planning Samir Aftab Sial, and official contractors of the project.

Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab, Riaz Hussain, provided an extensive briefing on the project's progress, highlighting key milestones achieved. Notably, the completion of the main trunk sewer and the remodeling of the ADA Nullah were reported. The ADA Nullah will soon be connected with the newly constructed nullah, marking a critical step forward. Additionally, the sub-base work on Walton Road is completed, with the water-bound layer currently in progress. Disposal stations are also set to become functional in the coming days, further facilitating project completion.

A significant highlight of the meeting was the update on the Major Ishaq Shaheed Flyover, which is now 85% complete, with shuttering removal scheduled soon. This major infrastructure component is crucial for improving traffic flow and connectivity in the area.

Following the review meeting, CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin conducted an on-site inspection of the under-construction Walton Road and Major Ishaq Shaheed Flyover. During his visit, he lauded CBD Punjab's proactive measures that effectively prevented water accumulation on Walton Road during the recent monsoon season. This accomplishment underscores the authority's commitment to operational excellence and community well-being. CEO CBD Punjab emphasized the need to expedite the project, instructing an increase in workforce and machinery to ensure timely completion, in accordance with the directives of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz.

The Walton Road Upgradation Project is poised to set new benchmarks in urban development, contributing to sustainable growth and improved quality of life for Lahore's residents. CBD Punjab remains committed to transforming visions into tangible, lasting improvements for the community.

**COP-29 Presidency notifies multistakeholder int'l advisory committee for inclusive 'Climate Action'**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations' 29th Global Climate Change Conference (COP29) Presidency has notified its diverse and multistakeholder international advisory committee for inclusive climate action under its motto, "In Solidarity with a Green World".

The COP29 Presidency in the prevailing highly charged milieu due to the galloping impacts of global warming and climate change has come up with a comprehensive selection of a 21-member international advisory committee also called COP-29 IAC to ensure that voices and perceptions of all concerned are considered at the global fora to provide inclusive results based on shared solutions.

The Committee comprises notable dignitaries who will extend beneficial

and critical viewpoints shedding light on various facets of climate action. The COP-29 forum in the past couple of years has become a household name from a mere oblivious international forum with all eyes glued to it for well-planned and mutually agreed strategies to combat the menace of climate change.

The COP-29 IAC aimed to represent diverse voices of climate advocates from different communities such as finance, academia, government, entrepreneurship, and civil society to provide multi-stakeholder guidance and expert advice to the COP-29 Presidency on key issues in the sphere of climate change.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; Co-chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center and former World Bank Pres-

ident, Ismail Serageldin (Egypt); former President of Latvia (1999-2007), Vaira Vike-Freiberga; Board of Directors of Fortescue Metals and Fortescue Future Industries; Chair of the Board, The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery; Vice-President of the ExxonMobil (2000-2013) Jean Baderschneider; President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, Maria Fernanda Espinosa; Environmental Advocate and Turkish lead actor of Drama Ertugrul, Engin Altan Duzuyan; Former Minister of Environment, Brazil and the member of the COP-28 Advisory, Izabella Teixeira; Former President of Malawi, Joyce Banda; Former Mexican Foreign Secretary and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Patricia Espinosa Cantellano; Hungarian diplomat and president of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly, Csaba Korosi; Director of China's National Centre for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation, Xu Huaqing; Former President of Bulgaria, Rosen Plevneliev; Former President of Romania, Emil Constantinescu; Former Executive Director, UN-Habitat, Maimunah Mohd Sharif of Malaysia and Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri are the members of the COP-29 IAC.

Dr. Suleri is the only expert from South Asia to be a member of the IAC, a high-level forum convening former heads of states, ex-ministers, artists, innovators, and experts of global prestige.

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# Solving the IPP Quagmire: Strategies & solutions

The government has recently launched a discreet campaign against Independent Power Producers (IPPs), highlighting issues related to high electricity tariffs. Previously, the outcry against rising power costs came primarily from consumers, chambers of commerce, and small and medium enterprises, whose demands were largely ignored. However, the government now seems to realize that addressing the dual issues of electricity and gas circular debt is critical for its survival. To build pressure, the various scandals and secret information including the payment of large subsidies to IPPs and capacity payments to idle power producers have been leaked to the media.

This has kickstarted a heated debate in the mainstream media. Critics, analysts and energy experts are arguing that the agreements with IPPs were detrimental to national interests due to high production costs leading to elevated tariffs for consumers. The guaranteed payments have significantly increased the national debt and dependency on private entities for essential services, reducing governmental control over energy infrastructure. Furthermore, these contracts are prone to inefficiencies and corruption, escalating costs and reducing transparency, ultimately straining public finances and economic stability.

The media, civil society and political forces are pressuring the government to renegotiate power tariff payable to IPPs. The demand, though logical and sensible, is difficult to implement due to long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with fixed terms, "Take or Pay" clauses, and capacity payments obligating the government to pay for unused power. These

contracts include sovereign guarantees, making them legally binding and difficult to alter without facing international arbitration, which can result in hefty fines. Additionally, Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) protect foreign investments, adding another layer of complexity. Attempts to renegotiate can erode investor confidence and impact the country's credit rating and future foreign investment prospects.

But the country cannot sustain this heavy burden anymore and it needs to get out of this paradox sooner the better, but how?

In typical contractual agreements for power projects, it is common for the initial costs to be high due to the capital investment required. Over time, these costs are expected to decrease as the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) recover their fixed costs and earn reasonable profits.

Amending "Take or Pay" clauses to "Take and Pay" agreements, where payments are made based on actual electricity supplied, and incorporating performance-based incentives can also improve efficiency and reliability.

The government should offer its continued support and guarantee linked to operational efficiencies and reduced tariffs to maintain investor confidence while phasing out subsidies as IPP financial health improves.

Encouraging long-term partnerships, such as equity participation in future projects and including provisions for transferring ownership to the government after fixed costs are recovered, aligns IPP interests with national development goals and ensures sustainability.

Promoting renewable energy through competitive bidding and diversification

unilaterally terminating the agreements, but should think creatively to create a win-win situation while renegotiating with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). It should search, find and adopt international best practices that can provide valuable insights. However, there is no second opinion that renegotiating terms and tariffs is essential.

The renewed negotiations should bring the IPPs willing on the table and convince them with logic and wisdom. The terms of reference should include; adjusting payment terms to reflect actual power consumption rather than fixed capacity payments and gradually lowering tariffs as IPPs recover their fixed costs and earn reasonable profits.

Encouraging long-term partnerships, such as equity participation in future projects and including provisions for transferring ownership to the government after fixed costs are recovered, aligns IPP interests with national development goals and ensures sustainability.

Promoting renewable energy through competitive bidding and diversification

into renewable projects can reduce operational costs and environmental impacts.

This strategy not only lowers electricity tariffs but also enhances energy security and sustainability. Examples from other countries, like the Philippines, which restructured its power sector through the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) in 2001, show that renegotiating contracts and introducing competitive bidding can stabilize prices and improve financial health.

India's Electricity Act 2003 promoted competition and efficiency by unbundling state electricity boards and allowing open access and competitive bidding, leading to increased private investment.

Similarly, South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) attracted significant investment in renewables through competitive bidding, reducing costs and enhancing energy security.

Ghana's approach of renegotiating IPP contracts, reducing capacity charges, and improving state utility efficiency further illustrates how strategic reforms can address similar challenges.

Implementing these strategies, based on international best practices, can help Pakistan negotiate more favorable terms with IPPs, ensuring both parties benefit while addressing the country's energy and financial challenges. This approach can reduce electricity costs, lower circular debt, and promote a sustainable and efficient power sector, ultimately benefiting both IPPs and the country.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## New health crisis hits war-ravaged Gaza

The highly infectious polio virus has been found in sewage samples in Gaza, putting thousands of Palestinians, already traumatized by relentless Israeli bombardments, at risk of contracting a disease that can cause paralysis, the UN health agency said Friday.

Gaza's Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO) both said they had carried out tests and found samples of the virus in sewage water.

Poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) had been identified at six locations in sewage samples collected on 23 June from Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, WHO said Friday.

Giving details, WHO Spokesman Christian Lindmeier said that vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) had been identified at six locations in sewage samples collected on 23 June from Khan Younis and Deir al Balah.

To date, no one has been treated in Gaza for paralysis or other symptoms caused by polio virus infection.

It is important to note the virus has been isolated from the environment only at this time; no associated paralytic cases have been detected, he told journalists in Geneva. As part of the response efforts, WHO in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is already working with the local health authority, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) and partners to assess how far poliovirus has spread.

This work will determine the measures needed to stop any further spread, including prompt vaccination campaigns, the WHO spokesperson explained.

Meanwhile, the UN human rights office for the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OHCHR OPT) described evidence that the people of Gaza continue to suffer immensely with some holding white flags as they move in search of shelter.

People are on the move from north to south, again, although they are making the journey knowing it is fraught with danger, said Ajith Sunghay, head of OHCHR OPT. I saw a motorbike and trailer loaded with personal possessions smouldering on the road. There was no body. But it was clear no one could have survived the strike. On the same road, I saw a bloodied donkey cart also laden with personal belongings. It too was abandoned. Why and who carried out these attacks is not clear.

The UN human rights officer described the impact of Israel's dismantling of the enclave's capacity to maintain public order and safety in Gaza. Our Office has documented alleged unlawful killings of local police and humanitarian workers, and the strangulation of supplies indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. Anarchy is spreading.

The hostile environment due to the war and the breakdown in civil order also raises enormous challenges for any meaningful humanitarian response to the mammoth needs of the people.

## Phone Calls Recording Matter - I

National security forms the bedrock upon which a nation's prosperity, stability, and sovereignty are founded. It encompasses a wide array of strategies and measures aimed at shielding the country from both internal and external threats, ensuring the safety and welfare of its citizens, and safeguarding its core values and interests.

At its essence, national security revolves around shielding the nation's territorial integrity from physical threats like military aggression and terrorism. This involves maintaining a strong defense capability that can deter potential adversaries and swiftly respond if needed. Such capability not only ensures the populace's safety but also upholds the rule of law and the integrity of borders.

Furthermore, national security extends beyond military concerns to include economic stability and

resilience. A secure nation fosters a conducive environment for economic advancement by safeguarding critical infrastructure, intellectual property, and trade routes. This protection enables businesses to operate smoothly, thereby promoting prosperity and creating employment opportunities.

In the realm of cybersecurity, national security entails safeguarding digital infrastructure and networks against cyber threats and attacks. As digital technologies become increasingly integral, protecting sensitive information and ensuring the reliability of communications has become paramount. Breaches in cybersecurity not only jeopardize national interests but also threaten individual privacy and financial stability.

Equally crucial is the defense of societal values and freedoms. A secure nation upholds human rights, democratic principles, and the rule of law, ensuring that all citizens can live without fear of oppression or discrimination. This fosters social cohesion and inclusivity, promoting a sense of unity among diverse communities.

National security also plays a pivotal role in addressing global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and transnational crime. Collaborating with other nations and international organizations allows countries to tackle shared threats effectively and mitigate their impact on global stability and prosperity.

Amid the intricate landscape of global politics, one of the foremost challenges faced by nations is the menace posed by anti-state entities. These encompass a broad spectrum of actors and ideologies intent on undermining established governments, disrupting societal order, and weakening national unity. Understanding the nature of these threats and their implications for national security is crucial in devising effective strategies to counter them.

Anti-state elements manifest in various forms, each presenting distinct challenges to national security. Among the most recognized threats are terrorist groups, which employ violence and intimidation to further political, ideological, or religious aims. They target civilians, infrastructure, and governmental institutions to instill fear and create instability.

Insurgencies represent organized movements that challenge state authority through armed resistance or subversion. Often operating in marginalized regions or among disaffected populations, they seek to destabilize government control.

In the digital era, cyber threats have emerged as potent tools for anti-state actors. Hactivist groups, state-sponsored cyber warfare units, and criminal organizations engage in cyber attacks to disrupt critical infrastructure, steal sensitive information, or undermine public trust in governmental institutions. State and non-state entities may undertake covert operations to manipulate domestic politics, elections, or public opinion in ways that undermine national unity and governance. These operations typically involve propaganda, disinformation campaigns, and strategic use of social

media platforms.

The actions of anti-state elements can have far-reaching implications for national security. Terrorist acts and insurgent violence directly endanger civilian lives, instilling fear and insecurity among the populace. Insurgencies and foreign influence campaigns can diminish public trust in governmental institutions, weaken the rule of law, and hinder effective governance. These groups might exploit socio-economic grievances or ethnic divisions to stoke dissent and instability.

Cyber attacks aimed at critical infrastructure, financial systems, or intellectual property can lead to substantial economic damage and disruption of vital services, impacting national stability and prosperity. Anti-state elements operating across borders have the potential to destabilize entire regions, exacerbate conflicts, trigger refugee crises, and establish havens for transnational criminal activities. Addressing the challenge posed by anti-state elements requires a comprehensive approach.

This includes enhancing law enforcement capabilities, strengthening border security, and improving intelligence gathering to prevent and respond effectively to threats from terrorist organizations, insurgencies, and cyber attacks. It also involves conducting targeted military operations, intelligence-led policing, and community engagement efforts aimed at disrupting and dismantling anti-state networks. Investing in robust cybersecurity infrastructure, promoting digital hygiene best practices, and fostering partnerships between public and private sectors are crucial steps in mitigating cyber threats. Addressing socio-economic disparities, promoting inclusive governance, and countering extremist ideologies through education, civic engagement, and community outreach are also vital components.

Collaboration with allies and international organizations to share intelligence, coordinate counterterrorism efforts, and address the root causes of extremism and instability further enhances these efforts.

*To be continued*



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

## Use of Colonial law to control peaceful protest

Pakistan also had a sedition law; Section 124-A of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) had similar provisions and was in violation of the constitution and its ethos. It gave unfair and immense powers to state authorities to exercise authoritarianism and despotism. The law was used on every lawful protest in the garb of public order, public morality, public security, and public benefit. There was no tacit act test on whether to edict the law or not. It is a relic of the past, and civilised societies around the globe do not acknowledge its existence in the statute book.

The law was challenged in the landmark case of Haroon Farooq vs. Federation of Pakistan in Lahore High Court. The court was invited to corner the provisions of Section 124-A with Articles 14, 19, and 19A of the Constitution, and the law is inconsistent with Article 8 of the Constitution. It should be declared ultra vires and void. Legally, Section 124-A abrogates the provisions of Articles 19 and 19A of the Constitution. Our Constitution is democratic and embellishes fundamental human rights. If we square the section in the Constitution, it poses a momentous threat to the free press, free speech, and the dispensation of information. The rights were in jeopardy when the law was enforceable. The utmost duty of the Constitution is to uphold the rule of law. It ensures a fair distribution of rights and imposes reasonable restrictions where necessary. Politically, people need information to make rational judgements and

want to know how they are governed by their governing bodies. The press plays a pivotal role in gathering and conveying information to the general public. These rights are protected in Articles 19 and 19A, respectively, and fulfil the rights and duties of the people and state functionaries. Section 124-A trampled the rights and gave unlawful authority to the federal and provincial governments to use the

tyranny of this law against people, editors, etc. Public office bearers enjoy no immunity from facing criticism of their acts or omissions. Socially, laws are meant to safeguard peaceful protests against the unlawful acts of the government. These rights get umbrella protection

under the Constitution. Article 16 of the Constitution is the cornerstone for the right to peaceful assembly with reasonable restrictions for the best interest of public order. International human rights law also gives unfettered protection to the right to peaceful assembly as enshrined in Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Article 21 of the ICCPR, General Comment No. 37 of the UN, and ECHR Article 11. Overall, laws that were implemented in the colonial era hold no importance in the existence of constitutional democratic societies. The laws that are legislated are the touchstones of human rights, and colonial laws are governed by the different international treaties and conventions, i.e., CEDAW. It has become a settled principle in law that unconstitutional laws are struck down and declared ultra vires.



Analysis

Ejaz Khan

# Pakistan's Rich Cultural Heritage celebrated at Pakistan Mango and Cultural Festival in Sydney

**Spokesman Report**

CANBERRA: The High Commission for Pakistan, Canberra and its Consulate General in Sydney in collaboration with the Pakistani

Diaspora organized the largest ever Mango and Cultural Festival in Australia. The event held at Fairfield Showground in Sydney, brought together a diverse audience of around 10,000 people to celebrate Pakistan's rich culture,



heritage, cuisine, and the exquisite taste of its renowned mangoes.

The event was graced by the presence of several distinguished dignitaries, including the Representative of the Honourable Premier of New South Wales; Senator David Shoebridge; Senator Mehreen Faruqi; Hon. Julia Finn MP; Hon. Nathan Hagarty MP; Hon. Anne Stanley MP; and Hon. Warren Eric Kirby MP. A large number of local Mayors, Councillors and members of the diplomatic community also participated. Their presence underscored the significance of this event in highlighting the multicultural fabric of Australian society and key role played by the vibrant Pakistani Diaspora in this regard.

The Representative of the Premier stated, "Events like the Pakistan Mango and Cultural

Festival highlight the vibrant multicultural tapestry of our society. It is a testament to the strength and unity of our diverse communities, and I am delighted to be a part of this celebration."

His Excellency Mr. Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri, High Commissioner for Pakistan to Australia, expressed his gratitude to the attendees and participants. In his remarks, he said, "The Pakistan Mango and Cultural Festival is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the richness of our culture, cuisine, and the exceptional quality of our mangoes. We are deeply honoured by the support and enthusiasm of the Australian community, and we look forward to many more such events to strengthen our bilateral and multicultural ties".

The festival featured an array of stalls, show-

ing different varieties of Pakistani mangoes, traditional Pakistani food, cultural artefacts, clothing and jewellery, and information on tourism and cultural heritage. Musical performances and exhibitions of Pakistani arts and crafts added to the vibrant atmosphere, providing attendees with an immersive cultural experience.

The festival was attended by media representatives, local communities, and Pakistani Diaspora from across Australia, reflecting the wide interest and support for this vibrant cultural event.

The High Commission for Pakistan extends its heartfelt thanks to all dignitaries, guests, and participants for making the Pakistan Mango and Cultural Festival a memorable and enriching experience. More such events will be organized in future.

## Joe Biden withdraws from 2024 US presidential race

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President Joe Biden has announced his withdrawal from the 2024 US presidential election race after fellow Democrats doubted his ability to beat Republican candidate Donald Trump following the first debate.

In a letter addressed to the American people on Sunday, Biden, 81, expressed his gratitude for the honour of serving as president, stating, "It has been the greatest honour of my life to serve as your president."



Despite his initial desire to run for re-election, Biden ultimately decided that stepping aside would be in the best interest of the party and the nation.

"And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as president for the remainder of my term,"

Biden assured the nation that he will address the country later this week to provide further details on his decision. "I will speak to the nation later this week in more detail about my decision."

He thanked all those who have "worked hard" to see him reelected. "I want to thank Vice President Kamala Harris for being an extraordinary partner in all this work," Biden said and thanked the American people for the trust they placed in him.

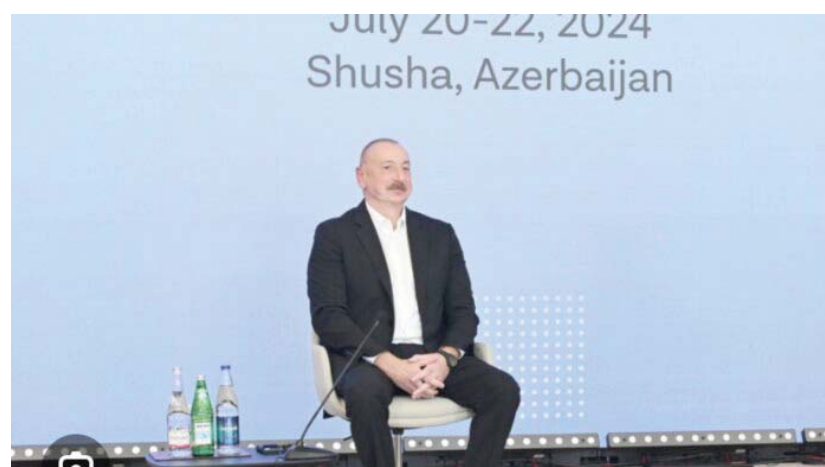
## President Ilham Aliyev hails Pakistan for support of media in countering misinformation

**Spokesman Report**

SHUSHA (AZERBAIJAN): President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan has praised Pakistan's media for its supportive stance, paving the way for a joint media initiative to foster greater cooperation and counter misinformation. Azerbaijan Pakistan strengthening ties through media cooperation

President Ilham Aliyev has expressed these views while addressing media at opening ceremony of '2nd Shusha Global Media Forum' gratitude for the consistent support from Pakistan's media, describing it as "brotherly" and "friendly".

He proposed establishing a joint media working group to promote mutual understanding and counter misleading narratives. This collaboration aims to leverage access to international media outlets, enhancing the reputation



and perception of both nations.

President's remarks followed a successful state visit to Pakistan, where he was warmly received by the Prime Minister and President of Pakistan. The trip resulted in the signing of 17 agreements, with a focus on investment opportunities, bilateral trade, defense industry cooperation, and uniting the potential of both

countries.

With a strong foundation laid, Azerbaijan and Pakistan are poised to strengthen their partnership in the years to come. The president Ilham Aliyev answered the media participant's question and also informed forum about the preparations carried out regarding the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on

Climate Change (COP29), the fight against the impacts of climate change at the country level, as well as the sustainable approach in the restoration and reconstruction works implemented in the liberated territories, which is going to be held in Baku in November this year.

The forum will feature four panel sessions on "Impact assessment: scoping disinformation," "Policies

and initiatives to build a more resilient society against disinformation," "The impact of artificial intelligence on reality, media and disinformation: Promoting media literacy," and "Climate movement and media."

At the panel sessions, officials from various countries, media and civil society representatives, state and business representatives, representatives of international organizations, and media experts will exchange detailed ideas and experiences.

The Forum, attended by over 150 foreign guests from around 50 countries, including news agencies of 30 countries, three international organizations, and 82 media entities, provides a platform for joint discussions and actions among participants.

The first Shusha Global Media Forum themed "New Media in the Era of the 4th Industrial Revolution" was held on July 21-23, 2023.

## Government and civil society should work together to promote healthy food consumption. Professor Dr. Anees Ahmed

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Panah organized a two-day scientific symposium on "Global Evidence and Policy Formulation for Healthy Diet" at Rafa International University. Vice Chancellor Rafa International University Dr. Anees Ahmed attended the ceremony as a special guest. Mian speaker were Commander AFIC Major General Naseer Ahmed Samorah, Pattern Panah Major General (retd) Muhammad Ashraf Khan, President Panah Major General (retd) Masoodur Rehman Kayani, Lt Gen (R) Prof. Dr. Azhar Rashid, apart from foreign doctors, Prof. Dr. Abdul Basit

from Karachi, Prof. Dr. Khawar Kazmi, Prof. Dr. Anjum Jalal, Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Prof. Dr. Wajid Ali, Prof. Colonel (Rtd) Shakeel Ahmed Mirza, Manwar Hussain Country Head (GHAI), Dr. Umar Zafar Jhagra, Dr. Abdul Qayyum Awan, Brig. (R) Abdul Hameed Siddiqui, Dr. Khawaja Masood Ahmad, Ministry of Health, Dr. Saqib Nasir from Pakistan Science Foundation, Lt. Gen. (R) Mustafa Kamal Akbar, Director of Islamabad Food Authority, Dr. Tahira, Dr. Shehzad Alam, Director of WHO, PSQCA, Pakistan Heart File CEO, Dr. Wahiba and General Secretary (PANAH) Sanaullah Ghamman. RIPHAH University Vice-Chancellor Dr. Anees Ahmed

as the chief guest said that along with physical exercise, healthy food is helpful in keeping the mind and body healthy. He said that the government and civil society should work together to change unhealthy food habits. He offered that Rafa University is ready to provide a platform to implement a proper healthy diet plan in the students' curriculum and will support PANAH in all possible ways to spread awareness in remote areas.

Commandant and Executive Director AFIC Major General Naseer Ahmad Samore said that the Pakistani nation has a strong capacity to fight and control NCDs. He further said that for

this, our institutions should work together to not only treat patients but also develop a strong infrastructure for health.

President Panah Major Gen. (R) Masood ur Rehman Kiani said that I am very grateful to all the distinguished guests, especially Commandant AFIC, because Panah was established and developed under the umbrella of AFIC.

Prof. Col. (R) Shakeel Mirza, Mr. Manoor Hussain Country Head (GHAI) and Professor Dr. Abdul Basit speak on the occasion and said that Pakistan has become the third largest country in the world with diabetes, due to which it is facing social problems as well as economic losses. On one hand,



hundreds of people are dying every day, while on the other hand, the government is spending billions of

rupees on the management of the diseases caused by the consumption of sweet drinks.

Preventing these diseases is the responsibility of all of us, we all have to work together.

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
80,117.89	81,839.86
Day's High	Day's Low
81,939.83	79,812.69
Index Value	Change
17,938,228,323	-1721.97
Percentage	Time
-2.1%	19 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,155.72	-49.17
Percentage	Time
-0.60%	19 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,349.45	-315.57
Percentage	Time
-0.78%	19 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
40,063.79	-62.56
Percentage	Time
-0.16%	19 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184.75	186.55
Bahrain Dinar	741.15	749.15
Canadian Dollar	203.5	205.5
China Yuan	38.35	38.75
Danish Krone	40.05	40.45
Euro	301.35	303.25
Hong Kong Dollar	35.70	36.05
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.43
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.25	917.35
Malaysian Ringgit	58.95	59.75
New Zealand \$	169.24	171.24
Norwegians Krone	26.04	26.34
Omani Riyal	722.87	730.89
Qatari Riyal	76.39	77.09
Saudi Riyal	73.70	74.42
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.4	26.7
Swiss Franc	309.05	311.55
Thai Bhat	7.5	7.65
U.A.E Dirham	76.50	77.25
UK Pound Sterling	354.85	358.35
US Dollar	279.25	280.75

# Flawed policies holding back economy: Iftikhar Khan

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Iftikhar Khan, the advisor to the President of FPCCI, said on Sunday that the highest population growth and the lowest GDP growth are the perfect recipe for disaster.

He said that uncontrolled population growth amid low GDP growth is a serious challenge.

Speaking to the business community, he stated that Pakistan's population is growing at the fastest rate in the region and will double by 2050.

Iftikhar Khan said that with 241.49 million inhabitants, Pakistan is currently the sixth most populated nation in the world, according to the census statistics. Among them, 48.51 percent are women, and 51.48 percent are men.

He warned that if the country's population continues at its current rate of 2.55 percent, the highest in the region, it will double by 2050, which will be very difficult to manage.

Iftikhar Khan said that in Pakistan, 36.47 million individuals are under five years old, 97.53 million are under fifteen, 62.58 million are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine, and 190.27 million are under forty.

According to literacy indices, 61% of Pakistanis who are ten years of age or older are literate, but Bangladesh and India have achieved better than Pakistan in a number of areas, including education.

According to the business leader, Pakistanis are on par with everyone in terms of intelligence and ability, but if we do not broaden our horizons, we will not even be considered in the global competition.

He underlined the necessity of maintaining political stability and peace, as well as the significance of maintaining policy consistency for a minimum of ten years.

Without keeping up with the world, we'll become irrelevant, he warned. Commenting on the budget, he stated that the recent budget's controversy stems from its failure to provide any relief to the middle class. Instead, it increased the effective income tax rate for salaried individuals to 39 percent, for associations to 44 percent, and for non-salaried individuals to 50 percent from last year.

The major reason behind the surge in taxes is to secure a new deal with the International Monetary Fund to somehow keep the national



economy afloat.

The disastrous budget reveals the fault lines in the current power system, as the government consistently refuses to end the exemptions it grants to the bureaucracy.

Similarly, the government excludes the retail and agriculture sectors, which wield significant political sway, from tax imposition.

The IMF's insistence led to the removal of some exemptions, but the list of protections remains endless. Flawed policies are holding

back the economy. We need a change that benefits the people at large, not just the privileged, he said.

Iftikhar Khan said that it is outright irrational to grind impoverished families under the weight of new taxes to secure an IMF package. In order to alleviate the burden on the poor, the government should also bring the rich and powerful into the tax net.

Moreover, the government should reflect on past events and draw lessons from them to understand why it is necessary for every government to seek assistance from the IMF each year to stabilise the struggling economy.

Despite claims that the budget is public-friendly and an attempt to minimise hardships, it has severely impacted the poor and businesses.

The consequences of this skewed system are far-reaching. These unjust taxes further strain the already tight budgets of middle-class families. The government diverts funds intended for groceries, rent, or education, thereby pushing many middle-class families closer to financial ruin. This stifles economic growth as these families have less disposable income to spend, he said.

## Sad incident

ISLAMABAD: A view of burned shops at H-9 Sunday Bazaar in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## SATI Calls for immediate termination of IPP contracts

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Danish A. Malik, President of the Surjani Association of Trade & Industry Karachi (SATI), along with executive committee members, has demanded the government to promptly terminate contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

During an emergency meeting, SATI passed a resolution urging the government to act swiftly on terminating IPP contracts. They emphasized the critical need to address the demands of the business community to safeguard the country's industries, prevent widespread unemployment, and alleviate the serious economic crises. SATI also stressed the formulation of policies to promote industrial production activities and encourage the establishment of new industrial units.

Furthermore, SATI underscored that protecting the interests of 240 million



people and the economy outweighs preserving the interests of 40 IPPs. They urged the government to review existing agreements with IPPs to prevent further economic downturn.

In the resolution, President SATI and executive committee members also appealed for reduced electricity rates to lower production costs and enhance the competitiveness of industries in global markets. Failure to heed these demands, they warned, could result in the destruction of industries and a surge in unemployment.

## Trade group hails Ministry for extending Saturday operating hours to benefit end-line workers

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Mr. Maqbool Ahmad Malik, Chairman of APCA and Sheikh Tariq, Vice Chairman of APCA have extended their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Chairman Karachi Port Trust for its exceptional dedication and hard work in resolving this long-standing issue. Both leaders acknowledged that the Ministry's actions reflect a deep understanding of the challenges faced by the trade community and a genuine commitment to fostering an environment conducive to economic growth and development.

This development marks a pivotal moment in the enhancement of trade logistics and operational efficiency. By ensuring



that shipping line offices remain open on Saturdays, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Karachi Port Trust (KPT) have taken a decisive step toward reducing bottlenecks and expediting the delivery process. This change is expected to lead to smoother and more efficient trade operations, benefiting all stakeholders involved.

The trade community, including customs agents, importers, exporters, and other key players, have welcomed this initiative with optimism. They anticipate that the extended operational hours will lead to a significant reduction in delays, thereby improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery order issuance process. This, in turn, is expected to enhance the competitiveness of Pakistan's trade sector on a global scale.

## Gold rates decrease by Rs.1,000 per tola to Rs. 250,000

ISLAMABAD, JUL 20 (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,000 and was sold at Rs. 250,000 on Saturday against its sale at Rs. 251,000 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 857 to Rs. 214,335 from Rs. 215,192 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.196,473 from Rs. 197,259, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola



silver increased by Rs.70 to Rs.2,920 from Rs.2,850 whereas that of ten gram silver went up by Rs.60.01 to Rs.2,503.42 from Rs.2,443.41.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$15 to \$2,400 from \$2,415, the Association reported.

## Contracts with IPPs should be fully reviewed, says Akram Farid

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Central Mian Akram Farid of employers' organization Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) while addressing an emergency meeting of employers said that the government will cooperate with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Renegotiate the contracts and get electricity from cheaper sources without any capacity charges.

M. Akram Farid expressed serious concern about the large-scale closure of various industries due to exorbitant electricity rates and said that as a result Unemployment is increasing across the country, more than half of the industry has shut down due to exorbitant electricity rates, there are 4 plants of IPPs that are without power generation since January 450 capacity and 450 in terms of generation, the hike in electricity prices in the last two years in the name of revolving credit and fuel prices has broken the previous fifty-year record of electricity price hikes.

The debt is around 2300 billion rupees, so the volume of capacity payments is more than 2000 billion rupees. This is the amount that is paid to power plants for their excess but unusable production. To ten rupees and transmission system charges are one and a half to two rupees per unit, while the costs of distribution companies are five rupees per unit, but the capacity charges are 18 rupees per unit. That is, the total cost of power generation, transmission and distribution is around Rs 17 and capacity charges are Rs 18.

Capacity charges are levied on excess production which is not being used, but here the private power plants are receiving capacity payment of 100% of production even on production significantly less than their capacity. No private power unit is running at 100% capacity. Most of them are running at 30 to 50% capacity, but the capacity charges are 100%.

Malik Aziz has not become the most expensive electricity producer in the region, where domestic



consumers are getting 60 rupees and commercial consumers are getting 80 rupees per unit of electricity, while industrial electricity rates are also double the regional average.

He said that all these IPP plants with partial or zero generation of electricity will be 2 trillion. Being paid Rs. He said that the country cannot

run with such IPP contracts. (IPP) contracts were rejected. Sharah said that industries cannot run with this electricity tariff. We should get electricity from cheap sources.

The partners said that the energy audit should be conducted by an international independent firm. Business will develop, industries will work

only then the country will develop. Business leaders pointed out that some IPP plants provided zero supply in January, February and March but received Rs 10 billion per month.

The high cost of electricity is unaffordable. 2 trillion rupees annually are taken out of the pockets of 240 million people as capacity charges and 25 percent of the industry has closed down.

He added that in 2015, an average of 13,000 MW of electricity was used, of which 200 billion for the 2000 MW capacity. A capacity charge of Rs. Now, the capacity payout is Rs 2 trillion, and the 2024 consumption is still 13,000 MW with a capacity of 43,400 MW. All these IPP plants with partial or zero generation of electricity are paid Rs.2 trillion. Such IPP contracts are unsustainable for the country. He claimed that there are some IPPs which are not operating but the government is paying them huge amount. M. Akram Farid further said that Pakistan's current electricity tariff is double that of India and Bangladesh.

## Farooq Shaikhani criticized the recent fiscal policies and the alarming surge in national debt

**Commerce Desk**

HYDERABAD: Muhammad Farooq Shaikhani, President, Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry, has voiced significant concerns over the government's ineffective financial strategies. He has sharply criticized the recent fiscal policies and the alarming surge in national debt.

Shaikhani highlighted that in a short span, the government has borrowed a staggering 32 trillion rupees from local banks at an exorbitant interest rate of 22%, intensifying the nation's financial strain. According to the latest State Bank data, the government's borrowing averaged Rs 71.8 billion per day during this period, underscoring a dramatic increase in spending. Despite achieving a 30% growth, the government accumulated Rs 3.231 trillion in debt over the last 45 days of the fiscal year. This alarming scenario underscores a fundamental failure in the government's fiscal strategies.

Shaikhani noted that during the 2024 financial year, loans from scheduled banks have reached unprecedented levels, posing significant risks to financial stability. In response to these challenges, the 2025 fiscal year budget proposes substantial tax increases to generate 40% more revenue than the previous year.

President Farooq Shaikhani criticized the government for indicating potential tax increases to boost revenue while failing to make serious efforts to control expenditures. He highlighted that despite the transfer of many ministries to the provinces following the 18th Amendment, these ministries continue to exist at the federal level. The government is spending billions annually on these federal ministries and is burdening the public with higher taxes to cover these costs.



# Pak children no less than Ronaldo, Messi: Rana Mashhood

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister Youth Program Rana Mashhood Ahmad believes Pakistani children were no less than Football Greats Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi saying they have unlimited talent but just need opportunities.

Speaking to media here at the Pakistan Sports Complex as part of the Pakistan Street Football Children team preparations for the Norway Cup, he commended Muslim Hands International for doing significant work in sports, education and other fields.

If young children are given opportunities, they will win laurels for the country in every field. This is not a street child squad but Pakistan's team, he said.

He also praised Pakistani girls who won gold medals in powerlifting competitions. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is doing all out efforts to provide opportunities to the youth and is giving special attention in every sector including sports, he said.

Mashhood was of the view that according to the vision of the founder of



Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan is a country where everyone can rejoice. We all have to take the country forward and the government will patronize talented children. We will nurture talented youth through the Prime Minister's Youth Programme. A modern bio-mechanic lab will also be built for the players, he said.

He said next year the South Asian Games are going to be held in Pakistan. We are also focusing on Youth Olympics as sports has become an industry in the world. We want teams to be selected on merit in every game, he said and added that he was hopeful that the street children team will win the trophy.

Talking about politics he said when PML-N Leader Nawaz Sharif came to

power, terrorism ended and Pakistan developed economically. The friendly countries had invested in Pakistan in large numbers. The sit-ins and propaganda in the country, based on lies, destroyed the economy at that time. National institutions are working together for the stability of the country. When PML-N comes to power, prosperity comes to the country. Current challenges are temporary. There will be no IMF program next year and prosperity will surely come in the country. The government will complete its five years, he said.

In 2017, Nawaz Sharif was removed from power but the nation does not want to see any such thing again. We have to free the country from debt and every conspiracy against Pakistan will be countered. No one can stop Pakistan's development now and anti-Pakistan powers will be exposed in front of the whole world, he said.

Country Head Muslim Hands Pakistan Syed Zia Al Noor and Pakistan Street Football team captain Muhammad Adeel and players and team administration were also present on the occasion.

## National Dodgeball teams to participate first time in World Championship



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan's Dodgeball teams will participate in the World Championship for the first time. Pakistani teams will participate in all three categories.

Two men's teams will participate in the foam and fabric ball category.

The women's team will represent Pakistan in foam ball. Preparations for the World

Dodgeball Championship have been started. Pakistan Dodgeball Federation President Rizwan Ali said the foam ball men's team camp will be held in Lahore and the fabric ball camp will be held in Gujranwala.

The women's team camp has started in Karachi. He said that Punjab Inter-Division Dodgeball Championship was also being conducted in the first week of August. Men's and women's teams of all divisions will participate in the championship.

It may be mentioned here that Dodgeball World Championships 2024 is being held in Austria from August 11 to August 17, 2024.

## Shoaib Bashir bowls England to series-clinching win over West Indies



Sports Desk

Shoaib Bashir took his career-best figures as England thrashed the West Indies by 241 runs to secure a series-clinching win in the second Test at Trent Bridge on Sunday after the tourists suffered a spectacular collapse.

The 20-year-old off-spinner finished with a superb return of 5-41 as the West Indies, set 385 to win, slumped to 143 all out in the second Test.

The West Indies had actually made a steady start to their stiff chase to be 61-0 only to collapse in stunning style, with all 10 of their second-innings wickets lost in 23 overs.

Victory gave England an unassailable 2-0 lead in a three-match series following their innings and 114-run win at Lord's.

West Indies openers Kraigg Brathwaite and Mikyle Louis came through some testing early overs from an England attack without retired pace greats James Anderson and Stuart Broad for the first time in a home Test since 2012.

But when Chris Woakes (2-28) had Louis caught behind off the first ball after the drinks break, it was the start of a spectacular top-order slump that saw six wickets lost for just 30 runs.

Bashir then struck with his third ball, dismissing Kirk McKenzie cheaply for the second time in the match when wicketkeeper Jamie Smith held a good catch off an edge from a dragged-down delivery.

West Indies captain Brathwaite had looked in fine touch while making a near run-a-ball 47, including eight fours.

But for the second time this match, the experienced opener fell in sight of a fifty when was caught behind off a fine Woakes delivery.

And 74-3 became 75-4 when Kavem Hodge, fresh from his maiden Test hundred in the first innings, was plumb lbw for a duck to Bashir as he played back.

Bashir then struck again with a classic delivery that drifted and turned to have Alick Athanaze, who made 82 in West Indies' first-innings 457, caught at first slip by Joe Root for just one.

Fast bowler Gus Atkinson's two wickets in three balls left the tourists on the brink of defeat at 113-8.

But it was Shoaib Bashir who finished the match, bowling Jason Holder (37) — who had hit for two sixes — with a full and flatter delivery before knocking over Shamar Joseph as the No 11 heaved across the line.

West Indies were all out inside 37 overs, with 17 wickets having fallen in the day on a blameless pitch.

Earlier, both Root and Harry Brook hit hundreds as England made 425 in their second innings.

Root struck 122 and Brook 109, with the duo sharing a partnership of 189 after they had come together on Saturday when England were just 99 runs ahead at 140-3.

Root's century left him one shy of the England record of 33 Test hundreds held by the retired Alastair Cook.

England started Sunday's play on 248-3, already 207 runs in front. Brook was 71 not out and Root was unbeaten on 37.

Brook's straight-driven four off Jayden Seales saw him into the 90s before two more boundaries off Alzarri Joseph took him to 99.

# Khurram, Omair, Mubasir rout Bangladesh A on commanding day for Shaheens

Sports Desk

DARWIN: Pakistan Shaheens had a commanding day in the field with bat and ball against Bangladesh A as they set them a target of 428 on day three in the first four-day match at the DXC Arena in Darwin. Bangladesh A require 408 runs as they closed the day with 20-0 in seven overs.

Earlier, Bangladesh A resumed their innings from the overnight score of 203-4 before succumbing to 266 all out in 76.2 overs as Shaheens took no time in wrapping up their innings. Shahadat Hossain was stranded for 36 not out while none of the batters apart from Rejaur Rehman Raja (32, 18b, 4x4s) offered any resistance as their team added only 63 runs for six wickets leaving a deficit of 201 runs.

Test fast bowler, Khurram Shahzad was the chief destroyer as he dismissed



five batters in the first session claiming figures of 6-72 in 21.2 overs, his sixth five-wicket haul in first-class cricket. Mohammad Ali finished with

2-64 in 22 overs, while also holding up one end on the morning of day three. Shahnawaz Dahani had one scalp to his name.

With a lead of 201 runs, Pakistan Shaheens began their second innings copping two early blows. Haseebullah departed for a six-ball duck while Sahibzada Farhan was dismissed for eight, leaving Shaheens 20-2 in 5.1 overs.

Omair Bin Yousuf (100 not out, 123b, 6x4s, 2x6s) and Mubasir Khan (95, 134b, 8x4s, 1x6), promoted up the order, put on a mammoth 170-run third-wicket partnership to help Pakistan extend the lead over 400-mark.

Mubasir missed out on his fourth first-class century while Omair, playing his 50th first-class game, registered his 11th ton in the format. The declaration call came right after he reached his ton, with Shaheens scorecard reading 226-3 in 47.2 overs, setting Bangladesh 428 runs to win. Bangladesh bowlers toiled as Ripon Mondol, Rejaur Rehman and Mukidul Islam picked up one wicket each.

# KDA Sports Clinch Shaheed Usman Ghani Memorial Cricket Tournery Title

Sports Desk

KARACHI: KDA Sports clinched First Shaheed Usman Ghani Memorial Cricket Tournament title when they beat Abu Rehan Cricket Club by 104 runs in the final here at NED University Ground. The tournament is being organized by Al Karam Sports with the Collaboration of Sports Department Government of Sindh.

Minister of Local Government of Sindh Saeed Ghani, is son of Shaheed Usman Ghani, this tournament was organized in his memory. Saeed Ghani Sahab was supposed to gracious his honour able presence in the final as a Chief guest but he would not come due to some emergency but he sent a video message in which he said that "I would like to congratulate Al-Karam Sports Secretary Arif Hafeez and the organizing committee, whose tireless hard work and planning made this tournament a huge success and we got to see a lot of quality cricket. If we want to attract them, we have to promote sports and patronize them. Later, a



prize distribution ceremony was also held in which Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Sindh Jalaluddin Mahar and legendary Test cricketer Touseef Ahmed were the Chief guests. Jalaluddin Mahar said that during the tournament, the players showed the best game for which they deserve to be congratulated. We must attracting youth towards sports

along with education. It is a positive process. Test cricketer Touseef Ahmad said that I congratulate KDA for winning the tournament, such tournaments should be held regularly so that the players will get benefit and club cricket gets a boost. Director Physical Education Batool Kazim performed the administrative duties. On this occasion, Special Assis-

tant to Chief Minister Sindh and President of District East Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Sand, Asif Khan Convener District East, Sarwar Khan Ghazi Member District East, RCAF Zone One Secretary Arif Waheed Khan, Director Sports Karachi University Rashid Qureshi, Ibrahim Sheikh, Haji Raza Khan, Ayaz Munshi, Riaz Baloch, General Secretary of

Pakistan Sports Writers Federation Asghar Azeem, Shahroz Alvi, Muhammad Rizwan and others were also present. Earlier, in the final played at NED University ground, KDA Sports Batting first, scored 222 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in the allotted 20 overs. Gulzar Ali scored 88 runs, Saifullah Bangash scored 48 runs and Farhan Shah scored 32 runs. Aurangzeb Ahmed took 4 wickets while Samir Alam took 2 wickets.

In reply, Abu Rehan C C got out by scoring 118 runs in 19.3 overs. Aurangzeb Ahmed scored 30 runs and Aish Malik scored 27 runs. Farhan Shah took 3 wickets and Muhammad Umar Captured 2 wickets.

The chief guest of the ceremony, Jalaluddin Mahar and test cricketer Touseef Ahmed distributed the prizes among the players. Gulzar Ali was declared as the man of the match. while the winner trophy was received by KDA Skipper Butt Khan and the runner-up trophy was received by Shoaib Jamal, captain of Abu Rehan Cricket Club.

# Pakistan thump Nepal to register first victory in Women's Asia Cup 2024

A Sports

DAMBULLA: Gull Feroza played a quick-fire knock, supported by Muneeba Ali to help Pakistan register a thumping nine-wicket win against Nepal in the ACC Women's Asia Cup 2024 here at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Sunday.

Chasing a modest target of 109 runs, Pakistan gave a dominant performance and successfully achieved the total in 11.5 overs after losing only one wicket.

Gull Feroza and Muneeba Ali gave Pakistan a strong start,

scoring 52 runs in the first six overs.

They continued the onslaught and by the halfway mark, Pakistan had reached 92 runs, with a one-sided victory in sight.

Feroza struck two more boundaries in the next over to push her team further closer to the target. However, she could not finish the match as she got out with only five needed to win. She scored a 35-ball 57 with the help of ten boundaries.

Muneeba Ali finished the match with a boundary, leading her side to a net run-rate-boosting victory after they lost

to India in the first match. She scored 46 off 34 with eight boundaries.

Nepal bowlers had a bad day at work as they conceded a boundary in every over. Kabita Joshi picked the solitary wicket for them.

Pakistan women's captain Nida Dar invited Nepal to bat first earlier and her bowlers proved the decision right.

Fatima Sana removed Samjhana Khadka in the first over, while Sadia Iqbal dismissed Kabita Kunwar and Indu Barma to reduce Nepal to 30-3 in five overs.

Sita Rana Magar and Sita Rana Magar had no answers to Pakistan's tight bowling as they scored 10 runs in the next 4.2 over before the latter got run-out. Magar also got run-out in the 14th over after scoring a scratchy 26 off 30.

Puja Mahato also played a cautious knock of 25 runs from 32 balls, while Kabita Joshi scored an unbeaten 31 off 23 with four boundaries and one six to push the team's total to 108-6 in 20 overs.

For Pakistan, Sadia Iqbal picked two wickets, while Fatima Sana bagged one.



## Fateha

PESHAWAR: Engr. Amir Muqam, Federal Minister For States & Frontier Regions, AJK & GB Affairs offering Fateha for the deceased father of Mobashir Hasan, Principal Information Officer (PIO) on Sunday.



Photo: PID

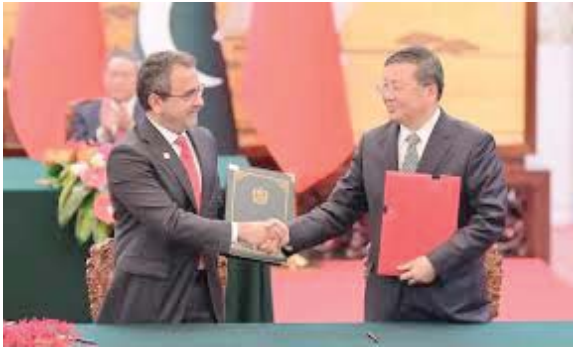
## Pakistan to push Chinese utilities in Pakistan to switch to domestic coal

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan this month will ask Chinese power plants operating in the country to shift to using coal from Sindh's Thar region rather than imported coal, the power minister said on Sunday.

Islamabad may also begin talks on re-profiling Pakistan's energy sector debt during the visit to Beijing, Awais Leghari, head of the energy ministry's Power Division, told Reuters.

Leghari will be part of the delegation to discuss structural reforms to the power sector suggested by



the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which last week agreed on a \$7 billion bailout for the heavily indebted South Asian nation.

Neighbouring China has set up over \$20 billion worth of energy projects in Pakistan. "One of the key purposes of going along is the conver-

sion of our imported coal units to the local coal. That would have a huge impact on the cost of energy, of power in the near future. So that is one of the biggest (items on the) agenda," Leghari said in an interview.

Such a transition would benefit the Chinese-owned plants in Pakistan by reducing pressure on Islamabad's foreign exchange reserves, he said, making it easier to repatriate dividends and offering a better return in dollar terms.

The transition could save Pakistan more than Rs200 billion (\$700 million) a year

in imports, translating to a decrease of as much as Rs2.5 per unit in the price of electricity, Leghari said.

In April a subsidiary of conglomerate Engro agreed to sell all of its thermal assets, including Pakistan's leading coal producer, Sindh Engro Coal Mining to Pakistan's Liberty Power. Liberty said the decision stemmed from Pakistan's foreign exchange crunch and its indigenous coal reserve potential.

The minister declined to elaborate on the possible talks with China over re-profiling energy debt.

## PM committed to promoting environmentally-sustainable mountaineering, PM's aide Romina Khurshid

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam on Sunday emphasised efforts have been launched on the PM's directives to set up mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan having structured training and educational facilities specifically tailored to mountaineering, and sustainable tourism practices in Pakistan's north to promote world-class environmental-friendly mountaineering, climbing and mountain tourism.

While chairing a second review meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee to Establish Mountaineering School in Gilgit-Baltistan held here in the climate change and environmental coordination ministry, Romina Khurshid Alam said, "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is very much committed for



setting up the mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan and other mountain regions of the country."

Establishing such facilities that would help equip aspirant mountaineers and mountain climbers with the knowledge and confidence to enjoy the mountains safely while respecting the local environment, values and cultures of mountain communities and fellow climbers would prove

an important initiative for promoting sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering and climbing in the country, the PM's climate aide said.

"A plan is being implemented in close coordination and support with the Gilgit-Baltistan government to set up first government-run mountaineering school of the world-class standard in Skardu. It also aims to open new vistas of employ-

ment opportunities for the local mountain communities and help promote sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering and climbing," remarked the PM's aide.

Romina Khurshid said that the picturesque Gilgit-Baltistan has long been celebrated for its scenic towering peaks, including K2, the second highest mountain in the world. The region is rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage,

attracting adventurers and explorers from around the globe.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Additional Secretary Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Zulfiqar Younas, Deputy Secretary (CC) Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Ministry Dr. Mazhar Hayat, Secretary, Inter-Provincial Coordination Ministry Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Secretary federal education & professional training ministry Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, senior official representative of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission, Gilgit-Baltistan Planning & Development Department, Leading Pakistani mountaineer Naila Kiani, PRO to PM's Coordinator Muhammad Arshad Chaudhry, Deputy Director Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Ministry Muhammad Saleem.

## UNICEF Pakistan launches social behavior change toolkit on MHH

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: UNICEF Pakistan has announced the launch of Social Behavior Change (SBC) toolkit focused on menstrual health and hygiene (MHH).

This groundbreaking initiative aims to transform societal attitudes and behaviors towards menstrual health, promoting a more supportive and informed environment for women and girls across the country.

The launch event, held in Islamabad, brought together a diverse group of experts and representatives from various implementing partners spanning all provinces. These stakeholders shared their insights and experiences, highlighting the toolkit's potential to drive impactful change in communities.

The SBC toolkit offers comprehensive resources and strategies designed to educate and empower individuals, families, and communities.

## CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif to Promote Public-Private Partnership for Rewarding Skills Training

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: "Innovation in technical training courses is need of the hour for economic growth and reduction of unemployment," said Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif while chairing a meeting to finalise Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) Mapping Plan. She added, "Advanced courses in the market-driven trades should be taught in TEVTA institutes." She highlighted, "The new courses must include training in building, textiles, garments, tourism, hospitality, information communication technology, automobile assembly & repair, professional training in food processing, biomedical technology,

light engineering, renewable energy, and surgical instruments."

Madam Chief Minister directed the authorities concerned to establish partnerships with leading industries to support internships, apprenticeships and job placement. She also directed them to introduce Korean, Japanese, German, Chinese and Arabic language courses in TEVTA institutes. She vowed, "God willing, we will succeed in building a strong technical education system in Punjab."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif agreed to a proposal to establish Punjab Overseas Employment Promotion Authority for Skilled Jobs in the International Market, and directed to outsource 'Heavy

Machinery Driving/Operator Course' in collaboration with Large Scale Construction Developers.

Madam Chief Minister approved the construction of 45 welding workshops in 9 cities, besides the construction of state-of-the-art welding and construction course labs in Gujranwala, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Multan, Attock, Taxila, Layyah and Mianwali. She also agreed to a proposal to recruit 1000 employees to overcome shortage of human resource in TEVTA, and directed to increase monthly budget for the purchase of training material for practical training @ Rs 2000 per student per month. She also directed the relevant authorities to issue guidelines to ensure biometric attendance of the teachers.

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## Khawaja Asif criticises judiciary for 'political verdicts'

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Sunday criticised the judiciary for its alleged 'political verdicts', saying that the decisions should be in accordance with the Constitution and law.

In a statement, the minister emphasised that the judiciary's responsibility is to interpret the law, not to make one. He noted that judges should focus on interpreting the law rather than venturing into political commentary.

The Defense Minister pointed out that there have been numerous political decisions made by the judiciary, citing the examples of Justice Muneer's decision and the Bhutto case. He warned that the current situation could lead to constitutional chaos.

Khawaja Asif also stressed that political stability is not just the respon-



sibility of politicians but also of the judiciary, media, and bureaucracy. He urged the judiciary to restore its credibility as rumors of conflict within judges are spreading.

Asif also suggested that Article 209 should be applied to judges who make wrong decisions.

## Rubina Khalid Fulfils Promise: BISP starts Registration for Sikh Families

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On the special directives of Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), the registration process for the Sikh community in Buner (KPK) has officially commenced. BISP field staff is actively conducting surveys of deserving Sikh families to include them in the program, reflecting the promise and commitment made by Rubina Khalid to the Sikh community.

This initiative reflects Senator Rubina Khalid's firm commitment to ensure that all deserving families, regardless of their religious background, receive the support and benefits of the Benazir Income Support Programme. The Sikh community has expressed their gratitude to Senator Rubina Khalid and appreciated her efforts towards their welfare through BISP.



During her recent visit to Buner, Senator Rubina Khalid met with members of the Sikh community at Pir Baba Gurdwara. She guided the Sikh women through the BISP registration process and instructed the staff at the BISP office in Buner to facilitate the survey for deserving women from the Sikh community.

Senator Rubina Khalid also directed the staff to address the issues of all minority communities in Pakistan and to assist them in every aspect to ensure their registration and inclusion in the BISP family.

## Dramatist Khalil ur Rehman kidnapped, robbed in Lahore



## Bureau Report

LAHORE: In a shocking incident in the Sunder area of Lahore, a well-known dramatist Khalil ur Rehman Qamar was robbed by unknown suspects under the pretense of producing a play.

According to the case filed by drama writer, a woman named Anna Urooj contacted him, claiming to be a big fan and expressing interest in producing a drama.

"Upon arrived at the location provided by the woman, I was made

to sit in a room. After some time, unknown armed suspects entered the room, beat me, and took away my mobile phone, cash, ATM card, and other belongings," Khalil ur Rehman Qamar said in his police report.

In his police report, he stated that he was then blindfolded and taken to an unknown location where the suspects demanded an additional Rs 1 million for his release, however, when the demand was not met, they threw him at an unknown location and escaped from the scene.

The police have registered a case of robbery and kidnapping based on Qamar's complaint.

The investigation has been handed over to the CIA police, while the authorities have stated that a search for the suspects is underway and they are confident that the culprits will be apprehended soon.

## Altaf Hussain secures legal ...

Continued from Page 1

living in self-imposed exile in the UK since the early 2000s.

Last year, the MQM-P had triumphed over Hussain when the

court said that seven London properties valued at about GBP10 million were the possession of the MQM-P. The party was declared to be the beneficiaries of the trusts and therefore of the properties.

## Pakistani students in ...

Continued from Page 1

students are currently in Bangladesh, out of which 48 are in Dhaka, 31 in Chittagong, nine in Memon Singh, eight in Cumilla, seven in Rajshahi and four each in Sylhet, Bogra and Ghazipur.

Another two students are stuck in Manikganj, while one student is stuck in Rangpur and Dinajpur.

Meanwhile, parents of Pakistani students studying in Bangladesh have expressed deep concern and anxiety over the deteriorating security situation in the country, fearing for their children's safety and well-being.

In a desperate plea for assistance, the parents have written to the additional secretary to the Prime

Minister of Pakistan, highlighting the dire circumstances their children are facing. They have also requested the Pakistani High Commissioner in Bangladesh to intervene and ensure the safety of the students.

The letter details the escalating unrest in Bangladesh, including the imposition of curfews in Dhaka and surrounding cities. It also mentions that the Bangladeshi government has ordered the evacuation of all local students from their hostels, leaving the Pakistani students confined to their hostel premises.

The parents express their growing worry about their children's access to food and essential supplies due to the curfew and the deteriorating security situation.