



Mohsin Naqvi praises forces for foiling terrorist infiltration at Pak-Afghan Border

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday lauded the security forces for their prompt action in thwarting a terrorist infiltration attempt on the Pakistan-Afghan border. The minister praised the security forces for their bravery and vigilance in defending the nation and maintaining peace.



Tackling plastic pollution vital for environmental sustainability, public health: Romina Khurshid

Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam said that plastic pollution has emerged as a serious concern for Pakistan, which has aggravated further the environmental degradation problem being faced by the country with significant economic and health crisis. (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on increase in investment and capacity of federal government Ministries on Monday.



Photo: PID

Turkmenistan foreign minister arrives in Islamabad



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, has arrived in Islamabad, Pakistan. He was warmly welcomed by the

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, at the Islamabad Airport.

He will hold extensive talks with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and call on the Pakistani leadership.

Gov't taking all possible steps to ensure business friendly environment for investors: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday expressing the government's resolve to increase investment in the country, said the government was taking all possible steps to provide business friendly environment to the traders and investors.

Chairing a meeting on increase in investment and capacity of federal government

Ministries at the PM House, the prime minister directed the relevant authorities to formulate a steering committee with respect to the progress on increasing investment and capacity of the federal ministries. He said he himself would chair the committee.

During the meeting, it was informed that the Public Private Partnership Authority had hired a consultancy firm Kearney to get the services of experts with

regard to increasing investment and enhancing the capacity of the federal ministries.

Kearney is a world renowned firm which operates across the world especially in the Middle East.

In the meeting, Kearney informed the prime minister about the strategy of its ongoing consultative process with the government of Pakistan.

The firm has so far consulted with 15 institutions of the federal

government while 97 priority projects have been identified in this consultation process, the meeting was told.

Kearney said it would develop a plan of action for sustainable development in consultation with Pakistan government while it would also provide assistance to the Government of Pakistan with respect to the privatization of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), improving the regulatory framework of public sector

enterprises and attracting more investors.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Division Ahad Khan Cheema, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jehanzeb Khan, PM's Coordinator Rana Ihsan Afzal and other relevant high officials.

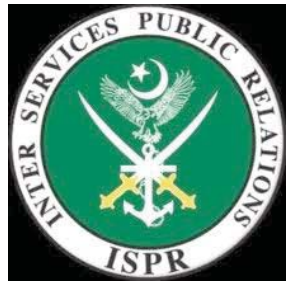
Three terrorists killed during infiltration attempt at Afghan border in Dir: ISPR

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: At least three terrorists were killed during an infiltration attempt at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dir district in the wee hours of Monday, said the military's media wing.

"The infiltrators were surrounded, effectively engaged and after an intense fire exchange, all three terrorists were killed," the Inter-Services Public Relations said in a statement.

It added that Pakistan has been asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border. "Interim Afghan Govern-



ment is expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan," it said.

"Security forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to securing its borders and eliminating the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR stated.

Strong lobby opposing Operation Azm-e-Istehkam: DG ISPR

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army said on Monday that it had conducted over 22,000 intelligence-based operations in the ongoing year to eliminate terrorism in the country.

Addressing a press conference on Monday, Director General Inter-Services Public Relations Lieutenant General Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry said that there had been a noticeable increase in the propaganda against the army.

DG ISPR said that a total of 398 terrorists have been killed while 137 officials were martyred. He added that over 112 operations have been conducted each day in 2024.

Answering a question about Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, DG ISPR said that the decision was taken in a meeting where all stakeholders were present.

He added that the operation is a comprehensive effort against terrorism and was needlessly politicised.

"The stakes are very high," DG ISPR said, adding that a lobby does not want revised National Action Plan to succeed.

Chaudhry read out PM Shehbaz Sharif's statement regarding the operation, clarifying that there was no kinetic operation planned that will require displacing any population.



He added that while over 22,000 operations have been conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, there are a total of 22 courts to deal with the arrested terrorists.

DG ISPR also said that there was an entire spectrum of illegal activities, including businesses, that was facilitating terrorism.

He added that the excuses of missing persons and 'peace marches' were suddenly raised as soon as the operation was announced. He said that no one was advocating for an increase in counter terrorism departments and courts.

In response to a question about Bannu, DG ISPR recounted the terrorist attack followed by the peace march a day later. He added that there were 'certain elements' that were armed and had raised slogans against the state. He said that the protestors had even looted the supply depot.

The DG ISPR said that the army had responded as per SOPs.

Without naming the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, he said that a party was trying to protest even though it was responsible for civil administration.

Chaudhry also recounted that PTI had responded to May 9 by questioning why the army had not responded. He also criticised courts for being 'lenient' towards those involved in May 9.

DG ISPR also called for stringent laws against 'digital terrorism' that he said was playing a large part in the propaganda against the army.

He added that nowhere in the world was there a free pass on disinformation and courts handed out strict punishments.

Chaudhry said that there should be legislation to control disinformation and digital terrorism to stop people behind anonymous profiles from spreading propaganda.

Islamabad Police confirm arrest of PTI's Raouf Hassan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have confirmed the arrest of PTI information secretary Raouf Hassan during a raid at the party's secretariat in Islamabad.

According to Islamabad police, law enforcement agencies conducted a raid on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Secretariat based on concrete evidence. The police stated that the PTI Secretariat had been operating as the hub of an international disinformation network through its digital media center.

The raid was carried out following information provided by an international social media activist associated with PTI.

According to the police, the digital media center at the PTI Secretariat was being used to incite people and spread propaganda.

Law enforcement agencies have arrested individuals involved in this propaganda campaign, police confirmed. Among the arrested is PTI leader Rauf Hassan, whose detention has been verified by the Islamabad police. However, the police clarified that the news regarding the arrest of Barrister Gohar is incorrect.

During the raid, the Islamabad police seized computers and records from the PTI central office, which are now part of the ongoing investigation. The operation marks a significant move by authorities to curb disinformation and maintain public order.

Over 40 PTI members, including Raouf Hasan, 'arrested' in Islamabad

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: More than 40 people associated with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, including Raouf Hasan, were "abducted" from the party's central secretariat in Islamabad by the federal capital police on Monday, said Aon Abbas Buppi.

"Before Hasan, 18 of our social media team members

women, have been abducted. We don't know anything about them and the FIR in which they were named."

Police raided Imran Khan's party headquarters in sector G-8 area earlier in the day, sources within the party said. The federal capital police have not made a statement so far.

A heavy contingent of police arrived at the secretariat around noon and surrounded it. The contingent included women officials as well. They also sealed the road leading to the office.

According to Buppi, one of the reasons for the raid was affidavits. "Today affidavits of

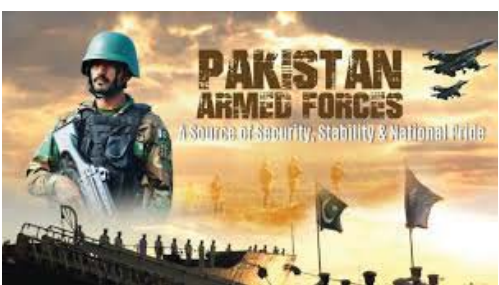


who worked in the central secretariat were arrested. Moreover, police also picked up 14 women who arrived at the secretariat this morning for applications," he said while appearing on Spotlight with Munizae Jahangir aired on Aaj News.

"So, a total of 40 to 45 members, including men and

PTI MNAs were supposed to be submitted to the Election Commission of Pakistan. They also took all of our documents and laptops containing details, numbers, and the diary numbers," he said.

He claimed that such an action resulted from the government's tension over the reserved seats case decision.



KPk Governor says contacts ongoing to solve problems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

Sohail Abbasi

ABBOTTABAD: The governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that the contacts with the political leaders are ongoing to solve the problems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He expressed these views while addressing the worker convention at the Pakistan People's Party Secretariat in Abbottabad. Provincial Information Secretary Amjad Afridi, Divisional General Secretary Farooq Tanuli, District President Salim Shah and others also spoke. However, the most important and serious problem of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is peace. After years, the province is engulfed in unrest.



Who should hold the neck of those who accuse Sindh of corruption? Tell them that you had a government in KP for ten years, but not the amount of salaries, while there is no such thing in Sindh. The universities

are destroyed. We have increased the fund base for universities to 25 billion. We have removed the ban on the students' union. Why is there a ban in KP? The country

gets leaders from the students' leadership. Nothing to promote. Half of the cricket team belongs to KP and there has been no first class cricket in KP for the last fifteen years. No resolu-

tion has been passed in the provincial cabinet and assembly in favor of the sacrifices of the martyred security forces. In the 7th NFC Award, Mr. Zardari, during his former presidency, gave additional money, which has exceeded one hundred billion, for the merged districts and institutions affected by terrorism. Send a defamation notice to Brigadier Mehmood Shah. When the conditions of the province are bad, he talks about me to divert attention. Speak against me in Peshawar from class 4 to 21. Speak against me, but let's talk about the province together. Appreciation and where I will fight your case in the center and serve you according to my limits in the province, BISP chairperson will also come to you. Addressing the convention, the speakers paid tribute to the Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, describing him as a source of pride for the party and the province.

All the lawyers of Islamic Lawyers Forum to protest at Islamabad sit-in against over-billing of electricity bills



Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, Dr. Safdar Hashmi and Islamic Lawyers Forum Rafi Raza, Athar Aziz Chaudhry, Mahmood Ansari, Tahir Qureshi, Rana Ishaq and Khalid Goheer, while addressing a press conference in connection with the Islamabad sit-in on July 26 against electricity over-billing, said that All the lawyers of Islamic Lawyers Forum will participate fully in the Islamabad sit-in. They condemn the corrupt contracts made with IPP and the cruel taxes imposed on the salaried class and businessmen of Pakistan. The IPP contracts made in 2002/3 and 2013 have become a noose for the people of Pakistan. During this period, the people of Pakistan received only 47% of the electricity from these IPPs while 100% payment is being made, which is a complete injustice. Taxes and illegal charges on the people in the form of electricity bills are equivalent to robbing the people. Pakistan has been economically made a slave of the IMF. By withdrawing the billing, the correct bills are not given to the people again and the government does not cancel the contracts with the IPPs.

Shaishta Zeeba elected President of Multan Jasmine Lions Club



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The meeting of Multan Jasmine Lions Club was held under the chairmanship of the newly elected president Shaishta Zeeba. In the meeting, former president Shahnaz Zulfiqar presented a bouquet of flowers and a collar pin to the newly elected president Shaishta Zeeba and secretary Afifah Shalzad. While doing this, President Shaishta Zeeba said that we will continue all possible struggles with the support of members for the promotion of Lionism and the service of suffering humanity, social and development projects, because human welfare is our success in this world and the hereafter. Meanwhile, Farhat Shafiq, Rehana Sagar, Arusa, Shagufta Shalzad and other members congratulated the newly elected officials and expected that there will be a significant increase and improvement in the completion and efficiency of public and service projects during their tenure.

On the occasion newly elected President Shaishta Zeeba and Secretary Afifah Shalzad along with Shahnaz Zulfiqar, Farhat Shafiq, Rehana Sagar, Arusa, Shagufta Shalzad and other members presented a bouquet of flowers.

AKU-EB's Role in Developing Global Standards in Educational Assessment Recognised

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Examination Board (AKU-EB) proudly announces its significant contribution to the development of the International Standards for Educational Assessment, recently launched by the International Association for Education Assessment (IAEA) in May 2024. These globally accepted standards set benchmarks for best practices in examinations and assessments worldwide.

The creation of these standards was a seven-year journey led by the IAEA Recognition Committee, comprising members from various countries.

Protest

LAHORE: Members of All Pakistan Deaf and Dumb Association hold banners and placards during protest in favor of their demands at Faisal Chowk in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

The country cannot move forward until the agreements with IPPs are revised: Mirza Talib

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The country cannot move forward until the contracts with IPPs are reviewed and the electricity bills are not approved: people, traders are our voice.



Grand dialogue is inevitable to end economic problems, this was said by Mirza Talib Siddique Baig, senior vice-chairman of Anjumam Tajran City Registered Faisalabad while talking to the media. He has further said that the capacity payment

made to the Independent Power Distribution Companies (IPPs) squeezed the blood of the people, the government did not buy a single unit of electricity in a year, but the capacity payment of 1929 billion rupees in compensation. In total, electricity worth 1198 billion rupees was purchased from IPPs, but payments of 3127 billion rupees were made. Mirza Talib has made it clear

that electricity worth 1198 billion rupees was bought from IPPs last year with people's blood and money. Purchased but payments of 3127 billion were made, i.e. capacity payment of 1929 billion rupees was made without buying electricity. Total payments made to IPPs accounted for 38% of cost of production and revealed 62% of capacity payments, which are momentary.

Jamaat-e-Islami to stage sit-in in Islamabad on July 26: Iqbal Khan

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The current situation of the country is very unfortunate. The monster of inflation has made life miserable. Under the leadership of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Hafiz Naeemur Rahman, there will be a sit-in by the right people in Islamabad on July 26, Juma Mubarak, which is very organized and vigorous. The purpose of the sit-in will be to give the oppressed people their legitimate rights. Inshallah, the people will support us. The illegitimate government

formed on the basis of Form 47 has heated up the market of indiscriminate looting in the country. The blood of the people is being squeezed on the people. The burden of taxes should be removed immediately, but these taxes should be imposed on the landlords, free electricity for the elite, free petrol and free gas should be abolished and their prices should be reduced for the poor people, expressed these views of the former candidate of the National Assembly. Constituency NA 49 and Provincial Secretary General Punjab North

Iqbal Khan while addressing a full press conference in the district office, on this occasion he was accompanied by District Amir Sardar Amjad Ali Khan District Secretary Hafiz Muhammad Bilal Maulana Jaber Ali Khan Maulana Naeemullah Mian. Muhammad Junaid Azam Khan, Syed Sanaullah Bukhari Umar Waqas and Liaqat Umar were also present. Iqbal Khan said that on July 26 at four o'clock Asr, the sit-in will begin in D Chowk Islamabad. People from all over the country will participate. Amjad Ali Khan and

Hafiz Jaber Ali Khan will leave from their respective places under the leadership of Iqbal Khan said that the purpose of this sit-in of Jamaat-e-Islami is only to give relief to the common people. And about some taxes, even the electricity authorities do not know why these taxes were imposed. What kind of cruel system is there that there is no pricing mechanism. There are lakhs of people, the government has turned a dark eye. IP-Pace is paid 450 billion rupees without generating electricity, as if it is a mother lion.

Pakistan face overall 38% increase in energy prices, 62% increase in capacity charges causing tariff hike

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Speakers at a panel discussion underscored that Pakistan is facing an overall increase of 38 percent in energy prices along with a 62 percent rise in capacity charges leading to tariff hikes in the country that could be overcome through an independent power consumer model promoting individual power generation.

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), as part of its Monday Seminar series, under the auspices of the Network for Clean Energy Transition (NCET) conducted a panel discussion on "Pakistan's Electricity Tariff Structure: Insights and Key Determinants" here at the SDPI conference hall.

Dr. Khalid Waleed, Research Fellow at SDPI, detailed Pakistan's consumer categories and tariff-setting mechanisms, highlighting how the tariff structure is designed to reflect various consumer types and usage patterns. Residential consumers, classified under category A-1,

make up 89% of the consumer base and account for 48% of the total consumption. This trend is opposite to the global pattern where industries are the main consumers of electricity. In Pakistan, however, commercial consumers (A-2) represent 9% of the consumers and 7% of the consumption.

He further explained the mechanism behind the high electricity bills. In Pakistan, the capacity charge, encompassing fixed operational and maintenance costs, return on equity, debt servicing, insurance, working capital financing fees, and procurement and construction costs, is higher than the generation charge. The Energy Price (EP), which includes fuel cost and variable operational and maintenance expenses, is projected to increase from 0.84 trillion Rs in FY24 to 1.16 trillion Rs in FY25, translating to a rise from 10.94 Rs/unit to 15.65 Rs/unit. The Capacity Price (CP) is anticipated to grow from 1.847 trillion Rs in FY24 to 1.95 trillion Rs in FY25, contributing to 18.39 Rs/unit or 60% of the overall power tariff.

Another reason for the increased electricity bills is the various taxes imposed. He explained that in Pakistan, electricity bills include several taxes, including an 18% General Sales Tax (GST) from the federal government and an Electricity Duty from provincial governments of 1.5% for residential customers and 2% for commercial customers.

Dr. Musarat Jabeen highlighted the concept of the independent power consumer (IPC) model, advocating for solar energy initiatives and encouraging everyone to generate their own energy to promote sustainability.

Engr Ahad Nazir, Associate Research Fellow and Head Center for Private Sector Engagement at SDPI highlighted that all energy-generating plants are paying fixed tariffs regardless of production and output.

Engr. Ubaid ur Rehman Zia, head of energy unit at SDPI mentioned that the tariff structure reflects the complex interplay of power sector policies and regulations, market dynamics, and



regulatory frameworks. The structure and determinants of these tariffs have far-reaching implications, affecting not only household budgets but also the competitiveness of businesses and the overall economic stability of our country. Zainab Babar, Research Associate at SDPI

said that the problem is circular with challenges deep-rooted in the broader energy structure of the country. She said that several key issues in the current system, such as the burden of high-capacity payments and dollar indexation, make electricity unaffordable for many consumers.



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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:35 am
Zohr	12:14 pm
Asr	5:10 pm
Maghrib	7:15 pm
Isha	8:53 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

Admission process continues at IIUI, last date July 29th

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) has extended the last date to apply for admissions of fall semester in more than 100 programs of its 11 faculties till Monday, 29th of July, 2024.

The university administration made this decision keeping in view the interest and requests of applicants to extend the date. The university has offered admissions in BS, MS and PhD programs of 11 faculties including Social Sciences, Sciences, Management Sciences, International Institute for Islamic Economics, Arabic, Usuluddin, Languages and Literature, Engineering and Technology, Shariah and Law, Faculty of Computing and Information Technology and Faculty of Education.

The university administration made this decision keeping in view the interest and requests of applicants to extend the date. The details of the offered programs of fall 2024 admissions, eligibility criteria and fee structure can be seen on cms.iiu.edu.pk.

Tackling plastic pollution vital for environmental sustainability, public health: Romina Khurshid

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam said that plastic pollution has emerged as a serious concern for Pakistan, which has aggravated further the environmental degradation problem being faced by the country with significant economic and health crisis.

"Plastic waste, if not managed properly, degrades our ecosystems, affects public health, and hampers our sustainable developmental goals," the PM's aide warned while addressing as a chief guest at a high-level roundtable discussion on plastic waste management in the country here on Monday.

Organised by ministry of Climate Change, the roundtable discussion aimed at sharing knowledge, showcasing successful

interventions, and exploring opportunities for collaboration.

The discussion was attended by various stakeholders including top key government officials, representatives of national and international non-governmental organization, academia, researchers, students and media.

Highlighting the present government's plastic waste management policy measures, Romina Khurshid Alam informed the participants, "We have established a robust regulatory and policy framework to control the transboundary movement of plastic waste in line with the Basel Convention.

She said further that the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) has taken significant strides in banning single-use plastics and polythene bags, as well as D2W technology that causes the generation of microplastics,

hoping that these measures would prove to be crucial steps towards mitigating plastic pollution.

She said that none of us can afford to ignore the reality that plastic, due to its low price and ease of use, continues to be an integral part of our everyday lives. Therefore, impactful solid waste management and raising awareness among all stakeholders are imperative, Romina Khurshid added.

"Therefore, we must ensure that our citizens understand the environmental and health impacts of plastic waste, and we must equip them with the knowledge and tools to reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover plastic products effectively," the PM's climate aide stressed.

She said that by working together, we can overcome the challenges posed by plastic waste and move towards a sustainable future.



Tree plantations

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Atta Tarar during planting sapling in connection with tree plantation campaign ceremony at trail 5 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Contracts with IPPs, should be revised and made public: Atif Ikram

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that it is necessary to review the agreements with IPPs. The government should bring the agreements with IPPs to the public. Expensive contracts are the cause of electricity crisis today, people and business circles have suffered severe problems due to expensive electricity bills, he expressed these views while talking to a delegation of the business community.

Federation President Atif Ikram said that the reason for the high electricity bills is the agreements made with the IPPs. The power plants of the PPPs are running at



less than 10% capacity and the government is paying the full amount. On one hand, the circulating debt is increasing, on other hand, the public is being burdened.

Atif Ikram said that the price per unit of electricity in Pakistan was already higher than other countries in the region, now the living and business conditions of the common people in Pakistan have become disturbed. The delegation of the business community included Chairman Capital Office Karim Aziz Malik, Vice President Federation Tariq Jadoon, Mian Akram Farid, Chairman Diplomatic Committee Muhammad Ahmed, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail Hussain, Samina Fazil, President of Women's Chamber Rizwana Asif and others.

Saudi Falcon Vigen delegation visits ICCI



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mohammad Tariq Ghous, President of Falcon Vigen Investment Company Saudi Arabia, expressed his willingness for investing in Pakistan during a meeting with acting President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar here on Monday. Accompanied by Mohammad Tashfeen, Country Head Pakistan, Ghous praised the investment-friendly environment in the country and appreciated the Pakistan government's initiatives to attract foreign investment.

Ghous commended the country's peaceful atmosphere and the government's efforts to promote economic stability through foreign investments.

Earlier, acting President ICCI Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar welcomed the delegation and highlighted potential investment areas in the country, including mines and mineral sectors. He said that the country's youth is not only blessed with all the needed technology but is equally enthusiastic to serve the country for economic betterment.

On his part Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General United Business Group, expressed Pakistan's love and unwavering support for Saudi Arabia.

He also made mention of ICCI's initiatives, including plans for a modern hospital, international university, industrial estate, and state-of-the-art expo center.

Bakhtawari also highlighted ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari's efforts to serve the business community, including installing water filtration plants and providing educational resources like computers and lab equipment etc. in the duty of his corporation's social responsibility.

Those present in the meeting also include Rizwan Chhceena, Chaudhry Maqsood Tabish, Afraz Sial, Zarif Khan, Chaudhry Waseem, Kh. Meer ul Hassan and others.

Telenor Microfinance Bank awarded PCI DSS Certification, for excellence in Cardholder Data Security

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB), operator of Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform easypaisa, has achieved a significant milestone by receiving the prestigious Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) certification (ver.4.0) from Risk Associates, a leading PCI Qualified Security Assessor (QSA) in Pakistan. This certification underscores TMB's commitment to upholding high standards of data security and handling cardholder data with utmost diligence.

The certification ceremony, which took place at TMB's Islamabad office, marked a significant milestone in the Bank's commitment to data security excellence. Key stakeholders from both institutions attended the event. Representing Risk Associates were Aziz A. Rahim, Chief Operating Officer, and Hashim Mufti, Head of Business Development & Strategy. From TMB/easypaisa, attendees included Muhammad Rizwan Ikram, Chief Risk Officer, Mustapha Salim Lotia, Head of Information Security, and Ahmad Sabih, Head of GRC.

During the ceremony, Aziz A. Rahim, Chief Operating Officer, Risk Associates, presented the PCI DSS Certificate of Compliance to Muhammad Rizwan Ikram, Chief Risk Officer, TMB/easypaisa, and Mustapha Salim Lotia, Head of Information Security, TMB/easypaisa. Commenting on this accomplishment, Kashif Ahmed, Acting President & CEO, TMB/easypaisa, remarked, "We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of excellence in data protection, and achieving the PCI DSS certification underscores our unwavering dedication to prioritizing the security of customer data."

Kashif Hassan, Managing Director of Risk Associates, congratulated TMB for achieving this milestone, stating, "This certification demonstrates TMB's commitment to implementing robust security measures and maintaining industry-leading standards in financial transactions."

The milestone certifies TMB's enhanced payment card account data security and ensures compliance with a stringent baseline of technical and operational requirements designed to protect account data.

With over 40 million registered mobile accounts and counting, TMB/easypaisa continues to lead Pakistan's digital financial services landscape, dedicated to fostering financial inclusion through technological innovation.



Dubai Islamic Bank Pakistan Limited and ZLK Islamic Financial Services partner to enhance Shariah-compliant financial access

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Dubai Islamic Bank Pakistan Limited (DIBPL), a subsidiary of Dubai Islamic Bank, has partnered with ZLK Islamic Financial Services, Pakistan's first Shariah-compliant brokerage firm. The MoU signing ceremony was held at DIBPL Head Office in Karachi. The MoU was signed by Junaid Ahmed, CEO of DIBPL, and Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman of ZLK Islamic Financial Services, in the presence of Ashfaq Ahmad Khan, COO of ZLK Islamic Financial Services, and Naveed Malik, Head of Consumer Banking at DIBPL.

This strategic collaboration is aimed at enhancing access to Shariah-compliant financial products for DIBPL's wide customer base, including Roshan Digital Account holders and local clients. Customers are set to gain access to brokerage services by investing in a variety of Riba-free financial products



such as shares, GoP Ijara Sukuk, ETFs, and Murabaha Share Financing (MSF). This initiative is a testament to DIBPL and ZLK Islamic Financial Services' commitment to promoting and expanding ethical and Shariah-compliant financial solutions in Pakistan.

Mr. Junaid Ahmed, CEO, DIBPL, commented: "DIBPL remains committed towards initiating and

promoting innovative Islamic banking solutions. This collaboration with ZLK Islamic Financial Services highlights our dedication to expanding access to creative financial products, promoting financial inclusion and prosperity."

Mr. Naveed Malik, Head of Consumer Banking, DIBPL, added: "Our partnership with ZLK is designed to help customers achieve Halal Munafa

(returns) on their investments. At DIBPL, we provide Shariah-compliant investment opportunities, enabling our customers to engage in financial activities that promote both financial inclusion and Shariah-compliant banking services."

Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman, ZLK Islamic Financial Services, emphasized the strategic importance of the partnership, stating: "We are excited to partner with DIBPL to enhance our brokerage services and provide clients with seamless access to Shariah-compliant investment opportunities. Together, we will deliver value-added solutions that meet the globally accepted standards of Islamic finance."

Through this partnership, DIBPL and ZLK Islamic Financial Services aspire to foster a conducive ecosystem for Shariah-compliant finance, contributing to the sustainable growth and development of Pakistan's Islamic financing sector.

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Technical Courses Should be Taught to Students of Religious Schools

The holy book says: "Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." In our country, religious schools (madrasas) are a blessing, ensuring the transfer of Islamic knowledge. Education is not just about letters, words, and books but about developing minds and intellect in a way that nurtures natural talents and emotions to benefit humanity.

Madaris have been playing a significant role in the education system of Pakistan. Around three Million students are enrolled in 35000 Madaris, (estimated 2019) out of which 26,160 Madaris are registered with provincial / areas government under the society act. About 25000 Madaris are affiliated with their respective Masalik Boards i.e. five different organizations / boards (examining bodies) working under the supra-body of Madaris "Ittehad Tanzeemat-ul-Madaris Pakistan (ITMP).

The question arises, what can be done so that students graduating from madrasas can earn a livelihood? They didn't study religion to make a living out of it. For Muslims, gaining knowledge is a duty that benefits both this life and the hereafter.

The curriculum of religious schools has always been debated, even by those unfamiliar with the books. Why is that? When madrasa students step into practical life after 8 to 11 years, they face economic challenges. Their degree mainly qualifies them for roles as imams or preachers in mosques. For instance, if there are 100 students in a Hadith class, only 10 might be able to read Arabic text independently, and out of those, only 2 might speak Arabic fluently. This is similar to English schools where even teachers may struggle with proper English.

In 1937, during a conference in Aligarh, Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani emphasized the importance of this issue for religious institutions. The complaint is that good scholars are not being produced, but little attention is paid to the reasons. Scholars should be freed from poverty and made capable of earning their livelihood independently, giving them freedom and confidence.

In Pakistan, except for Jamia Tur

Rasheed in Karachi, which has modernized its curriculum and presented it akin to Oxford University, madrasa leadership remains hesitant to make decisions in this matter.

No one denies the importance of technical education. This education is not an obstacle in the way of religion and sects.

That's why Technical Education is crucial for a society's educational and economic stability, but sadly, in Pakistan, technical education gets less attention than general education, and even less in madrasas.

Recently recognizing the importance of technical education, a positive development has been announced recently. "Nizam-ul-Madaris Pakistan" has started offering 17 technical courses to madrasa students with the help of the Directorate of Religious Education and NAVTTC. These courses include IT, e-commerce, mobile phone repair, general electrician, digital marketing, Amazon, virtual assistant, and auto mechanics. Ghulam Qamar, the director, expressed satisfaction with

the successful launch of these courses and emphasized that the government wants madrasa students to be skilled and dignified citizens.

Dr. Mir Asif Akbar, the chief of Nizam-ul-Madaris Pakistan, mentioned that thousands of students in Lahore, Sheikhpura, and Nankana Sahib are benefiting from these courses. This trend of integrating technical education in madrasas will have significant positive outcomes. Courses like cooking and fashion designing should be included specifically for female students.

The future of madrasa students is a matter of concern for all thinkers and our religious leadership. If we do not provide opportunities for their progress and fulfill their worldly needs in a dignified manner, two outcomes are likely: either they will abandon their studies for other fields after a few years, or they will resort to unacceptable means to survive in the religious field, such as selling amulets or begging. If this issue is not addressed, the role of religious schools in societal reform will be greatly diminished. Therefore, madrasa students should be taught technical skills to become economically self-sufficient and serve Islam selflessly.

Israeli strikes on Yemen



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has responded to Israel's airstrikes on the Yemeni port city of Hudaydah, which reportedly killed at least six people and injured more than 80, by calling for all parties involved in the conflict to "exercise utmost restraint".

In a statement, the UN chief noted that Israel had claimed responsibility for the strikes, which took place on Saturday, as a response to previous attacks on Israel by the Houthis – formally known as Ansar Allah – a group which controls swathes of territory in Yemen, including Hudaydah.

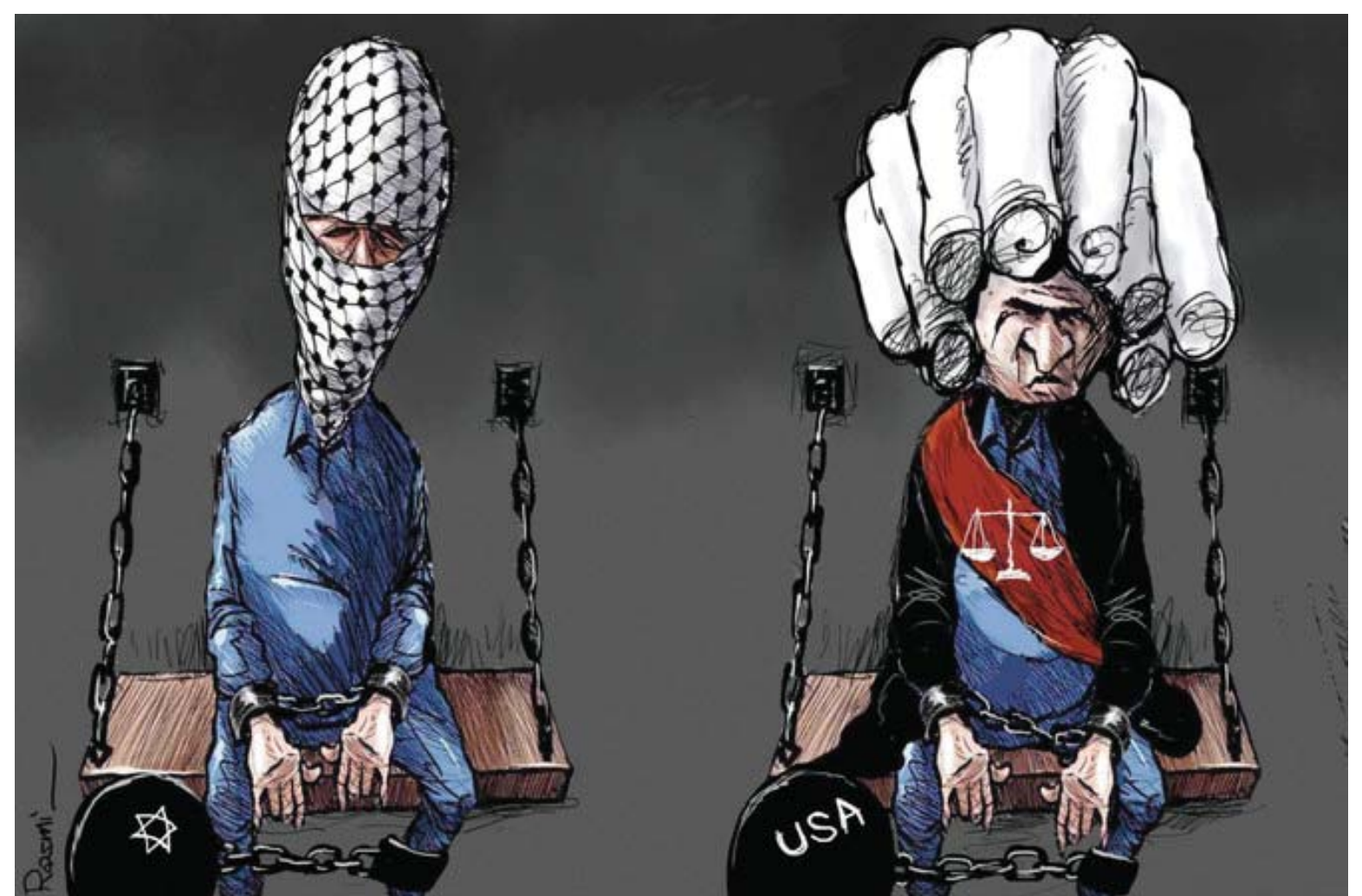
The strikes came after a drone attack on the Israeli city of Tel Aviv on Friday killed one person and wounded 10 more. The attack was claimed by the Houthis and led to a senior Israeli Government minister vowing to "settle the score". The Israelis strikes on Saturday hit electricity infrastructure and a refinery, creating a large fire.

Efforts to mediate between the Houthis and Yemeni government have stalled in recent months and, following the onset of the war in Gaza in October, the Houthis pledged to attack what they deemed to be pro-Israeli shipping interests along the Red Sea coast, as a demonstration of solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza.

In turn, a United States (US)-led coalition defending shipping in the Red Sea has continued to strike areas controlled by Houthis in Hudaydah, the capital Sana'a and Ta'iz.

The Houthis reportedly warned that the group's response to the Israeli airstrikes "will be huge" and that the group would continue to attack Israel and that there would be no "red lines".

The Yemeni conflict, which began in 2015, has been disastrous for the civilian population. The UN says the war has destroyed most sectors in Yemen, including healthcare, and caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Around half of the population, some 18.2 million people, are in need of some form of assistance.



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

Phone Calls Recording Matter - II

In the realm of national security, monitoring anti-state elements is a critical governmental responsibility aimed at safeguarding citizens, institutions, and territorial integrity.

These elements encompass a diverse range of actors—from terrorist groups and insurgent factions to cyber threat operatives and foreign influence campaigns—that pose significant threats to governance and stability.

Effective monitoring involves deploying advanced technologies, conducting intelligence operations, and employing strategic analysis to detect, deter, and mitigate threats before they can cause harm. Central to this effort is intelligence gathering through various methods. Human Intelligence (HUMINT) involves gathering information from human sources such as informants, agents, and defectors, providing valuable insights into the intentions, capabilities, and activities of anti-state groups. Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) entails intercepting and analyzing electronic communications like phone calls, emails, and internet traffic to uncover covert activities, networks, and communication patterns. Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) involves monitoring publicly available information from sources such as social media, news outlets, and public databases to gather intelligence on the activities and intentions of anti-state actors. Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) includes analyzing imagery and geospatial data obtained from satellites, drones, and other platforms to gather insights into the geographical aspects of anti-state activities. These intelligence disciplines collectively contribute to a comprehensive monitoring framework that enhances national security by providing early warnings, strategic insights, and actionable intelligence to preempt and mitigate threats posed by anti-state elements.

Various surveillance and monitoring technologies are employed for these purposes. Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) is used to monitor public spaces, borders, and critical infrastructure to detect suspicious activities and potential threats. Biometric Identification utilizes technologies such as

facial recognition and fingerprint scanning to identify individuals linked to anti-state activities. Social Media Monitoring analyzes social media platforms to detect radicalization trends, propaganda dissemination, and recruitment efforts by extremist groups. Cyber Surveillance monitors internet traffic, detects cyber attacks, and identifies digital footprints left by cyber threat actors targeting national interests. Financial Monitoring and Analysis includes the use of Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) to track financial transactions, money laundering activities, and illicit funding sources supporting anti-state elements. Sanctions Monitoring enforces economic sanctions against individuals, entities, or countries involved in financing anti-state activities. These technologies and methods collectively contribute to enhanced surveillance and monitoring capabilities aimed at safeguarding national security and countering threats posed by anti-state actors.

Community and human behavior analysis are integral components of security efforts. Community Engagement establishes trust and cooperation within local communities to gather information about potential threats and extremist activities. Behavioral Analysis utilizes psychological and behavioral profiling to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalization or recruitment by anti-state elements. International cooperation and information sharing play pivotal roles as well. Joint Operations and Task Forces collaborate with allied nations and international organizations to exchange intelligence, conduct joint operations, and coordinate responses to transnational threats. Information Exchange shares intelligence, analytical assessments, and threat indicators with partner countries to bolster collective security measures against anti-state elements.

In the field of national security, monitoring and intercepting phone communications of anti-state elements play a critical role in preempting threats, gathering intelligence, and safeguarding national interests. Governments worldwide operate within legal frameworks that define the parameters for

tracing and intercepting phone calls. These laws empower intelligence agencies and law enforcement to conduct surveillance activities aimed at protecting national security.

Tracing and tapping phone calls involve sophisticated technological capabilities and methodologies. Call Detail Records (CDRs) analyzes metadata such as phone numbers, call duration, and location data to discern patterns, networks, and connections among anti-state elements. Voice Interception utilizes specialized equipment and software to intercept and record phone conversations in real-time or retrospectively, providing insights into intentions, plans, and operational activities. Data Mining and Analysis employs data analytics and machine learning algorithms to sift through intercepted communications, identifying keywords, phrases, and suspicious behaviors indicative of anti-state activities. These techniques and processes are crucial for enhancing national security efforts by enabling early detection, thorough analysis, and effective response to potential threats posed by anti-state actors. Cross-platform surveillance integrates the interception of phone calls with monitoring of other communication channels like email, instant messaging, and social media to compile comprehensive intelligence profiles.

In the global campaign against threats posed by anti-state elements, numerous countries have instituted rigorous measures to trace and intercept phone calls as integral components of their national security strategies. These efforts are pivotal for gathering intelligence, preventing terrorist attacks, disrupting criminal networks, and safeguarding national interests.

The United States maintains robust legal frameworks and advanced technological capabilities to monitor and intercept communications of individuals and organizations considered threats to national security. Agencies such as the National Security Agency (NSA) operate under the authority granted by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), allowing them to obtain warrants for surveillance targeting foreign powers or their agents. Additionally, the USA PATRIOT Act has broadened the government's mandate to intercept communications in the context of counterterrorism operations.

To be continued

Freedom of Press

What if news was manipulated by an elite few, burying unpleasant realities and suppressing different opinions? What we see today is not much different from this dystopian situation. We are witnessing an outright contrast to the ideology that a free and transparent press stands as a central tenet to a thriving democracy and something must be done about it.

Democracies are run on institutions, formidably the ones who hold the power to determine between right and wrong. Which begs the question, how is a common man to be assured that the power in their possession is used responsibly. Yes, you guessed it, the press. It must be acknowledged that the press doesn't just report the news, it ignites conversation. When controversies and scandals surrounding powerful institutions hit the headlines, it sparks public debate. Hence, by bringing issues to the forefront, the press empowers citizens. They can now demand answers to the questions that had never been asked, and yes this does put many a powerful on the edge of their seats. This is not something new, in fact a while ago, prominent investigative journalist Naziha Syed Ali brought forward an investigation on certain real estate tycoons in Pakistan and how the government played a role in allowing the matter to be swept under the carpet. It's occasions like these where the crucial role of journalists in providing the truth to the people is emphasized.

There are so many brave jour-

nalists just like Ms. Naziha who are unfortunately not given the platform to be able to bring forward topics such as mentioned. Allegations made by the wrongdoers in question causes backlash for journalists, and more than often this allegation is of bribery, quite ironic. No one dares to

be a whistleblower anymore, not just for their sakes but for their families. The entire process, from witnessing wrongdoing to coming forward, is draining. The uncertainty of the outcome can take a toll on journalists, they are human after all. Even so, there are some dauntless humans out there, driven by a strong sense of right and wrong, who see an injustice that could harm their people and try everything in their power to see change.

An unsafe environment for journalists creates a vacuum for the people. When the people have no one to bring them answers, agitation and restlessness kicks in. And then you have what plagues countries, disunity, riots and loss. You lose the trust of people in their own officials. The country wounds up creating an enemy of itself. Nothing new to the sore eyes of the soils of this nation.

Change, however arduous it may be, is necessary. Freedom of press should not be a guarantee, it should be a right. Violence against journalists need not be ignored, and their voices need not be suppressed. Utmost support and respect is deserved for those who shed light on the truth. Let not the deaths of brave souls go in vain. Let us not be a nation shrouded in ignorance.



Analysis
Abdul Basit Alvi



Analysis
Qamar Abbas Jaffri

Brazilian Navy Chief called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Admiral Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes, Chief of Staff of the Brazilian Navy called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

Matters of bilateral interests including maritime security, emerging security environment and enhancement of security and defence cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting.

The visiting dignitary commended the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged the sacrifices of Pakistan and Pakistan Armed Forces in the war against terrorism.

Earlier, upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, a smartly turned-out tri-services contingent presented 'Guard of Honour' to the visiting dignitary.



PMYP delegation in Paris to explore educational, socio-cultural exchange opportunities



Spokesman Report

PARIS: A delegation coordinated by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme visited Pakistan Mission in Paris and held a productive interaction with Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad and members of Pakistani diaspora. The meeting aimed to explore opportunities for enhancing educational and socio-cultural exchange between Pakistan and France, according to a statement issued on Monday.

The delegation's visit to France and other countries is part of a broader initiative to expose Pakistani youth to opportunities and new trends for higher education, training and human development.

This effort seeks to empower young Pakistanis to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the country's growth and development.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan's state agencies ink landmark news cooperation

Spokesman Report

SHUSHA: The Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and Azerbaijan's state news agency (AZERTAC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Monday, paving the way for enhanced cooperation in news sharing and exchange.



The signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of the 2nd Shusha Global Media Forum in the city of Shusha, Azerbaijan, from July 20 to 23. The agreement was signed between Mudassar Iqbal, Deputy Director and Head of Diplomatic and Global Affairs on behalf of APP, and Mr. Vugar Aliyev, Chairman of the Board of AZERTAC.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan's state agencies ink landmark news cooperation. This agreement will allow the two countries to share news, photos, and videos, promoting greater collaboration and information exchange. It is a significant outcome of President Ilham Aliyev's recent visit to Pakistan, during which several agreements were signed.

This media partnership is expected to enhance bilateral ties and foster mutual understanding between the two nations.

According to the agreement, both organizations will expand their bilateral cooperation and exchange of experiences through professional visits by their executives, correspondents, and technical staff.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan's state agencies ink landmark news cooperation. The participants will make their best efforts to ensure that necessary professional assistance is provided to each other's resident correspondents or representatives in Azerbaijan and Pakistan.

Pakistan calls for immediate implementation of ICJ's advisory opinion on Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday welcomed the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Israel's unlawful policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and called for its immediate and full implementation.

It said the ruling clearly established that Israel's unlawful policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were in breach of Israel's obligation to respect the right of Palestinian people to self-determination.

"Israel is under an obligation to end its unlawful occupation; cease its illegal settlement activities; and to make reparation for the damage caused," it was asserted. The ICJ had ruled on the "Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem."

"It may be recalled that Pakistan had made a written submission to the ICJ on the case in July 2023, and later also shared a rejoinder with the Court. Pakistan also participated in the oral public hearing held by the ICJ on the case in February 2024. In its submissions to the ICJ, Pakistan reiterated its strong and unwavering support for the right to self-determination of the Palestinians and highlighted the illegality of the Israeli occupation," Foreign Office Spokesperson, said in a press statement.

The spokesperson further said that they hoped that the Court's ruling would be an important step towards ending the Israeli occupation, realization of the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination, and creation of a viable, secure, contiguous and sovereign State of Palestine on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

8th China South Asia Expo is to promote trade and mutual relations between Asian and European countries: Wang Liping

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In connection with the opening of the 8th China South Asia Exhibition in China, a conference organized by the Ministry of Commerce of China was held under the chairmanship of Wang Liping, Director General of the Exhibition. Founder Chairman of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas, Fahad Barlas Convener Exhibition also participated. In which a briefing was given about the 8th China South Asia Exhibition, delegations from around 80 countries will participate in this exhibition.

The exhibition will explore new opportunities and introduce new trends and emerging technologies to drive industry growth and identify potential investment



or collaboration opportunities. With such superior products, the fair will be an invaluable platform to launch new ventures, increase market access and stay ahead of the competition. The aim of the exhibition is to promote trade and mutual relations between Asian and European countries. China In this context, despite the global economic uncertainty, China's commitment to openness, innovation and development is continuously promoting opportunities and prosperity. At the end of the conference, founder chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry, Khurshid Barlas, Fahad Barlas, Convener Exhibition, met Wang Liping, Director General of Ministry of Commerce and discussed about enhancing bilateral relations and also presented the shield.

PSX Transitions to the Efficient & Convenient One-Share Marketable Lot

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) has successfully transitioned to a One-Share Lot system for investor transactions on the regular market, aligning with international best practices for stock market investments. Previously, the minimum marketable lot sizes for listed companies varied from 20, 50, 100, and 500 shares based on their prices. To enhance investor convenience and streamline stock market transactions, this change has been enacted. PSX as a frontline regulator is committed to add value to its customer experience and facilitate investors and stakeholders. The transition to the One-Share

Lot began on April 19, 2024, and was executed in multiple phases on a weekly basis, to ensure a smooth and efficient transition. The conversion was based on a comprehensive evaluation conducted by the Exchange.

The new lot size is expected to offer numerous benefits to investors, facilitating seamless, systematic, and efficient transactions in the capital market. Key advantages of the One-Share Lot include increased retail participation, as the smaller standard lot size makes high-priced stocks more affordable for retail investors, resulting in higher liquidity and improved trading volumes. Additionally, this change allows investors to build more balanced portfo-

lios, as those with limited capital can now afford a wider range of stocks. The new lot size also eliminates the need for investors to trade in odd lot markets at a discount, promoting accessibility. Furthermore, it simplifies operations for investors and securities brokers by removing the need to track multiple lot sizes, thus reducing administrative and operational burdens.

Mr. Farrukh H. Khan, MD & CEO of PSX, expressed his satisfaction with the transition, stating, "This is a significant step forward for Pakistan Stock Exchange, particularly benefiting small investors. The shift to a One-Share Lot aligns with international best practices and moves

PSX closer to global standards where trading units consist of one share per lot, enhancing market compatibility, competitiveness, and accessibility. From larger scale achievements like promoting ESG, bringing forth products like ETFs, PRIDE and investor education web-app like My Portfolio, to transaction level improvements such as One-Share Lot trading facility, PSX is right at the forefront to enhance and improve the customer experience. I thank the SECP for their support and congratulate all stakeholders and market participants, specially the small investors of the Stock Exchange for this beneficial development of One-Share Lot trading facility".

Bangladesh protests pause after top court scraps job quotas

Spokesman Report

DHAKA: Streets appeared calm in Bangladesh's capital on Monday a day after the Supreme Court agreed to scrap most government job quotas that had angered student-led activists and led to deadly protests.

Late on Sunday, protesters gave Bangladesh's government 48 hours to meet a string of new demands, including a public apology from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the violence, and the restoration of internet connections disrupted during the unrest.

But on Monday, most appeared to be obeying a curfew in cities that had seen regular demonstrations after a high court in June reinstated old quotas that reserved many state jobs for descendants of freedom fighters and other groups.

At least 147 people have died in

the violence, according to information from hospitals.

A public holiday declared over the last two days was extended to Tuesday, according to a government notification.

"Normalcy will return within one or two days," Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told reporters.

Experts have blamed the unrest on stagnant job growth in the private sector and high rates of youth unemployment that have made government jobs, with their regular wage hikes and other privileges, more attractive.

Hasina, 76, who was sworn in for a fourth consecutive term this year, has been accused of authoritarianism, human rights violations, and crackdowns on free speech and dissent in the past - charges her government denies.

The recent clashes followed similar violent protests ahead of January's national elections by

Hasina's opponents in response to what they called her authoritarian rule, and by garment workers demanding better pay amid high inflation.

On Monday, there were no reports of violence or protests across the country, officials said. Army tanks were seen stationed at several places in the streets of Dhaka, the capital, while armed security patrols directed the few motorists who ventured out.

The Supreme Court's Appellate Division on Sunday ruled in favour of an appeal from the government, overturned the lower court's decision and scrapped most of the quotas, directing that 93% of government jobs should be open to candidates on merit.

Hours after that ruling, the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement issued a statement demanding the government

reopen campuses and end restrictions imposed as protests raged.

It also called for the resignation of some ministers and university officials and the dismissal of police officers deployed in the areas where students were killed.

"We are giving an ultimatum to the government to fulfil our eight-point demand within 48 hours," one of the Movement's leaders, Hasnat Abdullah, told reporters.

He did not say what would happen if the government did not meet the demands. The government did not immediately comment.

Thousands were injured in last week's protests as security forces fired tear gas, rubber bullets and sound grenades to scatter the demonstrators.

Protesters said some of their leaders were detained, including Nahid Islam, who told the media



he was picked up by "20-30 people" claiming to be police early Sunday morning and taken to a room where he said he was tortured until he lost consciousness.

"When I regained conscious-

ness I found myself lying on the streets," he said.

Bangladesh's \$416 billion economy had been one of the fastest-growing in the world for years, but has faced struggles after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Costly energy imports following the war in Ukraine shrank its dollar reserves, which fanned inflation and pushed the government to seek a bailout from the International Monetary Fund.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
78,539.18	80,117.89	
Day's High	Day's Low	
80,085.63	78,404.76	
Index Value	Change	
12,978,214,618	-1578.71	
Percentage	Time	
-1.97%	22 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
8,198.78	+43.06	
Percentage	Time	
+0.53%	19 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
40,398.77	+111.24	
Percentage	Time	
+0.28%	22 Jul, 1:22 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
39,599.00	-464.79	
Percentage	Time	
-1.16%	22 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184.7	186.5
Bahrain Dinar	741.15	749.15
Canadian Dollar	203.65	205.65
China Yuan	38.35	38.75
Danish Krone	40.05	40.45
Euro	301.35	303.45
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	73.6	74.32
Singapore Dollar	202.15	204.15
Swedish Korona	26.4	26.7
Swiss Franc	309.05	311.55
Thai Bhat	7.5	7.65
U.A.E Dirham	76.4	77.15
UK Pound Sterling	354.5	358.35
US Dollar	279.25	280.7

Rebalancing contracts should begin with Chinese IPPs: Mian Zahid Hussain

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that IPPs are playing a major role in the destruction of the country's economy.

He suggested stopping the establishment of new IPPs and giving state-owned IPPs standard rates for supply or electricity.

Mian Zahid Hussain stated that we should start with the power plants of our friendly country, China, in order to balance the agreements with IPPs.

The veteran business leader told the business

community that we should stop building new IPPs of all kinds because only those in power need them.

He warned that the country will go bankrupt if the private sector does not stop building new power plants.

Mian Zahid Hussain stated that different IPPS have received payments ranging from Rs 750 to Rs 350 per unit, which is unacceptable.

Setting up IPPs is not a business; it is profiteering and robbery. We need to explain to the public why we are purchasing electricity worth billions from various IPPs and paying trillions of rupees to some IPPs without generating a single unit.

According to Mian Zahid Hussain, IPPs receive payment in the form of capacity charges without producing any electricity. Why are



agreements with IPPs kept secret if they are

transparent and beneficial to the country and nation?

He demanded that we expose all IPP owners and recover looted wealth from white-collar robbers.

Mian Zahid Hussain asserted that the sale of 10 rupee units of electricity for 60 rupees is ruining 24 crore people, enough to feed 40 families. Electricity bills are wiping out the middle class, a clear indication of the authorities' mismanagement.

Mian Zahid Hussain added that comparing IPP contracts in Pakistan to those in other countries during the same period can highlight corruption in these contracts.

Without unity, the people will have no choice but to suffer, and the country will go bankrupt, he warned.

Protest

LAHORE: Employees of agricultural water management shouting slogans during protest in favor of their demands in front of press club in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Spokesman

President SAI demands rationalization of power tariff

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Muhammad Kamran Arbi, President of SITE Association of Industry, has demanded the government to seriously look into the matter of exorbitant electricity tariff for all categories of consumers, particularly export and general industries tariff and rationalize the same taking into consideration the actual cost of per unit production.

In a statement, SAI President said that there is much unrest amongst the business community due to very high electricity bills. The high energy tariff is fast making industries - export oriented, and otherwise - uncompetitive in the international markets where Pakistan's competitors particularly Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Vietnam & Egypt have an edge over us.

"Pakistan simply has no competitive edge on any country, and it is positioned



at the bottom where prices of industrial energy input are concerned. Industrial production requires energy security (particularly electricity, gas and water) with utilities being competitively priced, of good quality and having consistent supply."

Mr. Arbi termed the current situation as 'alarming' and stated that it calls for immediate intervention from the government which is a must to keep the wheels of industry moving to ensure that the labor force remains gainfully employed, and the country does not lose on export orders in the international market.

PYMA warns IPP capacity charges threaten industry shutdown

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sheikh Khalil Qaiser, Chairman of the Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association (PYMA), along with Senior Vice Chairman Sohail Nisar, Vice Chairman Jaweed Khanani, and members of the Executive Committee, have urged the government to reconsider contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) in the interest of the economy. They called for the cancellation of these contracts, expressing concerns that high electricity and gas rates could devastate the textile industry and severely impact exports.

PYMA officials emphasized that the textile sector is already grappling with unsustainable costs due to elevated energy tariffs. They warned that additional capacity charges imposed by IPPs could force many industries to cease operations.

"The government claims to prioritize economic stability and national development, yet such policies jeopardize industrial operations," PYMA officials

stated in their appeal to the government.

Criticizing government payments to IPPs, they highlighted instances where IPPs have received substantial payments despite minimal electricity generation, questioning the transparency of governance. They noted that current contracts obligate the government to purchase electricity at 750 rupees per unit from certain IPPs, urging transparency and accountability in these dealings to alleviate concerns within the business community.

"The burgeoning capacity charges imposed by IPPs have rendered electricity rates unaffordable. Without intervention, industrial closures loom ahead," PYMA officials added.

PYMA office-bearers urged the government to intervene swiftly to reduce production costs, sustain industrial operations, and bolster exports. They stressed the need to lower electricity and gas rates by revisiting contracts with IPPs to ensure uninterrupted industrial activity and foster economic growth.

Company Benches constituted in High Court of Sindh

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court of Sindh, Mr. Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui, has constituted two Company Benches on the Original Side at the Principal Seat Karachi of High Court of Sindh.

These benches are comprised of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Muhammad Faisal Kamal Alam and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Adnan Iqbal Chaudhry. The Hon'ble Judges bring with them vast experience in commercial and regulatory disputes and have delivered numerous landmark judgments that have significantly influenced the legal landscape.

The establishment of these separate Company Benches at the High Court of Sindh marks a significant step towards early resolution of cases pertaining to company matters and regulatory affairs.

It is noteworthy that the Hon'ble Lahore High Court, Hon'ble Islamabad High Court, Hon'ble Peshawar High Court, and Hon'ble High Court of Balochistan have already constituted separate Company Benches.

The Hon'ble Chief Justices of the respective High Courts are mandated under Sub Section (4) of Section 5 of the Companies Act, 2017 to constitute one or more Company Benches, having exclusive original jurisdiction to adjudicate matters relating to companies and regulatory affairs.

foodpanda partners with Dvago to expand health solutions



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: foodpanda recently signed a partnership agreement with Dvago, the largest network of Health & Wellness solutions in Pakistan. This collaboration brings Dvago's extensive range of products to foodpanda Shops, making it easier than ever for customers to access essential items from the comfort of their homes. With 7 branches already onboard and many more coming soon, Dvago's presence on foodpanda Shops ensures that

costumes across Pakistan can conveniently shop for their health needs online.

Muntaqa Peracha, CEO of foodpanda commented on the occasion, "By bringing Dvago's trusted solutions to our platform, we are making it more convenient for our customers to take care of their health and wellness needs. Our goal, with this collaboration, is to offer a convenient, reliable, and efficient online shopping experience every time, and we look forward to this exciting journey."

CAT dismisses Neucon Pakistan's appeal upholding CCP's decision in fraudulent use of trademark case

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has dismissed the appeal filed by Neucon Pakistan, affirming the decision of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) regarding fraudulent use of trademark and labelling and packaging.

The CCP issued a Show Cause Notice to Neucon Pakistan after receiving a formal complaint from Ferozsons Laboratories Limited, the authorized distributor of Biofreeze Gel and Spray in Pakistan, a product originally developed by USA-based Performance Health Inc. Ferozsons alleged that Neucon was marketing a deceptively similar product under the name 'BYQFREEZ', mimicking the trademark, packaging, and labeling of Biofreeze. Following a comprehensive inquiry, the CCP confirmed that Performance Health Inc. is the rightful owner of the Biofreeze trademark and that Ferozsons was the only registered distributor in Pakistan.

5th DIGIBAP Summit 2024

Stakeholders urged to collaborate for enhancing digital supply chain finance

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Top representatives from the banking and fintech sectors along with state regulators gathered to discuss ways and suggest implementable solutions to digital based financing for supply chains for small and medium enterprises and the agriculture sectors at the 5th DigiBAP Summit 2024 on Monday at a local hotel. The summit featured panel discussions and presentations by leading bank presidents and CEOs as well as senior executives on issues such as Financing the Future, Digital SME Lending, Strategies for Digital Supply Chain Financing, and Future of

Digital Lending. Speaking as chief guest at the 5th DigiBAP Summit 2024, Deputy Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Saleem Ullah said that ease in access to finance for the SME sector is the priority area for the government and all banks need to create the requisite infrastructure and systems to extending digital financing solutions for supply chains of SMEs. He lamented that currently less than 5% commercial funding is extended to the crucial SME sector. The summit was organized and hosted by Terrabiz in collaboration with Dukan. SBP's 5-year strategic plan calls for doubling the size of credit to

SMEs to Rs. 1,100 billion and increasing the borrowers 150,000 small businesses. For this we need to accept SMEs as a profitable business segment. Saleem Ullah asked banks to develop their working plans for this end and share those plans with SBP. SME along with Agriculture and IT remain priority sectors and the PBA has made task forces on this. These sectors require concrete measures on real commercial lines and not just lip service or subsidies. The Deputy Governor also said that banks need to properly leverage technology to meet targets, reduce bank costs, and increase access. We have global

examples for this including some in Pakistan as well. Chairman Pakistan Banks' Association Zafar Masud, said increasing digital adoption is dismantling barriers to financial inclusion in Pakistan, engaging people in the formal financial system, aiding in the drive of economic growth, and posing an opportunity for Digital Supply Chain Finance (or DSCF) to streamline and enhance financial transactions within supply chains and offer substantial benefits to SMEs. He mentioned that the banking regulator mandated banks to develop and implement DSCF solutions within six months to address the need to increase



SMEs' access to finance and digitize payments. In this regard, partnerships between banks, fintechs, and other technology providers can expedite the rollout of digital SCF offerings, making them accessible to SMEs relatively quickly. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb also mandated the Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA) to work with SBP on enhancing financial inclusion in agriculture and SMEs, particularly in the area of technology and leveraging existing digital platforms, he added.

Aamir Aftab, Chief Product Officer at JazzCash, said, "Pakistan is home to approximately 3 million small, and medium enterprises (SMEs), and JazzCash aims to digitise its transactions. The platform processes over 100,000 loans daily, providing a crucial financial tool for MSMEs, which are the backbone of Pakistan's economy but have historically had limited access to formal financial sources," said Aamir Aftab.

Mehran, Dahani bowl Pakistan Shaheens to win against Bangladesh A

DARWIN, JUL 22 (APP): Pakistan Shaheens bagged a hard-fought 148-run win over Bangladesh A in the last hour of play on day four of the first four-day match at the DXC Arena in Darwin on Monday.

Shaheens took all 10 Bangladesh wickets in 79.2 overs on day four with Mehran Mumtaz and Shahnavaz Dahani sharing seven among them.

Requiring 408 runs to win or to bat out the day to save the game, Bangladesh A's opening batters started the day by bringing up fifty-run partnership, continuing from the overnight score of 20-0.

Dahani struck to remove Shadman Islam (26, 65b, 4x4s) in the 22nd over.

Shaheens' bowling attack toiled for another 21.1 overs when Mehran eked out the vital scalp of Parvez Hossain Emon, who had faced 138 balls for his



57 runs hitting six fours and two sixes. Mehran soon trapped Aich Mollah, for a paltry four, in the 50th over.

For the next 12.2 overs Amite Hasan (71, 102b, 14x4s) and Shahadat Hossain put on 57 runs ringing the alarm bells for

Shaheens. Dahani made much needed inroads in the Bangladesh A batting by removing well-set Amite in the 63rd over and Ariful

Islam (4, 5b, 1x4) in the 65th over with a little over two hours' time left in the day.

With Shaheens five wickets away from triumph, Mehran Mumtaz landed a double blow in 71st over to end Shahadat's (42, 62b, 7x4s) rearguard effort and removed Hasan Murad for a five-ball duck leaving Bangladesh A 221-7.

It took Shaheens 15.2 more overs to remove the remaining three batters as Ripon Mondol resisted with an unbeaten 43 off 30 balls hitting seven fours and Mahidul Islam chipped in with a 66-ball 15 with Bangladesh A scoring 279 all out in 86.2 overs. Mehran and Dahani collected figures of 4-84 and 3-57, respectively. Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad and Mohammad Ali picked up one wicket each. The second four-day match will start on Friday, July 26 at the same venue.

England Cricket open to IPL investment in The Hundred

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chief executive Richard Gould confirmed on Monday they have held talks with Indian Premier League (IPL) owners about acquiring a stake in their domestic The Hundred competition.

The fourth edition of The Hundred, which features eight specially created teams — each with a men's and women's side — rather than the traditional 18 first-class English counties, starts on Tuesday.

Its future remains uncertain, with the ECB looking to secure private investment in a bid to cement its position in the global calendar and boost the finances of the domestic game.

The ECB are trying to balance a desire for a cash injection while retaining control of the Hundred by selling off a 49 per cent stake in each team to private investors, with host teams retaining the remaining 51 per cent of shares.



But the hosts could sell part or all of their shares.

"Control comes at different levels, it comes at team level and it comes at competition level — that's not something we are ceding control of," ECB chief executive Richard Gould told reporters during a conference call.

"Different investor groups have different needs, for some it is about control of what happens on the field, for others it's the commercial element.

"You're right about the strength of the Indian market — it represents probably 90 per cent of the revenues coming into the ICC (International Cricket Council)

and we have seen the proliferation of IPL teams moving outside of their home market into other national markets. I think that's to be welcomed," he added.

The cash-rich T20 IPL, a multi-million dollars spectacle underpinned by the mass enthusiasm for cricket in India, the world's most populous nation, has changed the sport's global landscape, with players no longer needing to go through the grind of five-day international Test matches in order to enjoy lucrative careers.

There is a view that IPL owners, such as the billionaire Ambani family who are in charge of the Mumbai Indians, would only be interested in full control of The Hundred team.

"There is certainly the opportunity for people to have potentially 100 per cent ownership," said Gould.

"It depends on the capabilities they can bring both in terms of finance and operation delivery."

The ECB's director of business operations Vikram Banerjee said while he

had spoken to IPL owners about the Hundred, he was also open to offers from American Football's NFL.

"I've now met and spoken to, a number of times, all the IPL owners and WPL (Women's Premier League) owners that don't overlap and there is interest there, from what they've told me, which is fantastic and lends into a very exciting process," Banerjee said.

"I would really hope we have a level of partnerships with some IPL teams, I think that would be brilliant. They have done a great job and know cricket very well."

He added: "At the same time, we've just sent out a document and video to some NFL owners that explains what cricket is and what the rules are.

"In terms of fan engagement, how they can build stadia experience and bring in the next generation, those guys are amazing.

"So, we can bring that blend together, which I think is what we hope to do and that can work really well."

Historic Britain's cricket clubs ban players from hitting sixes

A Sports

LAHORE: Southwick and Shoreham Cricket Club, one of the oldest cricket clubs in the world, have imposed a ban on the players from hitting sixes.

According to a report by Daily Mail, the decision was taken in the wake of a series of complaints from the neighbours, who claim that their house windows, cars, sheds and even people have been in the wrath of big hitters at Southwick and Shoreham Cricket Club, formed in 1790 near Brighton.

Consequently, the clubs have altered the rules of the game where the first six will be counted as no runs while if a batter hits another one during an innings on the Green, he will be adjudged out.

One of the club batters heavily criticised the newly introduced rule and termed it "ridiculous".

"Hitting the bowler for a six out is part of the glory of the sport. How can you



ban it? It's ridiculous.

"To take that away removes the joy of it. I don't agree that the rules should be tinkered with in this fashion."

Another batter said: "Everything

is about health and safety these days and insurance companies are charging a fortune to indemnify sports clubs against accidental damage or injury to bystanders.

"If you buy a house next to a cricket ground then you've got to expect a few cricket balls in your garden."

The West Sussex club was founded during George III's reign. The residential dwellings encircle the ground, which has brief boundaries. The club has installed nets, but the surrounding trees limit the heights.

The prohibition was supported by Mary Gill, 80, whose family has resided besides the Green in a Grade II-listed cottage for generations.

"I've lived here all my life and I think the ban is a good thing.

"It's a very small ground and can't accommodate the testosterone-fuelled young men who come along and just want to hit the ball as far as they can.

"My parents and grandparents lived in this house before me and cricket balls were always sailing over and causing damage. Over the years we've had tiles smashed off the roof, windows broken and all sorts."

Pakistan's Arslan Ash becomes five-time EVO Tekken champion



A Sports

LAS VEGAS: Pakistan's E-sports star Arslan Ash added another feather to his cap by winning his fifth EVO Tekken 8 title for the fifth time, defeating compatriot Atif Butt in the Grand Finals here.

Arslan emerged victorious 3-1 in the winner's final following which Atif locked horns with Japan's Nobi in the loser's final and outclassed the latter to 3-0 to set up the Grand Final with the star Pakistan gamer.

Atif started the thrilling Grand Final on a high as he won the first game but Arslan equalised.

Atif then switched to FENG and tied the score at 2-2. In the final round, however, Atif Butt appeared favourite but Arslan Ash landed a perfect hit to clinch his fifth EVO title.

"I've done it again, Alhamdulillah, 5th EVO title in the bag, but definitely not my last," Arslan posted on X, formerly Twitter. "This win is for Pakistan and everyone out there pushing boundaries! Onward and upward! And to my critics, I've still got it, baby! And I'm not done yet," he added.

Meanwhile, Atif Butt showcased sportsman spirit by terming Arslan Ash a deserving winner but shared that he was not satisfied with his performance.

"First of all, I would like to thank all of my supporters. As a professional player, I always wanted to win an EVO. It's a dream title of any player. I have tried hardest to win it, but failed & got the (2nd position)," wrote Butt.

"I'm not really happy with my performance. Still, I'm thankful to Allah for showering a lot of blessings on me. I will work tirelessly to present Pakistan at the highest level. In Sha Allah, he added.

"[Arslan Ash] you have given me a tough time in grand finals. You really deserve to win the tournament. I heartedly congratulate you on your 5x EVO title. It's again the victory of Pakistan Tekken. It's just a beginning. In Sha Allah," Atif Butt concluded.

India's chief selector breaks silence on Ravindra Jadeja's future in ODIs



India chief selector Ajit Agarkar dismissed the speculations that all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was dropped for the upcoming three-match away ODI series against Sri Lanka.

Agarkar's clarification came in the wake of a report from the Hindustan Times that claimed that Jadeja is no longer part of the team's plans for the ODIs.

Days ago, India named a full-fledged squad for their upcoming three-match away ODI series against Sri Lanka with Jadeja a notable exclusion.

According to a source in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the national men's team's selectors, led by newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir, want to provide ample opportunities to Axar Patel and Washington Sundar ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, scheduled to take place in Pakistan.

"There are only six ODIs, including the three in Sri Lanka, before next year's Champions Trophy. The selectors want to utilise the handful of games by giving more opportunities to Axar Patel and Washington Sundar," Hindustan Times quoted a BCCI source.

Meanwhile, Ajit Agarkar clarified that Ravindra Jadeja was rested, not dropped from the ODI squad. He then went on to term the all-rounder's exclusion a strategic move, made in light of a busy Test season. "It would have been really pointless to take both Axar and Jaddu for a three-match series," Agarkar said.

"He has had a terrific World Cup. Not at all dropped. Either of them wouldn't have featured in games had we taken him. There's a big test season coming up. I think probably we should have clarified it when the squad was announced. He is still part of the format. He is a very important player for us," he added.

Notably, Jadeja boasts a formidable all-round record in ODIs, scoring 644 runs at an average of 40 and a strike rate of 84 since India's gut-wrenching defeat against New Zealand in the ICC Men's World Cup 2019.

Global winners of ICC Development Awards announced

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday, July 17th, revealed the global winners in the ICC Development Awards 2023, with six emerging nations honoured for a range of groundbreaking initiatives and outstanding performances during the last calendar year.

Launched in 2002, the ICC Development Awards casts light on the world-leading work being carried out in ICC Associate Member countries to grow the game globally, whether through innovative development programmes or through inspiring efforts on the field of play.

Mexico Cricket Association were awarded the ICC Development Initiative of the Year prize

for pioneering projects which included sending a team to the Street Child Cricket World Cup in India, and for their unique Cricket in Prisons programme, in which they deliver cricket sessions in prisons across Mexico City to enhance the rehabilitation and transformation of the lives of inmates.

Oman Cricket claimed the 100% Cricket Female Cricket Initiative of the Year for the Cricket4Her programme, which provides unique participation opportunities for women and girls and a valuable pathway through to competitive cricket.

The ICC Associate Member Men's Performance of the Year prize was awarded to the Netherlands for their heroic efforts in qualifying and competing at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India, while the UAE won the

Associate Member Women's Performance of the Year award after an impressive unbeaten spell which saw them triumph at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 Asia Qualifier in Malaysia.

Rounding off the winners were the Cricket Association of Nepal, who clinched the ICC Digital Fan Engagement of the Year following substantial growth on their social channels, and Cricket Scotland, who were victorious in the Cricket 4 Good Social Impact Initiative of the Year category, honouring their groundbreaking partnership with Breaking Boundaries, a local Scottish charity, to transform the lives of young, disadvantaged and underrepresented people in the country.

This year's winners were identified from a long list of regional awardees announced back in

April, and were determined by an esteemed panel comprising ICC Full Member executives, former international cricketers, and ICC global partners.

ICC General Manager – Development, William Glenwright: "The ICC Development Awards has a long-standing history of recognising the groundbreaking work being done by ICC Members to grow the game in emerging nations.

"Each year this project highlights some inspiring and remarkable stories and this year is no exception, with passion and innovation at the forefront of these successful initiatives. As well as delivering on the objectives outlined in the ICC's Global Strategy, it is always heartening to be reminded that our sport has the power to drive positive social change, and these projects



are testament to that. It's a time for us to reflect on the contribution of so many – particularly the volunteers – who are working so hard to make cricket more accessible to millions around the world.

"We are delighted to unveil the

list of 2023 global winners, and alongside the regional winners announced earlier in the year, we wish to congratulate everyone on their success. We look forward to seeing these programmes continue to flourish in 2024 and beyond."

The ICC Development Awards Panel:

Diana Puketapu-Lyndon (Chair of New Zealand Cricket), Julia Price (ICC Master Educator), Leshia Hawkins (Managing Director, Recreation Game at England and Wales Cricket Board), Sarah Fane (Director at MCC Foundation), Johnny Grave (CEO of Cricket West Indies), Shakera Selman (former West Indies international cricketer), Pholetsi Moseki (CEO of Cricket South Africa), Ed Rainsford (former Zimbabwe international cricketer and broadcaster), Mirwaiz Ashraf (CEO at Afghanistan Cricket Board), Mona Parthasarathi (Press Trust of India), Cynthia McCaffrey (UNICEF India Representative) and Arnab Roy (VP and Head of Marketing at Coca Cola India and South-West Asia).

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari chairing a meeting on saving Karachi from urban flooding, environmental degradation and promoting sustainable water resource development, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Monday.



Photo: PID

President for comprehensive plan to prevent urban flooding in Karachi

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday directed the Sindh government to prioritize a comprehensive plan to prevent urban flooding in Karachi by adopting a sustainable, long-term strategy based on international best practices for managing sewage and stormwater.

The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting on saving Karachi from urban flooding and environmental degradation and promoting sustainable water resource development, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The President was given a comprehensive presentation by international water and

sewage management experts and proposed various solutions to address the challenges of urban flooding and sewage in Karachi on the pattern of the tunnel sewer systems of Washington DC, the London Super Sewer Project, and the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System of Singapore.

Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, Adjutant General Lt General Muhammad Asim Malik, Minister for Local Government Department of Sindh, Saeed Ghani, Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murazza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, Syed Salahuddin,

Country Head Herrenknecht Pakistan, Col (r) Danyal Naveed Ahmed, senior government officials, and local and international water management experts attended the meeting.

During the briefing, it was proposed that a network of small and large sewer tunnels under existing roads in high-flood zones of Karachi may be developed. It was highlighted that underground tunnelling using modern techniques would not disturb the public, city traffic and land ownership.

The experts informed that Karachi generated almost 450 million gallons per day (MGD) of sewage. They added that sewage and stormwater

were collected in small and large open drains which fell into the Lyari and Malir rivers and were released untreated into the sea, polluting the marine ecosystem.

It was further informed that the existing network of drains had limited capacity and absorbed around 50% of the rainwater under normal circumstances. The meeting was told that excess water was not absorbed by the system, causing urban flooding.

Speaking on the occasion, the President underlined the need for completing the feasibility study to control flooding in Karachi through tunnelling options within three months. He stated that Karachi and its coastal areas need to be made

clean and brought at par with other Metropolitan cities of the world.

He said that since the proposed project would have significant environmental impacts, therefore, Government of Sindh should approach international donors to seek environmental financing for the project.

He said that the construction of the wastewater treatment system would also help supply treated water to Balochistan for agriculture, besides promoting the fisheries sector.

The President remarked that the city of Hyderabad was also facing urban flooding and sewage issues that also needed to be addressed on priority.

PTI ban: PM Sharif 'summons' Federal Cabinet meeting tomorrow

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has convened a meeting of the federal cabinet today (Tuesday), to give a nod to ban PTI, citing sources,

According to details, the federal cabinet meeting will focus on discussing the current political situation in the country.

One of the key issues on the agenda is the potential approval of a ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Additionally, the cabinet is expected to approve proceedings under Article 6 against former president of Pakistan, Arif Alvi, PTI founder Imran Khan, and former NA deputy speaker Qasim Suri, sources reveal.

Earlier, Information Minister Atta Tarar said there are credible pieces of evidence to support a ban on the PTI and cited the party's involvement in foreign funding, the May 9 incident, its role in the resettlement of terrorists in Pakistan, the cipher episode, and the resolution passed in the United States.

Addressing a presser, Atta Tarar said that Article 17 of the constitution empowers the federal government to ban a political party.

He stated that a reference under Article 6 will also be filed against former President Arif Alvi, former Prime Minister Imran Khan, and former Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri for violating the constitution when the assemblies were dissolved following the no-confidence motion against the then prime minister.

Digital transformation vital for country's uplift: Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that steps are on for digitalization in the country.

She said Ministry of IT and Telecommunication is working for fulfilling Digital Pakistan Vision, as economy, governance and society are being digitalised.

She was addressing the launching ceremony of "Country Digital Ecosystem Diagnostic Report" here on Monday. The event was organised by Sustainable Development Policy Institute in collaboration with the

Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Shaza Fatima said that Digital transformation is vital for the development of country. Digital Pakistan Policy is paving way for taking Digital transformation to the next level.

She said digital inclusion is our priority, adding that government is committed for ending the digital divide between rural and urban areas of the country. She said that it is through digital technologies that country can progress. Initiatives are being taken for digital innovation and infrastructure development in the country, she said.

Federal Minister Finance chaired the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb presided over a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCoSOEs) at Finance Division today.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Housing & Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Minister for Maritime Affairs Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, Minister for Commerce Mr. Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Law & Justice Mr. Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Economic Affairs Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Governor SBP, Chairman SECP, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers of the relevant ministries.

The Committee considered the summaries presented by different



Ministries/Divisions for the categorization of their relevant State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) as strategic/essential or otherwise.

The Cabinet Committee after detailed discussion decided that National Insurance Company Limited

(NICL), State Life Insurance Company Limited (SLICL) and Pakistan Re-Insurance Company Limited (PRCL) did not meet the criteria of strategic or essential SOEs and would not be categorized as essential for the public sector. The Ministry of Commerce

was further directed to explore Public Private Partnership model for the Pak Expo Company.

The committee considered the summary presented by the Ministry of Science & Technology and approved to rename and restructure STEDEC into Indigenous Research and Development Agency (Pvt) Limited (IRADA). It was further directed to constitute its board and operationalize the entity by December 2024. The CCoSOEs approved the proposals of Aviation Division and Ministry of Communications for the appointment of candidates as Independent Directors on the Boards of PIA Holding Company Board, Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB) and Postal Life Insurance Company Limited (PLICL). The committee directed M/o Communications to present proposals for categorization of these entities at the earliest.

PM Shehbaz condemns Israeli attack on Khan Younis, calls it inhumane act

ISLAMABAD, JUL 22 (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday vehemently condemned the Israeli forces' violent attack on Khan Younis in Gaza, describing it as an inhumane act, particularly following the evacuation of refugees.

The prime minister, in a statement issued by PM Office, described the aggressive attack on the Khan Younis area of Gaza shortly after the instructions to the unarmed Palestinian refugees to evacuate as a mockery of humanity according to.

The PM stated that it had become clear that the Israeli forces had been pursuing a genocidal agenda against Palestinians, noting that unarmed Palestinians had been denied the opportunity to evacuate.

Pak Kuwait Trade to Boost: Abdul Aleem Khan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan and Ambassador of Kuwait to Pakistan Abdul Rehman J. Al-Mutiari held a meeting in which it was agreed to further promote friendly and bilateral trade relations between the two countries by moving forward in a more integrated manner.

Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan discussed various proposals regarding the promotion of trade activities from Kuwait and expressed his willingness to cooperate for various projects on the basis of "Business to Business" and "Government to Government" mode of working. Abdul Aleem Khan said that he wants progress for investment from Kuwait to Pakistan for which substantial results can be obtained, especially from the private sector.



Ambassador of Kuwait to Pakistan, Abdul Rehman J. Al-Mutiari assured the Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan that his Government will provide all possible support in the strengthening of Pakistan's economy and completion of projects of mutual cooperation. He added that relations with Pakistan are more important for Kuwait and In Sha Allah in the coming days we will bring all the bilateral agreements to an ultimate end. Abdul Rahman J. Al-Mutiari further said that he is keen to further strengthen the brotherly relations with Pakistan and those contracts signed in

the recent past by Kuwaiti Institutions will be finalized in time. In the meeting, various matters of mutual interest were discussed between Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan and Ambassador of Kuwait Abdul Rehman J. Al-Mutiari. Ambassador of Kuwait Abdul Rehman J. Al-Mutiari while appreciating Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan's recent visit to Kuwait said that his presence in Kuwait helped to more development of bilateral relations between Kuwait and Pakistan and promotion of mutual trade which will continue in the coming days, as well.

Brazilian Chief of Staff Visits NHQ



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Brazilian Chief of Staff Admiral Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad and called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf.

Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the visiting dignitary was received by Chief of the Naval Staff. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Navy also presented Guard of Honour. Brazilian Chief of Staff laid floral wreath at Shuhada Monument and afterwards was introduced to Principal Staff Officers of Naval Headquarters.

Later, Admiral Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes called on Chief of the Naval Staff in his office. Both the dignitaries

discussed matters of mutual interests, regional maritime security environment and bilateral naval collaboration. Various avenues of cooperation including training, exchange of visits and conduct of bilateral naval exercises between the two navies were also focused. The Naval Chief highlighted Pakistan Navy's initiative of Regional Maritime Security Patrols to ensure maritime security and peace in the region. The visiting dignitary acknowledged Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitments in support of collaborative maritime security in the region.

The recent visit of Brazilian Chief of Staff will further augment and expand defence ties between the two brotherly countries in general and the defence forces in particular.

National Commission on the Status of Women Launches 'Pathway To Equality' Training Program

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) has launched its flagship training program, "Pathway to Equality," aimed at promoting gender equality, child rights, and women's empowerment across Pakistan.

Chairperson NCSW, Nilofar Bakhtiar, expressed hope that the program will lead to empowered women across all sections of federal and provincial ministries, and that media fellows will play a crucial role in monitoring the implementation of policies and laws for women's equality and empowerment.