

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
کہا ہم سے شام نے ان سے ان کے والد  
نے اور ان سے معاشرے نے بیان کیا کہ میں نبی  
کریم ﷺ کے یہاں لڑکیوں کے ساتھ  
کھینچتی تھی، میری بہت سی سہیلیاں تھیں جو  
میرے ساتھ کھیا کرتی تھیں، جب نبی کریم  
ﷺ انہیں نظر فرمایا تو وہ رو پڑیں اور  
پھر نبی کریم ﷺ انہیں میرے پاس بھیجے  
اور وہ میرے ساتھ کھیتیں۔  
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6130)  
Barkat Rice Mills  
(Pvt) Limited



## Govt. will not yield to PTI's trolling tactics: Ahsan Iqbal

Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said on Tuesday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was using trolling as a weapon to intimidate individuals and institutions. While talking to a private news channel, he said that spreading false and baseless narrative against anyone who opposed them was the norm for PTI. (Details on Page 8)



## China FM says Palestinian factions agree to set up reconciliation government

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday hailed an agreement by 14 Palestinian factions to set up an "interim national reconciliation government" to govern Gaza after the war. Palestinian factions including Hamas and Fatah met in Beijing this week in a renewed bid for reconciliation. As the meeting wrapped up on Tuesday, China's top diplomat said the groups had committed to "reconciliation". (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

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## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of National Export Development Board (NEDB) on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## PM welcomes Beijing Declaration for Palestinian interim Government

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has welcomed the Beijing Declaration, which involves an agreement among prominent Palestinian groups to unify and create an interim unity government.

The prime minister specifically praised the People's Republic of China for achieving this significant diplomatic milestone. In a statement on his official X account, the Prime Minister remarked that the people of Palestine have endured prolonged hardship and suffering.

The prime minister stated that Tuesday's agreement sparks hope for achieving lasting peace. He called for

global solidarity with the Palestinian people and urged Israel to cease its aggressive actions, which have devastated Gaza and resulted in the deaths of approximately 40,000 innocent Palestinians over the past ten months.

The prime minister affirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the Palestinian cause and reiterated its call for a two-state solution, establishing an independent Palestinian state with pre-1967 borders and Al Quds as its capital.

Emphasizing the importance of unity among Palestinian factions, he underscored the need for a unified and influential voice advocating peace, justice, and statehood. Pakistan stands alongside the Palestinian people in their pursuit of self-determination.

## President for expanding ties with Turkmenistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for expanding bilateral ties with Turkmenistan across all areas of mutual interest and reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to its relationship with Turkmenistan.

The President expressed these views while talking to the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President said that Pakistan-Turkmenistan relations were based on a common vision for peace and prosperity in the region. The exchange of high-level visits between the two countries signified the mutual desire to further strengthen bilateral understanding and cooperation.

Welcoming the Minister, the President urged the need to enhance connectivity and communication between Pakistan and Turkmenistan, saying that Gwadar port offered great opportunities for promoting regional trade and Turkmenistan



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari welcomed the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, Mr. Rashid Meredov, upon his arrival, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on 23-07-2024. Photo: PID

should benefit from the port. The President stressed the need for continued exchanges and dialogue at all levels and enhanced trade, economic, investment and cultural relations for the prosperity of the two countries.

He offered that Turkmen students could seek education from the medical institutions of Pakistan. The President noted the importance of the Third Round of Bilateral Political Consultations held today by the two Foreign Ministers.

The Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan said that Pakistan and Turkmenistan enjoyed cordial relations. He stated that his country would continue to promote economic, cultural and educational cooperation with Pakistan.

He highlighted the importance of constructing motorways and railways, through Afghanistan, to connect the two brotherly countries.

Foreign Minister Meredov conveyed the greetings of the leadership of Turkmenistan to the President.

The President reciprocated the sentiment and said that he was looking forward to welcoming the Grand Leader of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in Pakistan.

## Dar, Lammy forge strategy to boost Pak-UK relations

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and United Kingdom Foreign Secretary David Lammy discussed boosting Pak-UK relations, focusing on the contributions of British Pakistanis, and planning for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October.

In a phone call, the Deputy Prime Minister congratulated David Lammy on his appointment as the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom, expressing optimism about the new UK government's commitment to continuing the positive momentum in Pakistan-UK relations.

The two ministers praised the valuable contributions of British Pakistanis in strengthening the friendly relations between Pakistan and the



United Kingdom.

The DPM highlighted the significance Pakistan places on its relations with the United Kingdom, particularly within the Commonwealth context. He expressed readiness to collaborate with Foreign Secretary Lammy on addressing climate change, advancing youth opportunities, and promoting trade and investment.

The two ministers committed to enhancing bilateral cooperation and staying actively involved leading up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October.

## Spectrum auction for 5G to be completed by March 2025: NA body informed

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunications on Tuesday informed that the Spectrum auction for 5G is under consideration and expected to be completed by March 2025.

The Committee, chaired by Syed Amin ul Haq, recommended that the ministry require service providers to ensure proper 5G services in major cities without compromising quality after the auction.

The Committee advised that the ministry incentivize service providers in the 5G spectrum auction and ensure these incentives are properly spent on infrastructure improvements to guarantee uninterrupted 5G services in the country.

Service Fund (USF) informed the Committee that 1.5% of the revenue from all service providers goes into the USF, which uses these funds to provide services in underserved and unserved areas, ensuring the availability of data and voice services.

The USF also reported that Rs. 61 billion from their fund was taken by the Federal Government in 2015 for the Federal Consolidated Fund, of which Rs. 45 billion is still outstanding despite repeated requests for their return.

The Committee recommended that the ministry send a request every three months to the Federal Government for the return of these funds.

The meeting was attended by MNAs Mukhtar Ahmad Malik, Ahmad Atteeq Anwar, Ammar Ahmad Khan Leghari, Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani, Sadiq Ali Memon, Syed Mustafa Kamal, Pullain, Gohar Ali Khan, Umair Khan Niazi, and officials from the Ministry.

## Raouf Hassan remanded for two days as details of FIA case emerge

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf spokesman Raouf Hassan was handed over to the Federal Investigation Agency on a two-day remand on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the FIR that led to his arrest has also emerged, revealing offences under PECA as well as confessional statements from PTI's social media office holders.

A court in Islamabad also approved the remand for several male workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, while two female workers have been sent to jail on judicial remand.

Earlier, PTI leader Raouf

Hasan and other accused were presented before the court of Judicial Magistrate Abbas Shah. PTI lawyer Latif Khosa appeared in court on behalf of the party.

At the start of the hearing, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) prosecutor requested a 30-day physical remand for Raouf Hasan, stating that devices related to social media accounts need to be recovered.

He argued that further investigation would be possible once the devices are found, and that the FIA can seek a 30-day physical remand in such cases.

Lawyer Latif Khosa opposed the request for Raouf Hasan's physical remand.

## PTI to stage daily hunger strike outside Parliament against 'injustice'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf staged a 'symbolic hunger strike camp' outside Parliament in Islamabad after the National Assembly speaker denied them permission to set up a camp inside the august house premises against "injustice" with their party leaders.

"The symbolic hunger strike camp will continue daily from 3pm to 7pm," PTI Chairman Gohar Ali Khan told reporters on Monday.

Gohar, Asad Qaiser, Ali Muhammad Khan, Falak Naz Chitrali, Sheikh Waqas, and Senator Humayun Mehsud participated in the strike.

This comes amid a crackdown on the PTI leaders. At least 40 members of Imran Khan's party were arrested during a police raid on its headquarters on Monday, according to Aon Abbas Buppi.

Among them was PTI Information Secretary Raouf Hassan, who has been briefing the media and appearing on shows to speak



about the party's actions and intentions. Earlier in the day, a court sent Hassan to the Federal Investigation Agency custody for two days. The FIR registered against him invoked sections under PECA and contained confessional statements from PTI's social media office holders.

Lawmakers did not need permis-

sion to stage a protest on the premises of the Parliament, said Gohar. "This is our right, we are parliamentarians, and parliamentarians are entitled to conduct themselves however they want within the premises of the Parliament," he said, "we can express our opinions [here]."

Continued on Page 8

# PM AJK announces slew of developmental initiatives in remote areas

**Bureau Report**

NAKYAL: Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has announced a slew of developmental initiatives aimed at improving road infrastructure and connecting villages to major cities and towns.

The AJK premier made this announcement while addressing a public gathering organized by minister for rehabilitation Javed Iqbal Badhanvi in the remote city of Nakyal on Tuesday.

The PM announced different road projects that included a road project from Nakyal to Nadi via Karila Mathani, Nakyal to Dabsi road via Mohra Sharif, Nakyal to Gali via Nadrot and construction of a multipurpose hall for Degree College Nakyal.

Speaking on this occasion, the PM said that the process of prosperity and development in the region has been started again and no one would be allowed to stop this journey of progress.

He said that every individual and every conscious citizen has to play his/her role in the nation building.

"When we talk about our rights and privileges we must not forget our duties", the PM said.



Terming politics as prophetic profession, the PM regrettably noted that the people have lost their faith in the system after realizing that this noble profession was used by some politicians as a means to fill their own pockets and serve their vested interests.

The PM said that the God almighty had given him an opportunity to serve the people of the state. He said that after assuming the charge of government many people-friendly measures were taken to improve the lives of common masses. "Azad Kashmir is the only

region in the world where electricity is provided at the cost three rupees/unit", the PM said, adding that it was possible because of Pakistan's generosity.

The PM said that he was a strong proponent of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan ideology. "Pakistaniyat runs in my blood and I am proud of it", the PM said. The incumbent government, he said, won't allow any one to sabotage this ideology.

On this occasion, the PM thanked the people of Nakyal for according warm welcome to him on his arrival.

Meanwhile, the PM Anwar ul Haq visited the grave of former Azad Kashmir President and former Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan and offered Fateha for the departed soul.

He was accompanied by senior minister Colonel (ret'd) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Mian Abdul Waheed, Malik Zafar, Chaudhry Azhar, Sadiq, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, Chaudhry Nisar Ansar Abdali, and Chaudhry Rashid, former minister Sardar Naem Khan, Adviser to President Chaudhry Muhammad Mehboob and others.

# Businessmen protest for end of IPPs in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: President of the Central Organization of Tajran Pakistan Muhammad Kashif Chaudhry and Patron General and President of Anjuman Tajran City Faisalabad Khawaja Shahid Razzak Sikka addressed a joint press conference at the office of Anjuman Tajran City here today and said that the country's political, economic and constitutional crisis, inflationary unemployment, confrontation between institutions, tension between the judiciary and the government, execution of cruel business-friendly scheme, excesses of FBR officials and looting of national exchequer collected by public taxes for IPPs. Expressing deep sorrow and concern, the government has been warned that it should be aware of what the traders and the people are doing



to fulfill their demands. The government will be responsible. He said that the rulers should listen. From Karachi to Turbat, the business commu-

nity of the country is united and has one language. We will not accept the confrontation between the institutions and the deadly contracts of IPPs.

Muhammad Kashif Chaudhry said that it was hoped that the government would give relief to the people in the budget of the new financial year, but by giving a budget full of taxes, the government has disappointed the people and the salaried class. He said that Faisalabad is an industrial hub but it is valuable for the country. Industries that earn foreign exchange and provide employment to people, businesses are dying and industries are closing down due to expensive electricity, gas and petroleum products. He said that it is cruel that at present capacity payment is being made to IPPs more than the defense budget. The government will have to revise the contracts of IPPs for the survival, integrity and development of the country. Patriotism cannot be doubted.

# Blind Murder of a Deaf-Mute Person Solved

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: City Police Officer DIG Sadiq Ali Dogar and SSP Operation Rana Arsalan Zahid and SSP Investigation Muhammad Ashraf Addressing to the Press Conference in Multan Police Line. He said "The mystery of the blind murder of a deaf-mute person was solved in the limits of Makhdoom Rashid police station, the accused was arrested, the deaf-mute friend turned out to be the murderer, the mobile phone of the deceased was also recovered from the accused. A month ago on 21.06.2024, the police information was received that there is a dead body of an unknown person near railway line 01 in Sardarwala town of Mouza Naiwala. On the information of the incident, Makhdoom Rasheed police reached the spot where an unknown body was lying near the railway line, which was brutal-



ly killed. On examination, the abdomen of the dead body was torn, the stomach was cut with a sharp instrument and the intestines were out, the cow was cut from the front with a sharp instrument. It was identified that he is a man aged 30/35 years. A knife was found near

the dead body with blood on it, which was seized by the police. CPO Multan Sadiq Ali Dogar, taking notice of the incident, ordered to identify the dead body and trace the accused and arrest them. In which the police teams consisting of DSP Makhdoom Rashid Rao

Tariq Parvez, HO Makhdoom Rashid Muhammad Bilal, Sub Inspector Javed Iqbal and other officers under the leadership of SP Sadar Division Shamsuddin started the police action. The fingerprints of the deceased were sent to the Fingerprint Bureau, from which the data of the deceased was verified by going to his house, who identified the deceased. Hui who was deaf and dumb. After which the police teams, using modern technology and human intelligence and using all their professional skills, traced and arrested the accused involved in the murder of a deaf-mute person. The arrested accused was identified as Ghulam Mujtaba son. Abdur Rehman Qaam Jat Samra Sakna Samijabab Multan accused is also deaf-mute. For the investigation of the accused, an assistant was appointed from the institute established for the training of deaf-mute persons to understand his words.

# NCSW Hosts Landmark Conference on Women with Disabilities

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) proudly hosted a groundbreaking national conference on women with disabilities as part of its esteemed series, "The Next Horizon". This significant event convened experts from across Pakistan to chart a progressive path forward for the empowerment of women with disabilities.

In her opening remarks, Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar underscored the pressing need to address the unique challenges faced by differently abled women in Pakistan. She highlighted the critical importance of making public spaces universally accessible and ensuring comprehensive support in health and education sectors.

Latika Maskey Pradhan, Deputy Representative of UNFPA, lauded NCSW's efforts and reaffirmed

UNFPA's commitment to empowering all women in Pakistan, advocating for a healthier and more inclusive society.

Senator Mahesh Kumar, the chief guest of the inaugural session, pledged his unwavering support for the empowerment of differently abled women in Pakistan. He emphasized the need for societal reforms to foster inclusivity and equality.

Federal Secretary for Law and Justice, Raja Naem Akbar, reiterated the ministry's dedication to providing equal opportunities for all citizens. Federal Secretary for Education, Mohyuddin Wani, expressed his commitment to crafting inclusive education policies. The Federal Secretary for Human Rights, Allah Dino Khawaja, announced the forthcoming launch of the Integrated Social Welfare System, a groundbreaking initiative designed to provide comprehensive support to

persons with disabilities. This innovative system will be interconnected with all relevant authorities, ensuring seamless assistance and empowerment at the highest level.

The conference featured dynamic group discussions focused on four pivotal areas: Legal Framework and Protection, Accessibility and Inclusive Services, Education and Employment Opportunities, Combating Gender Violence and Support

**Key recommendations from the conference included:**

**Inclusive Infrastructure:** Implementing legislative measures to ensure accessible transport and public infrastructure.

**Healthcare Policies:** Developing and enforcing healthcare policies tailored to the unique needs of women with disabilities.

**Public-Private Partnerships:** Creating apprenticeship programs and strengthening



the capacity of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) practitioners to support survivors with

disabilities. This conference marks a significant step forward in the

ongoing efforts to empower women with disabilities in Pakistan, reflecting NCSW's

unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable society.

## 'District Health Officer Malir Visits Hands Institute of Development Studies'

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: District Health Officer (DHO) Malir, Dr. Imdad Ali Channa, was the special guest at Hands Institute of Development Studies, invited by Rector Professor Dr. Abuzar Wajidi. During the visit, a comprehensive discussion was held focusing on initiatives to enhance educational opportunities for children in the Malir district.

As part of the visit, DHO Malir planted a commemorative tree and distributed rewards to support the future development of Hands Institute of Development Studies. The event also saw the participation of Additional District Health Officer Malir, Dr. Wazir Ahmed, Deputy Chief Executive of Hands, Maqbool Rahu, Registrar Syed Nasir Ali Mirza, SO to Rector, Lecturer Mehreen Shaikh, and Procurement Officer Mahesh Hotwani.

Rector Professor Dr. Abuzar Wajidi expressed his gratitude to DHO Malir Dr. Imdad Ali Channa and Additional DHO Dr. Wazir Ahmed for their visit and support towards the institute's efforts in promoting education in the Malir district.

## Inaugurated the public Liaison office in Dinga Kharian



**Anwar Chohan**

KHARIAN: Chaudhry Naseer Ahmad Abbas Sidhu Member National Assembly PMLN inaugurated the Public Liaison Office in Dinga for the convenience of the people of Dinga city and suburbs. Chaudhry Naseer Ahmad Abbas Sidhu MNA, former provincial minister Mian Tariq Mahmood, former Dinga chairman Mian Anjad Mahmood, former councilor Qaiser Ishaq Mughal inaugurated the Public Relations Office.

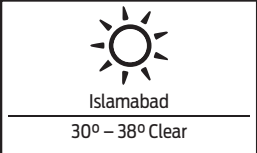
Earlier, the workers of Muslim League (N) Dinga gave a warm welcome to their leaders. The people of the area participated in the opening ceremony.

## Inner Well Club (DGK) District 340 Working is Day-Night for the Services of Humanity: Saleha Pasha



**Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: Mrs. Saleha Pasha President of Inner Well Club (DGK) District 340 and Mrs. Sidra Aslam Secretary-Elect. She is the only Pakistani woman who has been awarded the Golden Award by Inner Well Club International for her services in flood-affected areas, building houses with rations and hand taps for fresh water. He was given in recognition of the distribution of medicine and his service to countless suffering humanity, which is a great honor for Pakistan and Multan, he expressed these thoughts to the newly elected office bearers of Inner Well Club (DGK) District 340 yesterday. Speaking on the occasion of wearing collars and badges, District Chairman Mrs. Rizwana Tabasim Durrani said that the purpose of my life is to serve the suffering humanity and in today's era of inflation, clean and sweet in backward areas like Taunsa. Installing 85 hand taps of water is not less than a blessing. My 11 clubs are working day and night to serve the suffering humanity and this is the success in this world and the hereafter. And congratulated the rest of the officials, the president put badges, all the officials and members promised to follow in the footsteps of the district chairman and the president and declared 2024 and 2025 as years of service to suffering humanity. In the ceremony, Mrs. Shahla Pasha, Mrs. Samina Malik, Mrs. Shahreen Fanwat, Mrs. Rabia, Mrs. Nazia, Mrs. Asma Nadeem Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Shamaila Shaukat District Vice-Chairman attended and Mrs. Iram Mujahid was the head of the organization.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**  
 Fajr ..... 3:36 am  
 Zohr ..... 12:14 pm  
 Asr ..... 5:10 pm  
 Maghrib ..... 7:15 pm  
 Isha ..... 8:52 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
 CDA ..... 9208301-04  
 Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
 RDA ..... 5556311-4  
 TMA ..... 5770886  
 Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
 Islamabad Metropolitan  
 Corporation ..... 9209224  
 Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
 Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service  
 E-7, F-10 & F-11 ..... 9204654  
 G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 ..... 9203883  
 G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..... 9266316  
 Wapda Islamabad ..... 9217579-80  
 Sui Gas Complaint ..... 119, 9272249  
 Wasa Water Tank  
 Rawalpindi ..... 0331-5022125

**UAJK to celebrate 20th Convocation with Over 9,700 Graduates**

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) will host its 20th convocation on Thursday, July 25, 2024, at King Abdullah Campus, Chatter Kallas. Chancellor, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary will preside over the proceedings.

Prof. Dr. Wajid Aziz Lone, Controller of Examinations, detailed the arrangements made for the graduating students. Key participants in the meeting included Registrar Meritorious Prof. Dr. Ghulam Murtaza, Meritorious Prof. Dr. Syed Nadeem Haider Bukhari, Resident Director King Abdullah Campus Prof. Dr. Ayaz Arif, Dean Sciences Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rafiq, Dean Engineering Prof. Dr. Saadat Hanif Dar, Dean Social Sciences Prof. Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan, Director Finance Prof. Dr. Khawaja Basharat, Director Student Affairs Dr. Sharjeel Saeed, Additional Registrar Sardar Zafr Iqbal, Director Neelam Campus Dr. Malik Sajjad, Director Jhelum

# Hashoo School of Hospitality Management, Multan University of Science & Technology partner to facilitate premium hospitality

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM), Hashoo Group's premier education division, has partnered with Multan University of Science & Technology (MUST) to offer premium hospitality education in Southern Punjab. This collaboration provides youth in Multan and Southern Punjab with access to a 2-year international Associate Degree Program in Hospitality, featuring hands-on training, internships, and guaranteed job placement.

Executive Director of Pearl-Continental Hotel, Lahore & Education Division, Hashoo Group, Haseeb A. Gardezi, expressed enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "We are thrilled to facilitate premium hospitality education across Pakistan. With our successful campuses in other major cities,

our goal is to empower the youth with practical learning experiences. We appreciate MUST's support in realizing this venture."

Pakistan is one of the fastest-growing tourist destinations in the world, attracting both local and international visitors due to its unparalleled natural beauty, cultural heritage, and warm hospitality. Several international and local hospitality chains are increasing their investments in Pakistan, with ample support from government entities as well. The country's hospitality and tourism revenue is expected to grow significantly in the coming years.

Dr. Muhammad Arshad, Chairman Board of Governors, MUST, and a renowned education professional, remarked, "The hospitality and tourism industry is booming, and we are excited to offer top-tier education in collaboration with

HSHM."

This partnership underscores the commitment of both organizations to empower Pakistani youth with enhanced education and training, promoting economic development on both individual and national levels.

The agreement was signed recently at Rumanza by Pearl-Continental, with senior dignitaries from both organizations and Brig. Ahmed Rizwan Ghumman, Administrator, DHA Multan, in attendance.

MUST, a state-of-the-art educational institute in Multan, offers a wide range of degrees in various disciplines, including Computing, Allied Sciences, and Business Studies. The new Associate Degree in Hospitality & Tourism is the latest addition, with more programs to be announced soon.

HSHM, Pakistan's premier hospitality and tourism education institution, aims to produce



future industry leaders. Affiliated with the Confederation of Hospitality (CTH) in the UK, HSHM ensures alignment with international education standards. Hashoo Group is Paki-

stan's premium conglomerate with a diversified business portfolio spanning both national and international markets. The Group owns and operates the Pearl-Continental Hotels &

Resorts, PC Legacy, and Hotel One brands in Pakistan and has business interests encompassing the information technology, investment, travel & tourism, and real estate sectors.

## National Day of Egypt

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain and Ambassador of Egypt, Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid along with others cutting the cake to celebrate the National Day of Egypt at Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Play titled "Jagte Rahana" presented at Punjab Arts Council

**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: A play titled "Jagte Rahna" was presented in Punjab Arts Council under the patronage of Sar Sabz Punjab under the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Ms. Maryam Nawaz. The play aims to highlight climate change and the importance of planting trees. The play is written by Sikandar Ali, while the drama is composed by Mian Fayyaz. The characters of the play included Shahdaqbal, Lubna Butt, Arshad Bhatti, Ayesha Malik, Jeeva, Waleed Ali and Hanif Kuwaiti. Director of Arts Council Sajjad Hussain was the chief guest of the play. While the special guests included



former director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed, Deputy Director of Information Muhammad Owais and Muhammad Safwan Munir.

Director of Arts Council Sajjad Hussain said that climate change is a bitter reality which

has been denied for years but now it has become the biggest challenge of the 21st century. Trees act as oxygen for us and are a means of protection from environmental pollution. It is a good thing that Punjab government is giving awareness

through stage drama. Finally, the director of arts council congratulated all the artists for presenting the best drama. Former Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that the state can create awareness among the people by running large-scale campaigns to make people aware of the importance of trees and highlight the associated benefits to discourage them from cutting down trees. In addition, there is a need to encourage people to protect and plant trees on their own so that Pakistan can achieve the internationally recommended target of 12% forest cover. A large number of citizens were present at the Arts Council to watch the play.

## Civil Society urges immediate action to regulate harmful trans-fats

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In response to the World Health Organization's (WHO) recent "5-year milestone report on global trans-fat elimination 2023," the civil society of Pakistan has called the attention of policymakers and legislators to regulate the industrially-produced trans-fatty acids (ITFAs) to 2% of the total fat in all dietary sources across Pakistan.



Munawar Hussain, In-country Coordinator at GHAI, emphasized the urgent need for regulation in Pakistan. He said "The evidence is clear, trans fats have no place in our food supply. The health of our citizens is at risk, and it is imperative that Pakistan enacts and enforces the World Health Organization's recommended best-practice policies to eliminate these harmful substances from our diet. Public interest should always be paramount and protecting the health of our citizens should be our top priority."

Echoing this sentiment, Afshar Iqbal, Director Communications and Advocacy at Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), stated, "Public awareness and support are crucial in this fight. By educating the public about the dangers of trans fats and advocating for stringent regulations, we can save thousands of lives annually."

Mukhtar Ahmed, Executive Director of the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, Pakistan (CPDI), called for a unified national effort. He said that "Pakistan is currently placed in the 'less restrictive' category by the WHO indicating that more work needs to be done to protect public health from the hazards of ITFAs."

The Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority is responsible for enacting standard regulations for all foods to adopt best practice policies. Civil society organizations have called for immediate action by the national regulatory body, as each day of delay contributes to the suffering and deaths of people in Pakistan due to diseases linked to the consumption of ITFAs in the diet.

## Theater Play "The White Plague" will be staged at Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi from 21 August



**City Desk**

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi and Bodhi Works (Film and Theater Company) organized a press conference regarding the theatre play "The White Plague," at Haseena Moin Hall. President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi Mohammad Ahmed Shah, filmmaker and director Meher Jaffri, Theater Director Khalid Ahmed, actor Fawad Khan, Kashif Hussain, and Saad Zameer, briefed the media about the details of the play. President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi Mohammad Ahmed Shah expressed the Council's long-standing commitment to fostering various facets of art and culture over the past two decades. He emphasized that the Arts Council supports its academics and initiated collaborations with cultural institutions across Pakistan and internationally.

Director Meher Jaffri, an award-winning filmmaker and playwright, shared insights into the play "The White Plague," based on a 1937 Czech drama by renowned playwright, critic, and journalist Karel Capek. Theatre is dedicated to the memory of Zia Mohyeddin because it was his final commissioned drama. Jaffri highlighted the relevance of the play's themes to contemporary issues, particularly its satirical take on warmongering nations and inhumane viruses. She underscored the play's portrayal of a global pandemic, resonating deeply with today's world grappling with the mysterious "White Plague." The cast of the play includes prominent actors such as Fawad Khan, Saad Zameer, Samhan Ghazi, Kashif Hussain, Manal Siddiqui, and Zia Moayeddin's notable students. Jaffri confidently expressed that "The White Plague" would set a new standard for theatrical excellence, thanking President Shah Arts Council's support and commitment to raising artistic standards. Furthermore, actor Kashif Hussain, who plays the role of Doctor in the play, invited the audience to witness the play, promising an engaging and humorous experience.

## Urgent measures needed to address Karachi's environmental crisis: Rahimoon

**City Desk**

KARACHI: Karachi faces an urgent environmental crisis, with issues such as pollution, deforestation, and illegal encroachments worsening daily. In response, a delegation from the National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH) met with Minister for Environment, Climate Change, and Coastal Development, Dost Muhammad Rahimoon, to discuss these critical challenges and propose solutions.

The NFEH delegation, led by President M. Naeem Qureshi, Vice President Engr. Nadeem Ashraf, and Information Secretary Mustafa Tahir, emphasized the need for a coordinated effort to tackle environmental degradation in Karachi. "Every individual must play their part in securing our environment," said Qureshi. He highlighted the urgent need for a massive tree planta-



tion drive in the city and the imposition of strict laws and heavy fines to curb the activities of environmental mafias. Karachi generates approximately 12,000 tons of solid waste daily, a

significant portion of which remains uncollected and improperly disposed of, contributing to widespread pollution. The city's green cover has diminished drastically, with less than 2%

of its total area now covered by trees, far below the World Health Organization's recommended urban green cover of 10%.

Minister Rahimoon echoed these sentiments, expressing his commitment to environmental sustainability. "We must act now to prevent further degradation of our environment. Our ministry is ready to collaborate with NFEH to improve conditions and spread awareness among the masses," he stated.

The NFEH and the Ministry of Environment call on all Karachi residents to join their efforts in making the city greener and more sustainable. With collaborative action and stringent enforcement of environmental laws, Karachi can overcome its current challenges and pave the way for a healthier, more sustainable future.

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# Harris vs. Trump: What's Next for Pakistan?

The divine approval seemed to suddenly turn away from Joe Biden after he fumbled, lost his words, and struggled to maintain the sequence while making points, showing visible signs of aging. Later, he contracted coronavirus, perhaps seen as the final push of the divine to move him out of the president's slot. The "Huma," the "Bird of Paradise," which had been protecting his presidency, flew away in search of a new abode. For the first time, it found not a man, but a woman of mixed heritage—Black and Tamil—bestowing her with the strength and charisma to enter the race to become the first-ever female president of the world's most powerful country in known history.

She was nominated by Joe Biden as his successor, but this was only half the battle won. She still has to pass many tests and cross numerous formidable hurdles to officially secure her position as the Democratic nominee and run for the presidency. With the broadest smile, exuding confidence and competence, she is well-prepared for the challenge, but the path ahead is steep, with stiff competition from many men with impressive CVs and compelling credentials.

But who is Kamala Harris? She was born on October 20, 1964, is a member of the Third Baptist Church of San Francisco, a mixed race, with a Black and South Asian heritage. Her mother, the late Shyamala Gopalan, a PhD was of Indian Tamil descent from Madras (now Chennai), India. Her father, Donald Jasper Harris, is of Jamaican descent and is an economist and professor emeritus at Stanford University. Kamala has

one sibling, a younger sister named Maya Harris, who is a lawyer, public policy advocate, and political analyst, and who served as a senior policy advisor to Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. She is married to Douglas Emhoff, an attorney. They got married on August 22, 2014. She does not have biological children but is a stepmother to Emhoff's two children from his previous marriage, Cole and Ella Emhoff.

Kamala Harris earned a Juris Doctor (J. D.) from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, in 1989. She began her legal career as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, later serving as San Francisco's District Attorney from 2004 to 2011, and as California's Attorney General until 2017. Her career culminated with her election as Vice President alongside President Joe Biden in 2020.

Like all countries, Pakistan is closely watching the ups and downs of the U.S. elections. Pakistan, like others, is evaluating both Donald Trump and Kamala Harris for their expected policies toward Asia, South Asia, and Pakistan.

Pakistan has already experienced Trump's presidency, so his policies may not come as a surprise. However, Trump had some positive aspects for Pakistan. He prioritized counter-terrorism and used military force and economic sanctions to curb terrorism. His administration carried out drone strikes and targeted terrorist leaders in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Afghanistan, Trump focused on

reducing U.S. military presence while negotiating with the Taliban, leading to the Doha Agreement aimed at withdrawing U.S. troops. His approach to countries perceived to harbor terrorists involved applying pressure through sanctions and military actions.

Regarding the Kashmir dispute, Trump generally supported India's position, occasionally offering to mediate between India and Pakistan, but his administration was

less vocal about human rights concerns in the region.

Trump's view of Pakistan-China relations was generally wary, seeing Pakistan primarily through the lens of counter-terrorism and regional stability rather than as a broader geopolitical partner. He strengthened U.S.-India relations, viewing India as a key strategic partner to counterbalance China's influence in the region, which sometimes strained U.S.-Pakistan relations.

On the other hand, Kamala Harris is likely to maintain a strong stance on counter-terrorism, emphasizing a combination of military, diplomatic, and economic tools. She is expected to support initiatives that enhance regional stability and cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts.

In Afghanistan, Harris would focus on ensuring that the country does not become a haven for terrorists again, emphasizing diplomatic solutions and international cooperation.

On the Kashmir dispute, Harris may take a more balanced approach, emphasizing human rights and democratic

values. She has previously expressed concerns about the situation in Kashmir, which could lead to a more vocal stance on human rights issues.

Regarding Pakistan-China relations, Harris is likely to acknowledge their strategic importance while seeking to balance U.S. interests in the region, potentially engaging Pakistan in broader diplomatic and economic initiatives to counterbalance China's influence.

Under Trump, India was seen as a crucial partner in the Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China's rise, leading to significant defense agreements and a strong bilateral relationship.

Under Harris, while India will likely continue to be a strategic partner in counterbalancing China, she might also stress human rights and democratic values in U.S.-India relations, potentially leading to a more holistic approach.

For Pakistan, this comparison seems to tilt in favor of Kamala Harris becoming President of the USA. However, the true test will come once her policies take shape after she assumes office and confronts the ground realities and complexities of geopolitics. She will only realize the full impact of the intricate layers of bilateral and multilateral relations after assuming the mantle of power. Pakistan may likely be overshadowed by larger issues such as the Russia-Ukraine war, the China-Taiwan standoff, the trade and innovation war between the U.S. and China, and the Israel-Gaza conflict to name a few.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Climate change boosts wildfire, pest threats to world's forests

The world's forests are becoming increasingly susceptible to wildfires and pests due to climate change, according to a new report by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

"Forests and trees are essential components of agrifood systems. The removal of forest cover, especially in the tropics, increases local temperatures and disrupts rainfall patterns in ways that compound the local effects of global climate change, with potentially severe consequences for agricultural productivity," the report warned.

The report is calling for innovation in the forestry sector alongside urgent action from the international community in order to face these challenges and progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Wildfires around the world are more intense and frequent than ever before, even in areas that were previously unaffected. In 2023 alone, wildfires released an estimated 6,687 megatonnes of carbon dioxide.

Specifically, fires in the boreal zone just south of the arctic reached a new high in 2021 and accounted for nearly one-quarter of total wildfire emissions, up from 10 per cent previously, FAO said.

Climate change also makes forests more vulnerable to invasive species, with insects, pests and disease pathogens threatening tree growth and survival. Pine wood nematode, a microscopic parasitic roundworm, has already caused significant damage to native pine forests in some countries in Asia.

Areas of North America are also projected to experience devastating damage due to insects and disease by 2027.

This destruction of forests is a serious threat given that demand for global wood production is at record levels, at four billion cubic metres a year. Projections show global round wood demand could grow by up to 49 per cent between 2020 and 2050.

Moreover, nearly six billion people rely on non-timber forest products and 70 per cent of the world's poor rely on wild species for their basic needs.

FAO believes that science can help to address these challenges, and identifies five types of innovation that enhance forests' potential to address global challenges: technological, social, policy, institutional, and financial.

One example of such an innovation is to use AI for data analysis and innovative financing for forest conservation.

Since innovation can create winners and losers, FAO is arguing for inclusive and gender-responsive approaches to ensure the fair distribution of benefits among men, women and youth in all socioeconomic and ethnic groups.

FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu ultimately hopes the new report will "scale up evidence-based innovation in forestry."

"I believe it will also support FAO Members and other stakeholders in enabling responsible, inclusive, and essential innovation in the forest sector to strengthen sustainability and the resilience of agrifood systems for a better world and a better future for all," he added.



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

## Phone Calls Recording Matter - III

Similarly, in the UK, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) serves as the legal underpinning for surveillance activities, including communication interception, aimed at ensuring national security. The Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) supervises the interception of communications under rigorous legal and operational controls. The Investigatory Powers Act 2016, known colloquially as the "Snooper's Charter," further regulates

and extends authorities for surveillance activities across various communication platforms. Russia maintains a robust surveillance system overseen by the Federal Security Service (FSB), granting extensive authority to monitor and intercept communications domestically and internationally. China employs sophisticated surveillance technologies and comprehensive legal frameworks to monitor communications within its borders. The Chinese government exercises strict control over telecommunications networks and internet traffic, with surveillance operations conducted by agencies such as the Ministry of State Security (MSS). These measures are justified by the government as necessary for maintaining social stability and combating terrorism and extremism.

These examples underscore that no country allows terrorists and anti-state elements free rein, and each nation utilizes its resources to combat terrorism within its borders. Most recently, the federal government of Pakistan has authorized the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Pakistan's premier intelligence agency, to intercept and trace phone calls and messages. A circular approved by the federal cabinet allows a designated ISI officer of grade 18 or higher to trace calls under Section 54 of the Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act 1996, according to media reports. A notification issued by the Ministry of Information stated, "In the interest of national security and in the apprehension of any offense, the federal government is pleased to authorize officers nominated by the ISI to intercept calls and messages or trace calls through any communication system."



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

This decision to grant increased powers to the ISI aligns with the government's efforts to enforce stricter regulations on social media, citing concerns over national security. This includes the recent ban on the popular social media platform X. Additionally, Prime Minister of Pakistan has approved a draft amendment to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016, proposing the establishment of a Digital Rights Protection Authority. Furthermore, the government is implementing a national firewall across various internet service providers (ISPs), designed to filter and block undesirable content on social media platforms from reaching a wider audience. The plan involves the implementation of a keyword filtering system designed to detect and censor content considered detrimental or threatening to national security. This system will function as an "information inspector," effectively rendering certain posts invisible to users. Posts expressing dissenting viewpoints, whether origi-

nating domestically or internationally, are likely to undergo scrutiny through this inspection process before becoming fully visible online. This filtering mechanism will extend across major social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and what was previously known as Twitter. Additionally, measures are being prepared to prevent the perceived misuse of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) by citizens. The government may require individuals to disclose the VPNs they use to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), with failure to comply potentially leading to legal consequences. This section of the Telecommunications Act grants the federal government the authority to designate any individual or entity to intercept communications or trace calls through any telecommunications system.

Understanding the reasons behind this initiative is crucial. Pakistan, characterized by a complex geopolitical landscape and diverse societal fabric, has grappled with significant challenges stemming from terrorism and the proliferation of terrorist networks in recent decades. The country has faced a variety of threats, from extremist violence to insurgent movements, which have tested its stability, security, and international relations.

Pakistan's encounter with terrorism can be traced back to historical and geopolitical factors. During the Afghan-Soviet War (1979-1989), Pakistan played a pivotal role in supporting Afghan mujahideen fighters against the Soviet invasion, forming alliances that would later influence regional security dynamics. Following the September 11 attacks, Pakistan became a key ally in the U.S.-led War on Terror.

*To be continued*

## Hamas-Fatah Beijing Declaration

Dr. Hasan Yaser Malik

### Historical Context

Conflict between Fatah and Hamas; two principal Palestinian political parties led to Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007. Strains between Fatah and Hamas began to rise in 2005 after the death of Yasser Arafat in November 2004. After legislative election on 25 Jan 2006, that resulted in a Hamas victory, caused factional fighting which became more strong after the two parties repeatedly failed to reach a deal to share government. Hamas was founded in 1987 soon after the First Intifada broke out. The Hamas government was replaced on 17 March 2007 by a national unity government headed by Haniya comprising Hamas and Fatah ministers. President Abbas, declared a state of emergency, on 14 June 2007 and dismissed Haniya's national unity government and appointed an emergency government.

### Principal Issues between Hamas and Fatah

Hamas refused to accept the Quartet's conditions; to recognise Israel and earlier agreements.

Another issue is control over the border crossings, especially the Rafah Border Crossing to Egypt.

### Previous Reconciliation Efforts

Quartet Principles. Quartet is a diplomatic body formed in 2003 that is composed of the UN, EU, Russia and the U.S with an aim of mediating the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Cairo Declaration. Includes the formation of a unity government and the cessation of violence between Fatah and Hamas of 8 February 2007.

Fatah-Hamas Mecca Agreement. Was agreed on 23 March 2008, however this also could not deliver.

Sana'a, Agreement. It called for a return of the Gaza Strip to the pre-June 2007 situation, though this has not happened.

### Recent Hamas-Fatah Beijing Declaration

Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah signed a declaration in Beijing vowing to form a government together, the groups said Tuesday, in the latest attempt at resolving their long rivalry. Both sides said the accord, which provided no guarantees or timeline, was only an initial step.

### Analysis

Previous such declarations have failed, raising doubt

over whether the China-sponsored negotiations might lead to a resolution between Hamas and Fatah.

Israel has strongly opposed any role for Hamas, as Israel has announced its destruction after its Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel.

U.S. and Western nations have rejected to accept any Palestinian government that includes Hamas unless it deliberately recognises Israel.

Israel's FM has said no joint governance between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza will take place "because Hamas' rule will be crushed."

Beijing Declaration emphasise on "ending division and strengthening Palestinian unity," pledging to form a unity government for the Palestinian territories.

The agreement offered only broad outlines on how they would work together.

The agreement also underscored China's attempts to have a growing role in Middle East diplomacy, after its success in mediating the restoration of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In the statement, all the factions including Hamas said they were committed to the creation of a Palestinian state on lands Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a smaller militant group allied with Hamas, issued a statement after the talks saying it still "rejects any formula that includes recognition of Israel explicitly or implicitly."

China said it continues to contribute "Chinese wisdom and solutions" for the resolution of the Palestinian issue.

### Conclusion

Beijing has never had a self-centred about Palestinian question as it values morality and advocate justice. China was among one of first few countries that recognised PLO and the State of Palestine, and have been steadfast in supporting the restoration of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. Since the beginning of the new era, President Xi Jinping has repeatedly put forward proposals and proposals for the settlement of the Palestinian issue, contributing Chinese wisdom and solutions to the settlement of the Palestinian issue. It is hoped that the declaration bridges the diverging stance about Israel. Hamas earlier said that it would accept a state based on the pre-1967 war borders, while Fatah abides by interim peace agreements with Israel signed in early 1990s.

# Pakistan, Turkmenistan agree for enhanced high-level dialogue, exchanges

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Turkmenistan on Tuesday, noting the positive trajectory of the bilateral relations, agreed to further enhance high-level dialogue and exchanges at the leadership level, besides strengthening the bilateral dialogue mechanisms.

The bilateral ties were discussed in the Third Round of Pakistan-Turkmenistan Bilateral Political Consultations held here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar led the Pakistan side while the Turkmenistan side was led by Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, according to a Foreign Office press release.

The two sides reviewed Pakistan-Turkmenistan bilateral relations, including bilateral trade and invest-



ment, energy cooperation, connectivity and people-to-people linkages.

The two sides agreed to intensify joint efforts to further expand and deepen bilateral cooperation including political, economic and defence domains. It was also agreed to develop closer economic engage-

ment in the priority areas of trade and investment, energy, connectivity and information technology. The two sides also discussed the projects of TAPI Pipeline and TAP Electricity Transmission Line.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister expressed Pakistan's

commitment to further enhancing bilateral trade and economic ties commensurate with its true potential.

He underlined the need for early finalization of the Transit Trade Agreement and liberalization of the visa regime to facilitate businesspersons.

The two sides also agreed to promote bilateral parliamentary engagement and enhance cultural exchanges, educational scholarships including training of diplomats and people-to-people contacts.

It was agreed to work closely to further strengthen bilateral cooperation and dialogue in multilateral settings including at the United Nations and Economic Cooperation Organization.

Regional and global issues of mutual concern were also discussed including the situation in Afghanistan and the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

## Mobile Data Disruptions Fuel Firewall Speculation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: WhatsApp users across Pakistan experienced disruptions in sending media files through the app while using mobile data. Despite widespread reports, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and cellular mobile operators (CMOs) claimed to have received no official complaints.

Users reported being unable to upload media files, such as photos and videos, while connected to mobile data networks. However, when connected to Wi-Fi networks, voice messages and video files could be sent and viewed without issue.

The disruptions were not limited to media files, as users across Pakistan have reported issues accessing WhatsApp since Saturday. Users on mobile internet faced difficulty sending and downloading files, but those using Wi-Fi connections experienced no such problems.

Experts speculate the disruptions might be linked to the suspected installation and testing of a firewall designed to monitor and control internet traffic. Some experts have linked this inaccessibility to the installation of a firewall aimed at curbing the upload of malicious and fake content targeting the government, state, and institutions. However, there has been no official confirmation or explanation from the PTA or the government regarding the disruptions.

## US VP Kamala Harris lunches campaign for Democratic presidential nomination with snub to Netanyahu



WASHINGTON, JUL 23 (APP): US Vice President Kamala Devi Harris has decided not to preside over Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's July 24 address to Congress, on a day she mustered enough Democratic delegates' support to become her party's

nominee against Republican Donald Trump in November election. Some political analysts said Mrs. Harris' decision to skip the joint meeting of Congress was a snub to Netanyahu at a time when the Israeli war in Gaza has caused growing backlash in the country, especially his refusal to accept a ceasefire in Gaza amid mounting Palestinian death toll from the relentless Israeli bombardments.

But, according to media reports, Ms. Harris, who is of Indian origin, will meet the Israeli premier at the White House separately later this week.

An aide to the vice president cited a previously scheduled event in Indianapolis as the reason for missing the speech Wednesday.

Nearly 60 members skipped Netanyahu's address to Congress back in 2015 — and many think that the tally of Democrats skipping could be even higher this time around. (Biden, then vice president, was traveling abroad during that speech).

Meanwhile, top Democrats rallied to Ms. Harris in the aftermath of President Joe Biden's decision to drop his bid for reelection, as the vice president kicked off her campaign for the United States' top job.

Her elevation to the top of ticket would bring new strengths for the Democrats.

According to recent polls, Ms Harris trails Trump, the former president, slightly — a roughly similar position to the one Biden found himself in before his historic announcement. But there may be more room for those numbers to shift as the campaign moves from a hypothetical matchup to a very real one, according to the analysts.

For at least a moment, Democrats have a jolt of energy after more than three weeks of intense hand-wringing over the president's fitness and ability to sustain his campaign.

All of Ms Harris' leading potential rivals for the nomination have endorsed her, as has former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi — who remains one of the most influential players in Democratic politics.

This is, still, shaping up to be a tight race in November — a condition that reflects deep partisan trenches in American politics and the distaste many voters have for Trump as a candidate, according to experts.

## WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange enjoys life as free man after release

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange seems to be enjoying his "free" life after being released from a British prison nearly a month ago and returning to his native Australia.



Assange, 53, was released on June 26 from London's Belmarsh prison after a deal was struck to end his 14-year legal struggle with the United States Department of Justice.

Assange's wife, Stella, 40, offered a rare glimpse into her husband's post-prison life, releasing a candid family photo showing the couple basking in freedom on a deserted beach with their two children Gabriel, 7, and Max, 5.

She posted the photo on her Instagram and simply captioned it: "Family photo!"

Earlier, she had also posted a photo on her husband's birthday with the caption: "Free!"

She has previously said he would use his freedom to "swim in the ocean every day."

"He plans to sleep in a real bed. He plans to taste real food. And he plans to enjoy his freedom," she told reporters in Australia shortly after his arrival.

# Federal Minister for Commerce Emphasizes Strengthening Trade Relations with Oman

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan highlighted the significant potential for enhancing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Oman during a meeting with a high-level Omani delegation led by Ms. Ibtisam Al Farouji.

The Minister warmly welcomed the delegation and underscored the historical ties and economic opportunities between the two nations.

Jam Kamal Khan stated that the Ministry of Commerce is in the process of opening a new trade mission in Oman, which will ultimately enhance trade relations between the two countries.

The Minister invited Omani investment in both bilateral and trilateral modes and assured full cooperation and facilitation in this regard.

He informed the Omani delegation about Pakistan's strong sectors, such as IT, sports, renewables, and fruits, and highlighted incentives for investment, including cheap labor, port handling, and logistics.

The Ministry of Commerce has



launched a new policy, "Middle East Reconnect," to strengthen trade relations with Middle Eastern countries, including Oman.

Ms. Ibtisam Al Farouji, head of the Omani delegation, agreed that there is substantial potential for trade enhancement between the two countries, particularly in steel, renewable energy, and the pharmaceutical industry.

She invited Pakistani investments in Oman's manufacturing sector, offering incentives such as cheap gas and raw materials.

She also showed interest in acquiring raw materials from Pakistan, due to close proximity and low logistics costs, especially in iron ore, fruits, and vegetables.

She also informed the minister that she had a couple of meetings with the Chamber of Commerce today and would hold sectoral business meetings tomorrow in Islamabad.

Both sides expressed optimism about the future of bilateral trade and investment, underscoring the need for continued dialogue and cooperation to fully realize the economic potential of their relationship.

# China FM says Palestinian factions agree to set up reconciliation government

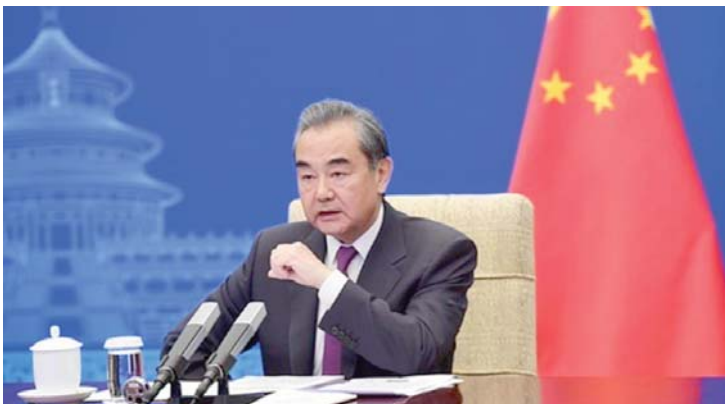
AFP

BEIJING: China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday hailed an agreement by 14 Palestinian factions to set up an "interim national reconciliation government" to govern Gaza after the war.

Palestinian factions including Hamas and Fatah met in Beijing this week in a renewed bid for reconciliation.

As the meeting wrapped up on Tuesday, China's top diplomat said the groups had committed to "reconciliation".

"The most prominent highlight is the agreement to form an interim national reconciliation government



around the governance of post-war Gaza," Wang said following the signing of the "Beijing declaration" by the

factions in the Chinese capital. "Reconciliation is an internal matter for the Palestinian factions, but at

the same time, it cannot be achieved without the support of the international community," Wang said.

China, he added, was keen to "play a constructive role in safeguarding peace and stability in the Middle East."

Hamas and Fatah have been bitter rivals since Hamas fighters ejected Fatah from the Gaza Strip after deadly clashes that followed Hamas's resounding victory in a 2006 election.

The Islamist Hamas movement has ruled Gaza since seizing control of it in 2007.

The secularist Fatah movement controls the Palestinian Authority, which has partial administrative control in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

# US Secret Service director Kimberly Cheatle resigns after Trump assassination bid

Reuters

US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle enters a House of Representatives Oversight Committee hearing on the security lapses that allowed an attempted assassination of Republican presidential nominee and former US president Donald Trump, on Capitol Hill in Washington, US, July 22, 2024. Reuters

US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle resigned on Tuesday, a day after acknowledging that the agency failed in its mission to prevent an assassination attempt against Donald Trump. Cheatle was facing bipar-

tisan calls to step down after a 20-year-old gunman wounded the former Republican president and current White House candidate at a July 13 campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

"It is overdue, she should have done this at least a week ago," Mike Johnson, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, told reporters. "I'm happy to see that she has heeded the call of both Republicans and Democrats."

President Joe Biden thanked Cheatle for her nearly three decades in the Secret Service and said she had "selflessly dedicated and risked her life to protect our nation throughout her career."

"We all know what happened that day can never happen again," Biden said in a statement. "As we move forward, I wish Kim all the best, and I will plan to appoint a new director soon."

Cheatle appeared before a congressional committee on Monday and said the attack on Trump, who was slightly wounded in his right ear, represented a failure by the Secret Service.

She called it "the most significant operational failure of the Secret Service in decades."

Both Republicans and Democrats called on Cheatle to resign. She drew the ire of lawmakers from both parties by refusing

to provide specific details about the attack, citing the existence of multiple active investigations.

The gunman opened fire on Trump with an AR-style assault rifle just minutes after he began speaking at the campaign event.

Perched on the roof of a nearby building, he was shot dead by a Secret Service sniper less than 30 seconds after firing the first of eight shots.

Investigators have concluded the young man, who lived in a town about 80 kilometres from Butler, acted alone, and have not been able to identify any strong ideological or political leanings.

Two rally attendees were



seriously wounded and a 50-year-old Pennsylvania firefighter, Corey Comperatore, was shot dead.

Trump's former physician said over the weekend that the Republican candidate sustained a two-centimetre (almost one

inch) gunshot wound on his right ear.

"The bullet passed, coming less than a quarter of an inch from entering his head, and struck the top of his right ear," said ex-White House physician Ronny Jackson.

Cheatle served as a Secret Service agent for 27 years before leaving in 2021 to become the head of security in North America for PepsiCo.

She was named to head the agency by President Biden in 2022.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
78,987.09	78,539.18
Day's High	Day's Low
79,585.34	78,634.15
Index Value	Change
8,401,189,843	+447.91
Percentage	Time
-0.57%	23 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,167.37	-31.41
Percentage	Time
-0.38%	23 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,453.55	+38.11
Percentage	Time
+0.094%	23 Jul, 1:57 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,594.39	-4.61
Percentage	Time
-0.012%	23 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184.75	186.55
Bahrain Dinar	741.15	749.15
Canadian Dollar	203.65	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	76.5	77.25
UK Pound Sterling	354.5	358.35
US Dollar	278.5	280

# Mansehra Police shine under DPO Shafiullah Gandapur's visionary command: Zafar Bakhtawari

**Spokesman Report**

MANSEHRA: Mansehra is known for its natural beauty and peaceful atmosphere, making it an attractive destination for tourists. The city and its surrounding areas offer a range of attractions and activities like the Kaghan Valley, Naran and the Saiful Malook Lake. The local community is also known for its hospitality and warm welcomes to visitors.

This has been stated by District Police Officer (DPO) Mansehra Shafiullah Gandapur while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry which called on him under the leadership of former President ICCI and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari.

Shafiullah Gandapur said that the Mansehra police is playing a vital role in promoting tourism in the area by extending maximum facilities to tourists which will surely have a positive impact on the local economy and community.

He went on to say that by establishing national brands in Mansehra, the city can



promote its unique identity, create employment opportunities and contribute to the national economy. He also expressed the hope

that other national brands will follow suit and establish their businesses in the region for the benefit of its people as well as for the promotion

of commercial activities.

To mark the occasion, the DPO honored Mr. Zafar Bakhtawari by donning him with a traditional turban and presenting him with a gun, in accordance with time-honored Pakhtoon customs.

On his part, Zafar Bakhtawari expressed gratitude to the DPO for maintaining peace and supporting tourism development in the area. He briefed the DPO on ICCI's initiatives to promote businesses in the capital city and urged the KP government to develop infrastructure along the Silk Road, including rest areas, mosques, washrooms, first aid centers and Tourism Facilitation Centers to enhance tourism, which in turn will benefit the local community and increase foreign exchange earnings.

Appreciating the role of Shafiullah Gandapur in North Waziristan, he said that the persons like Gandapur should initiate dialogue with the terrorists to overcome the menace adding that Shafiullah Gandapur is a brave and visionary Police Officer and the government of Pakistan must fully utilize his capabilities to address the problem of terrorism along the Afghan border.

## Traditional items

RAWALPINDI: A vendor is displaying handmade traditional items attraction for customers on his bicycle alongside a road in the city.



Photo: Online

## Public outrage over electricity bills is rising

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Samina Fazil, founder president of the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI), said on Tuesday that there is increasing anxiety among the people over exorbitant electricity bills.

The public's anger over electricity bills can erupt like a volcano at any time, which will be very difficult for the authorities to handle, she added.

She stated that since IPPs have become a threat to the country's security, the government should resolve this issue immediately.

Speaking at a meeting of women entrepreneurs, she asserted that the presence of corrupt IPPs hinders economic growth and prevents the masses from experiencing relief. If we don't address the growing public discontent over electricity bills, she warned, large crowds may choose to demonstrate violently.

Samina Fazil said that the politicians who brought the country's economy to the brink to reward crooked IPPs are now expressing rage over excessive bills, which is deceitful



behaviour.

She noted that corrupt politicians are sacrificing the interests of 240 million people in order to benefit 40 families who own different IPPs.

She advocated for an immediate halt to the establishment of new IPPs, citing Pakistan's abundant power generation capacity relative to demand. Politics and IPP favoritism cause load shedding, not power shortages. She demanded that the contracts with IPPs be either balanced or cancelled, and that the government pay its own IPPs a reasonable price.

Electricity should also be purchased from the IPPs of the friendly country of China

at a reasonable price, and this practice of plunder should be stopped because the IPP owners have been paid trillions of rupees and they have also rewarded their facilitators well. On this occasion, IWCCI President Rizwana Asif, Senior Vice President Sonia Saleem, and former President Mrs. Mumtaz said that they will not allow the exploitation of 240 million people for the sake of 40 corrupt families.

Businesswomen across the country pay outstanding tribute to former Federal Minister Gohar Ijaz and United Business Group Patron SM Tanveer for exposing the corruption of IPPs and offering all-out cooperation to both leaders.

## Up to 12-hour load shedding in HESCO region solely attributed to NTDC is not correct: NTDC spokesman

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: In response to a news story published in a section of press on July 22, 2024, the spokesman of the National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) has clarified about the recent power outages experienced in the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) service areas.

According to NTDC spokesman, additional load management measures implemented in the HESCO region were carried out in accordance with the NEPRA Grid Code 2023. This action was taken in response to an emergency situation that arose during the nights of Saturday and Sunday, July 21st and 22nd, 2024.

NTDC spokesman emphasized that the claim of a 12-hour load shedding period solely attributable to NTDC was an exaggerated figure and not an accurate representation of the situation. While explaining this, he said that the primary reason for these measures was a significant dip in power generation from the 36 wind farms located in the Gharo and Jhimpir wind clusters. These wind farms, with a combined installed capacity of 1,845 MW, support the 500 kV Jamshoro grid station of NTDC. The abnormally low wind speeds resulted in a drastic reduction in wind power generation, leading to an extreme load burden on the NTDC transformers at Jamshoro Grid Station.

In an effort to safeguard the critical equipment, NTDC coordinated with the HESCO authorities to implement additional load shedding measures. However, the wind generation was normalized by Sunday morning, and the additional load shedding was no longer required in the HESCO service area.

It is important to note that the actual load shedding duration was significantly less than the 12 hours flashed in the news report. The spokesman stated that the quantum of load shedding was about 75 MW for 4 hours and 142 MW for 6 hours on Saturday and Sunday nights respectively, resulting in an average interruption of approximately 01 hour per 11kV feeder selected by HESCO for this power curtailment.

## Telenor Microfinance Bank Announces Jahanzeb Khan as New President & CEO

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB), operator of Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform easypaisa, has appointed Jahanzeb Khan as President & CEO, effective 24th July 2024.

Jahanzeb is an accomplished executive with over 25 years of global banking experience and expertise in leading organizational transformation. He has demonstrable success in areas such as digital banking, payments, fintech, M&A and business growth across North American and Asian markets. Jahanzeb brings with him a wealth of leadership experience from global blue-chip organizations like JP Morgan Chase



& Co., one of the largest global financial services institutions, where he spent twenty years.

Recently, he successfully led FINCA Microfinance Bank as the CEO. He has a proven track record in consistently delivering exceptional results by developing high-performance teams, focusing on value drivers, and executing strategy. This is Jahanzeb's second stint with TMB. He had earlier joined TMB as Chief Product officer and later as Chief Strategy Officer.

## Commerce Plex and Faysal Bank Ltd Partner to Revolutionize Remittances in Pakistan

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Commerce Plex, a wholly owned and fully licensed subsidiary of Simpaisa Holdings is collaborating with Faysal Bank Ltd to seamlessly integrate fintech innovation with banking expertise. This strategic alliance aims to provide increased efficiency and transparency in remittance services. With roots originating in the UK and licensed & regulated as a Foreign Money Services Business (FMSB) by FINTRAC in Canada, Commerce Plex is committed to supporting Pakistan's remittance landscape by further improving the inflow of USD into Pakistan through government-approved channels.

This strategic partnership

between Commerce Plex and Faysal Bank Ltd will pave the way for exceptional service levels in remittance services. By leveraging cutting-edge fintech innovation and banking expertise, this collaboration aims to significantly boost the inflow of USD into Pakistan. The enhanced transparency and efficiency will open new corridors for receiving remittances into the country, making it easier for expatriates to send money home.

Yassir Pasha, Co-Founder & CEO of Simpaisa, enthusiastically declared, "This partnership is set to significantly boost the inflow of foreign currency, unlocking a wealth of new opportunities for USD and other foreign exchanges to fuel our nation's economic growth and development."

## RCCI assures cooperation with the visiting delegation of Oman Chamber of Commerce

**Commerce Desk**

RAWALPINDI: President, RCCI, Mr. Saqib Rafiq had a meeting with the visiting delegation of Oman Chamber of Commerce headed by H. E. Ibtisam Ahmed Said Al Farooji, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion of Oman. Matters related to the close cooperation between the Chambers of Commerce and joint ventures and exploring investment opportunities in various sectors including, Energy, IT, Tourism, Poultry, Gems and Pharmaceutical etc were



discussed. Other dignitaries included Ambassador of Oman to Pakistan, representatives of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry and representatives from private sector, TDAP representatives, including Mr. Arif Ullah and Mr. Ishaq Shinwari were also present on the occasion along with Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh and Executive Committee Member Ikram ur Rehman Abbasi.

## Ali Takesh joins Philip Morris Pakistan and Afghanistan as New Managing Director

**Spokesman Report**



ISLAMABAD: Ali Takesh has been appointed as the new Managing Director for Philip Morris Pakistan and Afghanistan, effective August 1, 2024. Ali Takesh succeeds Roman Yazbeck, who has led the company since January 2020 and will exit his role on July 31, 2024.

Ali Takesh brings extensive experience from his last role as Managing Director for Saudi Arabia and Kuwait at Philip Morris International ("PMI"), based in Dubai, UAE. With a strong background in driving commercial strategies and managing significant market transitions, Ali Takesh is well-prepared to lead Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited ("PMPKL") into its next phase of growth.

Ali Takesh, the incoming Managing Director, shared his comments about joining PMPKL, "I am thrilled to take on this leadership role at PMPKL. The company has a strong foundation, and I am eager to build on the successes achieved under Roman's leadership. In the coming months and years, we will focus on strengthening our market presence, driving innovation, and deepening our relationships with partners and stakeholders. I look forward to working closely with our dedicated employees, who are our greatest asset, to achieve our ambitious goals."

Ali Takesh's tenure at PMI also includes other roles such as Managing Director of Egypt and Vice President of Operations for the EEMA Region, where he was instrumental in executing growth strategies and managing complex regulatory environments. His strategic insights and operational expertise will be invaluable as he navigates the challenges and opportunities ahead.

# Serena Hotels supports Young Female Talent with 'Tee to Triumph' Golf Training Programme

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels proudly tees off the second season of the two-week "Tee to Triumph" golf training programme for young girls, under the Sports Diplomacy Initiative. This initiative, in collaboration with the Margalla Greens Golf Club, aims to provide these aspiring golfers with a platform to learn and improve their skills in a sport that is both challenging and rewarding.

The training programme, currently underway at the scenic Margalla Greens Golf Club, is attracting enthusiastic participation from over 25 young girls. They are being trained under the expert supervision of the club's coaches. The programme will conclude on August 1, 2024, with a closing ceremony.

The participants have expressed their gratitude to Serena Hotels and Margalla Greens Golf Club for their unwavering support and for providing them with such a valuable opportunity.

"We are pleased to partner with Serena Hotels on this wonderful initiative. The 'Tee to Triumph' golf training programme not only introduces young girls to the



sport but also helps build their confidence and discipline. It is a pleasure to see their progress and enthusiasm," said Commodore (Retired) Majid Satti, Secretary Margalla Greens Golf Club.

"Serena Hotels believe in the power of sports to bring positive change and inspire the younger generation. This sponsorship of the 'Tee to Triumph' golf training programme is a proof of dedi-

cation to encouraging talent, promoting sports, and empowering young girls to pursue their ambitions," said Junaid Shafiqat, General Manager Marketing & Communication.

## Gold medal winning sisters honoured

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Sports Board Punjab organized a grand ceremony at Punjab International Swimming Complex on Tuesday to honour three powerlifter sisters—Twinkle Sohail, Sybil Sohail and Veronica Sohail, who clinched 15 gold medals in Asian Pacific African Combined Powerlifting Championship in South Africa.

Secretary Sports Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial and DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal were the guests of honour on this occasion.

Director Admin Dr M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Director Zahoor Ahmed, Administrator Punjab Swimming Complex Amir Shah, Chairman Desi Khushi Federation Nadeem Pehlwan and father of three sisters Mr Sohail were also present on this occasion.

Talking to media on this occasion Secretary Sports Punjab said that winning 15 gold medals is a great



achievement and definitely it is a historic occasion for the country. "Without any doubt, the Sohail Sisters grabbed a great respect for the country on foreign soil," he added.

He said that the three female players have been helped in every possible way according to the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and the direction of Punjab Minister for Sports Malik

Faisal Ayub Khokhar. "Punjab Sports Department will continue to provide more facilities to athletes for the preparation of international sports competitions including Commonwealth Games".

DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal, in his media talk, said that the three sisters have earned great respect for the country by winning 15 gold medals. "The way Sohail sisters have achieved success in international powerlifting competition, it is definitely a great inspiration and motivation for young girls and women".

He further said that all possible facilities will be provided to these players for their preparation and participation in Commonwealth Games and other international powerlifting competitions.

The three sisters also expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Minister for Sports Faisal Khokhar, Secretary Sports and DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal for extending the best facilities that made this great achievement possible.

## ACB proposes Youth Tri-Series with Pakistan, UAE



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) is exploring the possibility of organizing a Youth Tri-Series involving Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the near future.

This initiative was discussed during the ICC's annual Board Meeting, which took place this week in Colombo.

ACB Chairman Mirwaiz Ashraf and CEO Naseeb Khan were present at the meeting, where they engaged in talks with representatives from Cricket South Africa, Cricket New Zealand, and Cricket West Indies.

The discussions centered on potential white-ball series opportunities leading up to the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

"Afghanistan Cricket Board's Chairman, Mr Mirwaiz Ashraf, and CEO, Naseeb Khan, attended the ICC Board Meeting which was held this week in Sri Lanka and was attended by representatives from other member countries," the ACB said as quoted by cricketpakistan.com.pk.

"During the meeting, ACB's leadership presented recent achievements, activities, and future plans for the Afghanistan Cricket Board. They also held discussions with representatives from Cricket South Africa, Cricket New Zealand, and Cricket West Indies about potential white-ball bilateral cricket ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025."

The proposed Youth Tri-Series, featuring Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the UAE, would be a significant addition to the cricketing calendar, with dates and venues yet to be finalized. Additionally, ACB is considering A-team tours to Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

"The discussions also included A team tours to Bangladesh and Zimbabwe, and the possibility of a Youth Tri-Series against Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, with the dates and venues to be confirmed," it said.

## Waseem shines in Scrabble Championship

Sports Desk



ISLAMABAD: Waseem Khatri of Pakistan made a scintillating start at the Scrabble Players Championship (formerly North American Scrabble Championship) at South Bend, USA.

At the halfway mark of the four-day championship Waseem is currently No. 1 with 11 wins and a spread of 1095. Alec Sjöholm of USA is 2nd while Joshua Castellano of Canada is 3rd, said a press release.

Another Pakistani, former world youth champion Moiz Baig returning to competitive scrabble after a gap of one year is also in tremendous form, currently lying 4th ahead of many stalwarts.

Waseem, the 2022 runner-up at this championship is averaging an incredible 487 points per game; the highest among all.

The two young Pakistanis are placed in the top division along with some of the best scrabble players in the world. The field includes a former world champion, a former world youth champion, 5 former North American champions, one Canadian champion and one British champion.

## Pakistan qualify for Women's Asia Cup 2024 as India crush Nepal

A Sports

DAMBULLA: Pakistan women's team on Tuesday, qualified for the ACC Women's Asia Cup 2024 semi-final, courtesy of India's statement 82-run victory over Nepal.

Pakistan were second in the Group A standings of the eight-team tournament following their 10-wicket victory over the United Arab Emirates (UAE) earlier today.

The Green Shirts had put one foot in the semi-finals with a thumping victory and wanted Nepal to lose their final group-stage fixture against former champions India.

However, even if Nepal had managed to beat India, they needed to win the match by a hefty margin to topple Pakistan's net run rate but that was not the case in the end.

Opting to bat first, India registered a massive total of 178/3 with opening batter Shafali Verma leading the charge with a quickfire half-century.

Verma top-scored for India with a 48-ball 81 which featured 12 fours and a six.

She was also involved in a magnificent 122-run opening partnership with Dayalan Hemalatha, who contributed significantly with a 42-ball 47.

Sita Rana Magar was the pick of the bowlers for Nepal, picking up two wickets for just 25 runs in her four overs.

In response, Nepal's batting unit struggled against a Deepti Sharma-led India bowling attack and were restricted to 96/9 in the allotted overs.

## Pakistan women grab 10-wicket win over UAE in Asia Cup

Sports Desk

DAMBULLA: Opener Gull Feroza smacked her second consecutive half-century to steer Pakistan to a comprehensive ten-wicket triumph over United Arab Emirates (UAE) in their Women's Asia Cup T20 2024 encounter at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Tuesday.

Opting to field first, Pakistan bowlers made early inroads into the UAE batting, restricting them to 103-8 in 20 overs.

Pakistan in their chase galloped to 107 without loss in 14.1 overs, with 35 balls to spare. Pakistan Women have taken a significant step forward towards improving their chance of securing a semi-final berth.

It was Pakistan openers Gul Feroza and Muneeba Ali, who continued their good form from their previous game against



Nepal and maintained it in their final league match against UAE. The two opening batters remained stitched unbeaten partnership of 107 runs, which is also the second century partner-

ship between the pair after they made 105 runs in the previous match.

Gull who reached her second successive fifty in 46 balls went on to score career best unbeaten

62. Her 55-ball innings was also laced with eight boundaries. Her opening partner, Muneeba got unbeaten 37 on board that came off 30 balls. She also timed the ball through the ropes four times.

The UAE Women's batting lineup faced a tough challenge against the Pakistan Women's bowling attack. Theertha Satish top-scored with 40 runs, while Esha Oza contributed 16. Khushi Sharma managed just 12 runs as the UAE innings struggled to gain momentum.

Sadia Iqbal, Nashra Sundhu and Tuba Hassan were the pick of the Pakistan bowlers, claiming two wickets each for 11, 22 and 17 runs respectively.

**Scores in brief:**

Pakistan won by ten wickets United Arab Emirates Women 103-8, 20 overs (Theertha Satish 40, Esha Oza 16, Khushi Sharma 12; Sadia Iqbal 2-11, Tuba Hassan 2-17, Nashra Sundhu 2-22.)

Pakistan Women (Gull Feroza 62 not out, Muneeba Ali 37 not out)

Player of the match: Gull Feroza

## England rising star Bashir 'still learning tricks of the trade'

Sports Desk

England's Shoab Bashir may already be a Test-match winning bowler but the 20-year-old off-spinner insists he's still learning "the tricks of the trade".

The towering Bashir ripped through the West Indies in the second Test at Trent Bridge, taking 5-41 on Sunday's fourth day as the tourists lost all 10 of their second-innings wickets in 23 overs, with England winning by 181 runs to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Bashir had only made six first-class appearances when he was catapulted into the Test side during a tour of India earlier this year and he responded with two five-wicket hauls on pitches renowned for aiding spinners.

But his progress appeared to have stalled at the start of the English county season, with Bashir kept out of the Somerset side by a more experienced

England spinner in Jack Leach.

Shoab Bashir went on loan to county rivals Worcestershire in a bid to get more game time but England captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum kept faith all the same.

"A lot has happened in the last few years," said Bashir. "I can't get ahead of Leachy at Somerset, understandably, he's obviously played a lot more cricket than I have."

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"Jack was over the moon for me (getting selected for England). We had a chat and he just told me to enjoy it. He's a class spinner and I've learned a lot off him. There's always so much to learn. I'm only 20, I'm still learning the tricks of the trade."

"There's a lot to work on, in cricket you never complete the game. Going on loan was a decision I had to make to play cricket at a high level, that's part

of the journey."

He added: "I didn't have too many expectations going into this game, I'm still trying to comprehend what's happened."

Shoab Bashir has now taken a highly promising 24 wickets at an average of 29.83 in five Tests compared to a modest return of 16 at 70.68 in 10 domestic first-class matches.

But the current England selectors are not overly concerned by statistics, with team management identifying Bashir's height and ability to get drift, in addition to bowling an attacking line, as qualities that made him suited to international cricket.

"Bowling spin in England is pretty tough, but I'm grateful I'm a 6ft 4in (1.93 metres) spinner because it's a nice attribute to have," he said.

"The extra bounce helps. We saw it here (at Trent Bridge), if you land the ball in the right areas, a few will bounce



and a few will skid on. I've got experienced guys in the team that help me make judgments on the pitch, what

lines to bowl and what paces to bowl. I'm just grateful to be in the position I am. I'm always going to stay

grounded, stay humble, and I'm just trying to enjoy every moment I have in an England shirt."

## Called on

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan H.E. Rashid Meredov called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## PM invites Turkmen companies to benefit from promising investment climate in Pakistan

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday invited the Turkmen companies to benefit from the promising investment climate of Pakistan and highlighted the role of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in facilitating foreign investors to invest in different sectors.

He also underlined the importance of regional cooperation and connectivity and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to early completion of TAPI Pipeline as well as working together on other connectivity projects.

PM invites Turkmen companies to benefit from promising investment climate in Pakistan

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of

Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov who called on him at the PM House, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister expressed satisfaction at the holding of 3rd Round of Pakistan-Turkmenistan Bilateral Political Consultations, led by the two foreign ministers and stressed the need for regular engagements of all the institutional mechanisms between the two countries.

He also highlighted the need for enhanced trade, economic, investment and cultural relations between Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

The prime minister fondly recalled his meeting with the Grand Leader of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov at Astana earlier this month and said that he was looking forward to welcome him in Pakistan at an early date.

## Gillani stresses importance of scientific innovation in securing OIC security

### Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani has emphasized the importance of scientific innovation and collaboration in addressing the interconnected challenges being faced by OIC countries vis-a-vis water, energy, food, and ecosystems security.

He was addressing the 25th IAS Scientific Conference, titled "Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus for the Security of OIC Countries," as Chief Guest today at the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) in Islamabad. The conference, organized jointly by the Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS) and the Pakistan Academy



of Sciences (PAS), gathered distinguished scientists and researchers to discuss critical issues facing OIC countries. The Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani acknowledged the vital role of IAS and PAS in fostering scientific excel-

lence as a pivot to address and resolve socio-economic issues. He also highlighted high-profile patronage of IAS by leaders, including His Royal Highness Prince El-Hassan bin Talal of Jordan and His Excellency Asif Ali Zardari, President of Paki-

stan and called it indicative of the significant political support for scientific progress.

He reaffirmed commitment to fostering scientific research and innovation as key drivers for inclusive development and growth. He expressed

hope for continued collaboration to support interdisciplinary cooperation in terms of promoting science diplomacy for the betterment of the OIC countries.

Senator Sherry Rehman also participated in the conference and read out message from the President H. E. Asif Ali Zardari.

Prof. Kausar Abdulla Malik, President Pakistan Sciences Academy, Prof. Adnan Badran, President, Islamic World Academy of Sciences also addressed the gathering and highlighted the crucial role of water, energy, food and ecosystem. Speakers observed that our challenges are common and there is need for adopting collective approach to tackle the burgeoning threats posed by climate change

## Aimal Wali Khan & Sardar M. Yusuf called on Abdul Aleem Khan

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: The whole nation stands united with one voice against terrorism and it is needed to fully implement the National Action Plan. Moreover, there is a dire need for strictest action against the facilitators of terrorists. These views were expressed by the President Istehtkam-e-Pakistan Party & Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan and President of Awami National Party and Senator Aimal Wali Khan in the meeting.

Aimal Wali Khan called



on Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan in his office. President IPP Abdul Aleem Khan congratulated Aimal Wali Khan on the success of ANP in the recent by-election at Bajaur. He said that for the development of the country political harmony among parties is of utmost importance and is required to ensure stability of political

policies on a long-term basis. Federal Communications Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that the construction of the motorway from Mansehra to Babu Sir Top in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa province is his top priority because he believes that the fastest road network from Mansehra to Gilgit would be a game changer for the entire province.

He said that the entry of overloading trucks and trawlers on the motorways has been prohibited to protect the national highways from vandalism and accidents. President Awami National Party and Senator Aimal Wali Khan discussed the current domestic and political situation with President IPP and Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan and pointed out some problems related to their area.

### PTI to stage daily...

Continued from Page 1

however we want."

He added that the protest conveyed the party's position against the "injustice, unfairness, and the illegal and unconstitutional things that are happening [to us]."

He added that PTI parliamentarians were staging a sit-in to uphold the law and the constitution, despite having reservations about some "strangers" occupying parliamentary positions.

Leader of Opposition in NA Omar Ayub called for the incumbent government to step down and hold transparent elections. He argued that only free and fair elections can steer the country out of its ongoing crises.

## CM Maryam chairs 5th meeting of Standing Committee of Cabinet on Finance and Development (SCCFD)

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: "Review establishment of Bone Marrow Transplant Center in Punjab," Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned while chairing the 5th meeting of Standing Committee of Cabinet on Finance and Development (SCCFD). She approved increase in financial powers of Commissioners, Deputy Commissioner, and Revenue Secretaries, and gave a go-ahead to recruit against the vacant posts in Health Information and Service Delivery Unit and Punjab Transport Company, besides the recruitment of Entomologist and Assistant Entomologist across Punjab.

Standing Committee of Cabinet on Finance and Development (SCCFD) gave approval to Architecture Allowance for the employees of Punjab Architecture Department, besides approving increase in commission allowance for the PPSC employees.

SCCFD approved increase in grant for Multan Institute of Kidney Diseases, besides approving to change the name of Government Public Library Roshan Bhila Kasur to Javed Mahmood Public Library Roshan Bhila.

Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Mairiyum Aurangzeb and Finance Minister Mujtaba Shujaat Rahman attended the meeting. Chairman P&D, SMBR, Secretaries and other officers concerned were also present.



## Pakistan 'seeks' rescheduling of \$15bln Chinese loan

### Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb will embark on a visit to China starting today, as Pakistan is seeking a rescheduling of \$15bln loan from Beijing, well-placed sources told ARY News on Tuesday.

As per details, a joint working group will be established between Pakistan and China to facilitate the loan rescheduling, sources added.

Additionally, discussions will address China's energy circular debt, which currently amounts to Rs 480 billion.

The Finance Minister will also engage in talks regarding the Panda

Bond. Pakistan aims to secure a \$250 million Panda Bond during this visit.

The \$2 billion loan was due in March and was extended for one year. Beijing had communicated the decision to Islamabad, it added.

Pakistan's cash-strapped economy is struggling to stabilise from a financial crisis and secured a \$3 billion standby arrangement from the International Monetary Fund last summer.

Pakistan's vulnerable external position means that securing financing from multilateral and bilateral partners will be one of the most urgent issues facing the next government, ratings agency Fitch said last week.

## Govt. will not yield to PTI's trolling tactics: Ahsan Iqbal

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said on Tuesday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was using trolling as a weapon to intimidate individuals and institutions.

While talking to a private news channel, he said that spreading false and baseless narrative against anyone who opposed them was the norm for PTI.

"PTI resorts to intimidation whenever something doesn't align with their interests, whether it targets an individual or an institution," Iqbal stated.

He further said that disagreeing with them makes it difficult to maintain one's respect. Minister firmly stated that the government would

not yield to such blackmailing tactics.

"Will we surrender to this blackmailing? Will our laws and state institutions bow to them?" he questioned, affirming the government's stance against succumbing to intimidation.

Answering a question, he said that polarization was a major threat, and the information war was an inescapable reality. False news is being spread openly to create chaos, anarchy, and mischief, he added.

Iqbal emphasized that the government is focused on strengthening the country economically and will not tolerate propaganda against the state.

He said that the government cannot allow thoughtful conspiracies to create a rift between the people and the state. Legal action will be taken against anyone found spreading anti-state content, he added.

## PPP seeks review of SC's reserved seats verdict

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party has pleaded to the Supreme Court to suspend its decision on reserved seats and review it.

The apex court had on May 12 overturned the denial of reserved seats to the PTI.

The PPP plea filed by Barrister Farooq Naik in the apex court also sought to keep the July 12 order in abeyance till decision on the review petition.

The Supreme Court didn't serve a formal notice with regard to granting special seats to the PTI, the PPP pleaded.

"The Supreme Court's order has been silent over the actual dispute," according to petition.

"The July 12 order of the apex court has been against the agreed rules of the interpretation of the constitution," PPP said. "The court didn't declare Article 51 and section 104 as void".

"The court order has been in contrast to the constitution and the law", the party pleaded.

PPP said that the court's findings flout the petitions of the Sunni

Ittehad Council (SIC) and other parties. "SIC and the PTI are two separate parties," PPP argued.

Petition further stated that providing 15 days' time to 41 members contravene the constitution and the law. "None of the 80 members of the SIC appeared before the court".

According to the PPP plea, "Declaring 39 members affiliation with the PTI has been reviewable. The PTI was not a party at any forum," the People's Party said in its petition.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 split verdict of the supreme court on a petition filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an ally of the PTI.

Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha Malik, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan were other judges who ruled in favour of the PTI in the majority verdict.

The top court also nullified the Peshawar High Court's order wherein it had upheld the ECP's decision over the reserved seats in assemblies.