



US seeking diplomatic solution after hostilities erupt along Israel-Lebanese border

The United States says it is working on a diplomatic solution in the wake of the outbreak of hostilities along the border between Israel and Lebanon after a rocket attack that killed civilians in the Israeli occupied Golan Heights, for which it blamed Hezbollah.



We are committed to make Punjab biggest digital hub of South Asia: CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif

"All possible measures are being taken to eliminate environmental pollution in Punjab," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in a meeting with British High Commissioner in Pakistan H. E. Jane Marriott to discuss promotion of mutual cooperation in education, health and other sectors. She added, "We are providing solar panels to people for economic relief." (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Briefing meeting

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari being briefed about the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) by Chairperson BISP, Mrs Rubina Khalid, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Monday.



Photo: PID

President for enhanced BISP outreach, number of beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday underscored the need for enhancing the outreach of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) as well as the number of beneficiaries for the uplift of underprivileged sections of society. The President expressed these views during a briefing given by the Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Mrs Rubina Khalid, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. He asked the Chairperson of BISP to establish an office at

Gwadar so that the deserving people of the area could benefit from the Programme. Taking note of the 0.45% service charges by the banks from BISP cardholders, the president said that the service charges needed to be waived off, and in this regard, the State Bank of Pakistan should be approached to ask banks for opening accounts for BISP beneficiaries. He said that the new payment system would also protect BISP beneficiaries from exploitation. He also called for engaging donors and the private sector to support BISP in its endeavours

to provide scholarships to the maximum number of deserving students. During the briefing, the President was informed about the core initiatives taken by BISP, including the Benazir Kafalat Program, Benazir Taleemi Program, Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Program, BISP Scholarships for Undergraduates Program and Benazir Nashonuma Program. Chairperson BISP informed that Rs 598.718 billion had been allocated for BISP during the ongoing fiscal year. She said that Benazir Kafalat was the flagship program of

BISP, providing unconditional cash transfers to eligible women and transgender persons across Pakistan. It was highlighted that Rs 461 billion had been allocated for the Benazir Kafalat Program, during FY 2024-25, for 9.3 million eligible families. In order to enhance school enrolment and provide education to children from low-income households, she informed that Rs 77.18 billion had been allocated for the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif which would benefit 9.7 million children. It was further highlighted that Rs 1.7 billion had been allocated to provide

10,000 scholarships to students under the BISP Scholarships for Undergraduates Program. The meeting was told that Special Nutrition Food was also being provided to 2 million pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their infants to address the issues of malnutrition and stunting. She also informed that during the floods in 2022, BISP disbursed Rs 70 billion to 2.7 million flood-affected families across Pakistan. The President appreciated BISP for providing monetary relief to the deserving and underprivileged strata of society.

Sepoy martyred after mob in Baloch Raji Muchi assaults security forces in Gwadar: ISPR

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A combination of file photos sent by the Inter-Services Public Relations shows injured soldiers after mob attack in Gwadar on July 29, 2024. A soldier was martyred when a "violent mob in garb of so-called Baloch Raji Muchi" assaulted security forces' personnel in Gwadar district on Monday, the military's media wing.



unlawful violent march. "Security forces have displayed extreme restraint to avoid unwarranted civilian casualties despite provocations," it said, "the violent actions of the mob are unacceptable and those responsible will be brought to justice." The military's media wing urged all citizens not to "fall prey" to the propaganda, to remain calm and peaceful, and to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in maintaining public safety and order. "Security forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace and stability of Balochistan," it said.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations stated that the martyred soldier was Sepoy Shabbir Baloch, 30, of Sibi district. The security forces' personnel were employed for security duties in the port city. At least 16 soldiers, including an officer, were injured in the unprovoked assaults by the "violent protesters," it added. The ISPR claimed that fake and malicious propaganda was being run on social media using doctored pictures and videos by the propagandists to gain sympathy and support for the

PM commends security forces for successful operation against terrorists

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday commended the officers and personnel of security forces for launching successful operations against terrorists at three separate places in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In a statement, the prime minister said the security forces fought bravely with Khawarij terrorists in Mohmand, Dera Ismail Khan and North Waziristan areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and killed five of them. He paid tribute to Police Constable Ibrar Hussain who embraced martyrdom during fight with the Fitnah-al-Khawarij terrorists. He prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of the departed soul in Jannah and to grant patience to the family members of the martyr to bear this loss with courage.



The joint operation of the security forces proved that the terrorists cannot escape from the officers and soldiers who are determined to defend their homeland, the prime minister added. He said the nation stood by its security forces until the menace of terrorism was completely uprooted from the country. The entire nation, including me, pays tribute to the security forces for their unwavering determination to defend the country, he added.

TLP deputy ameer arrested in Punjab's Okara for threatening to kill CJP Isa

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's (TLP) deputy ameer, Zaheerul Hassan Shah, was arrested in Punjab's Okara district on Monday for issuing death threats to Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Isa, sources said. He was hiding at an unknown location, they added. Earlier in the day, a first information report was registered in Lahore against the senior TLP leader for the above mentioned reason. The complaint was filed at the Qila Gujjar Singh police station by the Station House Officer (SHO) Hammad Hussain. Hassan has been charged under sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) for inciting religious hatred, causing public disorder, intimidating the judiciary, threatening CJP Isa, interfering in official duties, and obstructing legal functions. According to the FIR, Hassan incited hatred against the judiciary and "announced a reward of Rs10 million for anyone who brought the head of the CJP during a protest outside the Press Club." The complaint also included charges against 1,500 workers of the religiopolitical party. In response, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif stated that the government would take strict action against those who have issued death threats to the CJP. The state would not tolerate such fatwas (religious edicts) that call for violence, he added.

Minister Finance meets with the Ambassador Designate to the USA

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb was called on by the Ambassador designate to the USA Mr. Rizwan Saeed Sheikh at Finance Division today. The Finance Minister congratulated Mr. Sheikh on his new appointment as Ambassador to USA and underscored the importance of bilateral relations between the two countries. He shared insights from his visit to Washington D. C. for the Spring Meetings and informed about the recent Staff Level Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Minister also elaborated on Pakistan's economic reform agenda, focusing on key areas such as energy reforms, State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) reforms, and privatization efforts. Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh expressed keen interest in collaborating closely with the Finance Ministry. He affirmed his commitment to showcasing Pakistan's economic reforms agenda on the international platform. The Ambassador also conveyed his gratitude to the Finance Minister for his warm wishes and support.



Abbasi said: "You are standing on the wrong side of the court." After this heated exchange, the court adjourned the hearing. Upon resumption, the PTI chief apologised to Abbasi, which the NAB prosecutor accepted. Don't get personal with me, let's discuss the case. I have never talked about your personal life," Abbas said. Abbasi then challenged Khan and asked him if he could buy a complete dinner and tea set from Raja Bazar for Rs30,000. "Did Mohammed bin Salman gift you a Rs30,000 rupee dinner set and tea set?" Abbasi said: "You are standing on the wrong side of the court." After this heated exchange, the court adjourned the hearing. Upon resumption, the PTI chief apologised to Abbasi, which the NAB prosecutor accepted.

PTI's Khan, NAB prosecutor general had heated exchange during Toshakhana hearing

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A heated exchange took place between NAB Prosecutor General Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi and former prime minister Imran Khan during the hearing of the second Toshakhana reference in the special accountability court in Rawalpindi on Monday. As the case hearing began, Bushra Bibi also joined her husband on the rostrum. While conversing with the judge, Bushra said that she had left her decision to Allah and asked the judge "if he could

not see what the national-graft buster was doing." She alleged that continuous injustice was being done to them as NAB was "filing one false case after another." At this point, the PTI chief said that his wife had no connection with the state gifts and questioned why she was being allegedly punished. "I was the prime minister, but my wife was not in any public office." Khan said: "NAB officials are corrupt. Give them money and they will say whatever you want." This enraged the NAB prosecutor, leading to a bitter exchange of words between the two.

Don't get personal with me, let's discuss the case. I have never talked about your personal life," Abbas said. Abbasi then challenged Khan and asked him if he could buy a complete dinner and tea set from Raja Bazar for Rs30,000. "Did Mohammed bin Salman gift you a Rs30,000 rupee dinner set and tea set?" Abbasi said: "You are standing on the wrong side of the court." After this heated exchange, the court adjourned the hearing. Upon resumption, the PTI chief apologised to Abbasi, which the NAB prosecutor accepted.

PM directs measures to protect lives, properties amidst heavy rains

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the authorities concerned to take all possible measures to protect the lives and properties of the citizens amidst heavy rains in different parts of the country. The prime minister directed the National Disaster Management Authority to take immediate steps to cope with the emergency and extend support to the provincial governments as well as those of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan. He instructed the Islamabad city administration to facilitate the residents and ensure proper drainage of rainwater. Prime Minister Shehbaz directed the relevant departments to carry out constant monitoring, take coordinated measures and ensure evacuation of people from low-lying areas and drainage of water. Besides, he said the relevant authorities should ensure the provision of water pumps and other machinery, besides the deployment of medical staff, supply of medicines and vaccines, and timely treatment.



# Govt should not keep agreements with IPPs under wraps, insists Hafiz Naeem

Asim Tanveer

RAWALPINDI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Monday demanded that the government make 'illegal' agreements with the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) public.

Addressing the participants in the JI sit-in which entered the fourth day, he slammed the government for the exorbitant power bills leading to suicides.

He lauded the participants for creating a history by coming in droves and showing immense courage to weather all storms during the sit-in.

He claimed that no other party could become the true representative of 250 million people of Pakistan, except the



JI. Naeem criticised the government for creating hurdles for the JI women workers in Lahore, adding that it spoke of the government's cowardice. Taking the government to task over capacity payments to the IPPs, the JI emir said

people were not supposed to pay the taxes and the power bills, adding that "we have put across our demand to lift the capacity charges on electricity bills."

He also asked the government to conduct audit of all IPPs, adding that Rs2,600 billion circular debt had taken a huge toll on people's lives.

He also demanded the government to take back facilities of fuel and electricity from the civil servants, lamenting that civil servants used 1300cc cars which was just limited to using 1000cc cars in former premier Junejo's time.

Speaking about the petrol prices, he called for removing petroleum levy and adjusting petroleum products' prices accordingly.

*AJK PM stressed the need to take all roads open for traffic throughout the state during monsoon*

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has stressed the need for taking all possible measures to keep all roads across the state open for traffic during the monsoon as the national weather forecasting department predicts more rains in the country including Azad Kashmir. The AJK premier made these assertions while chairing a high meeting which was specially convened to assess damages caused by monsoon rains to road infrastructure in Azad Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, the PM directed the authorities to cancel leaves of officers and staff of all concerned departments including State Disaster Management Authority, 1122, NHA, Police, Administration and other related institutions for the next 2 months and asked them to stay vigilant to deal with any emergency situation. The PM said that steps should be taken on priority basis to restore the alternative 7 km road from Kohala to Muzaffarabad for heavy traffic. The Prime Minister also directed the concerned authorities to submit a daily report regarding the closure and maintenance of roads. The meeting was attended by Minister for Communications Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq and Chief Secretary Dawood Muhammad Bareech, whereas Director General State Disaster Management Authority Masood ur Rehman, Commissioner and DIG Muzaffarabad and officers of the NHA attended the meeting through video conferencing.

*Mirpur-Kotli road temporarily closed for traffic*



Bureau Report

MIRPUR: Due to the recent heavy monsoon rains, the Mirpur Kotli road broke on both sides at Dahiri Chaudharyan. There were small cracks on the road due to which the Mirpur Kotli road was temporarily closed for all types of traffic and the traffic was diverted. The alternative is being passed through the closed road. As soon as the incident was reported, the district administrative officers and high ways staff reached the spot on the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner.

Commissioner Chaudhry Shaukat Ali went to the spot and assessed the damages of the affected road and gave instructions to fill the cracks on the road with soil and gravel. The road department staff immediately started the work by installing heavy machinery to restore the road. Initially, the rough track will be restored on both sides of the affected road. The Roads Department removed a large drain from the road side, due to which the water coming into the road is being diverted through the culvert. Apart from Officer Mohammad Javed Malik, other people were also present. Magistrates and traffic police immediately closed both sides of the road.

*VC AIOU called on Sec Boards and Universities Sindh*



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Boards and Universities of Sindh, Muhammad Abbas Baloch assured Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) of his full support in allocation of government land for construction of Regional campus of the university at Hyderabad.

The assurance came in a meeting between Abbas Baloch and a delegation of AIOU led by Vice Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood at his office the other day.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood briefed him on the university's regional network in various parts of Sindh, particularly in remote areas, and its educational services.

Dr. Nasir Mahmood requested support from the Secretary for acquiring land for the construction of the Hyderabad campus. Director General Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmad Khan, and Director Admissions, Syed Zia ul Hassnain Naqvi, accompanied the Vice Chancellor during the meeting.

*Political parties have made the country a slave to the IMF: Allama Tahir*

Abdul Majid



FAISALABAD: Allama Tahir-ul-Hassan Central Deputy General Secretary of Pakistan Ulama Council said this in his special statement and added that the decision of Mubarak Sani case is a controversial decision and it is not in anyone's power to decide against the constitution and the law. It is a part of our faith. There is a wave of concern in the entire Muslim Ummah from the court decision and the controversial decision is a riot on the ground. Allama Tahir ul Hassan further said that Jamaat-e-Islami has paid the

right to interpret the people in the right sense. It has become difficult in this country. There are two laws, one for the poor and one for the rich. The government should collect taxes from landlords and capitalists and give relief to the poor people. Today, political parties have made the country a slave to the IMF.

The government has stopped giving free electricity. The electricity of mosques and madrasas should also be reduced by 50%. The demands of Jamaat-e-Islami are correct. The government should implement it and give people the right to live. So that the economic conditions of Pakistan can improve, the government will move forward towards reforms and the whole nation will continue to fight for its rights.

## Visit

H.E. Patricia Scotland, Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations, visited the National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) at NDMA HQs.



Photo: Online

# India does not stop the aggression on the Cease Fire Line it can have dire consequences

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD/ CHALHANA: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that I pay tribute to the people of Neelum that they are bravely and steadfastly fighting the Indian aggression on the ceasefire line. They did not back down at any cost. He said that if India does not stop the aggression on the Line of Control, it can have dire consequences. The people of Neelum Valley carried the funerals of thousands of martyrs on the Line of Control, thousands were injured, but India could not lower their morale. There are farmers. He said that measures should be taken to



ensure provision of facilities to tourists in Neelum Valley. A comprehensive strategy should be formulated to solve the problems of the people of Neelum. He expressed these views while addressing the reception by Shamim Ali Malik and Syed Saqlain Fida Kazmi on the occasion of the Kashmir Banega Pakistan rally at Chalhana. He said that in the past Neelum traveled from Muzaffarabad. It used to be settled in eight hours and I said at that time that in the coming times Neelum Mani will be in Dubai. And this credit for the spacious construction is due to the

Muslim Conference and the journey from Muzaffarabad to Athmaqam is being completed in just two hours. Mujahid e Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum traveled to Neelum on foot and listened to the problems of the people and started construction and development projects in the sixties. There was only one college in Neelum. Mujahid I established educational institutions for the convenience of the people. It is true that Mujahid e Awwal used to say that Neelum is my second home has happened I am deeply grateful to the people of Neelum.

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority Spokesperson/Director Public Relations Dr. Sohail Aftab promoted To Grade 19

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority Spokesperson/Director Public Relations Dr. Sohail Aftab promoted To Grade 19 on the basis of excellent performance. Dr. Sohail Aftab belongs to the Information Group. He has also obtained an LLM degree from Manchester University, United Kingdom. He also served as a Public Relations Officer in the Ministry of Defence & Ministry of Housing and Works before being appointed in National Highway Authority as Director (PR) on deputation. Besides this, Dr. Sohail Aftab also served as Deputy Director Training and Admin in the Publicity Wing and Audit Bureau of Circulation and Information Service Academy.



# Conducting a two-day conference titled 'The Next Horizon'

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Under the auspices of the National Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Organization, UN Women, empowering women, expanding democracy! Conducting a two-day conference titled "The Next Horizon". Practicing women parliamentarians from all four provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan participated in the conference. Azad Kashmir Minister Small Industries Trade and Travel Professor Taqdees Geelani, Minister for Kashmir Liberation Commission Intiaz Naeem, Adviser on Services and General Administration Nisara Abbasi and Adviser to Government Nabila



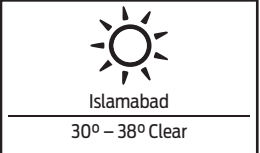
Ayub attended the conference. While in the conference, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women Nilofar Bakhtiar, Cenator Saleem Mandviwala, Speaker Sindh Assembly Anthony Naveed, Member Punjab Assembly and Chairperson Women Protection Authority Punjab Hina Parvez Butt, Member Punjab Assembly Asma Naz Abbasi,

O. I. Suman Ahsan of CU-N Women, Balochistan Education Minister Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Sindh Women Development Minister Shahina Sher Ali, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Ghazala Gola, Sindh Women Development Minister Shaina Sher Ali, film star Fawad Khan and members of national and provincial assemblies, UNICEF, UNFPA,

U. Representatives of NDP and UN Women attended. Addressing the conference, Azad Kashmir's Minister for Small Industries, Trade and Travel Professor Taqdees Geelani said that such conferences will help in developing a national agenda for political empowerment of women and economic development. Women's political participation is indispensable

for achieving gender equality and strengthening democracy. He said that there is a need for constitutional and structural reforms for the participation of women in governance in our country. Political parties should decide what percentage of tickets they will give to women for direct elections and what will be the role of women for key positions. Women should get roles in management positions according to their abilities. She should not be ignored as a woman. She said that it is important to ensure the participation of women in the political process in proportion to the population so that they can also serve the country and people according to their abilities she added.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| Fajr    | 3:42 am  |
| Zohr    | 12:14 pm |
| Asr     | 5:08 pm  |
| Maghrib | 7:10 pm  |
| Isha    | 8:46 pm  |

**EMERGENCY**

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

**ENQUIRY**

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Edhi Ambulance   | 115       |
| PIA Flight Info  | 114       |
| PIA Cargo        | 9280979   |
| Railway Inquiry  | 117       |
| Railway Exchange | 9270831-7 |
| WASA Rawalpindi  | 5555489   |
| CAA              | 9281092   |

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Water Tanker Service       | 9290322-7    |
| 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            | 0331-5022125 |

**Fed. Minister A. Aleem Khan condoles the death of Saudi Prince**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party & Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has expressed grief and sorrow over the death of Saudi Prince and Representative to the United Nations Abdullah bin Khalid, calling it a great tragedy for the Muslim Ummah. Expressing his condolence message, Abdul Aleem Khan said that the news of the death of a Member of the Royal Family from the land of Hijaz has left the entire Islamic community saddened. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan while offering prayer for the late Prince, said that may Allah Almighty grant Prince Abdullah bin Khalid highest place in heaven and make his journey easy in the hereafter. Federal Minister also expressed his condolences to the Royal Family and said that may Allah grant the royal family courage and strength in this difficult time.

# Robust plan must to showcase Pakistan's resilience-building initiatives at COP29: Romina

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change said that all-out efforts would be taken to project Pakistan's climate vulnerability and resilience-building measures in different socio-economic sectors, particularly agriculture, water, energy, health, education and gender.

Chairing a first meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on the 29th session of the Conference of Parties (COP 29) here on Monday, she urged the meeting participants to come with a concrete plan in close coordination with relevant federal and provincial departments to showcase Pakistan's resilience-building initiatives being implemented by federal government and provinces.

The meeting focused on preparations for the country's active participation in the upcoming COP29, a UN-led annual global climate summit, which is scheduled

to kick off from from 11 to 22 November 2024 at Baku, Azerbaijan's capital.

"We must come up with a well-thought out plan to showcase the country's resilience-building measures with own resources and highlight the finance, technology and capacity-building needs to strengthen further the country's resilience against myriad climate risks through adaptation and mitigation measures," she urged the meeting participants

She pointed out that global community is very much cognisant of the fact that Pakistan is among the few countries most affected by climate change, facing climate change-caused challenges like recurring and intensifying flooding, heatwaves and shifting monsoon patterns.

"But, there is pressing need for the country to emphasise the need for financial and technical support needed to cope with these vulnerabilities, protect lives and livelihoods of the communities and socio-economic sectors," Romina Khurshid Alam Suggested.



She emphasized that Pakistan has been vocal about the importance of adaptation strategies in resilience building against various fallouts of the climate

change. Given the reason, the country has put forward proposals for increased support to enhance resilience in vulnerable communities and sectors, such as

agriculture and water management with increased focus on adaptation measures in the resource-poor countries like Pakistan.

## Pouring raining

ISLAMABAD: A view of clouds hovering over the Margalla Hills during rain in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Increase in energy and tax rates will lead to increase in inflation rate: Atif Ikram Sheikh

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that the current fiscal inflation rate will exceed 22 percent due to the increase in tax rates and energy prices.

President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Shaikh has said in a statement that the government should reduce its expenses to provide relief to the masses. The burden has been transferred to the people and the industrialists by increasing the electricity and gas prices, the people are suffering



from serious problems. The electricity in Pakistan is more

expensive than other countries in the region, the loans taken from commercial banks at high interest rates are affecting the economy. The poison is a killer, the government has to pay interest of Rs 8500 billion on loans from commercial banks this fiscal year.

The IMF agreement is welcoming but the burden should not be put on the people. As a result of expensive energy, inflation will increase due to the increase in production cost. Inflation has increased in the fiscal year that started from July 1. The government has set a target of 12 percent inflation for the current fiscal year but inflation will exceed to 22 percent.

## MoU signed between National Institute of Maritime Affairs and Paradigm Shift



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) and Paradigm Shift signed an MoU at the NIMA Head Office for establishing a formal mechanism to cooperate and collaborate between the two institutions on 29 July 24. This partnership is designed to expand research and academic activities, promote quality research, and synergize joint efforts related to the maritime affairs of Pakistan.

During the ceremony, the President of NIMA assured Paradigm Shift of NIMA's wholehearted support in the conduct of research, policy analysis, and the advancement of Pakistan's maritime interests. In response, the CEO of Paradigm Shift opined that MoU will significantly contribute to generating awareness among the youth of Pakistan through jointly coordinated academic activities.

## PEEF Awarded Rs. 48 million in scholarships to beneficiaries

**City Desk**

KARACHI: The Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF) held a distinguished cheque distribution ceremony at the National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) in Karachi, honoring exceptional students in Nursing and Arts & Culture. The event was graced by Syeda Hajra Sohail, CEO of PEEF, Vice Chancellors from partner institutions, esteemed academic personnel, students, and Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, who attended as the Chief Guest.

At the ceremony, 137 students from 18 universities were awarded PEEF scholarships totaling approximately Rs. 48 million. These scholarships recognized their outstanding achievements and commitment in the fields of Nursing and Arts & Culture.

Syeda Hajra Sohail, CEO of PEEF, underscored the critical role of skill education in bridging the gap between academic learning and practical application. She stated, "PEEF is steadfast in its commitment to advancing skill development initiatives that better prepare our youth for the demands of the modern workforce. Our Fully Funded Scholarship Program is strategically designed to bolster employability in crucial sectors such as AI, Hospitality, IT, and Cybersecurity."

Addressing to the ceremony, Chief Guest Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique congratulated the scholarship recipients and emphasized that the ceremony was more than a simple distribution of cheques. He remarked, "Today's event symbolizes our recognition of the immense potential within our youth and our encouragement for them to reach even greater heights."

## Shamsher Ali appointed to Board of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Federal Government appoints Shamsher Ali, a Dubai based business tycoon, as the Member Board of Governors (BoG) at Overseas Pakistanis Foundation, which works under the umbrella of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development.

The announcement was officially made through the Cabinet Decision Number 343/Rule-19/2024/608 dated July 25th 2024 which discussed matters related to the uplift of Pakistani diaspora living abroad.

Shamsher Ali will primarily be contributing with his inputs and status of Pakistanis in the UAE, and neighbouring GCC countries to help in policy-making for Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs).

The Cabinet meeting was presided over the by Syed Qamar Raza, Chairman of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), and attended by Shaheen Khalid Butt-Director, Afzaal Bhatti-Director, Shamsher Ali-Director, Onaza Ehsan Butt-Director, along with Secretary of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development, Managing Director of OPF, Additional Secretary of Ministry of Finance, and Additional Secretary of Ministry of Law & Justice.

Mr. Shamsher Ali, Group CEO of Titan Investments Dubai, said: "I am honoured to be appointed to this prestigious position which holds a high responsibility of serving Pakistan and Pakistanis abroad. I take as a duty to my nation and will perform to the best of my abilities."

# Anssi Kullberg hails Pakistan as safe and sound country for business

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Explore & Invest Finland Conference organized by CEO Brain Designer, Muhammad Rauf on Monday at Islamabad.

Mr. Anssi Kullberg, Minister Counsellor/DHM Embassy of Finland was the chief guest. Along others, Chairman PCA Muhammad Badar Haroon, Vice President FPCCI Tariq Jadoon, Muhammad Mehfooz & Shiekh Hafeez, Renowned Social Personality Raja Mohammad Bashir, Raja Mudassar, Senior Government Officials and Traders participate in the event. Mr. Anssi Kullburg talking on the occasion termed Pakistan safe and sound country both for tourism as well as business. He said, he traveled all the way even to the far flung areas of Pakistan and very much inspired by the hospitality of



the people of Pakistan and the business potential. Mr Anssi said Pakistan is a safe country and the traders and businessmen of both Pakistan and Finland can get benefit from each other business promotion potential. He expressed his gratitude to the CEO Brain Designer Mohammed Rauf

Raja and all the leading business leaders who had participated in Explore Finland Conference and discussed bilateral trade and commerce related matters. Addressing to the participants Muhammad Rauf Raja welcomed to the distinguished guests and said that this is a unique occasion

for business community & perhaps its first time in Pakistan that Participants of this ceremony would find business opportunities of Finland. Similarly, the businessmen of Finland can also avail the opportunities of bilateral trade and business in Pakistan.

Mr Tariq Jadoon Vice President, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry highlighted the role of Small Traders and Small Industries and said Chambers are significant in this regard and it is hoped that through trade dialogue and mutual negotiations, we will definitely be able to draft positive recommendations through which the trade between the two countries can be improved. Mr Badar Haroon said that due to mutual cooperation, imports and exports can be significantly increased by facilitating the concerned business entrepreneurs. Expressing his views the renowned developer Mr Nawaz Ahmed Basra said that the Finland diaspora will extend similar hospitality during the visit of Pakistani traders and I'm sure this mutual understanding would pave a new road of business excellence.



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# China's strategic mediating in Middle East redefining the region's political landscape - II

**N**ow the intensity of conflict between the two countries is appears during the Israeli military campaign in the Gaza Strip. Pro-US-Israel policy has always been a recurrent agenda issue for the Democrats and Republicans in Washington.

Over the past several decades, power has shifted between the two major political parties in the United States, but one thing has remained steadfast: the extent of the commitment that is made by the US to the state of Israel. Both sides' leaders are sure that Israel does not have a better friend than the United States, and they cannot allow Israel to be unsafe. On average, US aid to Israel accounts to \$3 billion (€2.8 billion) annually and has totaled \$300 billion (€280 billion) since the beginning of 1948, basing on the Council on Foreign Relations, majority of the assistance goes to the military services despite the country is home to only 9.55 million people.

Hamas fired rockets at Israel on October 7, 2023, to which the United States provided arms to Israel. Military ships in the region and threatened to veto any ceasefire measures in the United Nations Security Council. US President Joe Biden has also overlooked conflicts with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and back up the country defense by asserting that "he knows the Israeli perception to the war on Gaza very well." Over the course of several years, Israel has moved steadily to the right politically.

The largest bombs used by Israel are

also provided by the United States. The US quickly recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital, but when asked to acknowledge the Palestinian state it has promised, it claims that the timing is not right. It seems that the "right" time would only come once the entire Palestinian territory is settled and Palestinians are completely eliminated, rendering the need for a state moot. The situation is changing as new powers in the world and the region challenge the American system.

The US and Israel do not want unity among Muslim countries and organizations, and they obstruct such efforts. Bahrain and the UAE have recognized Israel, partly due to fears of Iran. The soft war between Saudi Arabia and Iran has created a rift, with diplomatic missions between the two countries closing. These conditions were ideal for the US and Israel. However, news from Beijing reveals that Saudi Arabia and Iran are negotiating in China, and their agreement has weakened the American and European camps.

Former President Trump wanted Saudi Arabia to quickly recognize Israel, and the Biden administration shared this desire. However, Chinese diplomacy has thwarted these wishes. Now, Saudi and Iranian embassies have reopened, and relations are progressing. Recent reports from China state that on July 23, 2024,

representatives of 14 Palestinian groups signed a Beijing Declaration to end division and strengthen Palestinian national unity. This diplomatic development represents a significant shift in power.

Previously, negotiations occurred under American oversight. Now, they have taken place in a major Eastern city, with China employing a quiet but effective diplomatic approach. The 14 major Palestinian groups' agreement could make direct Israeli control over Gaza nearly impossible. Palestinians will now present themselves as a unified nation on the world stage.

Israelis have been to target all Palestinians while claiming to act against Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Currently, the United States fears it cannot prevent the expansion of Saudi-China relations. The Saudis, sensing a changing world, may view China as a more reliable partner for a stable future. The US hopes to influence Saudi Arabia through the Gaza ceasefire agreement, but it is unlikely that Saudi Arabia will fully align with the US or view it as the sole reliable partner. While the US can complicate security relations, Saudi Arabia will likely maintain its relationship with China.

Saudi Arabia is also loosening its grip on European allies. The recognition of Palestine by Spain, Ireland, and Norway may be symbolic but serves as a warning

to the US, reflecting a gap in solidarity with Palestinians and relations with Israel.

The United States is attempting to create global divisions based on its competition with China. The US views the Middle East as a crucial market and seeks regional instability to control Arab oil, while China does not have a history of deep alliances or ceasefires in the region. Most countries prefer not to choose between the US and China. China pursues its goals in West Asia and globally without competing with the US, maintaining relations with all parties. This approach has allowed China to mediate a significant understanding between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Fearing China's influence, the United States is creating instability in various regions to strengthen its global position. To maintain its grip on Europe, Russia is prolonging the war in Ukraine, while it engages in violence against Palestinians, making Gaza a battlefield on its global agenda. The world should express solidarity with the Palestinian people and urge Israel to end the brutal violence that has devastated Gaza and resulted in nearly 40,000 innocent Palestinian deaths over the past 10 months.

*(The writer is a Peshawar-based foreign affairs analyst, newspaper editor, and Secretary General of the Pakistan-China Friendship Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter. He can be reached at syeed.gilani@gmail.com.)*



Analysis  
**Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani**

## Diplomatic Solution

**T**he United States says it is working on a diplomatic solution in the wake of the outbreak of hostilities along the border between Israel and Lebanon after a rocket attack that killed civilians in the Israeli occupied Golan Heights, for which it blamed Hezbollah.

"This attack was conducted by Lebanese Hezbollah. It was their rocket, and launched from an area they control," White House National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement on Sunday, despite the Lebanese group having firmly denied responsibility.

Watson added that the White House has been in continuous talks with Israeli and Lebanese officials since a rocket struck the Druze town of Majdal Shams, as fears of a wider war lurk.

In New York, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on all parties to exercise maximum restraint and reiterated once again his consistent call on all concerned to avoid any further escalation.

"The exchanges of fire across the Blue Line must cease immediately. All parties must comply with their obligations under international law," said the note, adding that parties must urgently recommit to the full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1701 and immediately return to a cessation of hostilities.

[Adopted by the Security Council in 2006, resolution 1701 aimed at ending the war that year between Israel and Hezbollah. It calls for an end to hostilities, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, and the establishment of demilitarized zone.]

At the same time, Iran warned Israel any new military "adventures" in Lebanon could lead to "unforeseen consequences," according to media reports.

Western powers, including France, Germany and Britain, condemned the attack and appealed for calm, the reports said.

But the European Union called for an independent probe into what happened.

Overnight, the Israeli military said it struck a number of targets inside Lebanon, though the intensity of the strikes was similar to months of cross-border fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Saturday's attack comes at a sensitive time, as Israel and Hamas are negotiating a cease-fire proposal to end the nearly 10-month Israeli war in Gaza and free the roughly 110 hostages.

The rocket slammed into a football pitch where dozens of youths were playing in the Druze town of Majdal Shams, located about 12 kilometers (7 miles) south of Lebanon.

On Sunday morning, many of the bodies were brought to a community center in Majdal Shams, where family members had gathered.

Israel captured the Golan, a strategic plateau overlooking northern Israel, from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed it in 1981. The international community considers the area to be occupied territory. Since then, there have been frequent clashes between Israel and Hezbollah.

Since early October, Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon have killed more than 500 people, including many civilians. On the Israeli side, 22 soldiers and 24 civilians have been killed.



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

## DG ISPR's Press Briefing and Unwavering Stance on Digital Terrorism - II

**T**imely and transparent communication from military leaders can help mitigate tensions, correct false narratives, and encourage dialogue over confrontation. By promoting mutual understanding and clarifying intentions, the military can play a constructive role in preventing conflicts and supporting diplomatic efforts to resolve disputes. Strategic stability hinges on accurate assessments of military capabilities, intentions, and geopolitical dynamics. Misunderstandings, especially concerning nuclear weapons, missile deployments, or military exercises, can inadvertently destabilize regions and provoke unnecessary arms races or preemptive actions. Through transparent dialogue and confidence-building measures, militaries can promote strategic stability and reduce the risk of miscalculation or inadvertent conflict.

In the realm of modern governance and military affairs, transparency and effective communication are paramount. One of the pivotal figures tasked with bridging this communication gap is the Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) in Pakistan. Through regular press briefings, the DG ISPR plays a crucial role in disseminating information, shaping public perception, and ensuring accountability within the armed forces.

DG ISPR press briefings serve as a vital channel through which the military communicates its policies, strategies, and operational updates to the public and media. These briefings provide insights into national security challenges, ongoing operations, and the broader state of defense matters. By delivering accurate and timely information, the DG ISPR ensures

that citizens remain well-informed about critical developments impacting national security and stability.

In a democratic society, transparency and accountability are foundational to effective governance. DG ISPR press briefings uphold these principles by offering clarity on military actions, objectives, and outcomes. Addressing inquiries from journalists and the public, the DG ISPR fosters transparency, dispels misinformation, and builds trust between the military and civilian authorities.

Beyond merely disseminating facts, DG ISPR press briefings play a pivotal role in shaping public perception. By presenting the military's perspective on national security issues and operations, the DG ISPR helps contextualize complex military actions and policies. This proactive approach not only counters misinformation but also ensures the public maintains a balanced understanding of the armed forces' contributions to national defense.

During times of crisis or heightened tensions, DG ISPR press briefings assume heightened significance. They serve as a means to reassure the public, provide updates on security measures, and convey the military's readiness to address emerging challenges. By maintaining transparent communication channels, the DG ISPR plays a vital role in calming public concerns, debunking misinformation, and instilling a sense of stability and confidence throughout the nation. In Pakistan's diverse society, characterized by regional, ethnic, and political diversity, DG ISPR press briefings contribute significantly to promoting national unity. By presenting a cohesive narrative on national security and defense, the DG ISPR reinforces a collective

national identity and shared purpose. This unified messaging effectively mobilizes public support for military initiatives aimed at safeguarding the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Currently, Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry holds the position of DG ISPR, serving as a three-star General in the Pakistan Army. He has been serving as the 22nd Director General of ISPR since December 6, 2022. He hails from the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (EME) corps. Chaudhry, a member of the EME Corps, previously served as the Director General of the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, assuming the role in December 2022 after replacing Babar Ifkhar. His educational background includes Pakistan Military Academy, Command and Staff College Quetta, the German Staff College where he ranked first among all international officers, and the National Defence University in Islamabad. He made history as the first from the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering corps to be appointed as the DG ISPR. On May 11, Chaudhry was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General. Known for delivering comprehensive and articulate messages in his press briefings, he has garnered significant admiration from the people of Pakistan.

In a recent detailed press briefing, Chaudhry covered various current issues in Pakistan. He addressed the misinformation spread by terrorists against the Pak Army, highlighting that more than 22,000 operations were conducted against terrorists this year, resulting in the martyrdom of 137 officers and soldiers. Additionally, 398 terrorists were neutralized, and 31 high-value targets were successfully eliminated. Pakistan has long grappled with terrorism, facing complex challenges that have deeply affected its security, socio-economic development, and international relations.

*To be continued*



Analysis  
**Abdul Basit Alvi**

## Protease As a Robust Biocatalytic System For Various Industrial Applications

**Fareha Nadeem / Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tayyab**

**A**gricultural byproducts are important natural and renewable feed stock resources essential for the working of modern industrial societies. Pakistan is an agro-industry country with production of 50 to 60 million tons of agricultural byproducts on a per annum basis. Agricultural byproducts commonly called agricultural waste. Burning of these agricultural byproducts in routine by incineration, is responsible for wastage of resources, causes environmental pollution and results in discharge of huge amounts of greenhouse gases. Utilization of these agricultural byproducts as nutrients for microbial growth in the fermentation process reduces the production cost of enzymes. It also solves the issue of waste disposal, develops awareness of recycling energy efficiently and is eco-friendly. Enzymes are catalysts produced by living cells to speed up certain biochemical reactions and are essential components of metabolic pathways vital for life. There are thousands of enzymes known, and some of them are used in biotechnological and commercial applications including food & feed industry, detergent industry, leather and pharmaceutical industry, biofilm degradation, organic synthesis, paper & pulp industry, textile industry and also used for treatment of waste. Among these enzymes, proteases are hydrolytic in nature with prominent physiological and industrial significance. The worldwide enzyme market including proteases is evolving at an annual growth rate of 6.1% with total income from this market is expected to be priced as 3

billion US \$ by 2024. Proteases are produced from diverse sources including animals, plants and microorganisms. Proteases produced from microorganisms including bacteria and fungi are preferred over plants and animal proteases due to ease in production, low production cost and less production time. Filamentous fungi are good protease producers and *Aspergillus* sp. has been previously utilized for the bulk scale production of industrial enzymes. Current research deals with the screening of novel fungal strains for the production of protease. Various agricultural byproducts were utilized as substrates for fungal growth and for protease production.

The protease after purification was utilized for the characterization studies. The protease was immobilized via sodium alginate as a supporting matrix to enhance the shelf life and stability for industrial applications. The locally produced protease was found highly suitable for detergent industry for removal of proteinaceous stains, has capability to hydrolyze gelatin layer from waste X-ray films as these are worthwhile sources of silver and found suitable for in-vitro hydrolysis of soybean meal used for poultry feed industry. A group of scientists at Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences is working on the production and characterization of industrially important enzymes. Unfortunately, none of these enzymes are being produced in Pakistan till today and these are being imported by paying a huge amount of foreign exchange. The purpose of this research was to explore and characterize suitable proteases for the local industry of Pakistan. The production of this enzyme at domestic level will reduce the production cost and will save the foreign exchange for the import of this enzyme.



# We are committed to make Punjab biggest digital hub of South Asia: CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: "All possible measures are being taken to eliminate environmental pollution in Punjab," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in a meeting with British High Commissioner in Pakistan H. E. Jane Marriott to discuss promotion of mutual cooperation in education, health and other sectors. She added, "We are providing solar panels to people for economic relief." She highlighted, "Solarization project will be started in Punjab from August 14."

Madam Chief Minister said, "Transparency and merit will be ensured in the bidding of solar panel project." She added, "British companies are welcomed to participate in the project."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz



Sharif briefed British High Commissioner H. E. Jane Marriott, "We are taking all possible measures for the protection of women and children in Punjab." She apprised H. E. Jane Marriott about the establishment of first Virtual Women Police Station and Virtual Child Safety Center in Punjab.

The British High Commissioner appreciated the implementation of Sikh Marriage Act in Punjab, and termed Child Marriage Bill as an exemplary initiative of the Punjab Government. She said, "Punjab government is taking unique and historic steps for the protection of women and children."

Madam Chief Minister commended the welfare services of Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in Punjab.

Senator Pervaiz Rashid and Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb attended the meeting. Additional Secretary Sara Hayat, Head of British High Commission Lahore Office Clara Strandhoj and other relevant officers were also present.

## Warner Music South Asia Unveils Sarmad Qadeer's Captivating Solo, "Teri Galli"



**City desk**

LAHORE: Warner Music South Asia, in partnership with Giraffe, Pakistan's leading music and audio production company, is thrilled to announce the release of "Teri Galli," the solo track by the talented Sarmad Qadeer.

The song, a soulful Punjabi pop ballad, showcases Sarmad's exceptional vocal prowess and songwriting ability. The accompanying music video, directed by Adnan Aslam and Waqar Azeem Khan, features social media icon Jannat Mirza.

Produced by Supernova Muzic, "Teri Galli" is a poetic masterpiece that delves deep into the world of love and longing. Sarmad's heartfelt vocals, coupled with Tarz's evocative lyrics, create a captivating soundscape that resonates with listeners on a profound level. The song's narrative unfolds a tale of unyielding devotion and the intoxicating allure of a beloved.

Sarmad Qadeer is a rising star in the Pakistani music industry, known for his versatile talent as a singer, songwriter, and composer. With a string of successful collaborations and a dedicated fanbase, Sarmad has established himself as a prominent figure in the music scene. His journey to stardom began at the tender age of 16, and since then, he has consistently delivered chart-topping hits.

## CBD Punjab pledges support for tourism growth at influential FPCCI Seminar in Lahore



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua, Chief Operating Officer of Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), participated in a pivotal seminar on tourism organized by the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) in Lahore. The seminar gathered key figures in the industry to discuss strategies for boosting tourism in Pakistan, including the Consul General of the U.S. Consulate in Lahore, H. E. Kristien Hawkins, Secretary of Tourism and Archaeology, Ahmed Fareed Tarrar, Secretary of Overseas Pakistanis, Imran Pasha, and various esteemed members of the business community.

The Vice Chairman of FPCCI Quratulaen opened the seminar with a compelling welcome address, emphasizing the critical need to enhance tourism infrastructure and marketing in Pakistan. "Tourism is not just an industry; it's a powerful catalyst for economic growth and cultural exchange," he stated, urging collaboration between public and private sectors to unlock Pakistan's tourism potential.

During his address, Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua praised the concerted efforts of the Tourism Department and underscored CBD Punjab's commitment to developing projects that support and expand the tourism industry. "The endeavors of the tourism department in promoting Pakistan as a desirable destination are truly commendable as a development authority, CBD Punjab is also working on initiatives to enhance tourism infrastructure, particularly by addressing the shortage of quality hotels in the region. We are keen on welcoming diverse communities to our projects, which will significantly aid in boosting tourism."

Consul General of the U.S. Consulate H. E. Kristien Hawkins added, "Pakistan's diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage present an incredible opportunity for growth in tourism. Partnerships like these are essential to create sustainable and inclusive development that benefits all."

The seminar served as a platform for dialogue on the challenges and opportunities within the tourism sector in Pakistan. Participants discussed strategies for improving infrastructure, enhancing safety and security for tourists, and marketing Pakistan's unique attractions to the global audience.

## IIUI: Green Youth Movement launches training on climate action education

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Green Youth Movement (GYM) has launched a four-day training program on Climate Action Education Curriculum and Digital Learning Portal at International Islamic University. The initiative is a collaboration with British Council Pakistan.

Ms. Noor Amna Malik, Managing Director National Academy for Higher Education-HEC, attended the event as chief guest. She emphasized the importance of equipping youth with knowledge and skills to address climate change.

The training aims to empower GYM focal persons and oversight committee members with advanced GYM knowledge and practical skills in climate action education. This will enable them to effectively implement environmental initiatives in their universities.

The initiative seeks to create a robust network of informed and proactive youth dedicated to combating climate change. By cascading the training to Green Youth Movement clubs nationwide, GYM aims to promote a culture of sustainability and environmental stewardship.

The training program covers topics such as climate action education curriculum, digital learning portal, and innovative approaches to sustainable development. Participants will gain hands-on experience in developing effective environmental initiatives and projects.

The launch of this training program demonstrates the government's commitment to addressing climate change and promoting youth-led initiatives. By empowering young people with knowledge and skills, GYM aims to create a sustainable future for Pakistan.

## Jointly Press Statment

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar alongwith Secretary General of the Commonwealth Patricia Scotland addresses a joint press stakeout at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Operation of Attock Police, dangerous dacoit who looted 34 lakh rupees at gun point arrested



**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: According to the details, Aizaz Anjum son of Arif Khan Sukna Burhan applied to Police Station Sadar Hasan Abdal that he works at Crush Plant today dated 04.06.2024 money amounting to Rs.35 lakh from the bank was going from Hasan Abdal to Burhan in his car. On the way, four unknown persons came on two motorcycles and blocked my way, one of them fired a pistol at me, injuring me, and the other unknown persons took Rs. 34 lakh from my car. snatched away and escaped. District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan took notice of the incident and formed a special team under the supervision of SHO Sadar Hasan Abdal and assigned the task of arresting the accused. The police team of Sadar Hasan Abdal police station, using modern technology, with their professional skills, robbed millions of rupees at gunpoint, 2 dangerous dacoits Muhammad Shafiq alias Bika son of Rab Nawaz and Muhammad Owais son of Muhammad Riaz r/o of Tehsil Hasan Abdal. He was traced and arrested, who was physically remanded, recovered the looted money and the weapon used in the incident, a fire-arm pistol with 30 bore ammunition, and registered a separate case under the Arms Ordinance. DPO Attock while congratulating the police team of Police Station Sadar Hasan Abdal said that the protection of life and property of the public is the duty of Attock Police for which all resources are being utilized.

# Daraz Empowers 1,000 More Female Entrepreneurs through "Proudly Pakistani" Initiative

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: In line with its mission to uplift communities through the power of commerce, Daraz has successfully trained a second cohort of 1,000 female entrepreneurs from the Punjab region. These training sessions, part of Daraz's "Proudly Pakistani" initiative, were conducted across eight cities in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department of the Government of Punjab. This strategic partnership highlights Daraz's commitment

to supporting local communities and promoting homegrown products on a national scale. Launched in August last year, the "Proudly Pakistani" initiative aims to promote locally-made products and empower Pakistani entrepreneurs and artisans. Over 600 small business owners from across the country benefited from this initiative in its first year. The entrepreneurs receiving these trainings learn essential digital marketing and e-commerce skills and are given

the opportunity to showcase and sell their products on the Daraz platform, thus gaining access to a broader customer base. By enhancing their skills, these individuals will be better equipped to secure sustainable livelihoods and contribute to the local economy. Moreover, Daraz and the Social Welfare Department will jointly monitor and assess the socioeconomic impact of this initiative, with a focus on income generation and community development in the Punjab region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ehsan Saya, Managing Director of Daraz Pakistan, said, "Helping local businesses thrive in e-commerce has always been our ultimate end-goal. We are excited to create even more significant and meaningful impact this year through our 'Proudly Pakistani' initiative. We are optimistic about the future success these female business owners will achieve on our platform and their potential to increase their incomes and improve their livelihoods."

# Pakistan's potential to emerge among top 10 largest economies by 2047: Prof Ahsan Iqbal

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Dr Ahsan Iqbal on Monday said Pakistan has the potential to emerge among the top 10-15 largest economies of the world by 2047, which demands continuous struggle of the entire system as a team with continuity of policy.

He was addressing as keynote speaker at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) jointly held first-ever Data for Development (D4D) high-level policy dialogue titled "Enabling People-Centric Development Planning in Pakistan".

He added that data generation, data collection, and data dissemination was imperative to make objective and reli-

able data accessible to drive the national development agenda.

Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshed Alam congratulated SDPI and UNFPA for the D4D policy initiative and underscored the importance of collaborations to achieve such goals.

"Data is important for every single step from climate change, disaster risk reduction and SDGs. It can play a pivotal role in the betterment of people and the country. There is need for work at grassroots level which is the basis of change and development," she added.

In his welcome remarks, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said the D4D is extremely important and commended the UNFPA for collaborative effort with the SDPI.

The D4D dashboard will be devel-

oped at the ministry sharing credible data as it will help foresight and simulate future projections helpful in learning large modules, he said.

Dr Luay Shabaneh, Country Representative UNFPA Pakistan underscored the crucial role of data in driving sustainable development.

He added that Pakistan's capacity in production, dissemination and analysis of data alongside scaling up other institution's capacity to deliver needs to be considered.

MPA Punjab assembly and member to high level steering committee to D4D initiative, Ahmed Iqbal Chaudhry said data challenges are emerging that demands informed evidence whereas the country is facing serious challenges and it demands clear vision and leadership to address those problems.

During the panel discussion, Joint

Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Vaqar Ahmed and Deputy Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Sajid Amin delivered his presentation on D4D. He explained that the initiative is based on promoting and cultivating a data culture in Pakistan with the objective to strengthening ecosystem for data driven and people centric development planning and policy making.

Dr Naem uz Zafar, Chief Statistician at Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), Dr Faisal Bari, Chief Economist, Khyber Paktunkhwa (KP) government Arifullah Awan, Flt Lt (R) Additional Secretary at the Planning Ministry, Kamran Rehman Khan, expressed concern that Pakistan's rapidly growing population, coupled with dwindling resources, necessitates reliable data to ensure optimal resource allocation and utilization.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

### Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

| Current       | Prev. Close             |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| 78,827.74     | 78,029.50               |
| Day's High    | Day's Low               |
| 79,055.99     | 78,016.29               |
| Index Value   | Change                  |
| 9,353,173,245 | +798.24                 |
| Percentage    | Time                    |
| +1.02%        | 29 Jul, 2024<br>5:00 pm |

### Europe: FTSE 100 Index

| Index Value | Change                   |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 8,292.35    | +6.64                    |
| Percentage  | Time                     |
| +0.080%     | 29 Jul, 4:35 pm<br>GMT+1 |

### USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

| Index Value | Change                   |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 40,582.40   | -7.74                    |
| Percentage  | Time                     |
| -0.017%     | 29 Jul, 2:20 pm<br>GMT-4 |

### Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

| Index Value | Change                   |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 38,468.63   | +801.22                  |
| Percentage  | Time                     |
| +2.13%      | 26 Jul, 3:15 pm<br>GMT+9 |

### Open Market Forex Rates

| Currency          | Buying | Selling |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Australian Dollar | 184.85 | 186.65  |
| Bahrain Dinar     | 741.05 | 749.05  |
| Canadian Dollar   | 203.75 | 205.75  |
| China Yuan        | 38.4   | 38.8    |
| Danish Krone      | 40.15  | 40.55   |
| Euro              | 301.75 | 303.85  |
| Hong Kong Dollar  | 35.65  | 36      |
| Indian Rupee      | 3.33   | 3.43    |
| Japanese Yen      | 1.91   | 1.99    |
| Kuwaiti Dinar     | 908    | 917     |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 58.85  | 59.65   |
| New Zealand \$    | 169.15 | 171.15  |
| Norwegians Krone  | 26.04  | 26.34   |
| Omani Riyal       | 722.87 | 730.89  |
| Qatari Riyal      | 76.39  | 77.09   |
| Saudi Riyal       | 73.8   | 74.53   |
| Singapore Dollar  | 202.4  | 204.4   |
| Swedish Korona    | 26.6   | 26.9    |
| Swiss Franc       | 309.05 | 311.55  |
| Thai Bhat         | 7.5    | 7.65    |
| U.A.E Dirham      | 76.8   | 77.55   |
| UK Pound Sterling | 356    | 360.25  |
| US Dollar         | 278.40 | 280.05  |

## Consultative workshop on Sindh's solar-wind hybrid project

### Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sindh Energy Minister, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, has said the electricity prices for domestic and industrial consumers in the province will significantly be reduced with Sindh Electric Power Regulatory Authority (SEPR) likely becoming functional by end of next month to take over tariff determination affairs in Sindh.

The Energy Minister stated this on Monday while speaking as the chief guest at a consultative workshop on "Solar Wind Hybrid Project B2B Arrangements" organised jointly by the Sindh Energy Department and Energy Update.

The Energy Minister hoped that the federal government would fully support SEPR becoming functional in the province to provide due economic relief to the consumers by reducing power tariffs.

He said the solar parks being established under the public-private partnership and their renewable electricity supplied through Sindh Transmission and Dispatch Company (STDC) were two key pillars of the plan of the Sindh government being executed to reduce the consumer-end tariff.

Sindh Alternative Energy Director, Mehfooz Qazi, told the audience that the provincial government had initially planned to set up solar-wind hybrid generation plants of 350 MW generation capacity to produce electricity at the proposed tariff of Rs 18.45 per unit.

MD Thar Coal Energy Board, Tariq Ali Shah, shed light on the proposed new electricity policy of Sindh while saying that the Constitution fully supported the provinces to establish their own power sector regulators and transmission and distribution companies as being done in Sindh.

Naeem Qureshi of Energy Update expressed hope that the consultative workshop would be helpful in harnessing the massive clean energy potential of Sindh.

Several concerned representatives of energy sector companies, academics, and researchers attended the workshop and gave their views on the proposed B2B arrangement for the upcoming wind-solar hybrid power project under a public-private partnership regime.

# IPPs are a lucrative business for some politicians: Mian Zahid Hussain

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that the people's lives are now in peril due to the rotten and corrupt power industry.

Some politicians make good money via corrupt IPPs, and these units are destroying the lives of the masses and the nation's economy, he said.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the businessmen who set up IPPs knew that their exploits would erase the industry and trade



from the country. Still, they preferred personal interests over collective interests

and participated in looting.

He said that people have always been cheated in the name of investment. IPPs were not installed to resolve the country's problems, but the motive was selfishness, profiteering, greed and exploitation.

There has been constant looting since the 90s in the name of providing electricity to consumers, in which politicians and industrialists are involved. At the same time, many others have also taken part in the booty, he added.

The business leader said that although the country's transmission and distribution capacity is limited to 22,000 megawatts, IPPs that can produce 45 thousand megawatts were installed.

It is neither a coincidence nor a mistake, but it is a well-thought-out conspiracy, the

purpose of which is to cheat the public and to continue to do so.

That's why politicians behind facilitating IPPs are not willing to give any reasonable explanation in this regard.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the business community across the country is currently protesting against the electricity rates. If any discount is given on electricity rates for them, the burden will have to be borne by someone else.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that this year, two billion rupees will be paid to IPPs in the form of capacity charges, which is oppressive to the poor people.

He said that without solving the problem of IPPs, it is impossible to promote employment, make manufacturing cheaper and increase exports.

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Khan on Monday.



Photo: Online

## Ambassador designate to Mauritius visits Islamabad Chamber

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's engagement with Africa has historical roots and is characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. By harnessing mutual cooperation, Pakistan and Africa can unlock new economic opportunities and foster sustainable development. This has been stated by Pakistan's Ambassador designate to Mauritius Syed Zahid Raza during his meeting with former President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry here on Monday. He said that deeper engagements with Africa remains a strategic imperative for Pakistan, adding that forging a strong and effective partnership for peace, progress and prosperity is an indispensable goal, which should be advanced through a clear vision, consistent policy, and a long-term strategy.

Zafar Bakhtawari apprised the visiting guest that the Chamber is already Africa focused and has recently celebrated Africa Day in a befitting manner for bringing Pakistan and the African countries closer to each other and that the Ambassador to Mauritius who is known as the best friend of Pakistan was also among the attendees. He said that in the changed circum-



stances, Pakistan's envoys have to work with missionary zeal and devotion for the economic betterment of the country and bringing the countries closer to each other and strengthening business relations especially in the promotion of Pakistan exports and tourism potential.

He added that media has also the equal responsibility to promote soft image of the country for the purpose.

He also underlined the need for grant of hassle free visas to potential investors

for the foreign exchange earnings of the country.

Those present on the occasion include Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, General Secretary F-7 Markaz, Raja Hassan Akhtar Awan, President G-11 markaz, Ch. Maqsood Tabish, Executive member Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, Zulfqarn Abbasi, Chaudhry Waseem, Zia Khalid Chaudhry and Ghulam Murtaza Siddique.

## Power bills enrich IPP mafia, bankrupting poor: Dr. Shahid

### Commerce Desk

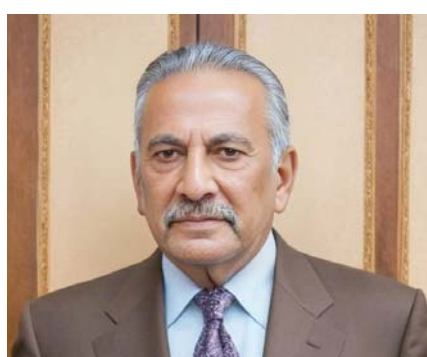
ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Monday that soaring energy costs are hurting the poor and middle class while benefiting the powerful and ruthless elite class.

He said that rising energy costs are forcing industrialists to close their mills, while the underprivileged and the middle class are struggling to survive.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement today that many people whose income is insufficient to cover their electricity bills are making ends meet by selling jewellery and household items.

He stated that political interests are being prioritised over the people, while the masses are being robbed mercilessly.

The business leader said that increasing installed capacity beyond requirements, ignoring the bidding process, and giving profit determined in dollars is not a mistake,



but deliberate attempts aimed at amassing billions have made the country bankrupt and the people mentally ill.

He emphasized that in this contest, we cannot ignore the negative character of politicians and Nepra's failure to safeguard the interests of the masses.

According to Shahid Rashid Butt, the responsible institution should bear the burden of recovering the losses from stolen electricity and unpaid bills.

He noted that influential individuals receive free or extremely cheap electricity, forcing the masses to foot the bill, which is unjustified.

He said that if the government stops collecting 24.5% of income and sales tax during summer electricity bills, then the consumer's bills will decrease by 24.5%. At the same time, the government's revenue will decline by Rs 50 billion.

A reduction in PSDP, which is 1150 billion rupees, easily covers the loss of Rs 50 billion if authorities desire so, he said.

He pointed out that to appease the assembly members, the development spending from the previous year, which was seven hundred and five billion rupees, has now increased to eleven hundred and fifty billion rupees.

The government charges 18 percent of the sales tax on LNG and furnace oil imports, which it uses to run its power plants. Reducing this tax will result in lower electricity bills, but only if the authorities plan to provide some relief to the suffering people.

## SECP initiates consultation to revamp Mutual & Pension Fund regimes

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has published a consultation paper, suggesting various alterations to the total expense regime (TER) and distribution paradigm for mutual funds and pension funds. These suggestions aim to reduce the burden on retail investors, optimize their returns, inculcate better saving habits, and increase retail penetration.

The consultation paper is made available on SECP's website in order to solicit public feedback and comments from stakeholders.

The paper reviews the current regime in three parts, i.e., the TER framework for mutual funds, the TER of pension funds, and a review of distribution models. While evaluating the current TER frameworks for mutual and pension funds, the paper suggests alterations to reduce the financial burden

on investors, enhance their long-term returns, and guarantee equity and transparency in the expenses of fund managers.

The problems that have impeded the growth of the distribution network and affected retail penetration are discussed in the third part of the paper. Further, it recommends a transformative framework to revamp the distribution model and improve its usability and accessibility for average investors. The proposed changes are designed to align with international best practices and ensure that pension fund participants receive the maximum value from their savings.

SECP requests public feedback in order to introduce regulatory changes aimed at creating a more efficient, transparent, and equitable system that better meets the needs of investors. Interested stakeholders may send their comments and feedback at [fnd.feedback@secp.gov.pk](mailto:fnd.feedback@secp.gov.pk).

## PYMA Urges PM Shahbaz Sharif to Abolish RD on Yarn, Citing Threat to Textile Sector, SMEs

### Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sohail Nisar, Sr. Vice Chairman of the Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association (PYMA), along with Vice Chairman Jaweed Khanani and members of the Executive Committee, expressed deep concern regarding the imposition of regulatory duty (RD) on polyester yarn under HS Codes 5402.3300, 5402.4700, and 5402.4600. He urged Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, to intervene and rescind the 5% RD on this essential textile raw material, warning of dire consequences for the textile sector and its associat-

ed small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

PYMA office bearers highlighted that both last year and this year, the National Tariff Commission (NTC) had recommended the removal of the 5% RD on Polyester Yarn. Despite meetings within the Ministry of Commerce, it was agreed to abolish RD; however, the RD was unfortunately retained in the new Federal Budget for 2024-25. This decision has triggered widespread anxiety within the textile industry, particularly among yarn importers. He emphasized that the 5% RD effectively amounts to 8% due to its compounding impact and called on the government to instruct the Federal Board of Revenue to eliminate this duty.

## CCP approves majority stake acquisition of Engro Powergen Qadirpur

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved a merger involving a significant reshuffling of power generation assets. This transaction entails a consortium, mainly comprising textile companies, acquiring a 68.89% stake in Engro Powergen Qadirpur Limited (EPQL), a subsidiary of Engro Energy Limited.

EPQL operates a 217 MW permeate gas-based plant in Qadirpur, Ghotki. Engro Corporation, a key player in Pakistan's energy sector, holds 68.89% stake through Engro Energy Limited.

As per the transaction, Engro Energy has entered a

share purchase agreement with a consortium of M/s Liberty Power Holding (Pvt) Ltd, M/s Soorty Enterprises (Pvt) Ltd, and M/s Procon Engineering (Pvt) Ltd. Liberty Power Holding focuses on managing power generation companies within the Liberty Group, Soorty Enterprises specializes in denim manufacturing and sales, and Procon Engineering manufactures automotive parts, non-woven fabrics, and foam products. The consortium also holds stake in the power sector through their associated companies.

The CCP's Phase I competition assessment identified 'Power Generation' as the relevant market.



# Olympics | Feature: How cycling saved Afghan rider in Olympic Refugee team

Xinhua

PARIS: Cycling has many benefits, but for Amir Ansari, the first rider off the ramp in the men's time trial race at the Paris Olympic Games, it is more than just a sport.

The 24-year-old Afghan competes in the colors of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, highlighting how cycling gave him hope during his darkest moments while striving to build a new life.

"My ambition is to represent 120 million refugees around the world and think about those who have lost their lives on the way. I was one of those lucky ones who made it all the way," he said in declarations to the Games organizers.

Ansari's turbulent childhood as a member of the Hazara ethnic group saw him move from Iran to Afghanistan and then back to Iran, before eventually settling in Sweden in the middle of winter.



He said the cold and dark journey gave him "depression-plus," so he went back to what he knew as a child—cycling.

He ended up at the Stockholm Racing Club and a national team doctor gave him an old mountain bike on the condi-

tion that he trained hard.

"I remember this old aluminium, heavy bike going faster than everyone and everyone was amazed by this tiny guy," explained Ansari.

Despite finding happiness in the saddle, Ansari still had plenty of problems to face, when his application to stay in Sweden was initially turned down, leaving him depressed and in a desperate situation where "you don't have any place to live, and you don't have any money, and you cannot work, and you cannot study."

Once again, the Stockholm Cycling Club and the Swedish Cycling Federation stepped in to help, and Ansari now has Swedish residency and is able to study and to train.

"I am not dreaming about beating anyone," he said. "But I will try to do my best so that when I come to the finish line, I will be proud of myself and not regret anything," he concluded.

## Rs 30 lakh to be distributed among winners of I-Day Marathon, Family Fun Race



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal has announced a hefty prize money of Rs 30 lakh for the winners of the Independence Day (I-Day) Marathon and Family Fun Race.

DG Sports Punjab made this announcement while presiding over an important meeting regarding the preparations of Independence Day Marathon and Family Fun Race at National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

Director Admin Dr M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Directors Zahoor Ahmed, Ataur Rehman, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti and Ghaffar Gujjar participated in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that thousands of male and female athletes will participate in Independence Day Marathon and Family Fun Race. "The Independence Day marathon race will be a memorable event. Independence Day sports competitions will be organised all over the Punjab province," he added.

Pervez Iqbal further said that the Independence Day marathon race will start on August 11 at 7:00am from Liberty Chowk. "The Family Fun Race will also be kicked off at the same point. A large number of male and female runners of different age groups will exhibit their sprinting skills in this family event," he explained.

## PECHS Taekwondo Academy and Kid Fit Taekwondo Academy



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Taekwondo event was organized for the Belt Promotion Test at PECHS TAEKWONDO ACADEMY under supervision of F. K's Taekwondo Family with participation of students from both PECHS Taekwondo Academy and KIDFIT Taekwondo Academy.

All students have shown their remarkable dedication and commitment by excelling the test.

Some of the students even got double belt promotions due to their commendable hardwork and exceptional performance.

IFAizan, Miss Muneeza, and Miss Naveen who conducted the test and examined the skills of all students.

Master Kamran Qureshi supportef and provided bes platform to learn and proof the motivational words for students.

## FDA to organize Jashan-e-Azadi Sports Gala from 1st August

Sports Desk

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) will organize a 3-day Jashan-e-Azadi sports gala at FDA Sports Complex Sargodha Road here from August 01, 2024 (Thursday).

After chairing a meeting, FDA Director General (DG) Muhammad Asif Chaudhry said that all necessary arrangements had been completed to organize the sports gala in a befitting manner.

He said that male and female players would participate in separate competitions for which the registration of players was started. He said that sports gala would feature lawn tennis, basket ball, swimming, table tennis, badminton, squash, snooker and gymnasium competitions which would be held from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Foolproof security arrangements would also be ensured for the participants of sport gala, he added.

## "Babar is defensive while Shan looks to attack": Aamer Jamal on captaincy

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan all-rounder Aamer Jamal drew a comparison between the captaincy styles of Babar Azam and Shan Masood. Jamal, in an interview with a local news outlet, was asked to share his take on the captaincy of Babar and Shan.

In response to the question, the all-rounder, who made his T20I and Test debut under Babar Azam and Shan Masood's leadership respectively, stated that both the captains have different mindsets and approach the game differently.

He claimed to have a good bond with both of them before explaining that Babar's style of captaincy is a bit defensive while Shan is someone who thinks aggressively.

"When it comes to captaincy, both have their own different mindsets. Shan Bhai's approach is different, and Bobby Bhai's approach is different. I have very good terms with both of them," said Jamal.

"I have had good terms with Shan Bhai since the time I played first-class cricket. When I joined the Pakistan team for practice bowling, he treated me very well.

"Both have different mindsets. I believe Bobby Bhai is a bit defensive. He thinks about securing the team first. Shani Bhai is a bit aggressive as he believes if somebody throws punch, you should too.

"As captains, both of them understand you and ask about your needs and what you require," he concluded.

Remember, Aamer Jamal has been recovering from a back injury he sustained in the ongoing County cricket season.

Jamal joined Warwickshire after a sensational Test debut on Pakistan's tour to Australia where he picked up 18 wickets in three matches. However, the Pakistan all-rounder could only represent Warwickshire in two County Championship matches and one Vitality Blast fixture.

He was last seen in action for the side on June 8 and has been sidelined since then as he suffered a back injury.

## Techstirr Pvt. Ltd. National Juniors Tennis Championship Commenced

Haya Yousuf beat Wania Bhagat 6-2, 3-6, 10-3  
Girls Under 18 Singles Main  
Maha Akhter beat Tahreem Yousuf 6-2, 6-1  
Amal Noman Yousuf beat Ayla Farhan 6-2, 6-2  
Zeenia Hassan beat Juniors 18 Qualifying Round 1  
Karish Kumar beat Ibrahim Shafi 8-0  
Azlan Ansari beat M. Hamza Essa Jee 8-2  
Ehsaan Ali beat Ahmed Kian 8-0  
Juniors Under 18 Qualifying Round 2  
Ehsan Ali beat Ibrahim Pervez 8-2  
Boys Under 14 Singles Qualifying Round 1  
Kamil Iqbal beat Hamdan Noaman 7-5  
Mustafa Chotani beat Abdul Rafay 8-0

Boys Under 14 Qualifying Round 2  
Zain Nomi beat Kamil Iqbal 8-2  
Yahya Bin Zain beat A. Baseer 8-3  
Ehsaan Ali beat M. Hamid 8-2  
Arman Ali beat Abbas Habib 8-2  
Under 12 Boys Singles Qualifying Round 1  
Ariz Ayaz beat Ahmed Irfan 8-6  
Qazi ahyan Babar beat Abbas Ansari 8-1  
Omer Bin zeeshan beat Osama Ali 6-2 rtd.  
Under 12 Boys Singles Qualifying Round 2  
Zohran Sohail beat Ariz Ayaz 8-6  
Zayed Ali beat Kabir Khan 8-0  
Khizer Ayaz beat Hassan Farhan 8-3  
Abdullah Ali beat M. Ayaan Essa Jee 8-1  
Omer Bin Zeeshan beat M. Umer Aamir 8-0.



Sports Desk

KARACHI: The inaugural Techstirr Pvt. Ltd National Juniors Tennis Championship commenced at DA Creek Club. TECHSTIRE Pvt. Ltd. are the

sponsor and tournament being organized by Karachi Tennis Association under the auspices of Pakistan Tennis Federation Results 29th July. Beat Zunaira Zahid 7-6, 6-2

## Shaheens fall short in thrilling contest as Bangladesh 'A' level series

Sports Desk

DARWIN, JUL 29 (APP): Pakistan Shaheens fell five runs short of the 296-run target as the second four-day match against Bangladesh 'A' finished in a thrilling manner on Monday at the DXC Arena in Darwin.

The pendulum kept swinging all day as Bangladesh 'A' bowlers took the required six wickets, striking at regular intervals, while Shaheens' batters dug deep, eventually falling five runs short.

The fourth day's play saw 56.2 overs bowled while Shaheens scored 154 runs. Bangladesh 'A' skipper Mahmudul Hasan Joy led the team from front with a match-winning five-wicket haul with his figures reading 5-21 in 13 overs.

At the beginning of the day, Shaheens required 160 runs to win with Haseebullah and Tayyab Tahir on the crease. Haseebullah (51, 120b, 7x4s) departed after adding seven runs to



his overnight total of 44. At this point, Tayyab (43, 97b, 3x4s) and Omair Bin Yousuf (45, 103b, 4x4s) joined forces

to stitch a dogged 65-run sixth-wicket partnership off 21 overs before the former succumbed to Mahmudul in

66th over.

Omair's resistance too came to an end some 57 balls later when he was caught by Mollah off Mahmudul with Mohammad Ali on the other end and Shaheens requiring 65 runs to win. Khurram Shahzad and Ali produced a spirited eight-wicket stand of 57 runs which came off 93 balls, keeping Bangladesh 'A' at bay.

Mahmudul cleaned up Ali, who had scored 21 off 63 balls hitting four fours, with Shaheens still eight runs away from win. Seven balls later Khurram's 57-ball rearguard, yielding 28 valuable runs with the help of three fours and one six, was ended by Mahmudul.

Faisal Akram faced seven balls for his solitary run before he was bowled by Hasan Murad to give Bangladesh 'A' series-levelling victory. Mahmudul was aided by Rejaur Rehman Raja and Hasan Murad who returned figures of 3-85 and 2-62 respectively.

## Pakistan Street Child Football team continues to shine in Norway Cup 2024

Sports Desk

OSLO: Pakistan Street Child Football team on Monday, outclassed Vardeneset BK 5-0 to claim their second successive victory in the ongoing Norway Cup.

The national street child football team, playing under the name of Muslim Hands FC, extended their dream start to the tournament with an all-round display.

The Pakistan team started their second fixture of the Norway Cup on a high as they netted two goals in the first half. The side carried on the momentum in the second half and scored three more to clinch a thumping.

Leading the way for Pakistan was Mohammad Kashif, who scored a brace while skipper Mohammad Adeel, Mohammad Khan and Shahid Anjum chipped in with a strike apiece.

While Pakistan forwards were on a roll against Vardeneset BK, their defence also



displayed exceptional grit and refrained the opposition from scoring a single goal.

Pakistan kicked off their Norway Cup campaign in style as they defeated Astor Footballklubb 6-1 with Abdul Ghani leading the charge with a brace.

Pakistan street child football team next faces Oystese IL Oystese/Norheimsund in their last group-stage fixture on Tuesday, July 30th.

Pakistan's squad for Norway Cup 2024

Goalkeepers: Aryan, Adeel Ali Khan  
Defenders: Asad Nasir, Ubaidullah, Mohammad Adeel, Hamza Gul  
Midfielders: Mohammad Junaid, Mohammad Khan, Daniyal, Owais, Mohammad Osama

Forwards: Mohammad Kashif, Isa Khan, Shahid Anjum, Abdul Ghani

For the unversed, the Pakistan street child football team finished as the runners-up of the previous edition of the Norway Cup after falling to a 9-10 defeat on penalties against Sola FK.

Pakistan street child football team entered the final after remaining unbeaten in seven games.

The national team scored the most goals by any team in the tournament and also recorded the largest victory in the tournament's history when they blew Fjellmo FK 11-1.

For an exceptional tournament, Pakistan's Asad Nasir was adjudged the player of the Norway Cup 2023.



## Attack

Smoke billows from a site targeted by the Israeli military in the southern Lebanese border village of Kafr Kila on July 29, 2024.



Photo: AFP

## Israel insists on harsh response to Hezbollah despite diplomatic efforts to avoid wider war

## Agencies

BEIRUT: Political and diplomatic communications have intensified between Lebanon and other nations to mitigate the serious escalation between Hezbollah and Israel.

The communications aim to prevent Lebanon from entering into an open conflict, particularly in light of Israel's decision on Sunday night to strike Hezbollah in response to what it deemed "Hezbollah's responsibility for the shelling of Majdal Shams."

Hezbollah has denied responsibility for the attack on Majdal Shams that killed 12 teenagers and children on Saturday.

A Lebanese government source said that "international communications" had so far

succeeded in containing an all-out war.

Israeli army spokesperson Avichay Adraee stated: "Our response to Hezbollah will be clear and strong."

A Lebanese security source confirmed that Hezbollah evacuated several key points in the south and Bekaa since Sunday, near the Lebanese-Syrian border and the vicinity of Sayyida Zainab in Syria, "in anticipation of an Israeli strike."

Lebanon witnessed a state of anticipation and caution on Monday, especially in the southern regions, the Bekaa, and Beirut.

Movement remained relatively cautious on roads connecting the regions.

The announcement that some airlines were suspending their flights to Lebanon further

increased caution.

Foreign ministries, instead of embassies, warned their citizens to leave Lebanon immediately or "prepare for long periods of shelter."

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati received a call from British Foreign Secretary David Lammy, who renewed "the call on all parties to exercise restraint to prevent escalation." Lammy stressed the need to "resolve disputes peacefully and through the implementation of relevant international resolutions."

Reuters reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called Israeli President Isaac Herzog and emphasized "the importance of preventing the escalation of conflict after the missile attack in the Golan Heights."

According to Reuters, Blinken and Herzog discussed "a diplomatic solution that allows residents on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanese border to return to their homes."

Reuters quoted an Israeli official as saying: "We want to harm Hezbollah, but we are not seeking a full-scale regional war."

The hostile operations between Hezbollah and the Israeli army did not stop on Monday.

An Israeli raid in the morning targeted two locations.

The first raid targeted a car near Shaqra, and when a motorcycle arrived at the scene, it was targeted by a second raid.

This resulted in the death of two people and the injury of three others, including a child.

Hezbollah mourned its two killed members, Abbas Salami, aged 34, from the town of Kharbat Salem, residing in the town of Shaqra, and Abbas Hijazi, aged 29, from the town of Majdal Salem.

Israeli airstrikes hit Houla, with Israeli artillery bombarding the outskirts of Aitaroun.

Residential areas to the south of Mays Al-Jabal were also hit by artillery and phosphorous shells, resulting in fires. The outskirts of Markaba, Rab El-Thalathine, and Kafri Hamam were also attacked.

The Israeli army conducted a sweeping operation toward Kafr Kila from its outposts in the settlement of Metula using automatic weapons.

Hezbollah continued attacking Israeli positions.

## Security forces kill five terrorists in three operations in KP

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have killed five terrorists in three separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), a joint intelligence based operation was conducted in Mohmand District and three terrorists were successfully neutralized.

During the conduct of the operation, terrorists' hideout was also busted and a cache of arms, ammunition and explosives was recovered. However, during intense fire exchange, Police Constable Abrar Hussain hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat.

In another intelligence based operation conducted in Dera Ismail Khan District, security forces effectively engaged terrorists' location, as a result of which Kharji Sifatullah was sent to hell, while three other terrorists got injured.



Kharji Sifatullah was involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area including facilitation of suicide bombing attack in Daraban on 12 December 2023 and was highly wanted by law enforcement agencies.

In a third engagement that occurred in North Waziristan District, another Kharji terrorist of Fitna Al Khawarij was sent to hell by the security forces.

Pakistan's Security Forces stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other law enforcement agencies to ensure peace and stability across Pakistan, and such sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve.

## Iranian envoy highlights BRICS' move towards de-dollarization with new financial messaging system



## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador Dr Reza Amiri Moghadam on Monday praised the BRICS alliance's initiative to establish a new transaction messaging system aimed at bypassing traditional payment mechanisms as the world is now closer to de-dollarization than ever before.

He, in a statement, emphasized that the creation of this new financial messaging system would provide more variety for economic activists and enable the region to reshape the

global trade landscape. He pointed out that this variety was essential and a hallmark of economic multilateralism.

"Pakistan's inclusion in BRICS, as an influential regional and international player, will be another turning point, further strengthening the BRICS alliance," he added.

Dr Moghadam expressed optimism that this development would contribute to a more balanced and equitable global economic order, benefiting all member states and promoting sustainable economic growth.

## Commerce Minister assures support for Gujranwala

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a virtual meeting with the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan pledged the ministry's full support in addressing the pressing issues impacting the business community.

The meeting highlighted several critical challenges, including Pakistan's disproportionately high electricity costs, which are hampering the country's ability to compete internationally.

During the session, the representatives of the Chamber stated that Pakistan's electricity costs, at 20 cents per unit, far exceed those of regional competitors such as India and Bangladesh, where costs are around 4 cents per unit.

Khan acknowledged that the high electricity tariffs have severely hindered the competitiveness of Pakistani industries in the global market, thereby stifling export growth. "We can't compete with the international market and can't increase exports unless we address the issues related to cost of production," Khan emphasized.



Representatives from the auto industry also voiced their concerns,

specifically requesting a review of import policies and an increase in import quotas to meet international standards for motorcycles and rickshaws.

They revealed that out of 190 auto industries in Pakistan, only 10 are currently operational, attributing this decline to their inability to meet global market demands.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from the commerce ministry to continue working closely with the business community to resolve these critical issues and bolster Pakistan's export capabilities.

## BISP Disburses Rs. 24.77 Billion Among 2.3 Million Deserving Families In Sindh

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Director General, Sindh Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Zulfiqar Ali Shaikh, announced today that the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has disbursed Rs. 24,772,482,000 among 23,592,84 deserving beneficiaries in Sindh during the ongoing quarterly tranche of April-June 2024.

Under the Benazir Kafalat initiative, BISP has distributed a quarterly stipend of Rs. 10,500 to each household. There are currently 24,906,29 registered BISP beneficiaries in Sindh, with

131,345 still pending to withdraw their quarterly financial assistance.

DG BISP Sindh, Zulfiqar Ali Shaikh, urged the remaining 131,645 female beneficiaries to collect their payments from BISP offices or payment centers by July 31, 2024, to avoid return of payments.

He also emphasized the importance of recertification surveys for all registered female beneficiaries at BISP's Dynamic Registration Centers in each district and Tehsil offices, accompanied by their children's B-forms and CNICs, to ensure continued payment eligibility.

## Israel's sanctions' on UNRWA, other international agencies reprehensible'

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The State of Palestine condemns the concerted efforts by Israel, the occupying power, to undermine and terminate the vital operations and provision of services by United Nations and other international agencies, including UNRWA.

In addition to proceeding with legislation that preposterously attempts to expel and brand UNRWA as a "terrorist organization", the Israeli government and occupation forces are limiting the presence, access, and operations of organizations mandated by the United Nations across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. This, in addition to not renewing visas



of UN staff, relentless incitement and targeting of humanitarian workers as well as the killing of the highest number of UN workers in the organization's history.

This unparalleled hostile Israeli campaign against UN agencies, offices, and staff violently contradicts the spirit and obligations of States under the United Nations Charter.

Such rogue conduct, in addition to the occupying power's prolific violations of peremptory norms of international law, disqualify Israel from the rights and privileges of law-abiding members at the United Nations. Palestine will be working with other like-minded states to strip the illegal occupying power from those privileges. There will be no business as usual for pariah states.

## Deputy PM Dar to attend President-elect of Iran's oath ceremony Today

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar will lead the Pakistan delegation at the inauguration/oath ceremony of the President-elect of Iran, Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, to be held on Tuesday (July 30) in Tehran.

The visit attests to the commitment by the two countries to strengthen leadership-level engagement and bilateral cooperation, a statement



issued by the Foreign Office said.

## Minister Finance meets with the Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with the Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan at Finance Division today.

Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan provided an overview of the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme which promotes entrepreneurship among youth by providing business loans on simple terms and with less markup through Commercial, Islamic and SME banks. The discussion covered the current structure of the scheme,

including its three operational tiers, and explored the potential benefits and logistics of introducing additional tiers.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciated the programme and recognized it as a valuable scheme for supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs). He expressed support for the initiative, highlighting its role in stimulating entrepreneurial activity and contributing to economic growth.

The meeting underscored the Government's commitment to enhancing opportunities for the youth and promoting sustainable business development across the country.