



US Election: Roy Cooper exits vice president race, endorses Kamala Harris

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper stepped down from the race to be Kamala Harris' running mate in the forthcoming elections. The governor made this official by posting it on his X handle, The New York Times reported. However, the decision was unclear until Cooper released his statement on Monday evening.



PTI founder's call for talks with institution, another conspiracy against state: Tarar

Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar Tuesday said the call made by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder for negotiation with the institution was nothing but another conspiracy against the country. This is another attempt of the PTI founder to drag the state institutions in his "dirty politics", said the minister in a media talk outside the Parliament. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting a delegation of Commonwealth, led by the Secretary-General of Commonwealth, Ms Patricia Scotland, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

President for stronger cooperation with Commonwealth

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has emphasised the need for stronger cooperation with the Commonwealth in areas of climate change, education, parliamentary exchanges and disaster preparedness. He called for enhanced interactions among parliamentary bodies, particularly young parliamentarians and students,

to further strengthen and promote the bonds of friendship with Commonwealth member states. The president expressed these views while talking to a delegation led by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Patricia Scotland, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday. Welcoming the delegation, the president said that Pakistan, being the founding member of the Commonwealth, attached great importance to this organization

for promoting cooperation among member states. The meeting exchanged views on the consequences of climate change for Pakistan. The president said that Pakistan had suffered a lot due to the impacts of climate change. He informed that over 2 million mangroves had been planted in Sindh to mitigate the impacts of climate change which had also earned \$ 27 million by trading carbon credits in the inter-

national market. He also mentioned that the Sindh government had started constructing 2 million flood-resilient houses in the wake of the floods of 2022. Secretary-General Patricia Scotland said that Pakistan was facing huge challenges relating to Climate Change and was among the countries most vulnerable to its consequences. She highlighted the Common-

wealth's robust engagement with Pakistan and expressed her gratitude for Pakistan's continuous support for the work of the organization. The president appreciated Secretary-General Patricia Scotland's climate advocacy for Pakistan in meeting the adverse impacts of climate change, especially in the aftermath of the climate-change-induced devastating floods in 2022.

Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Akbar Hussain sentenced for inciting sedition



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A retired Pakistani Army officer, Lieutenant Colonel Akbar Hussain, has been convicted of inciting sedition and sentenced to 14 years of rigorous imprisonment by a Field General Court Martial (FGCM). The conviction was announced by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday. Hussain was found guilty of attempting to undermine the loyalty of army personnel

and was sentenced on May 10, 2024. As a result of the conviction, his military rank was forfeited on July 26, 2024. This is the latest in a series of convictions of retired military personnel for sedition and espionage. In October 2023, former Major Adil Farooq Raja and former Captain Haider Raza Mehdi were also convicted by FGCM for similar offenses. Raja was sentenced to 14 years and Mehdi to 12 years of imprisonment, with both losing their ranks effective November 21, 2023. The convictions highlight the Pakistani military's strict stance against any perceived threat to its authority and national security.

Imran expresses willingness for talks if Army appoints representative

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has expressed his willingness to engage in dialogue with the Pakistan Army, stating that he is ready to negotiate if the military appoints a representative. He clarified that his previous criticism of the army was not accusations but rather "criticism," a hallmark of democracy. Speaking to journalists in the courtroom of Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, Khan likened the army to a "misbehaving child" and said that criticism is necessary for improvement. He emphasized that he has never made accusations against the army, only expressed his opinions. When questioned about his recent statements suggesting a desire to



mend relations with the army while simultaneously criticizing its leadership, Khan reiterated that he only offered criticism. He asserted that the army is not infallible and should not be shielded from scrutiny. Khan further stated that General Zia ul-Haq was behind the execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Yahya Khan was responsible for the fall of Dhaka. He questioned if criticism of the army should be silenced if it engages in oppressive actions.

Regarding negotiations with political parties, Khan questioned the legitimacy of the "Establishment's" representatives, including Mohsin Naqvi and the SIFC. He claimed that an undeclared martial law exists in the country and Naqvi is acting as their representative. He stated that he had given Mahmood Khan Achakzai a mandate for negotiations but would be willing to talk if the other side nominates a representative. He categorically stated that he would never engage in talks with Mohsin Naqvi, accusing him of orchestrating the mistreatment of PTI members and being responsible for the death of a "shadowy figure." He asserted that Naqvi will not be able to escape the consequences of his actions.

PM directs NDMA to accelerate relief efforts in rain-hit areas, assess damages



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday telephoned Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt. General Inam Haider Malik and directed to take all necessary relief measures as heavy rains lashed across the country. The prime minister asked the Authority to assess the damages to life and properties caused by the rains and improve coordination with provincial disaster management departments, and the disaster management authorities of AJK and Gilgit Baltistan, according to a PM House press release. He instructed the NDMA to

ensure swift restoration of the highways and roads damaged by the rains or landslides. Prime Minister Shehbaz also called for providing all possible healthcare facilities in the rain-affected areas, besides ensuring the supply of relief items including medicines and other commodities. He expressed deep grief over the deaths caused by heavy monsoon rains and consequent floods. He prayed to Allah Almighty for peace for the departed souls and sympathised with the bereaved families. The prime minister also instructed to extend all possible medical treatment to those injured in the rain-related incidents.

DPM Dar attends investiture ceremony of Iranian president

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar visited Tehran on Tuesday to attend the investiture ceremony of the President-elect of Iran, Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian. On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, the DPM conveyed a message of felicitations and best wishes for President Pezeshkian on his assumption of office. He congratulated the Iranian nation on the successful and smooth transitioning of power to the new political administration.



The DPM also expressed support and solidarity with the new Iranian administration and Pakistan's commitment to further consolidate ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Islamabad High Court orders 'immediate' opening of PTI Central Secretariat

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court ordered on Tuesday the "immediate" opening of the PTI Central Secretariat in the federal capital which was sealed during a police and FIA raid last week. In its reserved order, the court has also directed the PTI to make fire safety arrangements in the building in a week. The court has also declared the Capital Development Authority's sealing of the PTI office as "invalid". The PTI has agreed with the CDA authorities on 10 types of administrative arrangements, including installing fire extinguishing equipment on every floor, a fire pump on



the roof, a separate water tank, and a manual alarm system, it added. The court also ordered the installation of gas detectors in the building's kitchen and the display of emergency numbers for safety. The building's electrical wiring would also be properly checked. At one point during the hearing, Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz stated that "a political party's office cannot be sealed in this manner."

Party affiliation should not be changed, proposes NA bill

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) presented an amendment to the Election Act, 2017 in the National Assembly, proposing that independent candidates' affidavits regarding the party affiliation should not be changed. The proposed amendment in the law were tabled as a private members bill, by PML-N MNA Bilal Azhar Kiyani. The amendments suggested that an independent member cannot join any party three days after being notified. "No independent member can join the second party after leaving the first party,"

the amendment read. In the amendments, it was also proposed that the parties that did not submit their priority lists will not be awarded reserved seats. Legal expert Abid Zuberi, commenting on the move, said that after the Supreme Court's decision over reserved seats in favour of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Sunni Ittehad Council, the government intends to amend



the law to override the court's decision. He said the amendment in the law will be for the future. "If the law flouts the constitution, it could be challenged in the court", he said. It is pertinent to mention here that the bill was introduced aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision declaring the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) eligible for reserved seats.

A 13-member bench of the top court, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, ruled that the PTI is eligible for the allocation of reserved seats, dealing a major setback to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ruling coalition. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 majority verdict, setting aside the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order wherein it had upheld the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying the reserved seats to the SIC. Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Jamal Mandokhail, Justice Naem Afghan, Justice Yahya Afridi, and Justice Ameenuddin Khan opposed the majority decision.

Ameer-e Jamaat-e-Islami to sit-in on important highways in next phase

Asim Tanveer

RAWALPINDI: Ameer-e Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said that they will sit-in on important highways in the Country next phase of the Sit-in. The protest sit-in is starting from tomorrow in front of the Governor House Sindh. The entire nation is suffering the punishment of the incompetence of the rulers. It is not compulsion, but incompetence and corruption. The rulers say that the agreements cannot be brought before the nation. A forensic audit of the IPPs should be conducted.

Addressing to Sit-in Participants on the fifth day of the Rawalpindi sit-in, he thanked the founder chairman PTI Imran Khan for praising the sit-in and said that Tehreek Tafuz Constitution Pakistan has contacts For meetings with the They will not join any alliance. He said that Tehreek Tafuz Constitution is withdrawing from its position of Form 45 by talking about



new elections, what to say to those who are so confused. Secretary Information Qaiser Sharif, Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Punjab Central Javed Kasuri, Secretary General KP Abdul Wasi, Director Digital Media Salman Sheikh and other leaders were also present on the occasion.

Amir Jamaat said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif should announce that no minister and government officer will use vehicles of more

than 1300 cc. The ban on big vehicles will benefit 350 billion rupees. Why can't the Prime Minister work on this? Unwilling to benefit, the public pays for their luxuries in the form of bills and taxes. He said that the tyrannical rulers taxed up to 18% on basic food items, taxed children's milk, people paid bills, or bought rations. Apart from the poor, middle classes, now even industrialists are affected, industries are closing down.

Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said that IPPs started during the PPP regime, first agreements were made with 35 companies and then during the Musharraf era, 45 companies and then during the Nawaz Sharif era, talks were made with about 120 companies, during the PTI regime. Also talked to about 30 to 35 companies, and even now 100 to 124 IPPs are listed, the facts are not brought before the nation. I refer to an IPP that is going on right now, the government says you run it on RLNG, the FCC of that is 24.01. KWh which was paid in the month of May and in June was Rs 24.78 kwh, if it was taken on imported coal it would have been 16.82 and 15.53, it means a difference of Rs 7 to 9 and if it was on Tharcoal, it would have been reduced by another 40%. The question arises, why are they using RLNG? It is because they have entered into illegal agreements, they must have taken kickbacks, only then will these agreements have been entered into.

Multan Police Arrested 5 Dangerous Gangs Of 15 Robbers

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: City Police Officer DIG Multan Sadiq Ali Dogar. SSP Operations Rana Arslan Zahid. SSP Investigation Rana Muhammad Ashraf and SP City Hasan Raza Khakhi and ASP Dr Anum Tajamal while holding a press conference said that the Circle New Multan police have arrested 15 members of 05 gangs wanted in the incidents of robbery, robbery, theft, motorcycle and vehicle theft and motorcycle snatching. After arresting the members, stolen property worth more than 01 crore rupees, which includes 6 and a half tola gold ornaments, 02 Cultas cars, 01 tractor trolley, 14 motorcycles, 12 mobile phones and more than 13 lakh rupees in cash, was recovered from the accused. Arms 02 rifles, 07 pistols 30 bore and 65 rounds were also recovered, 45 cases have been traced DIG Multan Sadiq Ali Dogar. SSP Operations Rana Arslan Zahid SSP Investigation Rana Muhammad Ashraf. SP City Hasan Raza Khakhi and



ASP Dr Anum Tajamal told the media representatives during the press conference.

Multan police are continuing to carry out intensive operations to eradicate crime from the city, during these operations, police station Setal Mari, New Multan and Shah Rukn Alam police have investigated the incidents of

robbery, robbery, theft, motorcycle and vehicle theft and motorcycle snatching, 15 members of the wanted 05 gangs were arrested and stolen property worth more than 01 crore rupees including 6 and a half tola gold ornaments, 02 cult cars, 01 tractor trolley, 14 motorcycles, 12 mobile phones and more than 13 lakh rupees in cash were recovered from

the accused. 02 rifles, 07 pistols of 30 bore and 65 rounds were also recovered.

Setal Mari police arrested 09 members of Ashfaq gang, Bilal gang and Saeed gang wanted in robbery and robbery cases and stolen property worth more than 70 lakh rupees including 13 lakh rupees in cash, 06 and half tola of gold ornaments, 08 motorcycles, 02 cars, 02 kilts. Rifles, 06 pistols and 65 rounds were recovered.

New Multan Police arrested 03 members of Sajjad alias Sajju gang and recovered stolen property worth more than 28 lakh rupees, which includes 01 tractor trolley, 01 motorcycle and 04 mobile phones.

Shah Rukan Alam Police arrested 03 members of Bilal alias Bilal gang and recovered stolen goods worth more than 07 lakh rupees including 05 motorcycles, 08 mobile phones, cash 25 thousand and a pistol 30 bore.

45 cases of robbery, robbery, theft, motorcycle and vehicle theft and motorcycle snatching were traced from the arrested accused.

Muzaffarabad Muslim Conference demands diversion of Kohala landslide to Gurthama bypass road

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Central Chief Organizer of Muslim Conference, Raja Saqib Majeed jumped into the fray regarding Dulai landslide drawing attention to Kohala landslides and gave a detailed briefing to the AJK Chief Secretary Mr Dawood Breech for the construction of Prolai to Gurthama bypass road. The Chief Secretary approved the suggestion given by the Mr Saqib Majeed Raja sources said.

Last day Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir Dawood Muhammad Barich along with IG Azad Kashmir Abdul



Jabbar, DG State Disaster Management Authority Masoodur Rahman, Commissioner Sardar Adnan Khurshid, Deputy Commissioner Raja Mudassar Farooq, Assistant Commissioner Sardar Zeeshan, Chairman MDA Abdul Basit and other divisional and The district administration visited the spot at night to resolve issue of the landslide Kohala to Muzaffarabad road.

The Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed congratulated and thanked the Chief Secretary for taking personal interest in the Dulai to Gurthama bypass road. Raja Saqib Majeed

while drawing the attention of the Chief Secretary said that during the previous regime, he was assured by the concerned departments for early measures for the safety and the construction of this bypass road, but despite the passage of a year, the work could not be done on it.

Later talking to the media persons he said that Despite being the constituency of the current Speaker Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar, the work could not be done due to which landslides are happening day by day due to which the people are facing severe travel problems.

Kashmiris' ongoing freedom struggle against India

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the government of Azad Kashmir would utilize all available resources to strengthen Kashmir cause and Kashmiris' ongoing freedom struggle against India. The AJK premier said this while addressing a press conference during his visit to the APHC office here today.

The PM was accompanied by government ministers including Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, Chaudhry Arshad, Akmal Sargala and Chaudhry Akbar Ibrahim. Whereas the APHC convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi and other Hurriyat representatives were present on the occasion. He said that the purpose of his



visit to the amalgam's office was to congratulate the newly elected leadership of Hurriyat and express solidarity with our Kashmiri brethren. He assured the Hurriyat leadership that all the

resources of the AJK government were available for the freedom movement of Kashmir. "The government won't shy away from putting its resources at the Hurriyat's

disposal", he said. The PM also appreciated the APHC leadership for holding joint rallies with the people of Pakistan from Islamabad to Karachi and from Karachi to Lahore.

The move, he said, would further cement the bond between the people of both regions. Commenting on the recently concluded elections in India, the AJK premier said that the BJP's Hindutva ideology received a serious setback during the parliamentary polls.

The people of Occupied Kashmir demonstrated the highest degree of valour and defeated Modi and his proxy candidates in the parliament elections", The APHC convener, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, thanked the PM Haq for visiting the Hurriyat office.

The APHC convener besides highlighting the plight of Kashmiris in the occupied Kashmir presented a charter of demand to the PM on behalf of the post 90s migrant community.

U. S. Deputy Chief of Mission's visits South Punjab highlights U. S. support for cultural preservation in Pakistan



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: U. S. Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Andrew Schofer and Consul General Kristin Hawkins showed appreciation for the rich history of South Punjab during their visit to Multan.

DCM Schofer and CG Hawkins visited the shrines of Musa Pak Shaheed, Shah Shams Tabraiz, Bahauddin Zakria, Shah Rukn-e-Alam, and Multan's famous clock tower. Since 2001, the U. S. government has supported 35 cultural preservation projects in Pakistan. These projects have included conservation of the shrine of Musa Pak Shaheed and the restoration of Hazrat Shah Shams Tabraiz.

"The power of cultural preservation work extends far beyond individual sites and projects - as historically important and visually impressive as they are," said DCM Schofer. "These U. S.-funded projects spur economic development in Pakistan, engage local communities, foster respect for cultural diversity, and strengthen our U. S.-Pakistan partnership."

Sindh Textbook Board to distribute 4.45 million books to government schools

Qayoom Saroh

JAMSHORO: The Sindh Textbook Board announced today that it will begin distributing textbooks to government schools in Sindh starting July 31. Chairman Abdul Aleem Lashari made this announcement during a press conference in Jamshoro.

Despite facing numerous challenges, the board is on track to complete its textbook printing target for this year. Lashari stated that the board's work will be completed on time and according to schedule, attributing the delay in book distribution to hurdles and legal issues during the tender process.

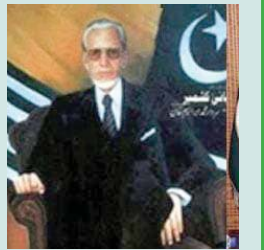
A total of 445,300 sets of books have been prepared for government schools in Sindh, with distribution starting on July 31 and expected to be completed by August 15. Lashari reported that 80% of the book printing work has been completed, totaling 24.3 million books.

Lashari denied allegations of favoritism in the tender process for book printing, explaining that issuing tenders is a standard procedure under Sepra law, and no publisher can receive more than two packages. The board's condition has improved significantly since last year, with its printing machine now two-color capable. The matter of upgrading the printing press is ongoing in court.

Sardar Attique says former President Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan was brave, true Kashmiri

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/DHIRKOT: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that the founding president of Azad Kashmir Ghazi e Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan was a great and a courageous leader who played an important role in the approval of the resolution of accession to Pakistan during the worst period of Dogra Maharaja.



In his message on the occasion of the anniversary of Former President Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, he said that Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan led the people of Kashmir in unfavorable conditions and that was the period when the state of Jammu and Kashmir was under personal rule and due to the atmosphere of fear and terror, it was difficult for people to take rest. In these circumstances, Ghazi e Millat held a meeting of the General Council of the state and parliamentary party All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in his home at Aabi Guzer (Water Pass)Srinagar and passed the resolution of annexation to Pakistan, which is remembered as golden letters in Kashmir Azadi Movement and Kashmir history.

SECP issues simplified illustration format for Life Insurance & Family Takaful products

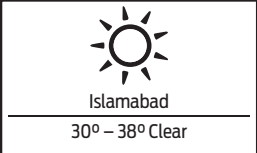
Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD, JULY 30: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan issued a revised illustration format to improve the readability, standardize insurers' illustrative values, and safeguard prospective policyholders from any deception. In this regard, S. R. O. 1088 (I)/2024 has been issued and is applicable on life insurance and family takaful products with savings components.

Life insurance and family takaful operators use product illustrations to highlight the benefits of long-term financial protection and savings vehicles, typically lasting over 5 to 20 years. Hence, the product illustrations are an integral part of the sales process of life insurance and family takaful policies.

The revised requirements aim to enhance transparency in product illustrations through improved disclosures and making them simple for the understanding of potential policyholders by explicit disclosure of allocation charges, clearing mentioning key disclosures with simplified format and enhanced font size. Moreover, Companies have requested to reduce illustration scenarios from 3 to 2 and remove inflation-adjusted values, displaying only actual amounts allocated to policyholder accounts.

The illustration directive has been notified by the Commission after extensive consultation with life insurance and family takaful companies, the Insurance Association of Pakistan and the Pakistan Society of Actuaries. S. R. O. 1088 (I)/2024 has been placed on SECP's website.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:44 am
Zohr	12:14 pm
Asr	5:07 pm
Maghrib	7:10 pm
Isha	8:45 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

FAO & MNFSR launch Digital Agriculture Consortium to transform agriculture sector in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Digital Agriculture Consortium (DAC) officially launched today at a local hotel in Islamabad, marking a significant milestone in the digital transformation of Pakistan's agriculture sector. The DAC launch event aimed to galvanize stakeholders, enhance engagement, and showcase Pakistan's burgeoning digital agriculture ecosystem.

This landmark event, organized under the PDAC project "Technical Support for the Establishment of Pakistan Digital Agriculture Consortium," and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR).

The launch event gathered a diverse array of participants, including digital agriculture input companies, mechanization service providers, digital service providers, financial service representatives, policymakers, development partners and other relevant stakeholders. The event was graced by the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunication and Land Information & Management System.

The event showcased products and services from digital agriculture companies across Pakistan, offering attendees hands-on experiences and insights into the latest advancements in digital agriculture. Companies exhibited a range of digital solutions, from precision agriculture tools to smart farming technologies.

Presentations provided in-depth insights into critical aspects of digital agriculture, including digital track and traceability systems and land information management. These sessions highlighted the potential of digital technologies to enhance agricultural productivity, efficiency, and sustainability.

Engaging panel discussions featuring industry experts and thought leaders discussed pertinent topics in digital agriculture, such as bridging gaps in ag-tech solutions and post-harvest success.

The event also initiated the process



of enrolling diverse stakeholders into the DAC, fostering a broad coalition committed to advancing digital agriculture across the country. This membership process aims to integrate key players from government agencies, private sector entities, academic institutions, and agri-

tech companies into a unified platform. The event facilitated the identification of fundamental challenges within the industry and the devising of effective solutions to address them. The launch of the DAC is a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey toward a more produc-

tive, efficient, and sustainable agriculture sector. By integrating advanced technologies, the DAC aims to make agriculture more consistent, efficient, and resource-effective, offering critical advantages for farmers and broader societal benefits.

Four robbers arrested, looted booty recovered

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Four robbers were nabbed in two different strikes of Police while looted booty as well weapons utilized in different robbery incidents was also recovered from their possession. In the first incident, a team of national highway and motorway police among them a brave lady police officer arrested two highway robbers on GT road near Kamra on Tuesday. The sources said that a robbery victim identified as Abdul Rehman has made a SoS call on national highway and motorway police help line that two highway robbers on the pretext of giving him lift snatched cash and valuables from him and later throw him near Burhan interchange. On getting information, police spotted the car near Hattain and signaled them to stop but the occupants ignored the instruction and fled their vehicle towards KP but a team of national highway and motorway police after chase and shoot out overpowered them and handed over to Hazro Police for further legal action. The sources said that the suspect during initial interrogation has confessed looting passengers on GT road on pretext of giving them ride offer. Separately, Hassanabdal Police arrested two robbers who shot and injured a stone crusher plant owner after snatching from him cash worth Rs 3.80 million on June 4. Azaz Anjum has reported to police that he was going to stone crusher plant after withdrawing cash from local ban when reached near Burhan interchange, two persons riding on motorcycle intercepted him and on gunpoint snatched cash from him. As he tried to resist, they shot him and fled away with looted booty successfully. Police spokesman has said that police through human and digital intelligence traced the suspect identified as Shafeeq and Owais and recovered looted booty from them.

Preparation of Independence Day

ISLAMABAD: A girl is selecting for buy national flags clothes on a stall ahead of upcoming 14th August at Tuesday weekly bazaar sector H-9 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Imperial Tutorial College Open Day for ADP in Fashion Design a Resounding Success

City Desk

KARACHI: The Imperial Tutorial College (ITC), powered by Image Pakistan Ltd., hosted a successful Open Day for its Associate Degree Program & Undergraduate Degree in Fashion Design, in partnership with Nisantashi University, Turkiye. ITC's faculty welcomed a large number of prospective students and their families at its state-of-the-art campus on Shahrah-e-Faisal, inviting them to explore its state-of-the-art facilities, meet esteemed faculty members, and interact with current students.

The ITC Open Day commenced with registrations and was followed by a comprehensive campus tour. The Welcome Address was made by Saira Danish Ahmed, Depart-



ment Head ITC; she touched on Imperial Tutorial College's dedication to fostering a new generation of innovative & skilled fashion professionals, offering them an atelier-like learning environment. Founded in 2020, ITC's rigorous and comprehensive approach to education blends theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience, shaping students into forward-

thinking, technically-proficient individuals ready to excel in the global fashion landscape.

ITC is powered by Image Pakistan, one of Pakistan's leading retail high-street fashion brands with an ever-growing local and international presence, renowned for being the pioneer of Schiffli embroidery in Pakistan. The ITC fashion design college

is founded and operated by Image, with a vision to help fashion designers by offering them unique and real-world learning, along with hands-on experience. Students at ITC often secure internship opportunities at Image, and participate in mentorship programs with its leading designers.

The ITC Open Day saw heavy footfall by the media industry, covering this prestigious event. A highlight of the event was the presence of renowned fashion journalist and critic Maliha Rehman, Senior Fashion Writer, Dawn alongside other notable media personalities. Engaging with students, she shared insights about the fashion industry. Her participation underscored ITC's reputation as a premier institution for fashion education in Karachi.

Chairman OPF to address expatriate grievances 'urgently' - in line with PM's vision

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Syed Qamar Raza, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), presided over the inaugural meeting of the Welfare Division of OPF. During the meeting, he expressed his unwavering commitment to prioritizing the resolution of expatriate issues. He highlighted the alignment with the Prime Minister's vision and emphasized that officers of the Welfare Division should intensify their efforts to provide maximum facilities and assistance to Pakistani expatriates both domestically and globally.

Ms. Laeqa Ambreen, Director General (Welfare & Services) briefed Chairman Raza on the current mechanisms in place to address the problems faced by overseas Pakistanis both abroad and at home. The meeting was attended by all the officers of Welfare & Services Division.

Chairman OPF reiterated his commitment to making all efforts to assist overseas Pakistanis, particularly those who are vulnerable and in need of immediate help. He directed the sharing of a list of 1,500 pending cases of financial assistance to explore the possibility of grants or assistance from the Government of Pakistan to clear the backlog.

In conclusion, Chairman Raza emphasized that he is available round the clock to assist Overseas Pakistanis and urged all OPF officers to make every effort to facilitate them.

Third batch of COMSTECH-Indonesia Research Fellowship Program completes



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd batch of the COMSTECH-Indonesia Research Fellowship Program for Virology and Vaccine Technologies has completed successfully. COMSTECH in collaboration with Indonesian Ministry of Health, PT Bio Farma, and Padjadjaran University, the Center of Excellence on vaccine and biotechnology products, enrolled 12 early-career scientists from nine OIC member states for a month-long training in virology and vaccine technology.

The third phase of one month-long training program held in Jakarta and Bandung, west Java. Scholars from Indonesia, Cameroon, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Egypt, Pakistan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda, participated in the program. The goal of the program was to enhance research and development capabilities in the field of virology and vaccine technology among OIC member states. First two phases of the same program have been successfully conducted in Indonesia in 2022 and 2023.

The program aimed to foster collaboration among OIC countries in vaccine production and contribute to global health initiatives. Since 2022, COMSTECH-Indonesia Research Fellowship Program has supported 24 research fellows from 18 OIC member countries.

The closing ceremony took place in Jakarta, attended by officials from COMSTECH, host institutions and experts from various OIC member states, online and in-person.

Telenor Velocity Co-hosts She Loves Tech Islamabad 2024

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: She Loves Tech, the world's largest women-led startup competition, launched its Islamabad round, co-hosted by Telenor Velocity and organized by CIRCLE Women Association, with Sapphire as the merchandise partner.

Held at Telenor Pakistan's Campus '345' in Islamabad, the competition brought together innovative women-led tech startups, industry experts, and ecosystem collaborators. The event saw the participation of 10 short-listed women-led startups vying for a chance to compete in the National Finale in August. The winners of the National Finale will advance to the She Loves Tech South Asian Regional Round.

The panel of judges included Ahsan Maykan-VP Consumer Marketing & Digital Platforms at Telenor Pakistan, Dr Saira Sadiqqe-GM & Founder of MedIQ, Sumera Abbasi-Executive Director of TIE Islamabad, Ammar Majeed-Head of Digital at Telenor Pakistan, Fasih Mehta-Global Partnerships Director at Epic Games, and Fizzah Haroon-Senior Manager Billing Systems & Digital Services at Telenor Pakistan.

Terrabiz organizes training on emotional intelligence & decision-making

City Desk

KARACHI: Terrabiz, one of the leading corporate training companies, organized an "emotional intelligence and decision-making" session on Tuesday at a local hotel. John Bentley, a renowned corporate trainer, was the main speaker. A number of professionals from different fields of the corporate world attended the session. John Bentley, the lead speaker, underscored the pivotal role of emotional intelligence in corporate decision-making because a staggering 70% of strategic failures can be attributed to poor decision-making by business leaders with low emotional intelligence.

He mentioned that emotions influence 80% of decision-making, as per a



survey carried out by Deloitte, hence, it is crucial to harness the power of emotional intelligence by effectively

blending thinking with feelings to make optimal decisions.

Business leaders and professionals

of various trades should effectively learn adaptability and embrace optimism to cultivate the growth mindset in their professionals and provide lives, improving their emotional intelligence to the optimal level. Individuals should recognize triggers, overcome their stress, and apply consequential thinking to be smarter people with EI.

Hamza Wasi Hasim, Founder and CEO Terrabiz, stressed the importance of investing in human capital to significantly enhance the productivity of human capital through capacity-building programs led by globally recognized trainers and speakers. He urged both corporate and private sectors to invest in their workforce to ensure high performance in strategic decision-making.

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Fatwa and Gwadar Incident

The situation in Pakistan is deeply troubling as the incompetence of politicians and civil administration has forced the army into handling sensitive ethnic, religious, cultural, and social conflicts, areas outside its training and primary purpose. The army is primarily trained to combat foreign enemies and assist the civilian government only when law and order are beyond civilian control. For example, during the Paris Olympics, over 10,000 military personnel provided security but returned to barracks after the event. In Pakistan, however, due to the persistent failures of political and civil leaders, the army is repeatedly called upon to manage conflicts that should be the civilian government's responsibility.

During my over four decades of experience, I have frequently interacted with the Army Command when they were called to assist civilians. The army consistently argued that they should only be called upon in extreme circumstances. They emphasized that their military-grade weapons are unsuitable for use against their own citizens, which limits their effectiveness to that of the civilian government. While their presence and flag marches may initially intimidate the populace, this effect diminishes as people grow accustomed to the army's involvement in civilian matters.

The involvement of the army in civilian affairs, driven by the incompetence of politicians and the civil administration, has severely damaged its image. Visible and virulent movements against the army have emerged in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) in KP advocates for the rights of the Pashtun people, aiming to end extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and unlawful detentions, while demanding justice and human rights. In Balochistan, groups like the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Baloch Republican Army (BRA), Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), and United Baloch Army (UBA) engage in armed struggle and propaganda against the army, further complicating the situation. This standoff has led to numerous incidents of violence, including the recent clash in Gwadar where a protest by the Balochistan Yakehti Committee turned violent, resulting in the death of one soldier and injuries to 16 others. The loss of life, whether of a protester or a soldier, is deeply painful for every Pakistani patriot, underscoring the urgent need for competent governance and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Like violent movements which should have no place in a democratic country, another deeply worrying phenomenon that reflects a serious fault line in our national fabric is the issuance of fatwas that call for taking the life of someone who contradicts the fatwa giver's religious philosophy. There has been a history of such illegal fatwas in Pakistan. In 2012, the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan issued a fatwa against Malala Yousafzai for advocating girls' education, leading to an assassination attempt. In 2011, a fatwa was issued against Salman Taseer for criticizing blasphemy laws, resulting in his assassination. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy faced fatwas in 2016 for her documentary on honor killings. Militant groups like the TTP issued fatwas against polio vaccinations, claiming they were a Western conspiracy, leading to attacks on health workers. The 1974 fatwa against Ahmadis declared them non-Muslims, resulting in severe persecution. The Women's Protection Bill in 2006 faced fatwas for attempting to protect women from domestic violence. Javed Ahmad Ghamidi faced threats and

was forced to leave Pakistan in 2005 due to his progressive Islamic views. In 2017, clerics issued a fatwa against Imran Khan over comments on the Khatm-e-Nabuwat clause. Judges involved in the 2018 acquittal of Asia Bibi faced death fatwas from extremist groups, and those who delivered the 2019 Faizabad Dharna verdict were similarly targeted by religious groups like TLP. The latest incident involved the issuance of a fatwa against Supreme Court Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa. In general parlance, the TLP, often termed the "Fatwa Churning Machine," is allegedly seen as an asset of the ISI and is subjected to mudslinging campaigns.

The Pakistan Army faces a two-pronged jeopardy, despite the unwavering dedication of its brave soldiers and officers who frequently embrace shahadat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan to protect the country and its people from terrorists, criminals, and extremists. Instead of receiving the praise they rightly deserve, a virulent propaganda campaign has been unleashed against the army on social media and traditional media platforms. While this propaganda has failed to deter the armed forces from achieving their objectives, it negatively impacts overall morale. Therefore, it is imperative to address and reverse this situation promptly.

In this context, the parliament should prioritize addressing the underlying fault lines within the country instead of wasting time on self-serving laws to protect itself from the judiciary or opposition parties. The parliament must investigate and understand the real reasons and factors that have transformed a large segment of society into separatist, insurgent, extremists, religious bigots, and intolerant individuals. These elements take pride in waging armed struggle against the army, burning religious symbols of minorities, lynching individuals accused of blasphemy, slaughtering those opposed to their religious views, and issuing fatwas to murder others without judicial process, all with impunity.

Interestingly, the district administration, special branch, and other intelligence agencies monitor all gatherings as a standard operating procedure, compiling daily reports at the district, divisional, provincial, and national levels, which ultimately reach the Prime Minister's desk every morning. Ironically, neither the Prime Minister, the parliament, nor our so-called intellectual thinkers and philosophers have taken up the challenge to reverse the ever-increasing phenomena of separatism, extremism, bigotry, intolerance, and violent behavior. Due to this impunity, these elements have become emboldened to the point of issuing fatwas against high-ranking officials, including the army chief, the prime minister, judges, and now the chief justice.

As a nation, we must insulate our army from civilian affairs. Politicians and civil administration should step forward boldly to handle all internal political conflicts, such as the PTM and Baloch insurgency, taking full responsibility for their success and failure. Moreover, civilian leadership must recognize that fatwas, especially those that incite violence or are criminal in nature, including those related to incitement to violence, hate speech, and terrorism, have no official legal status. Those issuing these illegal decrees must be immediately brought to justice at the district level before such issues escalate to the national level.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

New Israeli evacuation orders deepen misery for Gaza's displaced Palestinians

New forced displacements have continued in Gaza as regional tensions escalated after renewed hostilities along the Israeli-Lebanese border over the weekend, according to UN humanitarian officials.

Evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military have impacted Nuseirat and Bureij refugee camps, forcing families to relocate "again and again, knowing that safety is non-existent in the Gaza Strip", the UN agency assisting Palestine refugees, UNRWA, said in a post on X.

More than nine months into the war in Gaza, only 14 per cent of the enclave has not been impacted by evacuation orders, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazarini said.

"Quite often, people have just a few hours to pack whatever they can and start all over again, mostly on foot or on a crowded donkey cart for those who can afford it," he said. "Almost everyone in Gaza has been impacted by these orders. Many were forced to flee on average once a month since the war began nine months ago."

In a related development, the UN agency condemned the reported destruction of a water plant in Rafah in southern Gaza, a focus of Israeli military action since early May.

"Any time, something happens – like what appears to happen in Rafah over the weekend, with a water plant destroyed – it impacts the ability we have to generate water," said Scott Anderson, UN Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator and Director of UNRWA Affairs in Gaza. The UN agency has been unable to independently assess the situation, he noted.

Echoing the testimonies of forcibly displaced people who are among those assisted by UNRWA, Anderson recounted how one woman with twins explained the chaos of the upheaval: "She said, yeah, basically, that was one child for each arm and a little backpack, you know, and off they go to try to find safety."

According to UNRWA, evacuation orders are now issued "every other day", while UN aid coordination office, OCHA, reported on Friday that humanitarian partners estimated that more than 190,000 Palestinians had been displaced last week in Khan Younis and Deir al Balah, since an evacuation order issued seven days ago.

Recent evacuation orders and intense hostilities have continued to destabilize aid operations and hampered efforts to provide critical relief to civilians in Khan Younis, OCHA insisted.

It maintained that ongoing insecurity and the designation of "only one access point for the entry and exit of humanitarian staff into and out of Gaza – the Kerem Shalom crossing – have hampered efforts to deploy additional emergency medical teams in Gaza" – even though these workers are critically needed to help support the "exhausted" local health force.



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

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

The roots of terrorism in Pakistan stem from diverse factors such as geopolitical dynamics, internal conflicts, and ideological extremism.

Its strategic location, bordering Afghanistan and India, has exposed it to regional instability and cross-border militancy. Historical events like the Soviet-Afghan War have had enduring impacts, shaping militant ideologies and networks within the country. Terrorism in Pakistan manifests through various forms including



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, sectarian violence, and attacks on both security forces and civilians. Extremist groups, whether local or transnational, exploit grievances and socio-economic disparities to propagate their agendas through violent means. These acts of terrorism have not only claimed numerous lives but have also instilled fear and insecurity among the populace. Pakistan has made substantial efforts in combating terrorism through a comprehensive strategy that encompasses military operations, law enforcement actions, intelligence sharing, and legislative reforms. Operations like Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad have specifically aimed at eradicating militant strongholds, dismantling terrorist networks, and reestablishing governmental authority in previously turbulent areas. Moreover, initiatives targeting violent extremism (CVE) seek to tackle underlying causes, promote tolerance, and facilitate the rehabilitation of radicalized individuals. Recognizing the global reach of terrorism, Pakistan has

forged strong collaborations with neighboring countries such as Afghanistan and China, as well as with international partners including the United States and the United Nations. Cooperation in intelligence-sharing, border management, and capacity-building has been indispensable in addressing cross-border militancy and bolstering regional security.

The Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) also highlighted a rise in fake news targeting the Pakistan Army, stressing the importance of addressing these issues. He lamented the politicization of critical matters, citing Operation Azm-e-Istehkam as a prime example. The spokesperson emphasized that the war against terrorism is crucial for national survival, characterizing Operation Azm-e-Istehkam as a comprehensive campaign against terrorism. He questioned the emergence of a political faction obstructing stability and the implementation of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

Anti-state mafias represent a significant threat to the country. Globally, these criminal syndicates undermine not only law and order but also the fundamental integrity and sovereignty of nations. Motivated by greed, power, and lawlessness, they subvert legal frameworks and erode the rule of law. By infiltrating government institutions, law enforcement agencies, and regulatory bodies, these syndicates manipulate policies, influence decision-making, and avoid accountability, eroding public trust and perpetuating corruption. Beyond governance, they profit from illicit activities

such as drug trafficking, extortion, money laundering, and illegal trade, destabilizing economies and depriving governments of legitimate revenues. The resources diverted to combat organized crime detract from investments in social welfare, infrastructure, and poverty alleviation efforts, perpetuating socio-economic disparities. Additionally, anti-state mafias collaborate with terrorist groups, insurgencies, and external adversaries to undermine national security, engaging in arms smuggling and exploiting ethnic or sectarian divisions to provoke violence and instability. These collaborations pose serious threats to territorial integrity, communal harmony, and regional stability, hindering efforts toward peace-building and conflict resolution in affected regions. In the era of information warfare, anti-state mafias leverage disinformation campaigns and propaganda to manipulate public opinion, foster discord, and undermine national unity. By controlling media outlets, manipulating social media platforms, and conducting cyber operations, they propagate false narratives that distort reality, deepen societal rifts, and delegitimize legitimate governmental authorities. This psychological warfare diminishes public trust, polarizes communities, and diminishes resilience against external influences. Effective countermeasures against anti-state mafias necessitate holistic approaches integrating law enforcement actions, judicial reforms, international collaboration, and community involvement. Strengthening legal frameworks, enhancing intelligence capabilities, and fostering transparency in governance are crucial initiatives in dismantling criminal networks and reinforcing the foundations of lawful governance.

To be continued

Refugee Policy Failures of USA lead to burning of its own flag

In recent days, the burning of the American flag on Capitol Hill in Washington, D. C., has sparked outrage and condemnation across the nation. In many countries, such an act is considered a severe crime, carrying harsh punishments. However, in the United States, incidents like these have become disturbingly common, highlighting deeper issues within the country's immigration and security policies.

The American flag symbolizes the nation's identity, honor, and spirit. It represents the sacrifices of those who have fought and died to protect the freedoms and values that define the United States. The desecration of this symbol is an affront to all who hold these values dear. One cannot overlook the connection between these acts of disrespect and the policies that have allowed individuals with anti-American sentiments to gain citizenship. The United States Refugee Admissions Program, intended to provide sanctuary to those fleeing persecution, has, in some cases, admitted individuals who harbor ill will towards their new homeland. This is a glaring failure of the current immigration policies and security screenings. Visas have been granted to individuals from countries with histories of hostility towards the United States, raising concerns about the adequacy of the vetting process. America's non-Muslim majority finds itself increasingly dealing with the implications of admitting individuals with extremist ideologies, including those with a jihadist mindset. This is not to suggest that all immigrants or refugees pose a threat, but rather that the current system fails to adequately filter those who might. The burning of the American flag is not just a symbolic act; it is an open challenge to genuine American citizens who love and respect their country. It dishonors the memory of American soldiers who have laid down their lives, draped in the very flag that was desecrated. In nations such as Iran, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan, flag burning is met with severe penalties, reflecting the gravity of such acts. The United States government must take decisive action. Those



Analysis

Syed Fawad Ali Shah

who engage in flag burning should be arrested and punished accordingly. If they are American citizens, their citizenship should be revoked. If they are immigrants, they should be deported. The failure to address these actions sends a dangerous message of tolerance towards disrespect and anti-American sentiment.

In countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, and Kuwait, such acts of flag desecration would be met with the harshest of punishments, including death or life imprisonment. The strict laws in these countries deter individuals from committing such heinous acts, ensuring national symbols are respected. America, in its pursuit of freedom and human rights, has inadvertently allowed too much leniency, creating an environment where disrespect flourishes. The resettlement of millions of Afghans in the United States, while noble in its intent, also carries potential future risks. The American government must heed these warnings and take steps to tighten security screening standards for visas and refugee admissions. The future of America must be safeguarded by ensuring that those who are allowed entry do not pose a threat to its peace and stability. American citizens must wake up to their rights and the realities facing their nation. The time has come to preserve the values and freedoms that make America the land of opportunity and peace. The responsibility to protect America's future lies in the hands of its citizens and leaders. Only by improving and tightening security screening standards can the United States continue to be a beacon of hope and opportunity, rather than becoming a land plagued by the very threats it seeks to escape from.

The writer is a senior Journalist He can be reached at pmpk55@hotmail.com

Rana Tanveer agrees for expert task force on agriculture to boost technology roll out

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Monday agreed to form a taskforce comprising experts and stakeholders on agriculture to boost technology rollout for better crop yield and productivity.

The Minister was chief guest at the roundtable jointly organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and the Federation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) here titled Transforming Pakistan's Agriculture: Sustainable Growth Amid Challenges and the Role of Precision Agriculture Technologies.

The Minister underscored the importance of agriculture as the backbone of the country's economy that demanded moderation through cutting technological solutions and innovations helping in improving its average productivity.

He urged the SDPI and FPCCI to submit policy proposals to the Ministry of National Food Security and Research to initiate a coordinated and focused intervention to train, equip and mobilise farmer community to embrace the transformational change.

Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri in his special remarks said climate change impacts mitigation and adaptation in agriculture sector is only possible through precision agriculture technologies.

He mentioned that the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) is a most modern facility developing advanced technological solutions particularly in the realm of precision agriculture that will help the farmers in revolutionizing their day-to-day agricultural practices and techniques.

Chairman FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Agriculture, Chaudhry Ahmad Jawad in his opening remarks said that after the start of Green Pakistan Programme, agriculture is the most debated sector of the country's economy which cannot sustain without it.

Ahmed Jawad mentioned that the NASTP and other institutions were working in silos on precision agriculture that needs to ensure cohesion and coordination among themselves and the relevant stakeholders.

Advisor to President FPCCI, Dr Afshan Malik said agriculture sector was crucial for the country's economic prosperity whereas the government



should improve skills of the farmers, and enable financing and training opportunities to build up their capacities on modern lines.

Earlier, Research Fellow, SDPI, Dr Kashif Majeed Salik presented a detailed presentation at the Blueprint Study of the SDPI on agricul-

ture sector transformation. He highlighted that the study was a collaborative effort conducted with the assistance of the FPCCI whereas

the seminar was intended to address the needs for technological transformation and its implementation through collaborations.

'Leave No Child Behind in the Fight Against Human Trafficking'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Stakeholders from various international organizations and the Government of Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration and accelerating efforts to combat human trafficking. During an event organized to commemorate World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the emphasis was placed on protecting children and upholding the rights and dignity of those most at risk of exploitation.

The event, under the global theme "Leave no child behind in the fight against human trafficking," was a collaborative effort organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Sustainable Social Development Organiza-



tion (SSDO), in partnership with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

Observed annually on July 30th, the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons aims to raise awareness about human trafficking and advocate for protection of victims' rights. This year's global campaign urges accelerated action to end child trafficking and labour issues.

The event aimed to raise awareness about the prevalence and impact of child trafficking and labour in Pakistan while highlighting the collab-

orative efforts and commitments of various organizations in combating human trafficking. It also recognized national partners and stakeholders making significant contributions to the fight against human trafficking in Pakistan. During the event, UN agencies and partner organizations reiterated their commitment to addressing human trafficking through inclusive and collaborative efforts at all levels. Moreover, the event provided a platform for sharing knowledge, strategies, and best practices through presentations, expert opinions, and

discussions. In his opening remarks, the Additional Director General of FIA, Mr. Abbas Ahsan, our society as a whole and practitioners including law enforcement in particular must acknowledge what constitutes trafficking; its prevalence in Pakistan and the impact it has on the lives of people especially children. Country Representatives from UNODC, ICMPD, ILO, IOM, SSDO, and FIA underscored the importance attached to the protection of children and stressed that targeted meas-

ures are essential to reduce their vulnerability to trafficking.

Dr Jeremy Milsom, Representative UNODC Country Office Pakistan, invited Ms. Shahida Gillani, Programme Officer Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling to read the message of UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly with the audience. Ms Gilani highlighted in her message, this year's theme focuses on child victims which have tripled over the past 15 years.

Geir Tonstol, Country Director for the ILO Pakistan, said, "The ILO recognizes the urgent need to combat human trafficking, a grave issue disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable, especially children. With a staggering 3.3 million children trafficked worldwide, it is crucial for state systems to adopt integrated approaches that prioritize child protection.

Vincent Matteau, Senior Programme Coordinator at IOM, emphasized the urgent need to combat child trafficking by establishing stronger part-

nerships and improving migration management. "IOM is committed to expanding safe and legal migration channels, while addressing trafficking and smuggling through a comprehensive approach.

Syed Kausar Abbas, Executive Director of SSDO, highlighted the importance of a systematic approach to victim identification and referral, especially for vulnerable groups, and ensuring they receive tailored support. He called for increased prosecutions under the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (PTPA), better labour inspections for child and bonded labour, and enhanced stakeholder capacity.

Fawad Haider, Head of Office at ICMPD, emphasized, "The theme 'Leave no child behind in the fight against human trafficking' underscores the critical need for collaborative efforts to safeguard children's rights and dignity.

Senator Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson National

Commission on Rights of Child (NCRC) said, "Today on the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, we gather to confront one of the gravest violation of human rights: child trafficking.

Closing the high-level segment Director General FIA Mr Ahmad Ishaque Jahangir (PSP) emphasized, "Human trafficking, particularly child trafficking, is a serious human rights violation that demands our unwavering attention and action. In Pakistan, the FIA has been leading efforts to combat this heinous crime. Our work is significantly enhanced through collaboration with our esteemed partners. This joint event is a testament to our unified response and shared commitment to eradicating trafficking in persons."

UNODC, ICMPD, ILO, IOM, SSDO, and FIA reaffirm their collective commitment to eradicating human trafficking in Pakistan and a future where every child is safe and free from exploitation.

Stakeholders advocate for urgent equitable elections participation for PWDs

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan hosted a national consultation on "Making Elections Accessible and Meaningful for People with Disabilities in Pakistan" in Islamabad. The multi-stakeholder event made a compelling call upon the provincial and the federal government to ensure full implementation of Pakistan's national and international legal obligations for ensuring removal of all forms of barriers faced by voters with disabilities in casting their votes. The event also urged the government stakeholders to steadfastly mainstream the Accessibility Code of Pakistan 2006 in construction of all public

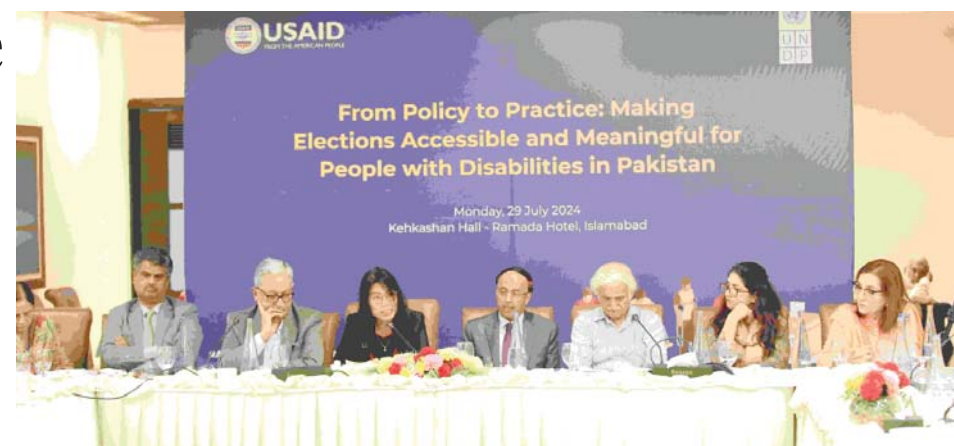
usage infrastructure. The consultation included PWD representatives, parliamentarians, government officials as well as representatives from national human rights institutions and civil society organizations. The National Consultation was preceded by four provincial Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) where provincial counterparts discussed accessibility to public buildings particularly schools and other buildings which were converted to polling stations on election day.

During the consultation, key challenges and recommendations were presented by the four provincial chapters of the National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR), Balochistan Commis-

sion on the Status of Women (BCSW), and UNDP Pakistan's Strengthening Electoral and Legislative Processes (SELP) project team. These consultations led to the development of consolidated action points by representatives from the Provincial Election Commissions, Human Rights Institutions, Line Departments, NADRA, Provincial Bureaus of Statistics, and notably, representatives from PWDs. These action points will be presented at the "National Implementation framework on Enhancing the Accessibility for Persons with Disability (PWDs) in Pakistan" event scheduled to be held in Islamabad on 29 July.

The event highlighted the need for accessible public build-

ings and the implementation of disability legislation across Pakistan. Participants noted that despite existing legislation, the lack of implementation continues to marginalize PWDs. Discussions revealed that while Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan have disability laws, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa lacks such legislation. However, PWD representatives stressed that lack of implementation, even in regions with laws, leaves public spaces largely inaccessible. Greater political will is required to advance disability inclusion effectively. Federal government entities, including Senate and National Assembly members, acknowledged these gaps and stressed the necessity for robust actions, particularly in making



public spaces, especially school buildings, accessible to improve the political and electoral participation of PWDs.

More specifically, the consultation discussed that effectively implementing relevant legislation and constitutional provisions requires shared responsibility and strong leadership. Key actions to champion equitable inclusion of PWDs in elections

requires a thorough review of pre-election processes like registration of voters with disabilities, disaggregated data collection on the status of their inclusion, disability-friendly postal balloting, and ensuring accessible government and private infrastructure according to the Accessibility Code of Pakistan 2006, which is also incorporated into provincial and federal legislations on the

rights of PWDs. Most importantly, the consultation concluded with the agreement that the recommendations will need a collaborative, sustained and concerted effort through inter-ministerial, inter-services, and civil society coordination to ensure that no citizen is left behind in exercising her or his fundamental right to vote.

Google Cloud Ignites Pakistan's Startup Ecosystem at Grand Finale of its Startup Competition 2024

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Google Cloud, in collaboration with Tech Valley, successfully concluded its inaugural Startup Competition Pakistan 2024 that saw 700 submissions from over 70+ cities.

"As incubators of innovation, startups possess immense potential to reshape traditional industries for a digital-first future, creating new economic opportunities for Pakistan. Supporting the growth of startups has long been a strategic imperative for Google Cloud. By equipping promising startups with the tools needed to grow and scale, we are making a valuable investment in Pakistan's long term prosperity, empowering the country for success in

the digital economy", said Farhan Qureshi, Regional Director, Google.

The Competition served as a launchpad for innovation, attracting a surge of creative solutions across five key tracks: AI and GenAI, Fintech, Sustainability and Environment, E-commerce and Connectivity, and Frontier Digital Technologies. Startups refined their pitches and identified areas of improvements through mentoring sessions in major cities of Pakistan.

"This competition has been a testament to the immense potential within Pakistan's startup ecosystem. We are thrilled to have partnered with Google Cloud and Bank of Punjab to provide this platform for our nation's brightest

minds," said Umar Farooq, CEO of Tech Valley.

The judging panel consisted of leading local and regional VCs including Indus Valley Capital, i2i Ventures, Sarmayacar, nVentures and SEED Ventures. Each winner from the five competition tracks received a cash prize of 1 million PKR and will be offered mentorship from senior Google experts to further refine their ideas. The competition also facilitated connections with leading VCs, opening doors to potential funding and mentorship. Additionally, all 25 Finalists were offered mentorship opportunities with industry experts including from Bank of Punjab and Orbit Startups.

The competition, strategically supported by Bank of Punjab

(BOP), solidified their commitment to fostering Pakistan's dynamic tech scene.

"BOP takes immense pride in empowering entrepreneurs and founders by offering unparalleled opportunities like this one and its support for various such endeavours in the past 3 years is a testament to this. Hosting Pakistan's inaugural Google Cloud Startup Competition underscores our dedication to strengthening the startup ecosystem in this region. I congratulate the winners for showcasing their exceptional talent, and we remain committed to providing impactful platforms and services that support startups both locally and globally," said Mr. Zafar Masud, President & CEO of Bank of Punjab.



An upcoming Google for Startups AI Academy for Asia Pacific was also announced, whereby Pakistani startups in the AI space will be eligible to be selected as part of the inaugural

cohort that will cover responsible AI and provide access to Google's ecosystem of experts and technologies. The chosen team will be a part of an APAC startup cohort with a 3 month program. The majority of

the program will be online, with an on-site three-day bootcamp in Singapore, which plays host to a startup ecosystem hub with over 4,500 startups, 500 VCs and 220 accelerators and incubators.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
78,628.80	78,827.74
Day's High	Day's Low
79,327.04	78,518.23
Index Value	Change
9,163,925,355	-198.94
Percentage	Time
-0.25%	30 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,274.41	-17.94
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	30 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,659.90	+119.97
Percentage	Time
+0.30%	30 Jul, 1:46 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,525.95	+57.32
Percentage	Time
+0.15%	30 Jul, 3:15 pm 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	73.9	74.6
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	75.65	76.4
UK Pound Sterling	356.35	359.9
US Dollar	278.5	280.6

Additional actions needed to resume business activities, says 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, on Tuesday, lauded the SBP for a slight reduction of one per cent in the interest rates.

Staff level agreement with the International Monetary Fund, control over imports, increase in taxes, reduction in current account deficit, stabilization of rupee value and reduction in inflation have boosted the central bank's confidence on which it has cut the key policy rate, he said.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the central

bank's decision will increase the confidence of the business community to some extent.

However, he said, keeping in mind the reduction in inflation, which has come down from 35% to 12%, a three to four percent reduction in interest rates was needed to meet challenges as industry and business are facing worst conditions.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that not only are electricity and gas more expensive in Pakistan than in the countries of the region, but the interest rate is also much higher than in these countries.

He said that the Monetary Policy Committee of the State Bank of Pakistan has reduced the basic policy rate by 100 basis points to 19.5% due to the trend of decreasing inflation. This decrease will lead to some reduction in interest payments on loans.



Mian Zahid Hussain said that the external accounts are continuing to improve, and the

foreign exchange reserves of the State Bank are also increasing, which is why efforts have been made to provide some support to the economic activities.

He said that it would have been better if the interest rate had been reduced by four percent because the business community has endured high interest rates for many years and is currently facing many challenges.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that earlier in the meeting held on June 10, the State Bank decided to reduce the interest rate by 150 basis points, after which it had come down to 20.5%. This was the first cut in the interest rate, while the second cut was made yesterday.

The business community wants the government and the central bank to work together to improve the economy so that the growth rate can increase, he said.

Souvenir

President Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh presenting crest to Federal Minister of Finance & Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb during his visit to KCCI on Tuesday. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, Minister of State for Finance, Revenue & Power Ali Pervez Malik, Chairman Businessmen Group Zubair Motiwala, Vice Chairman BMG Anjum Nisar and others are also seen in the picture.



Photo: PID

KDA to Establish New Industrial Zone in Surjani: DG Shujaat Hussain

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Syed Shujaat Hussain, Director General of the Karachi Development Authority (KDA), has announced the establishment of a new industrial zone in Surjani. The North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI) and the Federal B. Area Association of Trade & Industry (FABAT) will be given priority in this development.

Syed Shujaat Hussain made the announcement during a meeting held at the invitation of NKATI President Faisal Moiz Khan. The meeting was attended by Senior Vice President Shabbir Ismail, Vice President Naeem Haider, Chief Executive Officer of NKIDMC Younus Khamisani, and other notable figures including Imran Moiz Khan, Tariq Rasheed, Mahmood Rangoonwala, Syed Sabir Ali, Azim Ali, Syed Yasir Ali, Asghar Hussain, Sajjad Wazir, Shahid Sabir, and Moiz Qadri.

Faisal Moiz Khan, President of NKATI, welcomed the DG KDA and expressed appreciation for the announcement of the



new industrial zone. He also pledged full support for the initiative. Additionally, Khan raised concerns about increasing encroachments in the North Karachi Industrial Area, particularly around KDA roads, which he urged should be

addressed. In response, the Director General assured that measures would be taken to remove encroachments and that construction and repair work on Godhra and Saba cinema roads would be addressed.

Protecting consumers from hidden costs, CAT upholds CCP's penalty on cable manufacturers

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has dismissed Zafar Cables' appeal against the Competition Commission of Pakistan's (CCP) order for concealing cash coupons inside electric wire cable bundles without informing consumers.

The CCP conducted an enquiry on receiving information that many electric wire manufacturing companies were inserting cash or cash coupons inside the bundle packs of electric wire but they were not disclosing this information on the packaging or other promotional material. The practice only benefited the electricians who generally open the packs and deceived the end consumers who ultimately pay for the value of the coupons but were unaware of it.

The CCP's enquiry revealed that 18 electric cable manu-

facturers, including Zafar Cables, were engaged in the deceptive practice, benefiting only electricians while deceiving the end consumers. During the hearings, most of these cable manufacturers admitted their involvement and made commitments to stop doing so in the future.

The CCP's order stated that the non-disclosure of the tokens in electric cables packs is deceptive, as it creates ambiguity and is found lacking in having a reasonable basis as to the price borne by the consumers. This constitutes a violation of Section 10 of the Competition Act 2010. Consequently, a penalty of PKR 500,000 was imposed.

Zafar Cables challenged the CCP's order before the CAT. However, due to repeated absence on scheduled hearings, the Tribunal dismissed the appeal for non-prosecution.

Zong launches door step delivery of nearly everything

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, the leading telecommunication service provider in Pakistan, is excited to announce the launch of its new Online Booking Portal and Home Delivery Service.

Zong is committed to making digital services accessible to all Pakistanis by offering affordable and convenient solutions. The company's focus on affordability ensures that everyone can benefit from the power of technology, while its commitment to convenience brings services directly to your doorstep.

According to the official spokesperson for Zong 4G, "Keeping the evolving demands of our customers, Zong's new Online Booking Portal and Home Delivery Service innovates the customers experience. This is one of the many steps we are taking to digitalize our customers' journey with Zong."

Through its home step services, Zong's goal is to make its services directly available to customers' homes and ensure that even those who may have limited mobility or access to physical stores can still benefit from the digital products and services.

foodpanda partners with QJ Diagnostic to set up free medical camps for delivery riders



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: foodpanda Pakistan announced a significant partnership with QJ Diagnostic, a renowned medical lab in Islamabad/Rawalpindi and a sister concern of CitiLab, to enhance the health and well-being of its dedicated delivery riders. Through this collaboration, foodpanda and QJ Diagnostic set up free Hepatitis-C medical camps, demonstrating a strong commitment to rider health and safety.

Led by Mr. Zubair Nasir, CEO of QJ Diagnostic, this initiative is poised to make a substantial impact. Hepatitis C medical camp, organised at F-8 and Saddar hubs in Islamabad, offered ICT Hepatitis-C and Hepatitis-C PCR tests, and comprehensive treatment free of charge.

Muntauq Peracha, Managing Director of foodpanda Pakistan, stated, "Our riders are the backbone of our operations, and their health and well-being are of great importance to us. This partnership with QJ Diagnostic allows us to provide essential medical services to our delivery riders, ensuring they remain healthy and capable of serving our customers efficiently."

Zubair Nasir, CEO of QJ Diagnostic, also commented on the occasion of the partnership, "QJ Diagnostic was founded in loving memory of my late mother, Qamar Jahan Begum, with a mission to eradicate Hepatitis C from Pakistan. Over the past eight months, we have conducted tests for more than 9,000 underprivileged individuals, including foodpanda riders, and provided treatment for over 400 patients, who tested positive, in Rawalpindi and Islamabad."

ICCI delegation visits Ethiopian Embassy, expresses solidarity with Govt, families of landslide victims'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan, His Excellency Jemal Beker Abdula has emphasized the strategic partnership between Ethiopia and Pakistan, expressing determination to enhance bilateral relations, particularly in trade and business. He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation from the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), led by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, which visited the embassy to offer condolences for the loss of over 260 lives in Ethiopia's recent landslides. On this occasion former Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed was also present.

Ambassador Abdula highlighted the successful interactions between Pakistani and Ethiopian entrepreneurs through exchange programs, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. He also noted Pakistan's potential to benefit from Ethiopia's experience in addressing climate change.

The Ambassador expressed gratitude for Pakistan's support in launching Ethiopian Airlines' operations in Karachi, a key component of Pakistan's "Look Africa and Engage Africa" policy to strengthen government-to-government, people-to-people, and



business-to-business relations.

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to its ties with Ethiopia, recognizing it as a gateway for exports to Africa. He emphasized the role of Ethiopian Airlines in promoting bilateral rela-

tions and expressed the Pakistani business community's enthusiasm for exploring new avenues with Ethiopian entrepreneurs.

Earlier, President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari had expressed his heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the people and government

of Ethiopia for the tragic loss of lives caused by the devastating landslides last week. He assured Ambassador Jemal Beker Abdula that the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) was fully committed to providing all possible assistance to the affected families. Additionally, he recorded his condolence message in the condolence book, further solidifying the Chamber's support during this difficult time."

Former Senator and PAIDAR Chairman Mushahid Hussain Syed highlighted the importance of people-to-people exchanges and business-to-business connectivity in areas like education, trade, and sustainable development.

Former ICCI President and United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari commended Ambassador Abdula's efforts in strengthening bilateral relations by saying that together both the brotherly countries have gained a sufficient ground and that Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's visit to Pakistan will be a jump to further solidify ties between the two nations.

The ICCI delegation included Malik Shabbir Awan, Faizan Shahzad, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Maqsood Tabish, Akhtar Abbasi, and Zia Chaudhry.

MoU signed to boost cricket game at grass-roots level

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was held here on Tuesday between Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Capital Development Authority (CDA), Higher Education Commission (HEC), and Inter Board Coordination Commission (IBCC) to boost the game of cricket at the grass-roots level.

The ceremony was attended by Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chairman PCB and Federal Minister for Interior, and Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique, Minister for Federal Education & Professional Training, as guests of honour.

The collaboration aims to identify and nurture young cricket talent at schools and colleges level across Pakistan.

The MoU outlines a roadmap for university cricket to be commenced in September, followed by school and college cricket tournaments in October and November, respectively.

Speaking on the occasion, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi expressed his optimism about the MoU's, saying, "We will all work together for the betterment of



cricket, and the outcomes will be very beneficial for the game."

Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique

emphasized the importance of sports starting from the school level (grass-root level), saying, Schools should be

nurseries of leadership. We will begin from the school level and move forward, he added.

China's first Olympic champion cherishes golden memories

Xinhua

HEFEI: When Xie Yu, a 24-year-old Olympic debutant, emerged from behind to win an Olympic pistol gold, the scene was reminiscent of what happened in Los Angeles 40 years ago.

On July 29, 1984, Chinese sharpshooter Xu Haifeng narrowly defeated his Swedish rival in the men's free pistol event at the Los Angeles Games, earning China its first-ever Olympic gold. "I have to control myself and give my all," he wrote in a diary entry about how he felt then, which has been preserved to this day.

On the yellowed pages of his diary, Xu vividly detailed the competition on that day. The retired athlete donated the notebook with a green plastic cover to the Anhui Provincial Sports Museum in east China, where it is currently on display.

"In that era 40 years ago, our country needed a boost in our national pride," recalled the 67-year-old.

The 1932 Los Angeles Games saw Liu Changchun become the first Chinese to make an Olympic appearance and it was Xu's victory at Los Angeles 1984 that was inspiring for Chinese people, once dubbed the "Sick Man of East Asia."

Xu once penned a poem in his diary: Big ambition, small steps, Genius is one who can always learn; Hard work, more practice, Success is there for you to earn.

The entry was dated in 1979, the year when the People's Republic of China

resumed its lawful seat at the International Olympic Committee.

Standing in the Olympic arena, Xu knew that victory would be difficult. Material shortages were a major challenge for athletes shortly after China's reform and opening up in 1978. The provincial team of Anhui had only two imported pistols reserved especially for competitions, and the bullets he used were imported in 1975 and were all moldy. Before competitions, he had to clean the bullets one by one with a piece of cloth.

In the entry about the Olympic competition, he wrote: "I was calm in the first two series when the results were okay. In the third series, however, I only scored an eight. I knew something went wrong. So I walked out and sat for a while to calm down." When the competition ended, enthusiastic spectators rushed over to congratulate him or ask to take a photo together, but Xu was still nervous. At that time, there were no electronic screens to display the timely results, so they had to wait for half an hour.

Xu returned about 20 minutes later. As the competition was approaching the end, more spectators gathered to watch, putting pressure on him.

After a few shots, he still couldn't achieve his desired scores. "I realized that I couldn't go on like this," said the marksman. "I tried to muster up my spirit and refrained from firing until I

felt good enough."

It was perhaps the longest half-hour of his life, but it was worth the wait. Xu felt relieved after receiving the notice from the judges. "I didn't let down my country and my compatriots," he wrote. His teammate Wang Yifu snatched the bronze. It was such a big surprise for the organizers that they had to helicopter in a second Chinese national flag for the flag-raising ceremony.

In his diary, Xu chronicled each of his shots by drawing circles to symbolize the targets, while shots in different series were marked with different symbols such as dots and triangles in different colors. "After each competition, I usually write down my measurements, the process, and a summary," said the veteran shooter.

In the years that followed, he worked as a coach and sports official, but the habit of keeping a diary persisted. Throughout his career, he has filled dozens of notebooks, all of which he donated to the museum.

Former Olympic champions Li Duihong and Tao Luna were both his students. In 2004, he was the head coach of the Chinese shooting team when the shooters pocketed four Olympic gold medals in Athens.

Gone are the days when Chinese people eagerly anticipate a gold medal to prove the nation's strength. In fact, since 2000, China has consistently been in the top three of the Olympic medal table.



"As the country developed, various industries thrived, and more gold medals were won. People's focus on medals isn't as strong as it used to be," Xu told Xinhua.

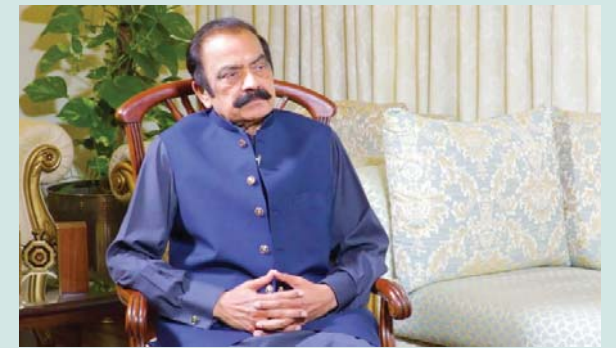
He witnessed China's economic and sporting development. This time, the country has sent a big team of 405 athletes to Paris, some of whom had trained overseas. As for shooting, Chinese shooters practice with the best pistols during training.

But Xu noted that a sporting powerhouse should be more than about Olympic gold medals.

"With the improvement of their livelihood, people's desire for a better life has become ever stronger, and they attach more importance to fitness," he said.

Although retired, Xu is still busy. "I hope that I can contribute more to China's sports," he said.

PM Advisor, Secretary, DG PSB congratulate Pakistan volleyball team on victory



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Advisor on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah Khan has congratulated the Pakistan Volleyball Team on their outstanding success at the 15th Asian Under-18 Volleyball Championship held in Bahrain.

Sanaullah, who also holds the portfolio of Inter Provincial Coordination along with Secretary IPC Ministry, and DG PSB congratulated the Pakistan Volleyball Team on their outstanding success at the Asian Championship.

The Pakistan Volleyball Team achieved victory by defeating South Korea 3-1 and India 3-0 in the matches of the championship to continue until August 4.

On Tuesday, the Prime Minister's Advisor, Rana Sanaullah Khan, Secretary of the Ministry, Nadeem Irshad Kiani, and DG PSB Yasir Pirzada, in their congratulatory messages, appreciated the hard work and dedication of all the players and coaching staff.

They expressed hope that the team would continue to achieve success with the same spirit in the future.

Pakistan defeat Kuwait, secure third victory in Asian U18 Volleyball Championship



The Pakistan team emerged victorious for the third time after defeating Kuwait by 3-0 in 15th Asian Men's U18 Volleyball Championship in Bahrain on Tuesday.

The scores of Pakistan's victory were 25-19, 25-11 and 25-19. With winning the last match of pool D, the team has qualified for the Top 8 round. The Men in Green will become part of Group F, and compete against Japan and Chinese Taipei.

Moreover, the team will enter the next round with a carry forward point due to their continuous victories.

The upcoming matches of Top 8 will be played by the Pakistani team against Chinese Taipei and Japan on August 1st and 2nd respectively.

The Green Shirts made a spectacular beginning with their first victory against South Korea.

The scores for Pakistan's victory in this match were 25-22, 23-25, 17-25, 25-20, and 19-15.

Additionally, a phenomenal 3-0 win against India was bagged by the Pakistan squad in their second match of the championship.

The team kept India under pressure throughout the game. Their set points were 25-20, 29-27, and 25-15.

Notably, the chairman of Pakistan Volleyball Federation has also announced a reward of \$100 for each player and coaching staff for beating India.

The players from the Pakistan team for the event includes Talal Ahmed, Abu Bakar, Muhammad Issam, Muhammad Hassan, Gibran Ajmal, Junaid Muttahed, Ali Shah, Muhammad Junaid, Muhammad Yahya, Muhammad Irfan, Muhammad Nasir, and Khizr Hayat.

Cricket Australia begins Women's Ashes Test countdown with iconic photos

Cricket Australia has unveiled some iconic photos that show how Australia captain Alyssa Healy and vice-captain Tahlia McGrath are gearing up for the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as the countdown to the historic Women's Ashes Day-Night Test Match commences.

Healy and McGrath accompanied each other at the MCG on Monday night to celebrate the six-month milestone until Australia and England face off in the inaugural day-night Test at the venue.

The Test will begin from January 30 and continue till February 2, 2025.

The momentous match coincides with the 90th anniversary of the first ever women's Test Match at the MCG, which took place during the Australia-England series in 1934-35.

Australia captain Alyssa Healy said: "We can't wait to play the first-ever day-night Test at MCG. It's going to be a special occasion as we honour the 90th anniversary of the first women's Test series under lights at this iconic venue."

"We are preparing for a big summer including the ICC T20 World Cup in Bangladesh, white ball series at home against New Zealand and India culminating with the multi-format Ashes series. We hope the Australian fans get behind us as we take on some tough rivals this summer."

Mandhana, Athapaththu move up in ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana of India and Chamari Athapaththu of Sri Lanka have progressed in the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings after some fine performances over the past week in the Women's Asia Cup played in Dambulla.

Mandhana has progressed one spot to take fourth position after scores of 55 not out against Bangladesh in the semifinal and 60 against Sri Lanka in the final, two places shy of her career-best second position. Athapaththu scored 49 not out against Bangladesh, 63 against Pakistan in the semifinal and a match-winning 61 off 43 in the final to grab a career best-equaling sixth



position.

Bangladesh captain Nigar Sultana has moved up three spots to 14th position, India's Jemimah Rodrigues is up one place to 18th while Sri Lanka's Harshita Samarawickrama

is back in the top 20 after her

Player of the Match effort of 69 not out in the final of the Asia Cup.

Wicketkeepers Muneeba Ali of Pakistan (up six places to 35th) and Nannapat Konchar-

oenkai of Thailand (up three places to 37th) have also made notable gains while Aliya Riyaz of Pakistan (up two places to 52nd) and Theertha Satish of the United Arab Emirates (up four places to 60th) are among the

others to move up the rankings.

In the bowling rankings, Pakistan's left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal has moved up one slot to fourth after finishing with four wickets in the semifinal against Sri Lanka while India's new-ball bowler Renuka Singh is back in the top five following a three-wicket haul against Bangladesh in the other semifinal.

Radha Yadav of India (up seven places to 13th), Udeshika Prabhodhani (up six places to 24th), Sugandhika Kumari (up four places to 27th) and Kavisha Dilhari (up five places to 30th) of Sri Lanka are among the others to move up the bowling rankings.

Dilhari has also moved up 19 places to 96th among batters and advanced 10 places to 17th among all-rounders.

India down Sri Lanka in a super-over thriller to sweep T20I series

A Sports

PALLEKELE: India came from behind to edge Sri Lanka in a super-over thriller and swept the three-match T20I series 3-0.

The last T20I went right down to the wire as skipper Suryakumar Yadav forced a super-over while defending six runs in the final over.

Washington Sundar bowled the super over for India and he leaked away just two runs before claiming back-to-back wickets to curtail Sri Lanka on a skimpy total.

Set to chase just three, Suryakumar Yadav hit Maheesh Theekshana on the first delivery to seal an astonishing victory for his side.

Put into bat first, India's inexperienced batting unit struggled against Sri Lanka's ruthless bowling attack and could accumulate 137/9 in the allotted 20 overs.

The touring party had a poor start to their innings as they lost half of their side with 48 runs on the board in 8.4 overs.

Meanwhile, Shubman Gill, who offered a notable fight, finally received ample support at the other end in the form of

Riyan Parag.

The duo added 54 runs for the sixth wicket before both perished in the 16th over, leaving India reeling at 105/7.

Gill remained the top-scorer for India with his gutsy 39. He conceded 37 deliveries in the process and struck three boundaries while Parag made a brisk 26 off 18 deliveries, peppered with one four and two sixes.

Washington Sundar then gave a late push to India's total with a quickfire cameo which lasted on the penultimate delivery of the innings. He smashed two fours and a six on his way to an



18-ball 25.

Maheesh Theekshana starred

with the ball for Sri Lanka, picking up three wickets, followed by Wanindu Hasaranga, who bagged two. Chamindu Wickramasinghe, Asitha Fernando and Ramesh Mendis chipped in with a wicket apiece.

In response, Sri Lanka were forced to make hard yards to achieve a modest total as India bowlers forced a late comeback.

The home side had a flying start to the pursuit with openers Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Mendis providing a solid platform with a 58-run stand.

Mendis was the core aggressor of the opening partnership while

Nissanka anchored through until his departure in the ninth over. He scored 26 off 27 deliveries.

Kusal Mendis was then involved in yet another fruitful partnership for Sri Lanka when he put together 52 runs for the second wicket with Kusal Perera.

Mendis' dismissal in the 16th over sparked a collapse as Sri Lanka lost four more wickets at an alarming rate and consequently slipped to 132/6 in 19 overs.

Perera remained the top-scorer for Sri Lanka with a 34-ball 46, closely followed by Mendis, who made 43 off 41.

Forced eviction

On Tuesday, more than 80 Palestinian families were forcibly evicted from the Israeli-occupied Silwan area of East Jerusalem.



Israel must immediately end forced eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem: UN

Agencies

UNITED NATIONS: The UN human rights office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory expressed concern on Tuesday over the forced evictions of over 80 Palestinian families in the Silwan area of Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem.

These evictions are "facilitated by the unlawful application of discriminatory Israeli laws against Palestinians in the occupied territory," the office said in a statement.

About 87 Palestinian families – nearly 680 individuals – face legal actions begun by "settlers" to remove them from their houses in Batn al-Hawa.

On 9 and 10 July, the Jerusalem District Court dismissed the appeals of the Gheith, Abu Nab, and Al-Rajabi families against eviction orders issued in lawsuits filed by Jewish Israeli settlers aiming to evict them from their homes.

The affected families reside in nine residential units which house over 80 Palestinians,

including children, women, the elderly, and individuals with special needs.

One particular area of concern involves the Shehadeh family, consisting of 15 people, including eight children, who face "escalating steps" toward their forced eviction.

This follows the Israeli High Court's rejection of a petition against an 11 April 2024 Supreme Court decision that ordered the family to leave their four-story residence in Batn al-Hawa to make way for

Jewish Israeli settlers.

On 14 July, the family received a notice demanding they vacate their home within 20 days, after which the settlers could enforce the eviction order.

"These cases are examples of an ongoing systematic settlers' campaign and application of a range of laws discriminatorily," the UN rights office said, "to uproot Palestinians from their homes, take over their property and implant Israeli settlers in the heart of Palesti-

nian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem."

Furthermore, international humanitarian law forbids Israel from enforcing its legal system in occupied territories, which extends to using Israeli laws to evict Palestinians from their homes.

Additionally, the office declared that these laws are intrinsically discriminatory against Palestinians, breaching Israel's international human rights commitments.

Mohsin Naqvi meets Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi at the Ministry of Interior.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and the overall law and order situation were discussed.

Mohsin Naqvi said that all possible cooperation will be continued for peace and tranquility in KP. He emphasized that the Frontier Constabulary, Counter-Terrorism

Department, and Police in KP are being equipped with modern technology and weapons.

He highlighted that KP is on the frontline in the war against terrorism and the brave personnel of KP Police, FC, and CTD have written a history of bravery with their blood in this war. He underscored that there is only one option winning this war against terrorism.

The interior minister reiterated the commitment that the nation will eradicate the scourge of terrorism with unity and consensus.

Govt launches mega project to provide best healthcare facilities in Islamabad: NA told

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday apprised the National Assembly that the federal government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif launched a mega project worth Rs 35 billion in the federal capital for provision of state of the art health facilities to the people.

Replying to a calling attention notice raised by Asia Naz Tanoli regarding significant increase in patients of Hepatitis C in Islamabad, the minister said that the prime minister has already launched a mega programme under annual Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) with the international support to provide best health care and facilities to the people in Islamabad.

He said the then government in 2005 had started a programme for



Hepatitis patients. After the devolution of health ministry to the provinces in 2011, now there was proper programme at the federal level, he said.

However, the minister said that both PIMS and Poly Clinic hospitals were providing treatment facilities to the patients in this regard.

He said over 90,000 medical tests of hepatitis were conducted during the last year in PIMS and only 3,664 tests were found positives.

Adopting artificial intelligence essential for development, prosperity: Ayaz Sadiq

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that this is an era of Artificial Intelligence and adopting innovations in all walks of life is essential for development and prosperity.

"Extending parliamentary cooperation among 56 member states of the Commonwealth is essential for regional prosperity and development," he expressed these views during his meeting with Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland along with representatives of parliaments of the Commonwealth who are on a 5-day official visit to Pakistan.

He also said that using innovative technologies and Artificial Intelli-



gence is pivotal for ensuring qualitative and public-responsive legislation.

The speaker also highlighted the significance of proactive parli-

mentary Friendship groups for enhancing parliament-to-parliament contacts among member states of the Commonwealth.

He also stressed the need to digitalize parliament for effective and public-responsive education. While mentioning the formulation of the Legislative Drafting Council.

He said that Artificial Intelligence is the technological innovation that can help produce synergy among parliaments of commonwealth member states.

While mentioning the Green Parliament Initiative, he said that the Pakistan parliament is the first of its kind which has been solarized completely for its electricity needs. Further, he also said that the Pakistan Parliament established the Secretariat of Sustainable Development Goals for synergizing among various stakeholders.

PTI founder's call for talks with institution, another conspiracy against state: Tarar

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar Tuesday said the call made by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder for negotiation with the institution was nothing but another conspiracy against the country.

This is another attempt of the PTI founder to drag the state institutions in his "dirty politics", said the minister in a media talk outside the Parliament.

He wondered how the PTI founder quickly changed his own stance on the concept of the neutrality of the institutions. "It is not acceptable for him that the state institutions are neutral and now for his own political benefits, he



wants them to be involved in the politics which is regret-

table," he added.

The minister believed that

the call for negotiation was made as the PTI founder preempted stern action against himself and his party after a raid on their social media cell which was operating in connivance with the enemies of the state.

He said further investigation into the operation of the social media cell would expose their alleged relations and connection with the state's enemies who were involved in formulating anti-state policies.

The minister said economic progress of the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also perturbed the PTI founder who had completely molded his harsh stance and tone.

"The PTI founder takes another U-turn today by suddenly requesting the insti-

tution to appoint a representative for talks," the minister said wondering how quickly he transitioned from his earlier stance of "I won't let go" to "Please talk to me."

Calling out him for his hypocrisy, Tarar said the PTI founder had resorted to the requests for talks after he realized that his shallow threats to the institutions would not work in any way.

He made it clear that there would be no compromise on the national security calling the PTI founder a "security risk" for the country due to his alleged involvement in the anti-state activities such as a malicious campaign against the state institutions on social media, attack on the army installations and defiling of the memorials of martyrs on May 9.

Second round of talks will begin on Wednesday, says JI leader Liaquat Baloch

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The second round of negotiations between the government and the Jamaat-e-Islami on the resolution of demands set by the party would be held on Wednesday (tomorrow), JI Deputy Ameer Liaquat Baloch said on Tuesday.

"There has been significant progress in the stalled negotiations between the government and the Jamaat-e-Islami," he said while appearing on Spotlight with Munizae Jahangir aired on Aaj News. He joined the show via a telephone call.

The last round of negotiations between the two sides took place on July 28, during which the religious-political party presented its 10 demands to the government. The government's

team informed the party's delegation that it was difficult to terminate the independent power producers (IPPs) agreements because they were international pacts that must be honoured.

At the end of the negotiations, the government team had told the JI delegation that it would convey its message to the prime minister and that the next round of negotiations scheduled for July 29 could not take place for any specific reason. The party had told the government that it would continue its sit-in despite the latter's assurance of forming a technical committee on the demands.

Baloch, the JI's negotiation team head, stated that the technical committee would consult Hafiz Naeem and other committee members.

Electricity prices to fall soon, Musadik Malik claims

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a welcome announcement for the Pakistani public, Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik has assured citizens that electricity prices will decrease in the coming days.

During an interview on a private television channel, Malik stated that the government has decided to bear the additional burden of electricity costs for 86% of households. To achieve this, the government will allocate 50 billion rupees from the national treasury to the power sector.

Malik also addressed concerns regarding the power distribution companies (DISCOs) and expressed hope that negotiations with the



Jamaat-e-Islami regarding the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) issue will yield positive results.

It is noteworthy that the Jamaat-e-Islami has been staging a sit-in in Rawalpindi for five days, protesting against excessive billing and demanding the termination of expensive contracts with IPPs. All previous negotiations between the protesters and the government have failed.