

Modi once again decided to crush Kashmiris: Pir Mazhar Saeed Shah

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZZAFFARABAD / ISLAMABAD: Maulana Pir Mohammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, Information Minister of the Azad Government of Jammu and Kashmir, has said that Modi has once again decided to crush Kashmiris in the Israeli style. The behavior of the Indian leadership has proved that talking to him is nothing more than playing the bean in front of the buffalo. We need to revisit our foreign policy for a permanent solution to the Kashmir issue.

Pakistan should convene an all-party conference comprising the Kashmiri leadership and decide on a plan of action for a permanent solution to the Kashmir issue.

He said that India has never shown seriousness for the solution of the Kashmir issue. Wherever the Kashmiris are, raise their voice for the freedom of the leaders who are fighting for the freedom of Kashmir. He said that Yasin Malik is not imprisoned for the sake of any party, region or individual, but for the freedom struggle of 12 million



Kashmiris. Whether it is Yasin Malik or Asiya Andrabi, the persecution of Hindus does not diminish. More than 10,000 Kashmiri Muslim men, women and children are enduring the hardships of imprisonment. Information Minister Pir Mazhar Saeed Shah said that the price of ideology is not lentil flour. Our position is independence from India, after which Kashmiris have the right to vote. He said that it has become necessary to eradicate this scourge of oppression in Kashmir and deal with it with iron hands.

Aman-Traqi Party wants to bring the people forward for economic justice: Faiq Shah

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Chairman of Peace Development Party Muhammad Faiq Shah has said that the continuous increase in the prices of electricity and food items has become a nightmare for the people and lives are at stake. The plays are being played, the people are fed up with these plays and are worried about their daily bread, the white-clad, middle-class classes are also forced to ask, while it has been made difficult for the salaried class to live, even vegetables and pulses are poor. Have been out of reach, the whole of Pakistan has been turned into an ammo of emotions and anger that can explode at any moment, will the people be thrown into jails due to hunger and poverty? He said that steps will have to be taken to solve the real problems in the assemblies, courts, police stations and administrative institutions. There are anti-people attitudes. And education is not the future, such people are not given speeches, but justice is the first need, Muhammad Faiq Shah said that the Aman-Traqi Party wants to bring the people forward for economic justice, political reforms and true democracy so that they decide their fate. He said that a drama ends and a new one is started so that the people are busy, but now these dramas have also failed. There is no change in personalities. Reforms in the system are necessary. There is competence and a plan of action. There is a solution to follow the action plan of the development party



Jammu Kashmir assembly holds dignified function on women's role in Pakistan



MUZZAFFARABAD: A dignified function was held on the role of women in Tehreek Azadi Pakistan organized by Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Acting President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Latif Akbar was the Chief Guest of the event while Advisor to the Government and Chairperson and Women Parliamentary Caucus Ms. Nisara Abbasi presided over the function. Acting President Chaudhry Latif Akbar expressed his views and said that women have a great position in Islam. Freedom contrary to Islamic rites cannot be imitated. He said that in order to empower women, the establishment of two Yemeni Parliaments in Azad Kashmir is of utmost importance and the efforts of former Deputy Speaker Ms. Shaheen Kausar Dar in its establishment cannot be forgotten. He said that legislation is the need of the hour to empower women.

Ms. Taqdees Kausar Gilani, Minister of Government, Ms. Imtiaz Naseem, Minister of Government, Ms. Nabila Ayub, Adviser to Government, Shagufta Noreen Kazmi, Ms. Sajda Gilani, Saira Chishti, Ms. Hasna Noor, Ms. Nusrat Durrani, Ms. Naila Shahzada, Ms. Uzmi Shireen, Ms. Kiran Abdullah, Senior Advocate, Ms. Kausar Parveen and A large number of other ladies and gentlemen attended. The speakers praised the women parliamentarians for organizing this wonderful event and said that the role of women in Pakistan's freedom movement cannot be denied at all. He said that it is impossible to forget the tireless efforts of Mother Nation Fatima Ali Jinnah, Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, Abadi Bano, Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, Begum Zari Sarfaraz among the respected women who played a leading role in the freedom movement of Pakistan. He said that their practical role proves that if women get opportunities, they can play a full role in the development and stability of the country alongside men. Aniza Agha Rathore performed the duties of stage secretary in the event

CCP Imposes PKR 5 Million Penalty on Diamond Paint for Deceptive Marketing

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has taken decisive action against M/s Diamond Paint Industries (Pvt) Ltd., imposing a penalty of PKR 5 million for violating Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010, which prohibits deceptive marketing practices.

A CCP bench, led by the Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu and Member Mr. Salman Amin, issued an order in response to a complaint filed by Nippon Paint Pakistan (Pvt) Ltd against Diamond Paint's marketing campaign for its product 'Durasilk' run on various television channels.

This was the third occasion concerns were raised about omission of material information in Television Commercials (TVC) by paint manufacturers. The investigation found that Diamond Paint, despite including disclaimers on its packaging and shade cards, does not disclose the presence and value of redeemable tokens in its paint buckets in its television commercials, thereby exploiting consumer rights by making partial disclosures on its packaging.

Transparency in advertising is crucial for informed consumer decisions, as TVCs often serve as the first point of contact between consumers and a product. The CCP's Paint Order 2012 explicitly mandated that inclusion of a token without proper disclosure would be deemed to have lacking a reasonable basis with regards to prices, and thus falling under Section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Moreover, the CCP conducted study in the entire paint industry to ascertain compliance with its 2012 order.

The CCP bench emphasized that proper disclosure of tokens is critical for customers. Marketing techniques that include redeemable coupons have a substantial impact on customer purchasing decisions. The order ruled that M/s Diamond Paint Limited failed to give consumers all of the information they needed to make informed purchasing decisions and thus violated the earlier directives on the use of redeemable tokens and violated Section 10 of the CCP Act.

Founder of Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: Workers diligently clean the Tomb of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro, the Founder of Hyderabad, at Kalhoro Colony.



Photo: APP

Minister of Social Welfare, Women's Development Azad Kashmir meets Punjab governor

Bureau Report

NAROWAL: Minister of Social Welfare and Women's Development Azad Kashmir Syed Bazal Ali Naqvi called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider. During the meeting, apart from political, economic and economic issues, Kashmir issue was discussed. Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider said that Pakistan is engaged in freedom struggle and will continue to support the Kashmiri people politically, morally and diplomatically, the Kashmiri people are continuing their freedom movement despite the Indian oppression, India has imprisoned the Kashmiris in their own homeland through the so called actions of August 5th 2019. The Indian army is committing serious violations of human rights in the small region of Occupied Kashmir. He paid rich tribute to the martyrs of Kashmir and said that God willing, the sacrifices of the martyrs will pay off



and they will be freed from the Indian illegal occupation. That our leader Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gave an immortal theory of war on Kashmir for a thousand years and we will also remain committed to it. On this occasion, Minister of Social Welfare and Women's Development Syed Bazal Ali Naqvi said that the people's coalition

government in Azad Kashmir The relationship between the Kashmiri people and the people of Pakistan is deep and strong, which India cannot weaken through its conspiracies.

He said that the sacrifices made by millions of Kashmiris for the love of Pakistan will not go in vain. He said that the foundation of the People's

Party was laid on the Kashmir issue. Our leader Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto represented the Kashmiris at every international forum. He said that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari raised his voice for Kashmiris at every forum as Foreign Minister. He also congratulated the Governor of Punjab on assuming office.

Hamdard Shura Karachi meets to discuss '77 Years of Independence'

City Desk

KARACHI: The monthly meeting of the Hamdard Shura Karachi took place yesterday at the Hamdard Corporate Head Office, chaired by Speaker Shura Karachi-General (R) Moinuddin Haider. Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and nominee for the state civilian award 'Hilal-e-Imtiaz' for the year 2025 was also present. The meeting's topic was "77 Years of Independence, Our Role in Pakistan's Development." Syed Muhammad Arsalan, Director of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, also attended the meeting.

At the start of the meeting, the Shura members expressed

their happiness and joy over Ms. Sadia Rashid's nomination for the Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Speaker Moinuddin Haider remarked that Ms. Sadia Rashid's significant contributions to the education sector serve as a role model for everyone.

Respected members of the Hamdard Shura Karachi, including Zafar Iqbal, Engineer Ibnul Hasan, Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, Huma Baig, Shehla Ahmed, Dr. Abu Bakr Sheikh, Dr. Amjad Jafari, Professor Dr. Hakim Abdul Hanan, Usman Damohi, the observer of the meeting and editor of Daily Jisarat Syed Muzaffar Ijaz, and the Secretary of Hamdard Shura Karachi Dr. Sana Ghori stated that Paki-

stan's 77-year journey should be viewed as a series of evolutionary stages. They said "While we have faced losses, we have also made significant gains. Pakistan started with no infrastructure, let alone industries, but today industries are spread across the country. A network of roads now connects even small towns to the rest of the nation. Initially, Pakistan was on the right path; however, after 1980, it shifted from being a welfare state to a security state."

While focusing on an individual's role in improving society they said that Arshad Nadeem, who won a gold medal at the Olympics, demonstrated that when an individual is determined to achieve something, success is possible, even without resources.

"The lack of resources is merely an excuse. Our national dilemma is that we seek collective solutions without focusing on our responsibilities. Few consider the importance of personal character. If each person commits to improving society in their capacity and remains steadfast, a positive transformation in the entire society can occur swiftly," they articulated.

They added "We often overlook the fact that every individual's thoughts, actions, and behavior impact the whole society. Currently, it seems as though there is chaos, with people acting as they please, without regard for the common good. Our individual issues outweigh our collective problems and we as a society



need to understand that." They further said that the repeated disruption of the democratic process has allowed many opportunists to enter politics,

gaining strength through the support of dictators. It is the responsibility of political parties to engage in nation-building. The rampant profiteering disguised

as inflation has made essential goods unaffordable for the people. At present, the most critical task is to eradicate corruption within the police department.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:00 am
Zohr 12:12 pm
Asr 4:57 pm
Maghrib 6:53 pm
Isha 8:23 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886

Jaranwala tragedy one year after tragedy: DCO-CPO

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: It has been one year since Jaranwala tragedy. A ceremony was organized under the supervision of Shiroana Jaranwala tehsil administration with the participation of Muslim Christian leaders under the title "Watan Ki Mati Ghuwa Rahana". Deputy Commissioner Captain (Rtd) Nadeem, Nasir and CPO Kamran Adil attended the function as special guests. Assistant Commissioner Rana Safdar Shabbir, SP Abid Zafar, Peace Committee members Allama Sikandar Zaki, Waseem Tariq, Bishop of Faisalabad Andreas Rahmat, Servant of God Father Salman, Pastor Naveed Mukhtar, Pastor Mukhtar Siraj, Pastor Javed Bhatti, Pastor Bailey Graham and other leaders.

The Deputy Commissioner said that he is grateful to the Christian community and the administration of the event. He said that it is important to respect each other's religions. We should live together and respect each other's feelings. He said that the district and police administrations are following effective measures to maintain peace in the district. CPO Faisalabad also addressed the ceremony and said that the accused of Jaranwala tragedy on August 16, 2023 have been punished according to the law. No one will be allowed to disturb the peace. The Deputy Commissioner along with the CPO also visited Cinema Chowk and met the Christian leaders. The Deputy Commissioner said that we all have to be on the same page to establish peace.

Discovery of hydrocarbons in Tal Block at Razgir-1 Exploratory Well (Lockhart Formation)

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: TAL Joint Venture comprising MOL Pakistan Oil & Gas Co. B. V. (Operator), Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Pakistan Petroleum

Limited (PPL), Pakistan Oilfields Limited (POL) and Government Holdings Private Limited (GHPL) has discovered gas condensate from Lockhart formation in the Razgir-1 Exploratory well, located in district Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The well was spudded-in on 9th January, 2024 and has been successfully drilled down to the depth of 3773.98m TVD. Based on interpretation results of wire-line logs data, Lockhart Formation (Exploratory Target) was tested successfully (post acid stimulation) at rate of around 17.9 Million Standard Cubic Feet per Day (MMSCFD) gas and 153 Barrels per Day (BPD) of Condensate at choke size 40/64" at Well-



head Flowing Pressure (WHFP) of 2017 Pounds per Square Inch (Psi). This new discovery has de-risked further exploration play in TAL Block, leading to new upside opportunities. The

said discovery will also help & contribute towards improving energy security of the country from indigenous resources and add to the hydrocarbon reserves base of MOL, its Joint Venture Partners and the Country.

Monsoon rain started

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at Srinagar Highway during rain, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Sehat Kahani expands healthcare access with launch of Home Healthcare Services

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sehat Kahani, a leading digital healthcare platform in Pakistan, proudly announces the launch of its new Home Healthcare vertical. This innovative service aims to bring high-quality healthcare directly to patients' homes, ensuring convenience, personalized care, and better health outcomes.

Commenting on the development, CEO Sehat Kahani, Dr. Sara Saeed Khurram said, "We are thrilled to launch our Home Healthcare services. This service will offer comprehensive plans for chronic, acute, and palliative patients according to their needs, ensuring their daily healthcare, medicines, and vitals can be checked on the phone with just a few clicks.



Furthermore, COO Sehat Kahani, Dr. Iffat Zafar Aga added, "Our Home Healthcare service is designed to provide comprehensive medical care in the comfort of your home. Along with at-home nurse visits, we are also offering at-home visits by doctors, which is unique and ensures quality healthcare delivery. Guest of Honor, CEO, Indus Hospital & Health

Network Dr. Abdul Bari remarked, "The launch of Sehat Kahani's Home Healthcare services marks a significant milestone in improving healthcare accessibility. Many patients and their attendants often prefer staying admitted due to the fear of not being able to provide the required care at home, making them vulnerable to infections. Other than the Guest of

Honor, the launch event was graced by esteemed attendees including the Chairman House of Altimi, Ex. Secretary Health & Ex. Secretary Education Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho, Managing Partner Amaanah Circle Dr. Razi Yousuf, and Head of Sales & Marketing Jubilee General Nadeem Irshad who have all shown immense support for this new initiative.

Ultra-processed foods are a significant contributor to the rising rates of obesity



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: An unhealthy diet stands as a major modifiable risk factor for NCDs. The absence of evidence based policies like front of pack nutrition labelling and warning signs on ultra-processed foods is among the primary reasons that people are unable to adopt the healthy food choices. Clear and concise labels help identify foods high in sodium, saturated fats, and sugars, which are key contributors to chronic diseases like hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. FOPL keeps consumers away from UPP minimize risk of chronic diseases. These concerns were highlighted during a meeting with coalition Partner organized by PANAH at a local Hotel in Islamabad. Health professionals, civil society organizations, health organizations and coalition partners of PANAH attended the meeting.

Munawar Hussain, In-Country Coordinator Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI), stated, "The annual cost of managing diabetes soared to over USD 2,640 million in Pakistan in 2021. Ultra-processed food and beverage products particularly sugary drinks and junk foods are major contributors to diabetes, heart disease, cancer, kidney failure, and other chronic diseases."

General Secretary Diabetic Association of Pakistan (DAP) shared that over 41% of adults in Pakistan are either obese or overweight. Additionally, more than 33 million people are currently living with diabetes, with another 10 million on the verge of developing the disease. He emphasized that clear and transparent labeling allows consumers to make informed decisions, potentially lowering the prevalence of conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

Dr. Saba CEO Heart File shared that many countries in the world have enacted mandatory FOPWLs on UPPs. FOPWLs encourages healthier food choices. By clearly labelling ultra-processed foods, we empower consumers to make better choices, leading to a shift towards fresh, locally-grown foods.

Zheng He Development Centre to be established at NUST



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As part of its continuous internationalisation efforts, the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) has reached an understanding with Jiangsu Shengxianglin Stock Holding Co, China, to establish Zheng He Development Centre at NUST. The centre will conduct technical trainings in the cutting-edge fields and facilitate placement of Pakistani students in leading Chinese companies across the globe.

Representatives from industry giants like Huawei and ZTE attended the agreement signing ceremony and pledged to play a pivotal role in developing skill-focused expertise of trainees. At the occasion, Dr Osman Hasan, NUST Pro-Rector Academics, remarked that these trainings would facilitate qualified individuals' access to international career opportunities. The project, he maintained, is a manifestation of deep educational and cultural ties between Pakistan and China, and is aimed at further strengthening cooperation between NUST and Chinese companies working in the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan.

DPO Attock visit DSP Shaukat Shaheed on death anniversary

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: On the occasion of the death anniversary of DSP Shaukat Ali Shah Shaheed, District Police Officer Attock Dr Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan visited the house of DSP Shaukat Ali Shah Shaheed.

Martyrdom is a great blessing that is bestowed upon those who are close to Allah, those who cultivate the grass with their blood are the benefactors of this nation, DPO Attock.

According to the details, on the occasion of the death anniversary of DSP Shaukat Ali Shah Shaheed, District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan visited the house of DSP Shaukat Ali Shah Shaheed and met his wife and daughter. On this occasion, DPO Attock presented gifts and a scholarship check to DSP Shaheed's daughter. DPO Attock paid tribute to Shaheed Shaukat Ali Shah and said that Martyrdom is a great blessing that is bestowed on those who are close to Allah.

AKU-EB 2024 Results Nurture Excellence and Hope in Students

City Desk

KARACHI: The results of the 2024 annual examinations have been announced by the Aga Khan University Examination Board (AKU-EB). Ninety-two students have made it to the prestigious AKU-EB High Achievers List, with 60% of the top performers being female. This reflects the Board's dedication to providing equitable and high-quality education to all.

Every year, the Board recognises outstanding students at both the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) levels with national positions that represent academic achievement. This year, Eisha Mustafa from Sindh (The Froebel's School, Karachi) was awarded the national position at the SSC level, while Sadia Shafi Muhammad Khuwaja from Sindh (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School, Hyderabad) was awarded the



national position at the HSSC level.

The board also announced its HSSC first positions at the provincial level. First provincial level overall positions were awarded to Nilam Bahar from

Gilgit-Baltistan (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School Gahkuch), Aila Asad from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School Kuragh); Shahzaib Ahmad Shahid from Punjab

(Nusrat Jehan Academy Inter College, Chenab Nagar); and Sadia Khuwaja from Sindh (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School, Hyderabad).

At the SSC level, first provincial level overall positions were awarded to Sana Khan from Gilgit-Baltistan (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School Gahkuch); Aaleen Zeb Sultan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Aga Khan Higher Secondary School, Chitral); Maliha Zaheer from Punjab (Maryam Siddiqia Girls Higher Secondary School, Chenab Nagar) and Eisha Mustafa from Sindh (The Froebel's School, Karachi).

"We are immensely proud to celebrate the outstanding performance of all our students in the 2024 AKU-EB examinations across Pakistan," said Dr Naveed Yousuf, CEO, AKU Examination Board. "Their dedication and excellence highlight our ongoing effort to foster educational quality, fair and transparent assessment.

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A world without General Hameed Gul

General Hameed Gul always used to say "I am neither retired nor tired. How is it possible that I retire at a time when my country needs me more than ever? I feel disappointed when people call me a Retired General. I have taken an oath to protect this country from All enemies (foreign and domestic). Leaving the uniform and active service could never terminate that oath. I am and always be a soldier." You can take a man out of the army but never the army out of a man. The world would never be the same without him. He carried the enormous responsibility of struggling against the Soviet Union for many years, was in the limelight even after he retired from Pakistan Army but was famous for his modesty and humility. One of the most powerful Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence and Military Intelligence, he was one of those few people in the army who were not willing to write off Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion. Under his leadership, order, and strategy. ISI was set to become the world's supreme intelligence agency and yet he was going to live a life of struggles and odds.

Hameed Gul's concept of how to fight that war succeeded. The only devastation Afghan Jihad witnessed was the famous Jalalabad attack where he deviated from his original guerrilla war strategy and the mujahideen suffered a serious setback. But it was all part of the game to win, lose and learn from the mistakes. Operation Trojan Horse was one of his most successful operations which made him a topic of discussion in Indian Intelligence Communities. He strategized the Afghan War alongside General Akhtar who was then DG ISI and at the same time, General Hameed Gul kept a close eye on India's Strategic threats when the Pakistan Army was busy with the Soviet Union. He worked closely with the CIA during Afghan Jihad but he became their greatest critic after they turned their back on Afghanistan following the Soviet Union's withdrawal. He also met with the RAW Chief twice during his reign as ISI Chief on the burning issues of Khalistan and Siachen. He was removed from ISI in 1989 following the defeat of Mujahideen in Jalalabad. During the first tenure of Nawaz Sharif, he was appointed as DG Ordnance Factories Wah, which

he refused. He proudly stated that "How could I have ever accepted the job of a factory manager. I was a true soldier who had always fought on the front line and had always been part of Team A." And was retired from the Pakistan Army. General Hameed Gul became the voice of Pakistan soon after his retirement specially he turned very vocal after the US invasion of Afghanistan. An upstanding patriot that he was and a fearless analyst, he continued to serve Pakistan and defend its ideology even after his retirement from Pakistan Army. He was one of those few people who have always protected the honor and integrity of Pakistan against the war hysteria of Indian Media. He was a strong advocate of 9/11 being an inside job and the entire plot constructed by Jews and Zionists. He did not believe that after spending \$40 million every year on its 11 Intelligence agencies, the US was taken by surprise on 9/11. The revelations during the investigations of Khalid Sheikh Mohamed in Guantanamo bay in 2006 by CIA (in the cover of Saudi Intelligence) further strengthened General Hameed Gul's Theories especially the secret and sudden deaths

of three Saudi Princes following Khalid Sheikh's interrogations. General Gul was a firm believer that Osama Bin Laden's killing in Pakistan was faked and was an eyewitness. The US has always seen him as a supporter of Taliban and often called him Father of Taliban. General Gul was always credited by India for being the brain behind proxy wars in Kashmir and Indian Punjab. Some accuse him for being behind the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai, India. Indian media and Intelligence agencies have always kept a close eye on him even after his retirement till his demise suspecting him to be behind everything that happened against India. He was so much on India's nerves. Even his counterparts in RAW have always known him to be a man with limited resources who can do anything in any part of the world. General Hameed Gul had warned India many times for intervening in the internal matters of Pakistan and maltreatment against Kashmiri Muslims. Despite the plethora of Political and terror-related Controversies surrounding him. He was never tainted by any charges of Financial or moral corruption. I believe that Pakistan and Afghanistan both owe a debt of gratitude to him. I salute him. We will miss you General Hameed Gul. Pakistan will miss you.



Analysis
Kiran Asim

WHO backs African efforts to combat mpox spread, as Sweden & Pakistan report new cases

The World Health Organization (WHO) said Friday is supporting African countries to scale up response to curb mpox, which is now an international global health emergency.

The outbreak that affected the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and spread to neighbouring countries continues to grow.

On Thursday afternoon, WHO member Sweden became the first country outside Africa to record a case of the mpox Clade 1 variant that is believed to be driving the latest outbreak. And on Friday, according to media reports, Pakistan detected 2 mpox cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

"We are hard at work on the frontlines of the response, collaborating closely with governments and communities to strengthen mpox control measures and are ramping up efforts to curb the widening trend of the virus through coordinated action with partners and national authorities," said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa.

Mpox – formerly monkeypox – is a viral disease that can be transmitted through physical contact with an infected person, animal, or contaminated objects.

It was first detected in humans in 1970, in the DRC, and is considered endemic to countries in Central and West Africa.

Outbreaks are caused by different mpox viruses called clades, and the clade 1 strain has been circulating in the DRC for years, WHO said.

The emergence of a new offshoot – clade 1b – and its rapid spread, including to nearby countries, is among the main reasons why WHO declared on Wednesday that mpox constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

So far this year, more than 2,100 laboratory-confirmed cases of the disease, and 13 deaths, have been reported in the DRC and 11 other countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda. This compares to 1,145 confirmed cases, and seven deaths, in 11 countries for all of 2023.

WHO said it is stepping up support to the affected countries by deploying additional experts, including epidemiologists and anthropologists, and providing initial funding to accelerate outbreak response measures.

Efforts are underway to enhance cross-border collaboration for case investigation, contact tracing and community engagement to ensure compliance with preventive measures, the UN health agency said.

The UN agency is also assisting national regulatory authorities to speed up regulatory approvals, as well as providing guidance to national immunization technical advisory groups to ensure readiness for vaccine rollout.

WHO said it has also begun the process for Emergency Use Listing (EUL) for mpox vaccines, which will accelerate access for lower-income countries which have not yet issued their national regulatory approval.



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

Voice of the People

Unity, responsibility, and progress: Pakistan's way forward

The country of Pakistan, which we enjoy with freedom today, was achieved through the immense sacrifices of its leaders and people. They sacrificed their lives, wealth, and time, so that we could live in an independent nation. They sacrificed for their children, so that we could live freely on Pakistan soil. Today on the day of 14 August, we proudly hold the Pakistani flag and our streets echo with the national anthem. But tomorrow, the flag will be taken down, and the same Pakistan will be criticized and cursed. The youth and many others in Pakistan ask, "What Pakistan give us?" My question is, what have we given to Pakistan? Besides hoisting its flag on 14 August, what are we doing for Pakistan? Is this the Pakistan that Iqbal dreamed of? Is this the Pakistan for which Quaid worked tirelessly?

In short, we are always talking about our rights but not our responsibilities. We all need to make collective efforts to make this Pakistan, an Islamic Republic in true sense. Every small action can count, and can lead to significant positive change.

Sidra Bibi, Islamabad
 Email address: sidraultra74372@gmail.com

JI protests against rising electricity bills

Respected Editor,
 Over the past few weeks, our nation of Pakistan has witnessed a surge in protests led by the political party Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) against the skyrocketing electricity bills and relentless load-shedding. These protests, which have garnered significant support from the public and even labor groups, highlight the severe economic strain on ordinary citizens due to these excessive taxes and inflated utility charges that are mainly added to our electric bills.

In my locality, residents have expressed their frustration with the increasing financial

burden. The government's failure to address these concerns has only impaired the situation, leading to widespread discontent. JI leaders had been encouraging the public to boycott electricity bills so that the government would take notice of this issue.

Hence, I urge the authorities to take immediate measures to alleviate the financial stress on citizens by reducing electricity tariffs and providing relief on taxes. Additionally, long-term solutions required to improve the power supply should be prioritized to prevent further disruptions.

Hopefully, you will shed light on this pressing issue in your upcoming column, encouraging the government to act swiftly and responsibly to protect the interests of the people.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
 Yours Sincerely,

Hania Arif
 Gulistan e Jauhar, Karachi, Pakistan.
 haniaarif8@gmail.com

Increasing electricity bills and frequent breakdown of electricity Pakistan

Respected sir,
 Through the column of your esteemed / reputed newspaper, I would like to draw the attention of authorities concerned with frequent electricity breakdown. Electricity is the basic need for the development of the country because through it we can run industries, factories, vehicles etc. It directly affects the household and business budget. It creates instability. Mostly rich people afford solar systems and they fix them at houses. But most of them do not. It affects Local people's businesses which become a low per capita income result of weak financial conditions.

It is essential for the county's development and citizens. We want a proper solution. The government and concerned authorities should take action. They should provide us with a solar system or make sure to provide us electricity.

I hope my concern will reach the ears of the concerned authorities through your newspaper. You are requested to give an appropriate space to my letter in your newspaper. Thanking you,

Your faithfully,
 Sawaira urooj, Peshawar
 Sawairaurooj02@gmail.com

Implications of political developments in Bangladesh for Pakistan

Dear Editor,
 Significant changes have occurred in the political landscape of the area with the recent overthrow of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government in Bangladesh as a result of student protests. This development bears mixed consequences for Pakistan. While Bangladesh saw remarkable economic growth under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, tensions between the two countries were frequently exacerbated by the government's adamant anti-Pakistan stance. Restarting bilateral relations could be possible as a result of the leadership shift, particularly if the new administration takes a more reasonable and non-aggressive stance toward Pakistan. But it would be premature to expect regional stability to happen on its own. This political change in Pakistan is a direct result of the student-led protests that brought about a wake-up call to the importance of public dissent, particularly among the younger generation. Despite the differences in Pakistan's political landscape, similar movements may be sparked by the turmoil in Bangladesh, particularly if the country's economic situation worsens. In order to foster a more cooperative and peaceful relationship with the new Bangladeshi leadership—a relationship that is essential for regional stability—Pakistan must constantly observe the situation as it is developing.

Sincerely,
 Ayesha Kiran
 City Phalia District Mandi bahauddin
 ashig8963@gmail.com

The Epic of Mughal Saga: The Savant Humayun - I

Welcome back my dearest gentle reader, today I will take you to the heavenly bodies of Mughal Emperor Humayun's observatory,

lost empire. Humayun had with him only a tiny army of around 5000 at this time. Thought, that was enough, as Sher Khan, Humayun's great Afghan adversary, had died a few years earlier, and North

to the dreams of Kabul while mapping the enchanting lands of India, on our flying Persian carpet.

Babar throne of India was succeeded by a lovable and easy-going bon vivant Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun, who was devoted more to the pleasures of life than to the pursuit of power and did not have the grit and ruthlessness needed to prevail in the turbulent political environment of Hindustan. The Mughal's adversaries, though routed in several battles by Babur, were not destroyed, and they hovered on the periphery of the empire, regrouping, observing, waiting for the right time. Hence in 1540, the resurgent Afghans struck, seized the imperial throne and drove Humayun out of India.

For 3 years Humayun wandered about in the western borderland with a small band of followers, hoping for a turn of fortune and that did not happen. Hence, he finally crossed the Indus and, scurrying through the domains of his hostile brothers in Afghanistan, took refuge with the Shah of Persia. The Shah welcomed Humayun as an honoured royal guest, and there Humayun basked in the opulent Persian hospitality for a year, "feasting and celebrating", as his personal attendant Jauhar described it. But he had to vindicate his honour, win back his empire. So, he set out again, though rather reluctantly. Humayun was now accompanied by a contingent of troops provided by the Shah, and with their help he seized Afghanistan from his brothers and, after consolidating his power there over several years, set his foot towards India, to recover his

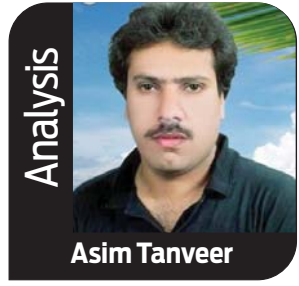
India was in political turmoil. In July 1555, Humayun stormed back into Delhi, 15 years after he was driven out of it by Insurgent Sher Khan. It was an exultant return however soon he died in a tragic accident, tumbling down the stairs of his astronomical observatory, where, obsessed with astrology, he had gone to study what the stars boded.

To be continued...



17 August: General Ziaul Haq's 36th Death Anniversary

General Zia-ul-Haq: An Architect of Pakistan's Islamic Identity and Military Strength



Analysis
Early Life and Family

General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, a figure who would leave an indelible mark on Pakistan's history, was born on August 12, 1924, in the Indian town of Jalandhar, then part of British India. His family belonged to the Arain community, a farming caste in Punjab. Zia's father, Muhammad Akbar, was a modestly positioned employee in the British Indian government. Zia's family held deep religious beliefs, which shaped his worldview and personal conduct from a very young age.

Growing up in a traditional and religious household, Zia developed a strong sense of discipline and adherence to Islamic practices, which would later define his personality and leadership style. Zia was the second of four children. The family moved frequently due to his father's job, which instilled in Zia a sense of adaptability and resilience.

Education
Zia's early education began in Simla, where he attended St. Stephen's College, a prestigious institution known for its rigorous academic environment. However, his education was interrupted by the upheaval of World War II, and he subsequently joined the military academy at Dehradun. Here, Zia received his initial military training, a career path that seemed to suit his disciplined and methodical nature.

His education and training in Dehradun would set the foundation for his future career, both in the military and as a statesman. Zia's academic performance was marked by diligence and brilliance, but his commitment and sense of duty were qualities that made him stand out among his peers.

Military Service and Early Career
Zia was commissioned into the British Indian Army in 1943 during World War II. His early military career involved service in Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia, where he gained considerable experience in handling both

administrative and combat duties. Following the partition of India in 1947, Zia opted to serve in the newly established Pakistan Army, where his career saw a steady rise.

In the years following independence, Zia continued to distinguish himself through his unwavering discipline and a deep sense of loyalty to his country. He served in various capacities, including postings in Jordan and other parts of the Middle East, where he was involved in training local armies, further honing his strategic and leadership skills.

By the late 1960s, Zia had risen to the rank of Brigadier and was recognized for his military acumen. His role in the 1965 and 1970 Indo-Pakistan War was marked by prudence and professionalism, traits that were increasingly rare among his contemporaries. In 1976, Zia was appointed Chief of Army Staff by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a decision influenced by Bhutto's belief that Zia, being a devout and apolitical military officer, would not pose a threat to his leadership.

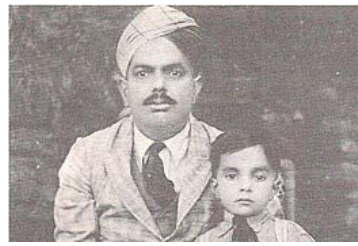
Chief Martial Law Administrator

The political turmoil in Pakistan during the mid-1970s culminated in a military coup on July 5, 1977, when Zia ousted Prime Minister Bhutto in what was officially termed as Operation Fair Play. Following the coup, Zia assumed the role of Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA), effectively becoming the most powerful man in Pakistan.

Services for the Nation and Islamic Ideology

Zia-ul-Haq's rule is most notable for the Islamization of Pakistan's political and social landscape. His belief in Islam as a guiding principle for governance led to a series of sweeping reforms aimed at aligning Pakistan's legal and educational systems with Islamic teachings. Under his rule, the Hudood Ordinances were introduced, which imposed Islamic punishments for various offenses, and interest-based banking was replaced with an Islamic banking system.

Zia's vision was to turn Pakistan into a true Islamic state. He believed that Islam should not just be a personal faith but should guide the governance and legal frameworks of the country. He sought to create a moral and ethical society based on Islamic principles, a move that won him the support of religious groups but also sparked criticism and controversy, particularly from secular and liberal segments of society.



Personal Piety and Lifestyle

Zia was known for his devout Islamic practices, which were reflected in both his personal and professional life. Unlike many of his predecessors, Zia was not known for indulging in the luxuries that often accompany power. He was a teetotaler, refraining from alcohol, and eschewed music and dance, which he viewed as contrary to Islamic teachings.

He was often seen performing his daily prayers, regardless of the demands of his office, and would encourage those around him to do the same. This personal piety extended to his governance, where he sought to institutionalize Islamic practices in the public sphere. While this won

him support from conservative quarters, it also alienated many who felt that such policies were being imposed rather than adopted by choice.

Presidency (1978-1988)

Despite the dismissal of most of the Bhutto government, president Fazal Ilahi Chaudhry resigned, and Zia took the office of President of Pakistan on 16 September 1978. After Bhutto's death president Zia ul Haq settled to the task of redesigning a political system for Pakistan.

Policies

Zia-ul-Haq implemented a series of policies to promote Islamization in Pakistan, such as the imposition of Sharia law, the introduction of the Hudood Ordinance, which prescribed severe punishments for crimes. Alcohol and gambling were banned. Zakat and Ushar tax was imposed on Muslims. Islamic courts and councils were formed. Apart from declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims, he also amended the constitution to make the Qur'an and Sunnah the supreme source of law.

One of the earliest initiatives taken by Zia in 1977, was to militarize the

integrated atomic energy program which was founded by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1972.

He pursued a policy of economic liberalization and deregulation with the help of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Reduced government spending. Privatization of government institutions. Encouraged foreign investment. Promoted exports and industry. He started the Yellow Revolution to increase agricultural production, especially wheat. As a result, Pakistan's economy grew at an average annual rate of 6.5 percent during his tenure. Zia called for criminal punishments in keeping with Islamic law. Zia even put his Islamization program to a referendum of the people in 1984 and coupled it to a vote of confidence in his presidency a favorable outcome of which would provide him with an additional five years in office. Zia nevertheless had received his vote of confidence and his Islamization program continued as the central policy of his administration.

Zia-ul-Haq played a key role in supporting the Afghan Mujahideen

against the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. He received financial and military assistance from the United States, Saudi Arabia, China and other countries, and allowed millions of Afghan refugees to enter Pakistan. General Zia-ul-Haq also facilitated the training of Mujahideen through the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Therefore Islamization became the guiding principle in Zia's plan to reform Pakistan, to reassure its unity, and to galvanize the country to meet all threats, both foreign and domestic. Clearly, the program of Islamization was also geared to reinforce the rule of Zia ul Haq as well as establish his Legitimacy.

Death

General Zia-ul-Haq died in a plane crash near Bahawalpur on 17 August 1988 along with other senior officials and the US ambassador to Pakistan Arnold L. Raphel. The cause of the accident is still unclear. But some theories suggest that it is Conspiracy or murder. After that, Ghulam Ishaq Khan became the president and Benazir Bhutto became the prime minister.

Tajikistan Pakistan Roadshow held

Spokesman Report

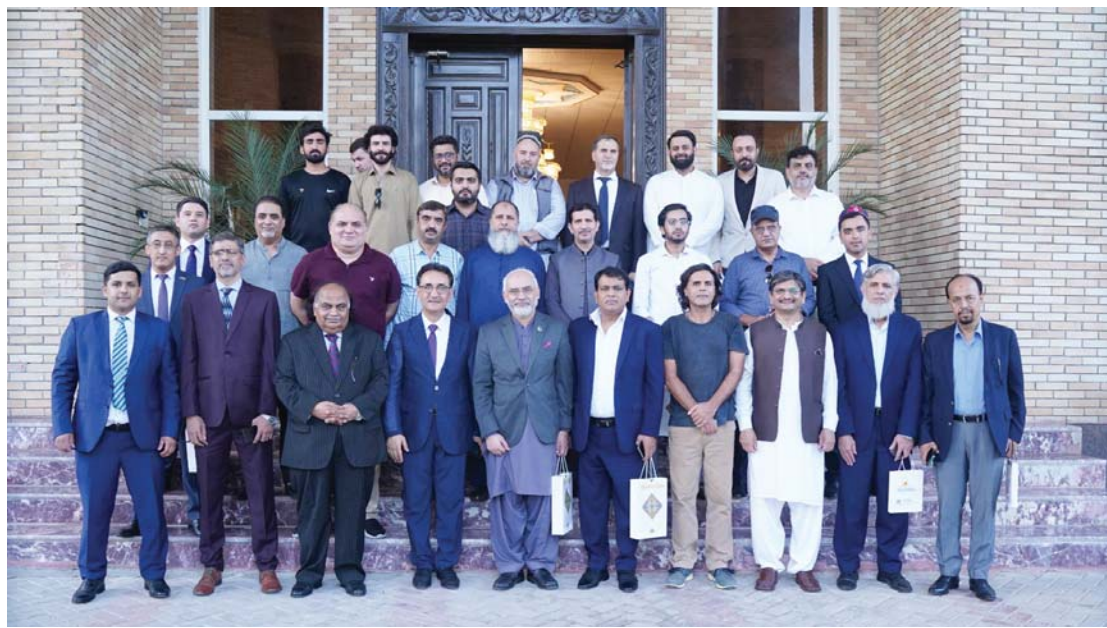
ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Tajikistan in Islamabad hosted the event entitled "Tajikistan - Pakistan Roadshow" to present tourism opportunities.

Islamabad Hosts Tajikistan-Pakistan Roadshow to Strengthen Ties

The event was attended by Tajikistan's Ambassador to Pakistan Yusuf Sharifzoda, management of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, representatives of travel agencies of Tajikistan, and 150 representatives of the tourism sector of Pakistan.

The management of almost seventy travel companies and tour operators, airlines, local media, television and radio, as well as the employees of diplomatic missions of Central Asian countries were also present.

Islamabad Hosts Tajikistan-Pakistan Roadshow to Strengthen Ties



Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps, specially attended the event.

The Tajik delegation presented the tourism potential of their country to the participants of the event.

In conclusion, all participants were presented with memorable gifts, brochures and catalogs about tourist places and attractions of Tajikistan.

Islamabad Hosts Tajikistan-Pakistan Roadshow to Strengthen Ties

Moreover, ten memorandums of cooperation were inked with Pakistani tourism companies, which were simultaneously invited to the Travel Market in Tajikistan, scheduled for late September 2024.

The General Director of Somon Travel LLC Umedjon Saidzoda said that those present were able to learn about the tourist attractions and opportunities in Tajikistan.

He said that future of tourism in Tajikistan is bright.

Islamabad Hosts Tajikistan-Pakistan Roadshow to Strengthen Ties

Saidzoda further said they are proud of their country's success in the international arena.

He said that from August 8 through August 15, representatives of several travel agencies of Tajikistan visited Pakistan, as well as held business meetings with central and regional public and private structures of the tourism sector in the country.

Islamabad Hosts Tajikistan-Pakistan Roadshow to Strengthen Ties

The meetings focused on issues of tourism development, development of joint projects, arranging of mutual info tours for travel companies, bloggers, media representatives, conducting joint tours in the region, as well as organizing courses on hospitality and provision of tourism services.

ICCI Tourism Summit in Skardu wins accolades from Diplomatic Community

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) is playing a vital role in promoting Pakistan's tourism potential and the successful organization of the 2nd Tourism Summit in Skardu is a testament to its dedication and hard work. The summit provided a platform for stakeholders to come together, share ideas, and explore opportunities to develop Pakistan's tourism industry. The connections made and discussions held during the summit will lead to tangible outcomes, such as increased investment, infrastructure development, and policy reforms. By highlighting the natural beauty and cultural richness of Pakistan, the ICCI under the leadership of its President

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari is helping to showcase the country's soft image and attract tourists from around the world.

These were the views expressed by the Ambassadors and diplomats of friendly countries who attended the 2nd ICCI International Tourism Summit Skardu from 13-15.

The Ambassador of European Union Dr. Riina Kionka said that Gilgit-Baltistan is the most beautiful area, enjoying immense potential to enhance the soft image of Pakistan worldwide through tourism and that by increasing tourism facilities, the region can be made a hub of international tourism.

The High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, Mazhar Bin Mazlan said that Pakistan and Malaysia are all weather

friends and that we are all proud of the achievements of Pakistan, made during the last 77 years. He also expressed his gratitude to President ICCI Ahsan Bakhtawari and his entire team for enabling him to join Independence Day celebrations of Pakistan at this most beautiful region and the highest plateau of 14000 feet high.

The Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid Hasan appreciated ICCI's tourism promotion efforts to help attract international attention and tourists to the region. He said that he was working for the VISA on arrival for the business community of Pakistan, which will surely strengthen the economic relations between the two countries.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Khizr Farhadov said that Paki-



stan's northern areas, including Gilgit-Baltistan are tremendously beautiful and offer immense potential for tourism. The region's diverse landscapes, ranging from mountains to lush valleys and serene lakes, make it a paradise for nature lovers and adventure seekers.

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yezzan Kristafin said that Pakistan is the most beautiful country and its brilliant people are its pride. He reaffirmed his country's commitment and determination to enhance multilateral cooperation

for the benefit of the people of the two countries. He expressed the hope that ICCI's tourism summit will be a game-changer for Pakistan's tourism industry and its economic growth.

Ambassador of Myanmar Wunna Han highlighted Gilgit-Baltistan's tourism potential by drawing parallels with his country's cultural heritage by expressing the hope that ICCI's endeavors to unlock the tourism potential of the region will bear fruit.

Ambassador of Yemen

Mohammed Motafer Alashabi spoke about Yemen's tourism potential, cultural heritage, and sought to enhance tourism cooperation with Pakistan.

Charge d'Affaires of Libya Mohammad BinJama envisioned stronger tourism links between Pakistan and Libya by calling for joint efforts to boost travel and cultural exchange.

The Portuguese diplomat discussed the commonalities between Pakistan and Portugal's tourism industries, potentially paving the way for future cooperation and collaboration.

On his part, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Ambassadors and diplomats for their participation in the successful summit, reaffirming ICCI's commitment to driving economic growth through tourism development. He pledged to continue achieving such milestones under his leadership, fostering collaboration and innovation for a prosperous Pakistan.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
78,045.30	78,105.98
Day's High	Day's Low
78,619.17	78,041.08
Index Value	Change
8,765,263,421	-60.68
Percentage	Time
-0.08%	16 Aug, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,311.41	-35.94
Percentage	Time
-0.43%	16 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,682.84	+119.78
Percentage	Time
+0.30%	16 Aug, 1:11 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,062.67	+1,336.03
Percentage	Time
+3.64%	16 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.9	187.5
Bahrain Dinar	738.2	743.7
Canadian Dollar	202.9	207.25
China Yuan	38.25	38.65
Danish Krone	40.03	40.43
Euro	303.5	305.70
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	905.45	910.60
Malaysian Ringgit	58.7	59.5
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	26.14	26.44
Omani Riyal	723.4	728.5
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	73.85	74.55
Singapore Dollar	202.15	204.15
Swedish Korona	26.25	26.55
Swiss Franc	319.5	324.50
Thai Bhat	7.55	7.7
U.A.E Dirham	75.95	76.65
UK Pound Sterling	357.9	360.1
US Dollar	279.70	280.4

We are IMF slaves after freedom from Britain: 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 Friday, said that seventy-seven years have passed since the establishment of Pakistan. Still, the fundamental goals of independence have yet to be achieved.

He said the nation has yet to find its destination and is wandering in darkness for apparent reasons.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the East India Company first enslaved the Muslims of this region, then they became slaves of Britain; later, after the establishment of Pakistan, incompetent politicians and dictators ruled them.

Now we are slaves of IPPs and failed govern-

ment corporations at the local level and IMF at the international level, he added.

Speaking at a function on Independence Day, the veteran business leader said that eliminating IPPs and failed government institutions is impossible without saying goodbye to the IMF.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the standard justice system has not been implemented in the country so far, and the fair distribution of wealth has not been ensured.

Even after 77 years of independence, the economy suffers from wrong policies, and the people's condition is deteriorating rapidly.

The failed government institutions are sucking 1200 billion rupees annually while 2100 billion rupees are being paid to IPPs in the name of capacity payment. Terrorism continues, and soldiers are sacrificing their lives for the protection of the motherland.

He said that the number of unemployed youth is in the tens of millions, while the



literacy rate is shameful and frustrated youth are running away from the country. Those who stay here are raising their voices to get employment within the country.

The people's condition can be estimated from the fact that 74% of the population cannot pay their electricity bills. Electricity bills have become the cause of economic and political crises in the country, while the people are looking to the rulers with hope.

Mian Zahid Hussain welcomed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's announcement that electricity prices will be reduced in the next few days. He said that this announcement is a ray of hope in the darkness.

He said that the reduction in petroleum prices would also reduce inflation and added that since the beginning of the process of accountability in the army, the people's confidence had also increased in this institution.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan cannot afford any more losses. Suppose the process of privatization and getting rid of IPPs has not started. In that case, getting the country out of trouble will be impossible.

Popularity of Turk Arts

ISLAMABAD: Indonesian diplomat women looks a traditional truck art vehicle placed at a shopping mall during Indonesian Expo 2024, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

KMBL celebrates 24 years of pioneering microfinance services across Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Khushhali Microfinance Bank Limited (KMBL) marked a significant milestone on Monday, celebrating its 24th anniversary with a cake-cutting ceremony at the KMBL Corporate Office. The event was a vibrant tribute to the bank's enduring legacy and commitment to financial inclusion across Pakistan.

In his opening remarks, President and CEO, Mr Aameer Karachiwalla explained, "The bank has certainly covered a long journey since its inception in 2000. Our resilience in facing challenges and the need to carry forward with unity and determination are our strongest assets." Reaffirming the bank's commitment to serving underserved communities, he stated, "KMBL has always been more than just a bank; it's a



movement toward financial empowerment for all Pakistanis."

Mr. Saleem Akhtar Bhatti, Group Head of Finance & CFO, Mr. Muhammad Aftab Alam, Chief Business Officer & Ms. Saira

Gabol, Chief Human Resource Officer, shared their reflections on being part of an institution dedicated to societal progress. They emphasized their resolve to turn challenges into opportunities.

Mastercard reaffirms commitment to Pakistan with new office in Karachi



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mastercard is bolstering its commitment to economic development in Pakistan with the inauguration of a new office in Karachi. The move is part of Mastercard's ongoing optimization of its regional network and the recent establishment of its new East Arabia division, of which Pakistan is a key market.

The new hub opening was commemorated with an official visit by J. K. Khalil, Division President, East Arabia, Mastercard.

The inauguration marks a significant milestone in Mastercard's journey in Pakistan, which spans more than two decades. The company has been empowering the people of Pakistan through strategic partnerships within the public and private

sector. "The opening of our new Karachi office marks a significant milestone in Mastercard's ongoing efforts to further elevate Pakistan's financial landscape. Thanks to the support of our partners, we are opening digital doors for all - whether through card and product launches, digital wallets fueling acceptance, or tailored solutions for businesses big and small. As we

look to the future, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our extensive network of partners in the public and private sector, who are helping us build a better, more connected digital world. We remain unwavering in our commitment to shaping the future of payments and financial services in this dynamic market," said Arslan Khan, Country Manager, Pakistan, Mastercard.

FrieslandCampina announces Financial Results for The Half Year

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL) announced its financial results for the first half of the year, concluding on 30th June, 2024. Despite a challenging economic environment, the Company achieved 17% growth (revenue of PKR 55.0 billion, compared to PKR 47.0 billion in the same period last year) fueled by a favorable portfolio mix, effective market investments and distribution expansion.

The Company also witnessed a gross profit growth of 16% maintaining gross margins despite the inflationary pressures on commodities and energy prices. This performance demonstrates the Company's resilience and ability to adapt to market conditions.

However, profit after tax declined by 6%, (PKR 1.26 billion compared to

PKR 1.33 billion in the same period last year) due to a significant increase in interest rates.

FCEPL remains committed to maintaining its market position and ensuring the highest quality of products for its consumers. The Company will continue to respond to consumer needs through in-market initiatives and by offering relevant product propositions while driving efficiencies across the value chain and optimizing investments to enhance the overall financial health of the business, thereby generating greater value for our shareholders.

Leveraging its global expertise and 150 years of heritage, FCEPL remains committed to the highest standards to hygiene, food safety and sustainability and providing safe, affordable, and nourishing dairy products to millions of Pakistanis, every day.

Incremental benefit must be passed on to Karachi industrial units: FBATI

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The government and concerned authorities should release the allocated funds on account of incremental benefit subsidy electricity to industrial units of Karachi, mainly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to prevent the closure of large-scale economic activities and layoffs in different sectors of commercial and industrial hub of the country, said President Federal B Area Association of Industries Syed Raza Hussain.

At present, NEPRA directed K-Electric to release the remaining allocated funds to the Karachi industries after the decision of its tribunal in favor of industries.

Raza Hussain mentioned that industrial production and economic activities are decreasing in Karachi as the current electricity cost spiralled up unabated, which also resulted in layoffs in different industrial zones. The immediate transfer of subsidies may aid industrial units in reviving their production and economic activities.

TCL Inaugurates First Flagship Store in Gujranwala, Showcasing World's Largest LED TV

Commerce Desk

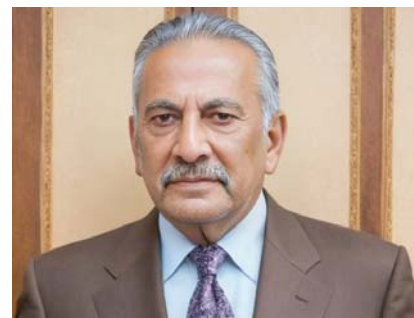
ISLAMABAD: TCL, the world's No. 1 LED TV brand, proudly announces the grand opening of its first flagship store in Gujranwala, a significant milestone in expanding its presence in the region. This new store reflects TCL's unwavering commitment to delivering immersive entertainment experiences through innovative technology.



Located at Tipu Chowk, Block B, Satellite Town, the TCL flagship store offers an interactive environment where customers can experience premium home entertainment solutions firsthand. The store features the latest TCL innovations, including the world's largest LED TV, the 115-inch X955 Max, underscoring the brand's leadership in technology.

Majid Khan Niazi, Director of Marketing, TCL Middle East and Africa, remarked, "The opening of our flagship store in Gujranwala is a pivotal moment for TCL as we continue our mission to bring innovative technology and superior entertainment experiences to homes across Paki-

IPPs damage masses, economy, and society



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that an immediate resolution to the IPPs issue is necessary to avoid nationwide turmoil.

He said the issue should be prioritized because the public's outrage over inflated bills is steadily growing, and businesses face difficulties.

Speaking to the business community, Shahid Rasheed Butt said that things could change suddenly and that authorities may or may not be able to control them; therefore, the matter should be resolved.

He asserted that forcing ordinary people to pay electricity rates that exceeded their income would lead to severe problems.

The business leader emphasized that capacity payments penalize the public and disrupt business activities.

Shahid Rasheed Butt asserted that the government could lower taxes or tariffs and benefit the public because it controls more than half of the IPPs established in the country.

He warned that the difficulties of public risk unrest as most people and businesspeople believe the government could resolve this issue.

He emphasized that the government should cut its soaring non-developmental spending to ease the anger of those who are furious about their electricity bills.

The number of impoverished individuals is increasing, surpassing the current 40%, and it is time to establish a fair distribution of wealth. He declared that the country is on the verge of chaos, and it is imperative to conduct a forensic audit of IPPs and stop the wastage of resources so that the public and businesses can get a break.

Arshad Nadeem reveals how he felt over buffalo gift from father-in-law

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Olympic gold medalist Arshad Nadeem returned to his homeland of Pakistan to a hero's welcome and numerous tributes. He has now revealed his reaction upon hearing the news of receiving a buffalo as a gift from father-in-law.

In a recent interview that went viral over the internet, Arshad Nadeem was seen jokingly commenting on the gift during an interview with his wife and a Pakistani journalist.

When asked about the buffalo, Nadeem humorously remarked, "She (his wife) told me, I said buffalo? He should have given me 5-6 acres of land, but buffalo is also fine. By God's grace he is so rich and he gave a buffalo." His light-hearted comment left the journalist laughing.

Nawaz, who has four sons and three daughters, including Nadeem's wife Ayesha, expressed immense pride in the javelin thrower's success.

"Whenever he comes to our house, he never complains about anything and



eats whatever is there," she said, highlighting Nadeem's humility and respect for his roots.

Nadeem, had reflected on the outpouring of support from his family and community that fueled his historic achievement.

Pakistan's federal and provincial governments have showered Olympic gold medalist Arshad Nadeem with a

slew of rewards. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a Rs150 million cash prize from the federal government, while Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presented Nadeem with a Rs100 million check and the keys to a Honda Civic at his hometown of Mian Channu. The Sindh government also announced a Rs50 million award, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister

Ali Amin Gandapur gifted Nadeem Rs5 million from his personal funds. Additionally, a commercial bank, UBL, recognized his achievements with a Rs5 million reward, and Toyota Pakistan presented the star athlete with a new Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric vehicle.

Nadeem's airplane was honored with a traditional water cannon salute as it touched down at Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore, signaling the start of a hero's homecoming.

The homecoming celebrations underscored Nadeem's status as a trailblazer for Pakistani sports.

As the country's first individual Olympic gold medalist, his record-breaking performance has inspired a newfound national pride and optimism.

"This is just the beginning," Nadeem had declared in a previous interview. "With my family and hometown behind me, I know I can achieve even greater heights."

Now, with a hero's welcome, Nadeem embarks on the next chapter of his journey, poised to continue making Pakistan proud on the global stage.

Honoured

To honour Olympian Arshad Nadeem's historic achievement, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) hosted a ceremony at Army Auditorium GHQ. COAS presents shield to the national hero.



PCB Zone-IV Inter Club Cricket Tournament. Rising Star reach Quarters

Deadly bowling by Afnan Khan and Asadullah Hamza

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Rising Star Cricket Club moved into the Quarter Final of the PCB Zone-IV Inter Club Cricket Tournament after beating Punjab Cricket Club by 131 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground.

The highlights of the days play was deadly bowling by slow left arm spinner Afnan Khan 4/18 and Medium Pacer Asadullah Hamza 4/36.

Scores in Brief:

Rising Star Cricket Club Scored 206/8 in allotted 35 overs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. The match reduced on 35 overs due to over night rain. Hanif Azad 41 4x4 1x6, Afnan Khan 37 3x4, Abdullah Fazal 36 6x4, Asad Iqbal 26 1x4 3x6, Asadullah Hamza 26 2x4, Sajid Rehman 2/45, Asadur Rehman 2/46.

Punjab Cricket Club 75 all out in 23 overs. Saad ulla Baig 40 4x4 1x6. Afnan Khan (sla) 41/18, Asadullah Hamza (rmf) 4/36.

Salman Butt names three fittest players in Pakistan team

A Sports

LAHORE: Former Pakistan captain Salman Butt named the three fittest players in the national men's cricket team, ahead of their two-match home series against Bangladesh, scheduled to commence on August 21.

Speaking on his YouTube channel, Butt raised concerns regarding the fitness of the national cricketers. He, however, asserted that not all the players in the Pakistan team are unfit and termed Test captain Shan Masood, Fakhar Zaman and Mohammad Rizwan the fittest.

"Improvements will be seen in fitness soon. You cannot say

all the players are not fit. If you look at some of the players they are among the top 10 players in terms of fitness in World cricket. You can look at Shan Masood, Fakhar Zaman, and Mohammad Rizwan, you look at their fitness, they have achieved good scores in the Yo-Yo Tests. They are good in the gym, they run well on the field," stated Butt.

"You need to manage fast bowlers, the problem is they don't play longer format, they don't feature in FC cricket, we don't play much Test cricket. Things are not getting developed in the way they should be. When this happens, the entire team is blamed unfit, people won't look at fit guys



even though all the players are hardworking," he added.

Salman Butt further highlighted the importance of fitness by coining the example of ace batter Babar Azam,

who, according to him, piled up runs after working on his fitness.

"Babar Azam scored truckloads of runs in the last 2 years, he proved his fitness, he ran on

the field, and scored runs while batting first as well as second innings. Things should go up but they are getting broken in the middle, which is wrong. So, this is the responsibility of the players to maintain their fitness," Butt stated.

"The entire Pakistan is talking about the fitness of the team and it brought a storm in Pakistan, players at the junior level were asked to run. This came after people said players weren't fit in the T20 World Cup 2024. No one questioned the physios or trainers, but instead, they started making players at the district level push hard for fitness. Those who made errors are still there," he concluded.

CM Aide announces Rs. 0.5 mln for Taekwondo medalist Aamir Khan

Sports Desk

PESHAWAR: Adviser to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sports and Youth Affairs, Syed Fakhr Jahan has said that the provincial government is strongly encouraging the development of major talent in the province.

This is our valuable asset, he said, adding, "After winning the gold medal in the international Taekwondo competitions in Thailand, Amir Khan, a player from the province, has made the name of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa famous all over the world and we are feeling proud."

Aamir Khan has presented a soft image of Pakistan and especially the Pakhtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Thailand.



He also presented a prize check of Rs. 0.5 million and assured him of providing them with other necessary training equipment and facilities related to their sports, and all support in case of participation in international competitions.

Advisor to Chief Minister

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sports and Youth Affairs Syed Fakhr Jahan specially invited the world Taekwondo players from Swat who won the gold medal in the World Taekwondo competitions in his office at Civil Secretariat Peshawar on Friday.

Among others, Provincial

Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Fazal Hakeem Khan and officials of the Sports Department were also present. On this occasion, the Sports Adviser congratulated the Taekwondo player for his excellent performance and said that he has shown his talent, effort and sport.

Recently the Inter Academies Games 2024 for the merged districts have been started which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and will continue till August 18. An opportunity should be provided to bring forward the players with natural abilities in every region and then financial support will also be given to these players, he added.

"We are also working on the

improvement of infrastructure for sports so that the availability of playgrounds and other facilities is possible for the youth to create a healthy society across the province and they become useful citizens of this society by being attracted towards positive activities," Syed Fakhr Jahan said.

During the meeting, he praised Aamir Khan for his success and encouraged him by assuring him of all possible support from the provincial government. During the meeting, Taekwondo player Aamir Khan thanked him for inviting him and encouraged him. He assured that he would continue his efforts and hard work to win more medals in future.

Sri Lankan batter banned indefinitely for doping violation



A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper batter Niroshan Dickwella has been suspended from all forms of cricket due to a doping violation, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) confirmed Friday.

According to the details, Dickwella failed a doping test in line with World Anti-Doping guidelines during the recently concluded Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2024.

"The suspension is effective immediately and will remain in place until further notice," stated an SLC media release.

"The test, which was conducted by the Sri Lanka Anti-Doping Agency (SLADA) during the Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2024, is part of SLC's ongoing commitment to maintaining the integrity of the sport.

"This initiative, undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Sports and in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) guidelines, is aimed at ensuring that cricket remains free from the influence of prohibited substances.

"SLC, together with the Ministry of Sports and SLADA, conducts these tests during domestic tournaments randomly to safeguard the sport against anti-doping violations."

Niroshan Dickwella, who led Galle Marvels in the 2024 edition of the LPL, last represented Sri Lanka on the international stage in March 2023.

He, however, received a national call-up for Sri Lanka's recent T20I series against Bangladesh but failed to make a cut into the Playing XI in either of the three matches.

The left-handed batter has been involved in several controversies before with the most notable being when he, alongside Kusal Mendis and Danushka Gunathilaka, was banned for breaching bio-bubble protocols in 2021.

Niroshan Dickwella represented Sri Lanka in 137 matches across formats and scored 4,841 runs with the help of two centuries and 32 fifties.

Jay Shah opens up on Kohli, Rohit's absence from Duleep Trophy

A Sports

LAHORE: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Secretary Jay Shah revealed the reason behind the absence of star batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma from this year's edition of the Duleep Trophy.



When probed about the absence of senior batters from the domestic tournament, the BCCI Secretary gave a blunt reply, stating that they may sustain injury.

Shah's statement came when India are set to play 10 Tests from September to January. The upcoming busy schedule commences next month when the two-time World Test Championship (WTC) finalists take on Bangladesh in a two-match series.

Jay Shah also coined examples of top cricket-playing nations like Australia and England, asserting that not all of their key players domestic cricket often.

However, contrary to Shah's claims, England Test captain Ben Stokes recently featured in the County Championship, representing Durham while his Australian counterpart Pat Cummins, is likely to feature in the Sheffield Series, according to a report by ESPN Cricinfo.

"We should not insist on players like Rohit and Virat to play in the Duleep Trophy. They will risk injury. If you have noticed, in Australia and England, every international player does not play domestic cricket. We have to treat the players with respect," Jay Shah was quoted as saying by ANI.

For the unversed, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma last played Indian domestic cricket back in 2012 and 2016 respectively.

Jay Shah then went on to highlight that most of the Indian international players are featuring in domestic cricket before lauding Ishan Kishan and Shreyas Iyer for their participation in the Buchi Babu Tournament.

"Apart from them, everyone else is playing. You should appreciate that," said Shah.

"One must note that Ishan Kishan and Shreyas Iyer are playing in the Buchi Babu tournament."

Pakistan Shaheens vs Bangladesh 'A' four-day match ends in a draw

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The first four-day match between Bangladesh 'A' and hosts Pakistan Shaheens ended in a draw at the Islamabad Club on Friday.

The match, which was largely affected by rain, saw 39.2 overs bowled on the fourth day, as play resumed at 2pm PKT today. The third day's play on Thursday was completely washed out due to rain.

Earlier, Pakistan Shaheens declared their first innings at the overnight score of 367 for four with a lead of 245 runs.

In their second innings, Bangladesh 'A' managed to score 153 for five when play was stopped due to bad light and ultimately resulting in a draw. For Shaheens, fast bowlers Mir Hamza and Mohammad Ali bagged two wickets apiece, while Mohammad Rameez Jnr grabbed one wicket.

For the visiting team, Nayeem Hasan was the top run-getter, scoring 55 off 69 balls, laced with 11 fours. Opening batter Zakir Hasan scored a 45-ball 33, which included three fours and a six.

Both sides will now feature in the second four-day game from August 20, which is scheduled at the same venue. The toss will take place at 09:30am, with the first ball to be bowled at 10.00am.

Scores in brief:

Match drawn
Bangladesh 'A' 122 all out, 44.3 overs (Mahmudul Hasan Joy 65; Naseem Shah 3-24, Mir Hamza 3-33, Mohammad Rameez Jnr 2-41) and 153-5, 39.2 overs (Nayeem Hasan 55, Zakir Hasan 33; Mir Hamza 2-13, Mohammad Ali 2-34)

Pakistan Shaheens 367-4, dec 90 overs (Umar Amin 177, Saud Shakeel 76, Mohammad Hurraira 39, Saad Khan 31 not out, Kamran Gulam 20 not out; Hasan Murad 2-49)

Player of the match - Umar Amin (Pakistan Shaheens)
Second four-day match at Islamabad Club from 20-23 August

Huge relief

LAHORE: PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif is holding a press conference with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.



Photo: Spokesman Photo

Punjab to provide Rs14/unit relief to consumers using up to 500 units of electricity: Nawaz

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab government would provide Rs14 per unit relief in August and September bills to consumers using up to 500 units of electricity, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif said on Friday.

"This is a huge relief. She [Maryam] has done this after cutting her government's expenses from different sectors," he said while addressing a press conference in Lahore. His daughter and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz accompanied him at the presser.

"Rs14 per unit will be cut from electricity bills and elec-

tricity bills will be readied and sent to the people. She has diverted funds worth Rs45 billion from the developmental budget to provide relief to the people," he said.

The PML-N supremo has been seen at every top-level provincial government meeting, leading to concerns from the experts over the authority his daughter has on the matters.

His photo was also seen in the Ramazan relief packages. When asked, the Punjab CM defended it and admitted that all decisions were taken with the consent of Nawaz.

Nawaz acknowledged the three-month relief period for lifeline consumers of electricity

whose consumption remains below 200 units per month, which was announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last month.

The government has claimed to have given a discount of Rs50 billion to the electricity lifeline consumers in July, August and September. For three months, 25 million consumers in the country would benefit from the government's relief. Moreover, the move would benefit "94 per cent of the country's domestic consumers" of electricity.

Earlier this month, the premier acknowledged that people using 200 to 500 units of electricity were also under the burden of high power

prices and added the federal government was considering providing relief to them.

Nawaz praised her daughter after announcing the decision, saying that the government had managed to do what it could.

He went on to add that Punjab CM Maryam was about to bring a solar panel scheme under which people would provide such a facility that would further help decrease their electricity bills.

"She has formed a programme to spend Rs1,700 billion on the solar panel for poor people and lower middle class, and middle-class people," Nawaz said.

In July, the Punjab cabinet

approved the "Roshan Gharana" programme under which people using up to 200 units could get free solar panels while those using up to 500 units would receive solar panels on a 10 per cent payment. The Punjab government would pay 90 per cent of the total amount for solar panels.

The interest-free loan would be provided to power consumers on a five-year instalment plan.

Nawaz urged his younger brother to support the provincial government in promoting solar panels. He also advised other provinces to create such opportunities for the people of their provinces.

Pakistan Navy Ship Hunain Visits Turkiye And Conducts Exercise Turgutreis-x With Turkish Navy



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship HUNAIN, during maiden voyage from Romania to Pakistan, visited Turkiye and participated in EX TURGUTREIS-X with Turkish Coast Guard Ship GELIBOLU. The exercise focused on various Joint Maritime Operations with the aim to enhance interoperability between both Navies.

Earlier, PNS HUNAIN visited Turkish Naval ports at Goleuk and Aksaz. Upon arrival at the ports, the ship was received by Senior Officials of Pakistan Embassy and Turkish Navy. During stay at Goleuk, Commanding Officer of PNS HUNAIN called on Turkish Navy Fleet Commander Vice Admiral

Kadir Yildiz and Commander of Goleuk Naval Base Rear Admiral Ali Tuna Baysal. During the meeting, professional matters of mutual interest and enhancement of bilateral cooperation between both the navies were discussed.

During stay at port Aksaz, Commander 2nd Destroyer Squadron of Turkish Navy, Commodore Captain Cenk TASLI along with Commanding Officer of TCG GELIBOLU visited onboard ship and appreciated Pakistan Navy's role in maintaining good order at sea in the region and beyond. He further added that visit of PNS HUNAIN will further provide an opportunity to flourish and strengthen existing brotherly relations and provide impetus to diplomatic and defence ties between the two countries.

Government's decision to provide risk coverage to banks for growth in SME Sector

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In line with the Government's efforts to give impetus to the SME sector, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has recently conveyed its strong resolve to support the banking sector by issuing a risk coverage scheme, which will help the banking sector to double its SME exposure to Rs. 1.1 trillion during the next

five years. These strategic measures being implemented with the support of Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA) dedicated taskforces, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, are expected to provide significant support to driving robust economic recovery and sustainable development in the country.

PM decides reforms to promote gemstones exports, industry

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday decided to carry out reforms in the gemstones sector to promote the industry and enhance its exports.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the matters pertaining to the reforms in gemstones sector, said that he would personally head the steering committee to promote the industry and its reformation.

He tasked Privatisation



Minister Abdul Aleem Khan to ensure the implementation of reforms.

He said the government would launch a project in Gilgit Baltistan to elevate

the standards of mining, chiseling and value addition of gemstones industry, assuring the federal government's support to GB government in this regard.

The prime minister said that unfortunately the gemstone sector was neglected during last 77 years and the precious asset was being wasted through conventional mining methods.

The meeting was told that GB, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu and

Kashmir had huge reserves of gemstones but conventional methods were being used there causing the wastage of the asset.

Federal ministers Jam Kamal Khan, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Ahad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Dr Musaddik Malik, State Bank Governor Jameel Ahmed, PM's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal, chief secretaries of GB, AJK and KP, and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Pakistan decries Israeli settlers' assault on Al-Aqsa Mosque: FO

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday strongly condemned the illegal storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque by hundreds of extremist settlers, led by officials from the Israeli occupation authorities, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said.

In her preliminary remarks during the weekly briefing, she stated that the desecration of one of Islam's holiest sites and the obstruction of worshippers' rights have deeply hurt Muslims worldwide. She described this act as a violation of the Geneva Conventions and a blatant disregard for several United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions concerning the historical city of Jerusalem.

The FO Spokesperson urged the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council, to take immediate action to

end the serious and repeated violations of the sanctity of holy sites in Jerusalem. The call included protecting the Islamic character of Al-Aqsa and ensuring the freedom of worship for the Palestinian people.

"We share the concerns of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation about the peril posed by the Israeli occupation's policies, aimed at altering the Arab and Islamic character of the occupied city of Jerusalem," she said.

"Yesterday marked a tragic milestone in the ongoing conflict affecting the people of Gaza," she said, adding that Israeli occupation forces have killed 40,000 individuals, the majority of whom were women and children. The ongoing genocide in Gaza must cease, and Israel should be held accountable for its war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The spokesperson stated



that Pakistan would continue to extend political, diplomatic, and moral support to the Kashmiri people for a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions.

Strongly condemning the killing of four Kashmiri youths by Indian troops in the Doda district of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK),

she said this brutal action by the Indian occupation authorities served as yet another example of their illegal and oppressive measures against Kashmiri people.

"We urge the international community to take immediate and decisive action to hold India accountable for its egregious human rights violations in IOJK and to take steps to protect the rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri people."

Foreign Office spokesperson said that the 7th session of the Pakistan-Türkiye Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held in Islamabad last week. Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi led the Pakistani delegation, while the Turkish side was led by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Nuh Yilmaz. She said the discussions covered all facets of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Türkiye. The two sides agreed to bolster high-level bilateral engagement, fully implement existing agreements, and upgrade the Pakistan-Türkiye Strategic Economic Framework (SEF). They also committed to enhancing cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, energy, security and defense, information technology, culture and tourism, education, and consular matters.

Pasban Watan Foundation celebrate Independence Day

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: In the Independence Day ceremony organized by Pasban Watan Foundation, former Provincial Minister Dr. Jamal Nasir and Member of National Assembly Tahira Aurangzeb praised the services of SHO Thana Waris Khan Syed Tehzeeb Al Hussain Shah for maintaining peace and order in the city and for the excellent performance during Ushra Muharram, and presented him with a shield of appreciation.

On this occasion, Member National Assembly Tahira Aurangzeb said that we are proud of our forces who risk their lives to protect the country and the nation. Dr. Jamal Nasir said that the performance of our police, like the Pakistan Army, is unparalleled. They risk their lives

to protect their country. I salute the police force for their bravery and courage. On this occasion, SHO Police Station Waris Khan Syed Tehzeeb Al Hussain Shah thanked for receiving the honorary shield and said that the police will continue to perform their duties with the same zeal. I am very grateful to Government of Punjab, IG Punjab, Pro, CPO and other senior officers who always encouraged us all. On the other hand, CPO Syed Khalid Hamdani awarded certificates of appreciation and cash prizes to SHO Waris Khan, Inspector Tehzeeb Al Hussain, SHO City Khalid Yar, SHO Ganjmundi Atif Sattar, SHO Rata Amaral Muhammad Sajjad for their excellent performance. And said that Rawalpindi Police is always working hard to establish peace and eliminate criminal elements.

Australian High Commissioner visits NARC



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins on Friday visited National Agricultural Research Centre and discussed matters relating to agriculture sector research and development.

The High Commissioner held a meeting with Chairman Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC), Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali (S. I.), said a press release. Dr. Ali briefed the envoy about PARC and its ongoing high tech research activities.

Following the meeting, he also visited National Institute for Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB) and Plant Genetic Resources Institute (PGRI).