



Fazl stands firm despite govt's 'sweet-talk', vows to oppose legislation contrary to Constitution

Amid government efforts to muster support of its allies and disgruntled partners ahead of potential judiciary-centric legislation, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has stated that he will not support any legislation contradictory to Constitution and remain part of the opposition.



'Pakistan's artists are asset of the nation': Asma Butt

Renowned writer, director and chairperson of Dolphin Communication, Asma Butt said that artists are the asset of the country and the nation. Wherever we go, we become the identity of Pakistan. Artists are apolitical. Their life and death are connected with art. It is not acceptable to see injustice done to art or artists under any circumstances. Rawalpindi Arts Council should be freed from political interference. (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Call on

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Syed Naveed Qamar and Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab and Attorney General were also present in the meeting on Wednesday.



Photo: Online

Glowing tribute to Major Aziz Bhatti

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Services Chiefs and Armed Forces of Pakistan pay a glowing tribute to Major Raja Aziz Bhatti, Nishan-e-Haider, on his 59th martyrdom anniversary. Major Aziz Bhatti, a shining symbol of courage and bravery, laid down his life during the 1965 War, defending the motherland.



Major Aziz Bhatti's unwavering commitment to duty, unshakable resolve, and supreme sacrifice will always be remembered and revered. His heroic actions inspired countless others to follow in his footsteps, upholding the highest traditions of valor and sacrifice.

memory, honoring his legacy which continues to motivate and inspire generations of soldiers to defend the nation with honor and distinction.

We also pay tribute to the families of our martyrs, who have borne the brunt of their loved ones' sacrifices with courage and resilience.

Let us pay our respects to Major Aziz Bhatti, Nishan-e-Haider, and all our martyrs, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of Pakistan.

Bilawal meets PM to discuss political situation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif today, discussing the current political situation and the government's economic policies.

Minister Sharif emphasized the importance of the PPP as a key coalition partner in the government. He acknowledged the party's support for the government's efforts to stabilize the country's economy.

The meeting was attended by a delegation of PPP leaders, including Naveed Qamar, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, and other prominent figures.

The Prime Minister praised Bilawal Bhutto's proposal for a "Charter of Parliament" which was presented in the parliament recently. The PPP delegation also expressed appreciation for the government's economic policies aimed at stabilizing the country's financial situation.

The PMLN side included Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers Azam Nazir Tarar, Atta Tarar, and Attorney General.

The delegation expressed full confidence in the government's policies and actions, which was welcomed by Prime Minister Sharif.

During the meeting, Prime

Parliament Arrests: Speaker suspends NA security officials

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker Ayaz Sadiq in punitive action over the Parliament arrests episode, has suspended five National Assembly security officials including the sergeant-at-arms.

assistants Ubaidullah, Waheed Safdar, and Muhammad Haroon.

The Speaker has suspended Sergeant-at-Arms Ashfaq Ashraf for four months over negligence in the security of the Parliament House.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq has formed a committee over the arrests of PTI MNAs from the Parliament House headed by Additional Secretary Iftikhar Naumani.

Four other security personnel have also been suspended for their failure to uphold security of the parliament.

Other members of the committee are joint secretaries Asadullah Khan and Rizwanullah. Acting Sergeant-at-Arms Raja Farhat Abbas has also been co-opted in the committee.

The suspended security staff included a security assistant Waqas Ahmed and three junior

The security officials suspended after the arrests of PTI MNAs from the Parliament House.

NA Speaker issues production orders for 10 PTI arrested lawmakers

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly (NA) Speaker Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday issued production orders for 10 arrested members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Muhammad Ahmad Chattha. NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq also issued production orders for Zubair Khan, Owais Haider Jhakkar, Syed Shah Ahad Shah, Naseem Ali Shah and Yousuf Khan.

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq issued the orders to bring the PTI arrested members to participate in the proceedings of the House. The speaker issued production orders for Sher Afzal Marwat, Amir Dogar, Zain Qureshi, Sheikh Waqas Akram, and

The Speaker issued the production orders for the ongoing session to ensure the participation of the arrested members in tomorrow's assembly meeting. The NA Speaker issued the production orders under the powers granted by Rule 108.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNAs including party chairman Barrister Gohar were arrested by Islamabad police following prior approval from NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq. ARY News reported on Tuesday, citing sources.

Owais Ahmed Chatha, Syed Shah Ahmed, Sunni Ittehad Council's Sahibzada Hamid Raza, Yousaf Khan, Maulana Naseem Shah, and Ahmed Shah Khattak.

On Monday, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar, Sher Afzal Marwat, and Shoaib Shaheen were arrested. The Capital police arrested MNAs Zain Qureshi and Sheikh Waqas Akram from inside the Parliament House.

Sources said Speaker NA Ayaz Sadiq allowed arrest of PTI MNAs outside the premises of the house. The development followed after police presented a copy of FIR registered against the PTI lawmakers for violating SOPs during September 8 public rally.

Additionally, police detained

Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill in Islamabad, citing violations of the event's NOC. The FIR names 28 individuals, including PTI leaders Barrister Gohar Ali, Sher Afzal Marwat, Shoaib Shaheen, Omar Gul, Zartaj Gul, Aamir Mughal, Seemabia Tahir, and Raja Basharat.

Additionally, three cases have been registered under the

Earlier, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister reached KP CM House safely after 7-hour absence following crackdown against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders.

PTI arrests issue will be 'diffused' by committee: Abbasi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, leader of the Awami Muslim League, has criticized the Speaker's handling of the arrest of former Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif within the Parliament building, calling it a "violation of privilege" and urging the Speaker to refer the matter to the Privileges Committee.

IG and all relevant officials.

Speaking on a news program "Spotlight" today, Abbasi stated that while the Speaker's formation of a special committee was acceptable, the issue should have been referred to the Privileges Committee, which should have immediately summoned the

He emphasized that this was not the work of a special committee and that the National Assembly has clear rules that were deliberately disregarded.

Abbasi expressed concern that the matter would now be passed around committees, potentially taking five to six months before being dismissed. He argued that if the arrest was necessary, it should have been carried out at the gate.

He recalled an incident from 1990 when he and Aijaz ul Haq were stopped for 15 minutes by an SP at the Assembly gate, resulting in the SP's career being terminated.



Regarding the Speaker's proposal of creating a "Charter of Parliament" Abbasi questioned the need for such a document, stating that existing laws, the constitution, and the rules of the National Assembly should be enforced.

He suggested that if any amendments are required, they should be made to the existing framework.

Commenting on the potential legislation regarding the extension of the Chief Justice's tenure, Abbasi stated that it was a personal matter for the Chief Justice.

He argued that the Chief Justice should choose to protect his honor or accept an extension, suggesting that accepting an extension would ultimately damage his reputation.

One dies as fire breaks out at Karachi's residential building

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: At least a person was killed as a fire broke out at an illegal petrol pump in Karachi's Shah Faisal area, trapping people inside a residential building.

building, putting the lives of residents at risk. The fire engulfed the building, leaving people stranded. The rescue teams faced difficulties in the operation while trying to evacuate those trapped as the building was filled with smoke.

According to initial reports, the petrol pump was operating illegally under a residential

Initially, one unit of the fire department was sent to put out

the fire but later five more fire tenders were also called to the scene to help with the operation. Several motorcycles parked outside the petrol pump also caught fire.

A fire brigade official confirmed that the blaze in the lower portion of the building is brought under control, and

people trapped inside were moved to the rooftop.

He said that one person was rescued in a semi-conscious state, while five fire brigade units are still on the scene. Multiple motorcycles parked outside the shop were also gutted in the fire. Rescue efforts were hindered due to dense smoke in the building.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Korangi Tauheed Mumtaz confirmed one person lost his life in the fire incident, adding that those trapped on the rooftop have been rescued.

The SSP Korangi said that the fire is completely extinguished. Tauheed Mumtaz said that the police had shut down the petrol

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has issued a major decision against K-Electric, imposing a Rs1 crore fine following a show-cause notice issued earlier this year regarding fatal incidents in 2022 and 2023.

job to a member of the same family.

NEPRA has also ordered K-Electric to submit a report within two months confirming implementation of the order.

The 19-page decision mandates K-Electric to pay Rs35 lakh to the family of a deceased citizen and to offer a

This decision comes after NEPRA issued a show-cause notice to K-Electric earlier this year, demanding an explanation for the multiple fatal incidents related to their electricity supply.

The incidents, which occurred in 2022 and 2023, resulted in the deaths of several citizens.

AJK PM blasts Indian defense minister over 'devious' Kashmir remarks

Bureau Report

Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the people of Azad Kashmir were well aware of India's despicable role in killing Kashmiri people and promoting terrorism in the region.

Reacting to the Indian Defense Minister's recent statement, the AJK premier termed India as a tyrant that besides depriving Kashmiris of their basic rights has killed hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in the illegally occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Hitting back at India's human rights record, the PM said that before issuing such irresponsible statements the Indian defense minister should have



hanged his head down in shame to see how they treated Kashmir and Kashmiri people since 1947."

Around 100,000 ordinary citizens were martyred by Indian occupation forces, whereas thousands of cases

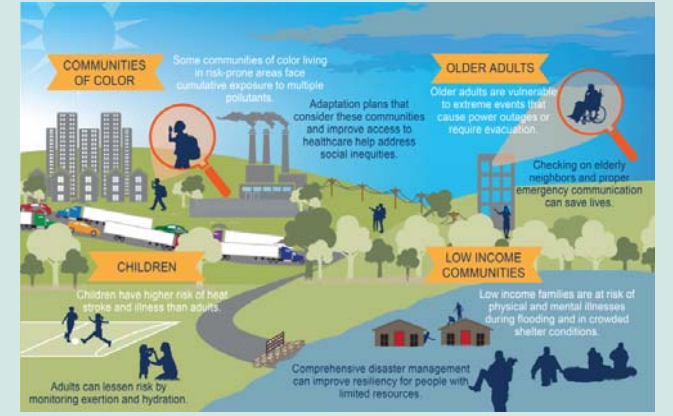
of mass rape, extrajudicial killing of youths, enforced disappearances have been reported in Kashmir since 1989", he said.

The PM said that more than 8,000 unnamed mass graves have been discovered in the valley. The Indian government, he said, had turned the held territory of Jammu and Kashmir into a prison where people feel suppressed, suffocated and robbed of their rights and identity.

The PM said that India was not only responsible for bloodshed and violence in the held territory but also in Azad Kashmir.

He said that how can people of Azad Kashmir forget the bloodbath of their loved ones killed by India's unprovoked firing and shelling on the LoC.

Climate change poses a serious threat to vulnerable populations in conflict zones: speakers



Bureau Report

GENEVA: Collective responses and concerted efforts are urgently needed to protect vulnerable communities in conflict zones that are threatened by climate change, speakers at a symposium on the impacts of climate change on human life said. UNH International experts, human rights leaders, diplomats and academics participated in the seminar organized by the Kashmir Institute of International Relations on the occasion of the 57th meeting of RC. Climate change expert Mr Talah Tufail Bhatti, Abdul Rehman, Aisha Tariq Rana, Syed Faiz Naqshbandi Sunir Hurriyet leader, Ms. Shamim Shall and Dr. Shagufta Ashraf were spoken in seminar.

The speakers described climate change as an issue of global concern, saying that climate change poses a major threat to those living in conflict-affected areas, where communities face many challenges due to political conflict, violence and militancy. "Kashmir is one of the areas most vulnerable to climate change," he said, adding that a protracted conflict has serious implications for lives, health, food and livelihoods across the region.

While it poses threats, it has also severely damaged key sectors of the economy due to temperature fluctuations, melting glaciers and continuous subsidence. Rains that lead to floods. "Kashmir has seen significant water scarcity as a result of rising temperatures," he said. "The agricultural sector of the region has been badly affected by water scarcity," he said, adding that apart from affecting food supply and availability of high-quality food, it has also affected crop productivity. He said that "like other parts of the world, there has been a significant decrease in underground water in Kashmir".

Mohsin Khan announced to contest the election



Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: President of Tajiran Mina Bazaar, Mohsin Khan, announced to contest the election. While talking to media representatives at Takht Bhai Press Club, he said that it is essential to hold elections in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Tajiran constitution. Every trader has the right to vote, and depriving them of this right would be an injustice. All shopkeepers want to elect their representative organization through voting. Some elements are spreading misinformation that they want to elect a president without voting, but they are not ready to contest elections and are trying to escape through various excuses. They have done this several times in the past, but this time they will not be allowed to escape. Present on the occasion were Kashif Mehmood, candidate for General Secretary, Saddam Khattak, Deputy General Secretary, Sartaj Khan, Senior Vice President, Shehzad Ayub, Vice President, Sarfraz Akakhel, Trader Leader, Naem Akbar, Trader Leader, and Haji Ismail, Chairman.

Intensive operations against drug smugglers continue: DPO

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Attock police's effective operations against anti-social elements continue, foiling an attempt to smuggle drugs worth millions from KPK to Punjab. Inter-provincial drug smuggler, Gambir Khan, son of Wali Khan, was caught with a large quantity of drugs. A case has been registered under the Narcotics Act, and the accused has been imprisoned. The ongoing jihad against anti-social elements who poison the veins of society will continue, tightening the noose for criminals in Attock, said DPO Attock, Dr. Sardar Ghias Gul Khan. Details reveal that under the directives of District Police Officer Attock, Dr. Sardar Ghias Gul Khan, strict checking continues at search checkpoints across the district. Continuing this effort, a team from Attock Khurd police, under the supervision of SHO Sub-Inspector Khanzada Shahroz Khan, stopped a loader rickshaw coming from Peshawar at the Attock Khurd search checkpoint. The rickshaw was driven by Gambir Khan, son of Wali Khan, a resident of Dak Khana Inayat Kille, Lera Seway, Tehsil Mamund, District Bajaur. Finding it suspicious, the police conducted a formal search, resulting in the recovery of 14 packets containing 16.8 kilograms of hashish hidden in secret compartments of the vehicle.

Hajj and Umrah as invaluable gifts from Allah: Al-Haj Imdad Ali Memon

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Al-Haj Imdad Ali Memon hosted a reception and dinner in honor of the pilgrims who recently performed Hajj. Many of the newly returned pilgrims attended the event. While welcoming the pilgrims, Hajji Imdad Ali Memon described Hajj and Umrah as invaluable gifts from Allah, which cannot be attained through wealth or power but only through His acceptance and mercy.

He further said that when Allah chooses someone as His guest, it becomes an honor to host and serve them. Shedding light on the importance of Islam, the Quran, and prayer, he emphasized that everything happens by the will of Allah and not through any power or force on Earth.

He stated that nothing moves on Earth without Allah's consent and explained that this world is temporary, with real life beginning in the hereafter. In conclusion, Hajji Imdad Ali Memon prayed that Allah protects everyone from the deceit of this worldly life and illuminates their hearts with the light of faith.

The event concluded with a heartfelt prayer for blessings, guidance, and prosperity for all.

Protest

LAHAORE: Women and children holding placards and protesting in favour of their demands in front of the press club of the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

Railway Prime Union announces second phase of protest march on Sept 19 in Faisalabad

Bureau Report

FAISALABAD: In the second phase of the protest movement, Railway Prime Union has announced to hold a train march from Lahore to Faisalabad and a meeting at Faisalabad railway station on September 19. Central President Sheikh Muhammad Anwar, while addressing a meeting of zonal and local officials at Faisalabad Railway Station on the occasion of organizational visit, said that the struggle for the rights of railway employees started by Prime Union under the leadership of Hafiz Salman Butt will be carried out in all circumstances. It will be continued. Railway employees will not be abused in any case, the privatization of railways will be strongly resisted. Chief Organizer Khalid Mahmud Chaudhry, Zonal President Zahiruddin Babar, Nooruddin, Bau Tahir, Sajid Imran, Malik Manzoor and others welcomed the station. Sheikh Muhammad Anwar said that on one hand, high inflation, electricity bills have broken the back of the employees and on the other hand, it is on their heads. The sword of job termination has been suspended, more than 13,000 lower scale posts are being eliminated in the railways, if the government cannot give relief to the employees, then don't bother



them. No. If the government has to eliminate the posts, then it should be started from Grade 17, MP One / Two scale officers and the retired officers of Physio Railways should be given high and attractive remuneration.

'Pakistan's artists are asset of the nation': Asma Butt

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Renowned writer, director and chairperson of Dolphin Communication, Asma Butt said that artists are the asset of the country and the nation. Wherever we go, we become the identity of Pakistan. Artists are apolitical. Their life and death are connected with art. It is not acceptable to see injustice done to art or artists under any circumstances. Rawalpindi Arts Council should be freed from political interference. If the rights of the artists are revoked without any reason, the artists of the twin cities will be forced to protest. Artists appeal to Pakistan Muslim League-N government for justice.

Asma Butt said in a special conversation with journalists that I spent 30



years of my life in the service of art and artist. This is the reason why my services are highly appreciated and respected in the cultural and artistic sectors of Pakistan today. Pakistan is my identity. It is my desire to spend my entire life serving my country and art. She further said that artists have a sensitive heart. They

give voice to sensitive emotions and feelings. Artists are innocent people, you will never find hypocrisy or dirty political attitudes in them.

Asma Butt said that it is sad when artists are stopped from working, or obstacles are placed in their work. Artists can never tolerate their disrespect. Political interference in Rawalpindi Arts Council should be stopped. This interference is in no way acceptable to the artists. She further said that such political elements who are arbitrarily elected on reserve seats on the Rawalpindi Arts Council. It is suggested for them that they should go to the assemblies and raise their voices on public issues, serve the people, what will they do to solve the problems of the artists who could not get four votes, have they ever done anything for the welfare of

the artists. No, neither do the artists expect anything from them. They should remain under their jurisdiction. Rawalpindi Arts Council is for artists, so it should be limited to artists. We know how to do our job. Because the artists are the ones who make it.

If the artists come out on the streets, it will be difficult to manage them. She said that since the political interference started, the doors of the Rawalpindi Arts Council have been closed to the artists. If the process of usurping the legitimate rights of the artists is not stopped, the artists will be forced to protest. Asma Butt, representing the artists, appealed to the government of Pakistan Muslim League-N to play a positive and fair role in keeping the institutions made for artists free from politics.

Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:24 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	4:33 pm
Maghrib	6:20 pm
Isha	7:44 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Ambassador Dr. Jemal inaugurates Honorary Consulate of Ethiopia in Karachi

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to Pakistan, has inaugurated the Honorary Consulate of Ethiopia in Karachi which will further strengthen the already flourish-

ing bilateral ties between the two countries.

Talking to the media, the Ambassador congratulated H. E. Ibrahim Tawab, Honorary Consul of Ethiopia in Karachi, on his appointment and opening of the Consulate.

Karachi is a business hub as well as the cultural center of Pakistan, the



Ambassador said, adding the Consulate opening would not only give a major boost to the bilateral trade, but also bolster people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

He said the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Pakistan has been playing a pivotal

role in Look Africa and Engage Africa Policy, contributing massively to connect Pakistan with Africa.

The Government of the FDR Ethiopia first established its Mission in Islamabad in 2022, brought the Ethiopian Airlines in 2023 and this year opened the Honorary Consulate in

Karachi, he added. On the occasion, H. E. Ibrahim Tawab highlighted the extraordinary business, trade and investment opportunities in Ethiopia.

He lauded the vision of H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker for promoting trade ties of Pakistan and Africa.

Denied access

ISLAMABAD: Blue Metro service denied entry of students, causing delays in reaching home.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Cheezious Empowers Over 50 Women with E-Commerce Skills Through SheWins Initiative

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Cheezious, a proud Pakistani fast-food brand, has supported and sponsored the education and training of over 50 young women through the pioneering SheWins initiative. This program equips these girls with essential e-commerce skills, empowering them to launch their own businesses from the comfort of their homes.

CEO of Cheezious, Imran Ejaz, stated that this graduation ceremony marks a continuation of Cheezious' commitment to giving back to the community and empowering women. We are excited about our ongoing collaboration with PITB and will continue to sponsor even more women in the next cohort, providing them with the tools and resources they need to thrive in the digital economy.

National Literacy Curriculum 2024 launched at AIOU

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Literacy Curriculum 2024 has been launched in an event with reference to literacy day held here in Allama Iqbal Open University.

National Literacy Curriculum 2024, aimed at improving Pakistan's educational landscape to ensure that no child is left without education.

The event was organized by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Allama Iqbal Open University, UNESCO, Pakistan Institute of Education.

The Chief Guest, Federal Secretary of Education Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, expressed gratitude to all the collaborators involved in the development of this



curriculum and congratulated them on the successful event. He emphasized that addressing Pakistan's educational challenges requires a multifaceted approach to increase literacy rates. Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University, highlighted that the National Literacy Curriculum 2024 represents a significant milestone in educational development. He affirmed the commitment to making this curriculum successful

and ensuring quality education for every Pakistani. The program aims to enhance literacy across the country and bring education to every household. Mr. Taka Yuki Suguwara, JICA's Country Head, thanked all the partners and stressed that the curriculum aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which advocates for inclusive, quality education and lifelong learning for all. Dr. Shafiqat Janjua, Director of the National Curriculum Council, noted that the teaching and learning processes have evolved significantly, with the curriculum now incorporating digital literacy, financial skills, and functional English. At the end of the event, shields were presented to the speakers, and certificates were distributed to the first batch of students under the Each One Teach One initiative.

Islamabad Marriott Hotel Launches Thai Food Festival on September 19th 2024

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Marriott Hotel is excited to announce the much-anticipated Thai Food Festival, on September 19th, 2024. This festival promises to deliver an authentic Thai culinary experience and cultural showcase that is sure to captivate guests.

Speaking at the press conference, the Hotel Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel Mr Hassan Khan expressed his enthusiasm for hosting the festival, stating: "We are thrilled to bring the rich flavors of Thailand to Islamabad through this vibrant festival. Our goal is to provide our guests with an immersive cultural experience, allowing them to savor authentic Thai cuisine while enjoying performances that showcase the beauty of Thai culture. We are honored to have the collaboration of the Royal Thai Embassy and look forward to welcoming everyone to this exciting event."



The Chargé d'Affaires Ms. Kamolwan Sriposil of the Royal Thai Embassy also shared her thoughts on the festival, highlighting the importance of cultural exchange through food: "Food has always been a significant part of Thailand's culture, and we are pleased to share our culinary

heritage with the people of Islamabad. The Thai Food Festival at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel offers a wonderful opportunity for locals and expatriates alike to experience the vibrant and diverse flavors of Thailand, while also enjoying traditional Thai performances. We are grateful for the hospitality of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel in making this festival a reality."

In addition to the delectable Thai cuisine prepared by the hotel's expert Thai chef, guests will be treated to live performances by a special Thai cultural troupe, flown in directly from Thailand to enrich the festival's atmosphere. The menu will feature an array of traditional Thai dishes, from spicy salads to creamy curries, offering a true taste of Thailand.

Guests are encouraged to join this unique culinary journey and experience Thailand's rich food heritage and cultural performances, right here in Islamabad

PAC organized Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council organized an Islamic calligraphy in collaboration with Mehr Qalam in connection with the celebration of Eid Milad-ul-Nabi. The chief guest of the opening ceremony of the exhibition was Pir Syed Ali Junaid ul Haque Geelani. Director of Arts Council Sajjad Hussain, Deputy Director Muhammad Shakur, Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman and Mehr Qalam Chief Shabir Ahmed Zia were also accompanied chief guests. 50 works of art by more than a dozen artists were displayed in it. Special guest Pir Syed Ali Junaid ul Haq Gilani addressed the participants of the exhibition and said that calligraphy is a completely Islamic art that begins with divine revelation. The scribes of revelation are highly valued in Islam. All the artists have expressed their deep love for the religion of Islam through their works of art through beautiful colors. I pray that Allah Ta'ala will increase his passion more. Director Arts Council Sajjad Hussain said that calligraphy is a great cultural heritage of Muslims. The bearer of the Islamic cultural heritage should publicize this beautiful and timeless art and especially the new generation should be exposed to the wonders of this art. Shabir Ahmad Zia said that our young artists are showing great talent in Islamic calligraphy.

Visa signs strategic partnership with ILINK to transform digital payments in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Visa (NYSE: V), a world leader in digital payments, signed a partnership agreement with ILINK, Pakistan's largest payment service provider and payment system operator. The event was attended by Mr. Saleem Ullah, Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, and Mr. Syed Sohail Javaad, Executive Director, Digital Financial Services Group of the State Bank of Pakistan, alongside senior leaders from Visa and the ILINK team.

The partnership facilitates integration of the Visa Alias Directory Service within the ILINK network, which aims to simplify incoming remittances, improve user experience, and protect sensitive payment credential information. Leila Serhan, Senior Vice President and Group Country Manager, for the North Africa, Levant and Pakistan (NALP) region at Visa, commented: "Pakistan is among the world's top 10 remittance receiving countries, according to World Bank data." <https://world-migrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/international-remittances>.

Najeeb Agrawalla, Chief Executive Officer, ILINK, expressed his excitement about the collaboration, highlighting its speed, security, and improved access to inward home remittances.

AKU's International Student Research Conference puts research at the forefront of medical education

City Desk

KARACHI: The International Student Research Conference, organized by students from AKU's Medical College, brought together over 1000 students from 30 universities for two days of networking and learning. The conference, themed 'Assembling Today's Brightest for Tomorrow's Breakthroughs' featured carefully curated scientific and teaching sessions, journal clubs, hospitality sessions, meetings with professors, and poster presentations. Keynote speaker Dr Hasan Badre Alam, Chair of Surgery at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, encouraged students to find a purpose stating, "At the start of your academic journey, you must create a purpose that can sustain you for years to come."

Dr Sohail Khan, Chief Executive Officer at Aria Institute of Medical Sciences and an AKU alumnus, shared his inspiring journey of returning to Pakistan to create a hospital and a research institute in Quetta. "Leadership is about taking your organization into the future."

Dr Russell Martins, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Hackensack Meridian Health taught students to never doubt the influence of their research as it fills a gap, has impact and highlights issues that need solving. Dr Zahra Hoodbhoy expressed that "Women's health and maternal health should be separated as women seek care only while pregnant because that's the only time they are cared for - they are seen as a vehicle for carrying babies."

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Free my Country

The September 8th public meeting did not attract the large crowd the PTI leadership had hoped for—one that could have put significant pressure on the government and provided much-needed public support for the PTI's key demands, which included the release of Imran Khan, the configuration of election results based on Form 45, the release of arrested workers, the army stepping back from politics, and ensuring the judiciary's independence. However, ironically, the government ended up aiding the PTI's cause by placing containers to block all routes to the venue, dispersing the crowd with tear gas, and making a series of arrests after the event.

These unnecessary and poorly thought-out actions by the government ultimately played into the PTI's hands. As the media shifted its focus from the less-than-expected turnout to the government's aggressive and disproportionate response, it inadvertently boosted the PTI's narrative. Had the government not taken such measures, it might have dampened PTI's momentum, demoralized its leadership, and disillusioned its supporters. But, unfortunately for the government and establishment, and fortunately for the PTI, the government did exactly what it should have avoided.

To add insult to the injury, the arrest of PTI parliamentarians within the premises of the parliament and the rumors of abduction of the Chief Minister and other leaders catapulted the popularity of the PTI to new heights, increased its sympathy vote and conversely eroded the political capital of the government and the establishment.

Instead of exercising grace and restraint, the government responded to the tall claims, threats, and foul language from the opposition with even worse language. Rana Sanaullah, the government

spokesman and de facto spokesperson for the establishment, hurled even more severe accusations and threats, reminiscent of the way Sultan Rahi used to challenge villains in old movies. He went as far as to challenge the KP Chief Minister, daring him to enter Punjab and face severe consequences. Sanaullah warned that the Chief Minister would not be allowed to hold a public meeting at Minar-e-Pakistan and would be insulted in a manner even worse than what was done to the Punjab Chief Minister.

These statements flagrantly disregarded the constitutional rights guaranteed to every citizen of Pakistan. Article 15 of the Constitution ensures the "freedom of movement", stating, "Every citizen shall have the right to remain in, and, subject to any reasonable restriction imposed by law in the public interest, enter and move freely throughout Pakistan and to reside and settle in any part thereof." Further, Article 16 guarantees the "freedom of assembly", providing that "Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order." Finally, Article 19 guarantees "freedom of speech", ensuring that every citizen has the right to express their views, subject to restrictions related to the glory of Islam, national security, and public order. The threats and challenges issued by the government's spokesperson clearly violated these fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, which protect every citizen, including public figures like the KP Chief Minister.

In its reactive press conference, the PTI accused the government and establishment of subverting the Constitution,

violating laws and regulations, disrespecting the sanctity of Parliament, abducting party leaders and workers, and suffocating the freedoms of the press, speech, and assembly—rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

During the press conference, the PTI leaders expressed regret for any inadvertent remarks made against the state, the military, and women in general. However, they stood by the substantive parts of the speech, particularly those delivered by the KP Chief Minister.

The General Secretary fully endorsed the Chief Minister's statements regarding the role of the Army. Specifically, he supported the claim that the military should "put its house in order" and return to its barracks, vacating roles not constitutionally mandated to them. He emphasized that the Army should refrain from interfering in the electoral process, influencing the selection of parliamentarians, and undermining the people's mandate. Furthermore, he called for the military to divest from its business, investment, trade, and real estate ventures, as these activities fall outside the Army's core constitutional responsibilities. His key demand was for the Establishment to loosen its iron grip on the country, free the country and allow the nation and its people to breathe freely.

The speaker apologized for the part of the speech that insulted journalists but endorsed the substantive claim, stating that conducting interviews in the drawing rooms of individuals who were abducted, tortured, and coerced into giving confessional statements under duress goes against the established norms and ethics of journalism.

They also apologized for the derogatory

remarks made against Parliament but stood by the part where the KP Chief Minister referred to it as a "faux parliament" lacking any mandate or endorsement from the people, calling its members stooges of those who brought them to power.

The speakers then announced a countrywide protest to be held on the coming Friday, condemning the unconstitutional actions of the government. The protest's main objectives are to demand the release of arrested PTI leaders, including Imran Khan, and to call for free and fair elections.

Here's the corrected and improved version of your text:

During the press conference, the KP Chief Minister, who had been absent for several hours, returned to his seat. It was revealed that he had been in a meeting with the establishment, discussing various political and law-and-order issues. However, the full details of these discussions came to light later. In a separate interview, Faisal Vawda added a critical perspective, hinting that while the Chief Minister was able to return this time, if a similar episode were to occur again in the future, he would face severe consequences.

The disproportionate reaction of the government and establishment against the PTI has once again elevated the party to a high moral ground, significantly boosting its political capital and public sympathy. This overreaction has had a negative impact on the law and order situation, heightened political tensions, and further eroded Pakistan's international image. It has also scared away foreign traders, investors, and businessmen, worsening the overall perception of the country and further depleting public support for the government and the establishment.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

79th session of the UN General Assembly

The 79th session of the UN General Assembly opened Tuesday afternoon in New York, with incoming President Philemon Yang of Cameroon outlining a vision of unity in diversity and calling for deeper international cooperation to tackle a host of global challenges, including climate change, escalating conflict, and a slowdown in sustainable development.

President Yang underscored the need for equitable economic growth driven by innovation and green economies, ensuring that "the benefits of economic development are accessible to all nations, large and small".

Peace and security, he added, would also be key priorities, as he urged nations to resolve ongoing conflicts, including in the Gaza Strip, Haiti, Ukraine, and the Great Lakes region of Africa.

"We must invest in all efforts to decrease tensions and instead build trust around the world," he said.

He said human rights, together with strengthening international law and justice frameworks, would remain high on the agenda, with the Assembly working to enhance the coordination of humanitarian efforts.

"This will help ensure its response to crises is timely and efficient, and that aid reaches those most in need," Yang said.

"Lastly, we will address the pervasive challenges of international terrorism, drug and human trafficking and modern slavery," he continued, stressing the need to uphold human dignity.

"As President of the General Assembly, I am committed to facilitating these discussions and harnessing our collective will and expertise to deliver significant solutions," he added.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres also addressed the opening of the session, highlighting the urgency of collective action to confront a world "in trouble".

He praised President Yang for his vision and leadership, pledging his full support to unite the diverse member states around common goals.

"From day one, the United Nations has been the place for multilateral solutions – grounded in collaboration, dialogue, diplomacy, and the UN Charter," he said.

Acknowledging the gravity of the current global situation, the UN chief emphasized the need for concrete solutions across various domains, including reducing poverty, inequality, and the climate crisis.

"We need solutions...to bring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) back to life and end poverty and inequality," he noted, adding that economic progress and job creation, particularly for women and young people, must be prioritized.

The current session's annual high-level general debate is taking place from 24 September.

More than 130 heads of state/government are taking part in the high-level debate. Pakistan's delegation will be led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is set to address the 193-Assembly on Sept 27.

Also taking place in September are high-level meetings the threats posed by sea level rise (September 25), and elimination of nuclear weapons and antimicrobial resistance on September 26.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awcat)

Exemplary Accountability System in Pak Army

The Pakistan Army has a noteworthy Field General Court Martial system that applies uniformly to all ranks without discrimination. Recent Field General Court Martial proceedings involving a retired Army General have sparked speculation, partly due to public unfamiliarity with the process. Understanding the Field General Court Martial procedure is essential to clear up any confusion. It consists of three stages: before the commencement, during the process, and after completion. In the initial stage, a summary of evidence is recorded, including statements from prosecution and defense witnesses and the accused. The accused has the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses, and a provisional charge sheet is prepared. The evidence summary is then forwarded to the Judge Advocate General's Department to initiate the case. The Judge Advocate General drafts a detailed report based on the recommendations, leading to the preparation of a charge sheet. Subsequently, an order is issued by the relevant authorities to convene a Field General Court Martial session.

In the second stage, known as the Trial Stage, the Field General Court Martial process begins. This involves establishing the court, swearing in the president and other members, and granting the accused the right to select a counsel of their choice. Additionally, the accused is provided with a Defense Officer, who assists in guiding the case. During this stage, both the prosecution and defense counsel present their cases before the court, witness statements are recorded under oath, and prosecution witnesses are subjected to cross-examination. Witnesses can be fully cross-examined during this stage. The Paki-

stan Army's court-martial system is essential for upholding discipline and accountability, particularly among senior officers. Historically, high-profile cases involving senior military personnel have demonstrated the army's commitment to maintaining high standards of conduct. For example, after the 1958 coup led by General Ayub Khan, martial law was imposed, and senior officers who opposed the new regime faced court-martial proceedings. These court-martials, aimed at consolidating the new government's control, resulted in demotions, imprisonments, and dismissals, helping to solidify the new military order.

Similarly, following the 1999 Kargil Conflict, senior officers were scrutinized for their decisions and actions. Following the Abbottabad incident, several high-ranking officers faced court-martial proceedings for their inability to detect and prevent the operation. Investigations focused on the conduct of the officers responsible for security in the area, with punishments including dismissals and formal reprimands. The proceedings were part of a wider effort to address security lapses and restore trust in military oversight. In 2017, a major corruption scandal involving high-ranking military officials emerged, with allegations of fund mismanagement and procurement irregularities. The Pakistan Army responded with thorough investigations, resulting in several court-martials. Officers found guilty faced punishments such as demotion, dismissal, and imprisonment; for instance, Major General (Retd.) Shahid was dismissed and faced legal consequences for financial misconduct. This underscored the army's zero-tolerance stance on corruption. In 2019, Brigadier (Retd.) Nadeem faced court-martial for operational misconduct

and authority misuse, resulting in his dismissal and a formal reprimand. In 2022, Lieutenant General (Retd.) Asim Bajwa was court-martialed for financial misconduct and mismanagement, leading to his dismissal and legal actions. The recent court-martial of a former Corps Commander further demonstrated the army's commitment to accountability and transparency. In a recent press briefing, DG ISPR revealed that an application concerning the Top City case involving Lieutenant General (Retired) Faiz Hameed was received through the Ministry of Defense.

The application, dated August 12, indicated that the Army discovered breaches of the Army Act by the retired officer both during and after his service, leading to the initiation of court-martial proceedings. DG ISPR underscored that the Pakistan Army does not support any political party or agenda. However, the self-accountability system is activated if any member attempts to pursue a political agenda for personal gain. He stressed that the accountability process is transparent, evidence-based, and impartial. The Faiz Hameed case demonstrates the Army's commitment to addressing violations driven by personal or political motives lawfully and without bias. He assured that actions will be taken against anyone involved in the case, regardless of their status, with full rights to legal representation and cross-examination. Lt. Gen. Ahmad Sharif noted that such stringent self-accountability serves as a model for other institutions, illustrating that misuse of one's position for personal or political gain will not be tolerated.

At the recent Corps Commanders' Conference, the Army Chief also reiterated the importance of strict accountability, affirming that no one is above the process, and this commitment enhances national pride and recognition of the Army's proactive stance.

Peshawar: The ancestral abode of subcontinent cinema legends - I

Fakhar-e-Alam

With a documented history spanning approximately 2400 years, Peshawar carried a unique legacy as a birthplace of both local and international film stars who have left an indelible mark on the subcontinent's cinema industry through their exceptional performances.

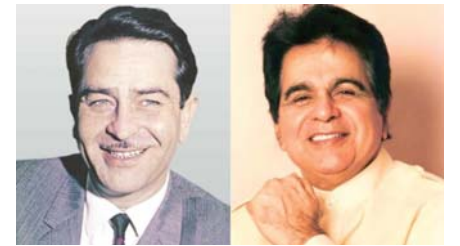
Often referred to as the "City of Artists," Peshawar is the ancestral home of cinema and TV icons such as Yousaf Khan, known as Dilip Kumar, and Raj Kapoor. These legends dominated the subcontinent film industry for decades, with their names often seen as a guarantee of box office success.

The ancestral homes of these Bollywood luminaries are still located near the historic Qisakhwani Bazaar in Peshawar, where they spent significant portions of their early lives before their families migrated to British India in search of better opportunities.

The houses of these all-time great Bollywood stars are still present in the vicinity of historic Qisakhwani bazaar Peshawar where they spent most of times before their parents migrated to British India for search of better future.

Raj Kapoor's father, Prithvi Raj was the first self-confessed Hindu Pathan belonged to Peshawar, who moved to Mumbai in 1930 where he prevailed over South Asian's film industry both as an actor, director and producer, thereby laying the first-ever Bollywood dynasty spanned about four generations.

Similarly, Shah Rukh Khan's father, Taj Muhammad Khan was also born and raised at Qisakhwani where his celebrated son had a good time with his family members during his teenage and became a superstar of the Indian's Bollywood.



In a 10 minutes distance from Kapoor's Havali and Shah Rukh Khan's father residence, there is a four-marla house of another Bollywood legend, Dilip Kumar who ruled over Indian cinema for nearly six decades with over 65 successful films on his credit.

Born at the residence of Lala Ghulam Sarwar Khan at Mohallah Khudadad near Qissa Khawani Peshawar on December 11, 1922, Yousaf Khan's film name Dilip Kumar had spent his child and adulthood in Peshawar for 13 years before migrated to Mumbai in 1935 with his father established fresh fruit business there.

"Dilip uncle was an inborn film star. He walks and talks like a super legend when he was a child in Peshawar, where his communication and leadership skills impressed me along with relatives, friends and neighbours immensely," said Faud Ishaq, the nephew of Dilip Kumar and President Sarhadi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) while talking to APP.

"Yousaf Khan Lala had loved performing art and visited Cinemas for watching films at Peshawar's during his child hood before finding an opportunity to materialize his cherished dreams of becoming a film actor in Mumbai where he was given a staged film name Dilip Kumar and soon earned a prominent place in competitive Bollywood," said Faud Ishaq.

To be continued

CCP, British Council partner to strengthen industry's understanding of competition law

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), in collaboration with the British Council, conducted an interactive session on Competition Law for UK Alumni based in Karachi.

The session attracted a diverse group of participants, representing various sectors including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, IT consulting, logistics, energy, agriculture, legal services, real estate, banking, academia, non-profit organizations, and public sector.

This interaction aimed to enhance understanding of Competition Law among participants by offering direct engagement with the CCP senior offi-

cial and get insights into Pakistan's Competition Law. The session included brief videos on the core components of the Competition Law, a comprehensive presentation on the law and two actual case studies on actions taken against cartels and deceptive marketing practices respectively.

Mr. Salman Amin, Member CCP, in his remarks emphasized the significance of Competition Law, noting that now competition Index is increasingly a crucial factor in attracting investment. He highlighted the importance of the CCP's role in maintaining a fair and competitive economy, which is vital for improving Pakistan's investment climate and economic competitiveness for undertakings willing to



conduct businesses locally or interna- tionally.

During the presentation, Mr. Ahmed Qadir, Director General CCP, presented an overview of the core provisions of the Competition Law and the CCP's commitment to promoting a competitive environment that benefits both consumers and businesses alike.

The session was very interactive, with participants engaging in thoughtful Q&A discussions on various aspects and impacts of Competition Law in different sectors of the economy. Attendees expressed strong interest in actual case studies and for further advocacy sessions by the CCP. They also appreciated the inclusion of Competition Law in Director Training Programs being carried out in Pakistan by different organisations.

Emphasizing CCP's role in promoting adherence to best practices across industries, Mr. Usman Khalid (Senior Manager) and Ms. Marryam Qadir (Manager) from the British Council conveyed that the recent sessions on Competition Law, held in Islamabad and Karachi, have received an overwhelming response. They noted that UK Alumni, in Islamabad and Karachi, have greatly benefited from the collaboration between CCP and the British Council. It was also agreed to include a similar session for UK Alumni in Lahore in their upcoming event which will further extend the outreach and impact of this valuable partnership between the CCP and British Council.

Birthday anniversary

Islamabad: President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh, Zamurrad Khan and others cutting the cake along with little fairies on the birthday anniversary of Afshan Malik at Pakistan Sweet Home.



Photo: Ramzan Mughal

Expansion for exports and local manufacturing of hi-tech pharmaceuticals

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: BF Biosciences Limited looks to raise 1.38 bn to 1.93 bn through issuing 28.3% new shares through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) on September 25-26.

Speaking at the pre-IPO investors road show held in Karachi, Mr. Osman Khalid Waheed Director of BF Biosciences, a leader in the biotech pharmaceuticals sector in Pakistan, is raising between 1.38 and 1.93 billion PKR to expand its key product lines and obtain export certifications. This strategic initiative is expected to drive significant growth in both the company's topline and profitability as company has already completed a brownfield expansion and IPO will also help the company to manage working capital needs of the aforesaid expansion.

Mr. Farhan Rafiq, COO BF Biosciences informed investors that Pakistan's first biopharmaceutical manufacturer, BF Biosciences Limited, is a joint venture company of Ferozsons Laboratories Ltd and Bago Group of Argentina, each holding 80% and 20% stake in it respectively.

He appraised the investors that company has already completed a brownfield expansion worth Rs 4 billion and the project is financed at a finance cost of around 2.5% for 10 years, while the majority of the expansion was completed at Rupee dollar parity of 200. He appraised the audience about the growth potential of a few of the emerging products company recently launched which includes Ferulin (Insulin) Sematide (semaglutide) and Noxane (Enoxaparin sodium).

Mr. Sebastian Martin Ferrarassi, Chairman of the Board of BF Biosciences shared with the investors that BFO was the first investment of the Bago Group of Argentina outside Latin America. Mr. Ferrarassi shared the Group's journey in partnership with Ferozsons, from their initial partnership in 2003 to commissioning BF Biosciences Limited, Pakistan's first Biotech Plant in 2009.

The floor price for the issue has been set at Rs 55 per share through a 100% book building process.

Initially, 18.8 million shares or 21.23% of the issue size would be allotted to the successful bidders, while 6.25 million shares or 7.07% of the issue would go to the retail investors.

The unsubscribed shares, if any, of the general subscription portion would be allocated to the successful bidders of the book building portion on a pro-rata basis.

The issuer will utilize any additional funds raised above the floor price in managing its additional requirements for capex and working capital needs.

BF Biosciences has estimated that the maximum strike price for the IPO may climb to Rs 77 per share that would increase the funds raised to Rs 1.93 billion.

Once fully subscribed, the IPO will bring down the respective shareholdings of Ferozsons Laboratories and Bago Group of Argentina to 57.36% and 14.34% in BF Biosciences.

Arif Habib Limited has been appointed as a lead manager and book runner to the issue. The company, once raised, will primarily spend Rs 560 million of the funds on buying plant and machinery to expand its product range and improve efficiency.

It would use another Rs 141 million to acquire export certifications such as PIC/S and SRA and new product development including Glucagon-like Peptide (GLP1) while Rs 674 million have been allocated to finance the company's working capital requirements for purchasing raw and packing materials to meet post-expansion working capital needs.

The core business of BF Biosciences, which was incorporated as an unlisted public limited company in 2006, involves the import, manufacturing,

marketing, and distribution of pharmaceutical products in Pakistan. The company started local manufacturing in 2009 through Line 1.

Mr. Shahid Habib, CEO Arif Habib Ltd said that BF Biosciences distinguishes itself by producing life-saving medications that are accessible to all and has propelled Pakistan into the exclusive league of exporters of biotech pharmaceuticals, especially during the Covid 19 pandemic.

BF Biosciences has a state-of-the-art biotech manufacturing plant located in Lahore that was designed and executed by Telstar Projects.

The plant produces biological medicines for cancer, chronic kidney disease and Hepatitis C and caters the local and international markets.

Currently, in this manufacturing facility the company has two manufacturing lines named "Line I" and "Line II".

During COVID-19, BF Biosciences was one of Pakistan's leading pharmaceutical exporters selling medicines to countries like Indonesia, Belarus, Ukraine etc. Soon after the commencement of Line II operations, the company is targeting PIC/S certification after which it will be aggressively exploring export markets.

BFBL is actively pursuing new registrations and plans to initiate exports to non-PIC/S nations.

The company is targeting Central American countries, where regulatory requirements are less stringent and where its joint venture partner, Bago has a strong equity.

Additionally, the BF Biosciences' parent company, Ferozsons Laboratories, already has a strong presence in Far Eastern and Central Asian countries, which are the markets of their primary focus in the short and medium term.

Mashreq Pakistan's New Shariah Board to Transform Islamic Banking in the Country

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mashreq Pakistan, a part of Mashreq which is the leading financial institution in the MENA region, has announced the formation of the Shariah Board for its operations in Pakistan. Dr. Ahcene Lahsasna has been appointed as Chairman Shariah Board, Mufti Muhammad Abdullah as Resident Shariah Board Member and Mufti Imtiaz Alam as Shariah Board Member.

Mashreq's recent In-Principle Approval from the State Bank of Pakistan to launch Islamic banking operations, coupled with the appointment of a distinguished Shariah Board mark a significant milestone in its Pakistani market expansion. This move highlights Mashreq Pakistan's commitment to bringing innovative, agile and tailored financial solutions that are Shariah compliant, addressing Pakistani consumers' unique needs.

Commenting on these pivotal appointments, Muhammad Hamayun Sajjad, CEO, Mashreq Pakistan, said: "Mashreq's presence as a progressive international bank and its role as a catalyst for Pakistan's future growth is steadily gaining momentum. We are poised to offer Islamic banking in the country, aspiring to deliver the best Islamic Banking solutions with an ambition to exceed customers' expectations. I am delighted to welcome our distinguished Shariah Board members as they join Mashreq Pakistan. They have joined us at a pivotal moment and will play an important role in driving the launch, followed by the expansion of Mashreq's Islamic banking services in the country. Their expertise in Shariah compliance and Islamic finance will be instrumental in our mission to deliver cutting-edge, Shariah-compliant financial solutions."

Dr. Ahcene Lahsasna, Chairman

Shariah Board, Mashreq Pakistan

In this critical role, Dr. Ahcene Lahsasna as Chairman will lead the Shariah Board and ensure that all of Mashreq Pakistan's Islamic banking products and services are Shariah compliant.

Dr. Lahsasna brings over two decades of experience in Islamic finance to Mashreq Pakistan. He holds two PhDs—one in Islamic Law and Jurisprudence from the International Islamic University Malaysia, and another in Banking and Finance from the University of Malaya. As a registered Shariah advisor at Bank Negara Malaysia and the Securities Commis-



sion Malaysia, Dr. Lahsasna's expertise is recognized globally.

Dr. Lahsasna said: "Joining Mashreq Pakistan as the Chairman of the Shariah Board is an honor. Mashreq's innovative spirit perfectly complements the dynamic nature of Islamic finance, and I'm eager to guide the development of industry-leading Shariah-compliant solutions that meet regulatory standards and resonate with Pakistani consumers' values and aspirations. This is a chance to demonstrate how Islamic banking can be a catalyst for both economic progress and social well-being."

Mufti Imtiaz Alam, Shariah Board Member, Mashreq Pakistan

As a Shariah Board Member, Mufti Imtiaz Alam will contribute to the

overall guidance and supervision of Mashreq Pakistan's Islamic banking operations.

Mufti Imtiaz Alam completed his Shahadat-ul-Aalamia and Al-Takhassus Fil Ifta (Specialization in Islamic Jurisprudence) from Jamia Darul Uloom, Karachi, and holds a Master's in Commerce from the University of Karachi. With over a decade of experience in Islamic Banking and Takaful.

Mufti Imtiaz Alam said: "I'm excited to be part of this ground-breaking journey, where we have the opportunity to redefine Shariah-compliant banking for the digital age. Our goal is to create a seamless blend of ethical finance and modern convenience, setting new benchmarks for Islamic banking not just in Pakistan, but globally."

Mufti Muhammad Abdullah, Resident Shariah Board Member, Mashreq Pakistan

Mufti Muhammad Abdullah as Resident Shariah Board Member will play a key role in the day-to-day operations of Mashreq Pakistan's Islamic banking services, ensuring continuous adherence to Shariah principles.

Mufti Abdullah brings over 14 years of experience in Shariah compliance, and Shariah board roles. He holds the esteemed Shahadat-ul-Aalamia and Al-Takhassus Fil Fiqh Al Islami (specialization in Islamic Jurisprudence), along with multiple master's degrees in various disciplines of social and management sciences.

Mufti Muhammad Abdullah said: "Mashreq Pakistan presents a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between modern banking and Islamic principles. I am thrilled to be part of this journey, and as a Resident Shariah Board Member, I look forward to contributing to the development of a robust Islamic banking framework that serves the Pakistani market effectively."

Many children are detected with congenital cataracts



Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust has screened about 175,000 students in one year in 550 free eye camps organized in the underserved areas of the country.

Dr. Hasan Raza, Deputy General Manager of Al-Shifa Center for Community Ophthalmology (ACCO), said fifty per cent of the kids with eye issues had hazy vision, while many had congenital cataracts.

Talking to media men, he said that 50 per cent of the children were facing blurry vision, which is convergence insufficiency. It happens when the nerves controlling eye muscles don't work correctly. One eye turns out when people with convergence insufficiency look at something up close.

The second-largest disease found was myopia, as almost thirty per cent

of the children had near-sightedness or myopia. Myopia is a common vision condition in which light rays that should be focused on nerve tissue at the back of the eye are focused in front of the retina instead.

Dr. Hasan said that the number of congenital cataracts is alarming. It's essential to spot cataracts in children quickly because early treatment can reduce the risk of long-term vision problems.

ACCO refers such children to Al-Shifa Trust Hospital, Rawalpindi, providing them with transport and meals.

He said free eye camps were organized in the remote areas of districts Rawalpindi, Sukkur, Kohat, Muzaffarabad, and Chakwal. In these camps, 175,000 students were screened and treated, and 13,000 cases were referred to Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital.

He informed that the children were also found suffering from eye problems, such as blepharitis, hyperopia, squint, corneal opacity, traumatic cataracts, astigmatism, and conjunctivitis.

He said that ACCO's main objective is to organize school screening eye camps to help children facing eye diseases at an early age and educate them about preventive measures to keep their eyes healthy.

The trust began its outreach project in 1992. Its free eye camps are established all over Pakistan, and such camps are being increased to help people in far-flung areas, where most patients lack the resources to access quality healthcare.

He underlined that eye-related problems are increasing at an alarming pace; therefore, all public and private concerns should boost their efforts to combat this menace.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
78,651.79	79,286.73
Day's High	Day's Low
79,507.17	78,612.16
Index Value	Change
7,833,214,326	-634.94
Percentage	Time
-0.8%	11 Sept, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
8,193.94	-12.04
Percentage	Time
-0.15%	11 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
40,560.52	-176.44
Percentage	Time
-0.43%	11 Sept, 1:33 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
35,619.77	-539.39
Percentage	Time
-1.49%	11 Sept, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	188.35	190.60
Bahrain Dinar	731.10	739.10
Canadian Dollar	207.45	209.85
China Yuan	38.25	38.65
Danish Krone	40.03	40.43
Euro	306.60	309.35
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.93	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	905.50	915.00
Malaysian Ringgit	59.3	60.3
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	26.14	26.44
Omani Riyal	722.40	730.90
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	74.19	74.74
Singapore Dollar	201.85	203.85
Swedish Korona	26.15	26.45
Swiss Franc	330.20	333.00
Thai Bhat	7.57	7.72
U.A.E Dirham	75.80	76.45
UK Pound Sterling	365.15	368.65
US Dollar	279.00	280.85

Reduced business costs and markup to promote industry: Mian Zahid Hussain

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that the IMF has not come to Pakistan itself but has been invited.

He said Pakistan has no option but to enter the IMF program to avoid looming bankruptcy. Mian Zahid Hussain said that negative remarks by some personalities against the lender are a sure way to economic suicide; therefore, they should be stopped from issuing such damaging statements.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the public and the business community are worried about the delay in the IMF program, which has slowly

started negatively affecting the economy.

Under these circumstances, the negative attitude of important officials is equivalent to setting fire to the country, which does a great disservice.

He said that some elements are trying to obstruct the agreement between IMF and Pakistan, and the government should stop them.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the IMF has objected to the central government and Punjab giving relief to the people in terms of electricity bills. The lender also fears that Pakistan would use the IMF capital to pay off Chinese debts, which is unacceptable to it.

The IMF had imposed a similar condition on Sri Lanka after its bankruptcy, so this is nothing new.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the international organization wants Pakistan to be given a loan when it rolls over twelve billion dollars



from China, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, filling the gap of two billion dollars in foreign financing.

However, these countries are unwilling to

roll over their debt, creating problems for Pakistan.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the uncertainty about the IMF loan affects the market, so the government should take the people into confidence, explain the situation, and take steps to prevent the problem from worsening.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that irresponsible rhetoric has also been used against the international organization in the past, which would have brought fame to some politicians. However, it has caused a lot of damage to Pakistan, and they are still making the IMF a target for criticism, which is condemnable.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that to get out of the current difficult situation, it is necessary to promote industrialization, for which business-friendly policies should be made with the support of FPCCI, business costs should be brought down, and markup should be reduced by four percent.

Suggestions

Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, interacts with a beneficiary woman during her visit at BISP Zonal Office in Skardu on September 11, 2024.



Photo: PID

Mobilink Bank partners with Mercurial Minds to accelerate financial transformation



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading digital microfinance bank, Mobilink Bank, announced a strategic partnership with Mercurial Minds (M. M.), a leading provider of intelligent automation solutions. This collaboration marks a significant milestone in Mobilink Bank's journey towards digital transformation, as the Bank strives to enhance operational efficiency, improve customer experiences, and solidify its position as a leader in the micro-

finance sector.

Mobilink Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of the world's population.

Safwan Khalid, CEO M. M., expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "We are delighted to support Mobilink Bank with our intelligent automation solutions. Our solutions will transform the Bank's operations by reducing labor-in-

tensive tasks, enabling the Bank to operate more efficiently and elevating the quality of service provided to their clients."

As Pakistan's leading digital microfinance Bank, Mobilink Bank is dedicated to providing accessible and affordable financial services to its customers with Alternate Delivery Channels (ADCs). With a strong emphasis on innovation and digital transformation, the Bank continues to lead the industry with cutting-edge solutions that address the evolving needs of individuals and businesses.

Bank Makramah partners with NCR, Wavetec to transform self service banking experience



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Bank Makramah Limited (BML) has entered into an agreement with NCR Corporation and Wavetec (NCR Channel Partner) to transform and elevate its self-banking network across Pakistan. Through this collaboration, BML will integrate NCR's cutting-edge ATM technology into its operations to significantly improve the bank's digital service capabilities and customer experience.

The MoU signing ceremony was held at BML Head Office in Karachi, attended by BML President and CEO Jawad Majid Khan, Deputy CEO Farhan Baig, Country Head of Administration Junaid Anis Khan, and Head of ADC Ashfaq

Naveed along with representatives from NCR Corporation and Wavetec, including NCR Corporation Country Manager Hashim Memon and Wavetec General Manager Aftab Khan. The partnership outlines the deployment of 200+ fully equipped NCR self-serv ATM machines at various BML branches and off-site locations across Pakistan.

"This partnership represents a significant advancement in our vision to enhance customer service through digital banking channels," said BML President and CEO Jawad Majid Khan. "Through support from NCR and Wavetec, BML will enhance its self-service banking infrastructure, ensuring top-tier performance, secure and reliable services for customers."

JS Bank wins the prestigious "2024 USD Clearing Quality Recognition Award" from J. P. Morgan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024: JS Bank, one of the fastest-growing banks in Pakistan, has been honored with the 2024 USD Clearing Quality Recognition Award for Outstanding Achievement, presented by J. P. Morgan. The award highlights the JS Bank's excellence in achieving the Best in Class MT202 Straight Through Processing (STP) with the of Rate 99.43%.

The award recognizes JS Bank's commitment to providing seamless, efficient, and reliable financial services that meet global standards. STP, a process ensuring automated payment transactions without manual intervention, is crucial for boosting operational efficiency, reducing errors, and enhancing customer satisfaction.

To mark this exceptional achievement, Amin Mohammad Khowaja, CEO of J. P. Morgan Pakistan, extended his congratulations and expressed his admiration for JS Bank's performance. To commemorate this success, Basir Shamsie, President & CEO of JS Bank, invited Amin Mohammad Khowaja to JS Bank to receive the award in person.

Basir Shamsie, commenting on the award, stated, "This award reflects our commitment to innovation, operational excellence, and delivering world-class services to our customers. We value our long-standing partnership with J. P. Morgan, and this recognition motivates us to continue setting new benchmarks in the banking industry."

JS Bank's focus on innovation, automation, and customer-centric services has once again placed the institution at the forefront of the financial sector in Pakistan.

Indonesian Charge d'Affaires seeks deeper business ties with Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Rahmat Hindiartha Kusuma, Charge d'Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy has highlighted the rich history of friendship and cooperation between Indonesia and Pakistan during a visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and meeting with its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari. He encouraged Pakistani businessmen to explore Indonesia's potential for international trade and investment, emphasizing the need to strengthen business-to-business relations between the two nations.

Kusuma stressed the importance of utilizing the existing Indonesia-Pakistan Preferential Trade Agreement and working towards a Free Trade Agreement. He also highlighted Indonesia's strategic location and established trade ties with the ASEAN region, offering Pakistani businesses access to a market of over 650 million consumers of ASEAN.

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari emphasized Pakistan's status as Indonesia's 6th largest trade partner in Asia, with relations based on mutual trust and confidence. He underscored the need for regular trade delegation exchanges and reaffirmed

ICCI's commitment to strengthening cooperation with the Indonesian Embassy.

Bakhtawari noted that collaborative efforts and mutual understanding are key to overcoming trade challenges, and that working together can unlock new opportunities and enhance economic prosperity. He emphasized the importance of increasing bilateral trade volume, which is currently below its potential, and highlighted the role of Central Asian markets in further strengthening trade relations.

United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari talked



Nikon D7500, 60mm, f/5. 1/100s

about two countries' similarities which have helped foster a strong bond between the two countries as well as the strategic locations, Pakistan is at the crossroads of Asia, while Indonesia is at the heart of Southeast Asia. Maqsood Tabish, Shaikh

Mohammad Ejaz, Malik Shabbir, Nasira Ali (Nema), Rabia Raheel, Nageena Khaleeq and Shahida Jan also contributed their valuable insights to further strengthen the existing bilateral relations between Pakistan and Indonesia.

Apple's New Rival? Infinix plans to release the world's thinnest 6mm phone!

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: As the highly anticipated launch of Apple's iPhone 16 approaches, the tech world is buzzing with speculation. But here's a twist: recent leaks indicate that Apple might not be making as many changes as we expected. Reports suggest that the iPhone 16 Pro Max will likely retain the same 8.3mm thickness as its predecessor. While this means the phone will still house a larger battery and advanced components, it seems Apple is opting for a design that remains familiar rather than revolutionary.

Just when we thought the smartphone race couldn't



get any more interesting, Infinix swoops in with a game-changing proposition. Founded in 2013, this up-and-coming Android brand has been making a name for itself by focusing on the needs of younger consumers. Now, Infinix is poised to steal the spotlight with a potential breakthrough: a smartphone that could become the thinnest in the world. Early leaks suggest that this new device might come in at less than 6mm thick—an astonishing feat in today's market!

Standard Chartered and Karachi United launched the Seventh Youth League - Football Tournament

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Standard Chartered announced the launch of its "Standard Chartered Karachi United Youth League" as part of its community service mandate to promote sports amongst children. This is the seventh time in a row that the Bank is sponsoring the league.

The objective of the "Standard Chartered Karachi United Youth League" is to provide a platform for Youth football teams from across the underserved areas of Karachi to come together, break barriers and inculcate the spirit and culture of sport and competition.

In the last six years, the Standard Chartered KU Youth League has had over 6500 beneficiaries including boys and girls.

This year's competition will see a total of 1300 boys and girls from across Karachi participate in matches. In order to increase the standard of the league, official referees and match commissioners have been appointed for every match.

A total of 210 matches will be played in six different locations including Khyber Muslim Ground Baldia Town, Old Golimar Football Ground, Jam Eleven Ground Malir, Karachi United, Clifton and Kakari Ground Lyari?



which promises to attract football fans from all over Karachi.

Rehan Sheikh, Chief Executive Officer, Standard Chartered Pakistan said, "The Bank has had a long association with football, and we are proud to be leading such a transformational initiative with Karachi United in Pakistan. Each year the league brings together children from across different communities and

backgrounds onto a level playing field through friendly competition. Beyond the fact that this improves the skills and game of the children, football has proven to stimulate positive mental health and cognitive development. We have also seen it contributing considerably to the promotion of tolerance, respect, perseverance, resilience and equity of the youth engaged.

We are delighted to share that together with

our partners, over the seven years period, the SC KU league experience has positively impacted over 6,000 children with not just football but also coaching in life skills, team work and other areas of life in general. We will continue to support such initiatives in future to promote equality and inclusion."

Imran Ali, CEO, of Karachi United said: "The SC KU Youth League has established itself as a

cornerstone of youth football and competitive play within Karachi's football communities. This league stands out as the most anticipated event on the annual sports calendar, reflecting the organization, professionalism, and quality that Standard Chartered has enabled us to provide to the thousands of children involved. Our growth is indicative of the league's popularity and demand. This year, we have expanded to more venues for matches, further showcasing enhanced tolerance, inter-community unity, and collaboration.

In addition to the outstanding quality of football, a key benefit of this league is the confidence it fosters in young individuals. Participation in a local team and involvement in competitive games, which emphasize respect, teamwork, and discipline, has enabled them to discover new skills and passions. Through our collaboration with SC's Future Maker program, we have identified league participants who have advanced to roles as educators, coaches, law enforcement officials, and entrepreneurs.

This progress would not have been achievable without the steadfast support and dedication of Standard Chartered. Given our accomplishments, we look forward to further developing this partnership."

Called on PM

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Street Child Football Team, which represented Pakistan in the Norway Cup 2024 U17 Category, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

CM Khailta Punjab Games to have Rs 80m prize money



Sports Desk

LAHORE: The cash prizes of more than Rs 80 million will be distributed among the participating players in the Chief Minister Khailta Punjab Games, the biggest games in the history of Punjab province.

DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal shared this information while addressing a meeting at National Hockey Stadium on Wednesday. Multiple aspects, features and preparations relating to Khailta

Punjab Games were discussed in the meeting. Director Admin Dr M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Directors Zahoor Ahmed, Ataur Rehman and other officials participated in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, DG Sports Punjab said that the Khailta Punjab Games will be organised in accordance with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. "The mega event of Khailta Punjab Games will start in the last week of this month," he said.

He informed that more than 5,000 players from Punjab's registered clubs will also participate in these games. "The thrilling competitions of Khailta Punjab Games will be conducted from inter-tehsil to provincial level".

Revealing more details of the event, he said that the events of twelve games will be conducted at district and divisional level. "The competitions of six games—athletics, cricket, badminton, football, hockey and kabaddi will be organised at the tehsil level".

Champions ODI Cup will start today in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: All the glory of Pakistan cricket will come down to the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad from Thursday and the fans from all over the city will be there where they will get to witness the best of everyday cricket by stars cricketers in the Champions ODI Cup. The opening match of the Champions ODI will be played between UMT Markhors (formerly Wolves) and Panthers at 3 pm. The Champions ODI Cup will have live coverage on national sports channels while live streaming on Tamasha, TapMaid and Mico app and broadcast on Volo TV in North America. Mohammad Rizwan will captain UMT Markhors, Misbah-ul-Haq will act as his mentor while Panthers will be led by Shadab Khan, with Saqlain Mushtaq as his mentor. The inaugural event of the season has a total prize money of Rs 4.90 lakh, in which the winner of the tournament on September 29 will receive Rs 3 crore and the runner-up Rs 1.5 crore. Muhammad Haris' Allied Bank Stallions take on Shaheen Shah Afridi's Noorpur Lions on Friday, followed by Saud Shakeel's



Dolphins and Shadab Khan's Panthers on Saturday.

All the five teams have been in Faisalabad for the past five days and have been participating in rigorous training sessions to prepare for the new tournament which will feature the best cricketers in the country. The tournament has been planned with an eye on next year's

ICC Champions Trophy 2025 where notable performers will try to strengthen their chances of making it to the national team. The national team will play ODIs in Australia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and home tri-series against New Zealand and South Africa.

Whiteball head coach Gary Kirsten will be in Faisalabad to oversee the

50-over tournament, which will be played on a single-round basis. Red Ball head coach Jason Gillespie will also join Christen in Faisalabad during the tournament. The top four sides in the tournament will advance to the play-offs, which will culminate in the final on September 29. UMT Markhors (ex-Wolves) captain Muhammad Rizwan says that a high-quality domestic event like the Champions ODI Cup is the lifeblood of any major cricket-playing nation as it exposes both experienced and emerging cricketers to national selection. Provides equal and fair opportunities to strengthen your claim. With this in mind I am sure it will serve all its purposes.

As per the format, it will be a tight contest given the talent and balance of all the teams. The team that consistently performs well in the next fortnight will emerge as the winner. I want my team to enjoy this tournament, not be afraid of the opponents and show their talent to entertain the people of Faisalabad. Panthers captain Shadab Khan says that we have trained hard in Faisalabad and now it is time to convert this effort into positive results.

County club calls ECB 'stupid' over 'fat bat' points deduction

A Sports

Essex County Cricket Club blasted the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) for deducting 12 County Championship points as one of their players used a bat ruled too wide.

Essex's hopes of winning the County Championship have all but perished when one of their batters, Feroze Khushi, used a bat, whose dimension went against the MCC's regulations, with Law 5.7.2 imposing that a bat's width should be 10.8cm.

The issue arose in the second innings of Essex's opening County Championship fixture against Nottinghamshire when on-field umpires Tom Lungley and Steve O'Shaughnessy, during a routine inspection, found out that Khushi's bat got stuck in the measurement gauge.

Essex went on to win their campaign opener convincingly by 254 runs but has now been docked 12 points from the 20 that they secured from the victory.

The sanction means that Essex now trail defending champions and leaders Surrey by 56 points with just two rounds remaining.

The sanction was imposed by the Cricket Discipline Commission (CDC), which runs as a separate entity, independent of the ECB.

But that did not prohibit former England captain and Essex Keith Fletcher from branding the ECB as "absolutely stupid".

"Feroze does not believe he did anything wrong and the whole side has been penalised, not just the one player," Fletcher told The Times.

Key players return as England announce squad for Pakistan Tests

Sports Desk

LONDON: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on Tuesday, unveiled a strong 17-member squad for the Test series against Pakistan, scheduled next month.

England will tour Pakistan for a three-match series, part of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC), scheduled to run from October 7 to 28.

The England squad features two uncapped players Durham's Brydon Carse and Essex's Jordan Cox while spinners Rehan Ahmed and Jack Leach also returning to the Test side.

Meanwhile, England's regular Test captain Ben Stokes, who missed the recently-concluded series against Sri Lanka due to an injury which he sustained in The Hundred also returned to the side but his participation would be subjected to the fitness.

Furthermore, left-handed opener Zak Crawley, who is recovering from a thumb injury was also among England's 17-member squad for the Pakistan Tests.

Crawley sustained the injury while attempting a catch in the last Test of the three-match series against West Indies.

England will tour Pakistan

with momentum as the side recently secured series victories over West Indies and Sri Lanka while the Green Shirts succumbed to a new low after losing the two-match home series against Bangladesh 2-0.

England last toured Pakistan in 2022 for a three-match Test series and blew away the home side, securing a whitewash.

England Men's Test Squad: Ben Stokes, Durham, Captain; Rehan Ahmed, Leicestershire; Gus Atkinson, Surrey; Shoaib Bashir, Somerset; Harry Brook, Yorkshire; Brydon Carse, Durham; Jordan Cox, Essex; Zak Crawley, Kent; Ben

Duckett, Nottinghamshire; Josh Hull, Leicestershire; Jack Leach, Somerset; Ollie Pope, Surrey; Matthew Potts, Durham; Joe Root, Yorkshire; Jamie Smith, Surrey; Olly Stone, Nottinghamshire; Chris Woakes, Warwickshire.

It is worth mentioning here that the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) may announce a revised schedule for the upcoming Test series against England due to the unavailability of the venues.

It was reported last week that the second Test of the series which was originally scheduled at the National Stadium in Karachi may get relocated to



the United Arab Emirates (UAE) but PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi refuted the claims and confirmed that all the three matches will be played in Pakistan.

ECC meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

ECC reviews and approves several key proposals across various sectors

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee today.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Mr. Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister for Commerce Mr. Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Mr. Mussadiq Masood Malik, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal,

Minister for Privatisation and Investment Mr. Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Governor SBP, and Chairman SECP, Federal Secretaries, and senior officers from concerned Ministries and Divisions.

The ECC reviewed a summary from the Ministry of Communications concerning the "Kalkatak-Chitral 48 km (Section-III) Road Project (N-45)-Procurement of Civil Works" and authorized the

Ministry of Communications and the National Highway Authority to proceed with the procurement of civil works as per Public Procurement Rule-5.

The ECC considered a proposal for provision of funds amounting to Rs. 238.42 million, for clearing arrears of wheat subsidy schemes 2015-16, by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (NFSR). ECC took into account the recommendations of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, and directed the Ministry to arrange the funds through the available budg-

etary resources and settle the long pending claims.

On a proposal of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research for a loan of Rs. 656 million to the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) to enable the organization to pay salaries and pensions to its employees, the ECC deliberated on the rationale and decided that this entity should be considered for wound-up. It was therefore directed that a case be submitted to the Cabinet Committee for Right-sizing of the Federal Government.

Lastly, the ECC considered

a summary from the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) regarding a change in the gas supply priority order. The ECC approved the proposal to amend the existing gas allocation priority by placing gas use for industrial processes in the first priority alongside domestic and commercial sectors, while gas use for industries using captive power was relegated to a lower priority alongside the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) sector. This measure would facilitate the industry using gas in its processes, as they would be included in the top priority category.

Pakistan and Hungary pledge to strengthen bilateral relations



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group convened its first meeting today with H. E. Bela Fazekas, Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary to Pakistan, at the National Assembly of Pakistan. The meeting, chaired by Raja Osama Sarwar, MNA/Convener of the Pakistan-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group (PFG), marked a significant step toward further strengthening bilateral relations between the two nations.

Attendees included prominent

members of the group, Mr. Naveed Amir Jeeva, MNA, and Mr. Ammar Ahmad Khan Leghari, who actively contributed to discussions aimed at deepening the ties between Pakistan

and Hungary.

In his opening remarks, Raja Osama Sarwar warmly welcomed Ambassador Fazekas and expressed his satisfaction with the cordial relations that have existed between Pakistan and Hungary. He emphasized the commitment of both nations to work together in fostering stronger diplomatic and economic partnerships.

"The bilateral relations between Pakistan and Hungary are built on mutual respect and cooperation, and we are confident that through this Friendship Group, these ties will only grow stronger," said Raja Osama Sarwar. He expressed gratitude to the Hungarian government for doubling the scholarships for Pakistani students, increasing the number from 200 to 400.

Visit of the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to Pakistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Arsenio Antonio Dominguez Velasco, will visit Pakistan from 12-14 September 2024. This will be the first ever visit to Pakistan by a Secretary General of the IMO.

Secretary General Velasco will participate in the "International Maritime Sustainability Exhibition and Conference" and hold meetings

with Pakistan's leadership and senior government officials.

The Secretary General's visit will afford an opportunity for Pakistan and IMO to exchange views on maritime sector and blue economy.

As a founding member of IMO, Pakistan is deeply committed to IMO's vision of safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans. Pakistan has served for five terms on the IMO Council and has consistently contributed in upholding the IMO objectives.

Royal Saudi Naval Forces delegation visits Pakistan Navy Led Ctf-150 at Bahrain

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) delegation, led by the newly appointed RSNF Maritime Component Commander, Commodore Othman Oqab Al Zahrani, met with Commodore Asim Sohail Malik, the current Commander of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), in Manama, Bahrain. Discussions focused on CTF 150's ongoing operations aimed at disrupting illicit activities in the Arabian Sea and ensuring maritime security in the region.

During the meeting, both commanders shared their perspectives on regional maritime security challenges and explored potential avenues for collaboration between CTF 150 and



the upcoming RSNF Maritime Component Command to maintain security and stability in the region. They also reaffirmed the excellent relationship between the two navies, emphasizing their shared commitment to

fostering regional peace.

Following a comprehensive briefing on CTF 150 operations, the RSNF delegation engaged with the entire Pakistan Navy team currently leading CTF 150 and exchanged views on viable

options to counter contemporary maritime security challenges. Commodore Asim Sohail Malik, Commander of CTF 150, assured that his team would continue to strengthen the efforts of this multinational task force to

provide robust security in this vital maritime region. He also highlighted Pakistan Navy's commitment to working with coalition navies to ensure peace and stability within the area of responsibility.

No Negligence Found on KE's Part in 32 Electrocuting-Related Incidents in NEPRA's Report

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: NEPRA Authority's Investigation Report found no negligence on KE's part in 32 out of 33 electrocution-related incidents that occurred in Karachi between July 2022 and June 2023. The utility has been fined for an unsatisfactory response in one incident. The company will revert on the report after thoroughly reviewing it. According to a press release issued by KE.

Economic projects in participation of Afghanistan move forward to practical implementation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On 11 September 2024, a number of events related to the practical implementation of large-scale energy, transport and infrastructure international projects implemented with the participation of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan took place on the Turkmen-Afghanistan border.

The National Leader of Turkmen people, Chairman of the Halk Maslahaty Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov participated in the events personally.

In the morning, the National Leader of Turkmen people arrived at the border checkpoint "Islam-Cheshme" of Serhetabat town of Tahtabazar province of Mary region, where he was met by key officials.

Some time later, Acting Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Afghanistan

Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund arrived to the place as well. In accordance with noble Turkmen traditions, bread and salt were offered to the Afghan guest.

Embassy of Turkmenistan in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Then, Chairman of the Halk Maslahaty Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov had a meeting with Acting Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Afghanistan in the conference hall built at "Islam-Cheshme" checkpoint.

After talks held in a friendly setting, the parties took part in the ceremony dedicated to the opening of the railway bridge of Serhetabat-Turgundi railroad, laying the foundation of "Shatlyk-1" gas compressor station in Mary region, as well as launching of the construction of the Serhetabat-Herat section, which is an important part in the implementation of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Transnational Gas Pipe-



line Project (TAPI) and the Serhetabat-Herat fiber-optic communication line, entitled "Arkadagyn Ak'yoly" (Bright Path

of Arkadag).

The events also included the launch of works on the construction of a ware-

house complex in the "dry port" of the Turgundi railway station and the Turgundi-Sanabar section of the first phase of the Turgundi-Heart railway, as well as the commissioning of the "Nur-el-Jahad" power plant located in Herat province of Afghanistan as part of the first phase of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) power transmission line project.

President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov addressed the participants of the events via video conferencing. It is important to note that Turkmenistan is actively participating in the global efforts aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Today's events serve yet another proof of Turkmenistan's commitment to developing a modern energy security architecture and sustainable transport for regional and international economic growth.