

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
ہم سے بڑھ کر خاتم النبیین  
کہا ہے محمد بن جعفر نے بیان کیا ان سے  
شعبہ نے بیان کیا ان سے سلیمان نے ان  
سے ابو اکمل نے اور ان سے عبد اللہ بن مسعود  
رضی اللہ عنہ نے کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ  
و سلم نے فرمایا ان اس کے ساتھ ہے جس  
سے وہ جنت رکھتا ہے۔  
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6168)

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RAWALPINDI



## Direct provincial talks with foreign countries a breach of Constitution: Hina Rabbani Khar

Hina Rabbani Khar, former minister of state for foreign affairs, has said that if a province talks directly with a foreign country, it violates the Constitution of Pakistan. "Let state be the state. If each province sets its own policy with America, China, or Afghanistan, it will challenge the Constitution," Khar said.



## IMF agreement will be made public on Sept 25: Aurangzeb

As Pakistan inches closer to its 24th International Monetary Fund bailout package, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has claimed that his five predecessors had not been able to negotiate such favourable terms with the global lender. "I urge everyone to read this IMF agreement, which will be made public on September 25," he said while addressing the 21st Annual Excellence Awards organized by CFA Society Pakistan in Karachi. (Details on Page 8)

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## Future Planning

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on the use of Electric Vehicles.



Photo: PID

## PM directs E-Vehicles policy finalization by November

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif on Saturday instructed relevant authorities to formulate a detailed financial framework for electric vehicles by November this year and streamline licensing regulations for their manufacture in Pakistan.

Chairing a meeting in Islamabad, the prime minister instructed that essential consultations be held with the Finance Ministry, the State Bank of Pakistan, all provinces, federal units, and relevant stakeholders concerning the electric vehicles policy.

The meeting was informed that the country currently has 45,000 two-and three-wheeled electric vehicles, as well as 2,600 four-wheeled electric vehicles. Addition-

ally, it was told that the installation of recharging stations for electric vehicles would be prioritized along motorways, GT Road (National Highway 5), and National Highways 65 and 70.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Power Owais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik, Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ihsaan Afzal, and other senior government officials.

# Constitutional Bill in line with COD endorsed by all political parties including PTI: Dar

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in the Senate and Deputy Prime Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar on Saturday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that the Constitutional Bill was in line with the provisions of the Charter of Democracy (COD) endorsed by all the political parties including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The Leader of the House was addressing to the 10th meeting of the 342nd Senate session held under Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani.

Senator Ishaq Dar underlined that there was a disconnect between the Leader of the Opposition's party leadership



in the Senate and the National Assembly.

"It was the third in camera meeting of the Special Parliamentary Committee in the Parliament which was participated by

Chairman PTI, Barrister Gohar Ali and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly, Omar Ayub Khan who was absent in the previous two meetings. There have been discussion on different agenda items," he said.

He added that the Opposition Leader should seek details from his colleagues on the special committee meetings.

Senator Dar informed the House that the issue emerged after Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari made a statement for joint efforts to restore the prestige of the Parliament and proposed a committee of all political parties on the arrest of some members of the lower house of the Parliament.

## JUI-F chief won't meet Govt's expectations: Salman Akram



Bureau Report

KARACHI: The recently appointed secretary general of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insan (PTI), Salman Akram Raja, expressed doubt that the Maulana Fazlur Rehman will fulfill the government's expectations.

Salman Akram Raja mentioned that the government is confident with the fact that eight JUI-F members will vote in their favor, however, stating that Maulana Fazlur Rehman won't support the constitutional amendment as it would be equivalent to betraying the country.

Raja noted that they have

discussed the situation with Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who understands the historical context and his position.

He criticized the Prime Minister's potential decision to appoint the Chief Justice, stating that it would be against the constitution of Pakistan.

Raja predicted that the constitutional amendment would be completed and then reviewed by the court, where it could potentially be rejected if it conflicts with the constitution's basic structure.

He stressed that, according to Article 63A, a party member cannot vote against the party directive and accused the government in attempt to amend Article 63A which is a clear violation.

Additionally, Raja stated that the Speaker has no authority to count votes from members who voted against the party directive.

## Khan will have to face music for allegations against CJP, army chief: Bilawal



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan would have to face consequences for allegedly making unwarranted allegations against the army chief and chief justice of Pakistan, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said on Saturday.

"Last night, the whole of Pakistan read a state-

ment of Prisoner Number 804 [Imran Khan] and for the sake of his politics and seeking relief in cases, this person has attacked every institution," Bilawal said in his address to the National Assembly.

Deputy Speaker Ghulam Mustafa Shah presided over the session.

"I advise PTI to investigate whether or not it was Khan Sb's statement

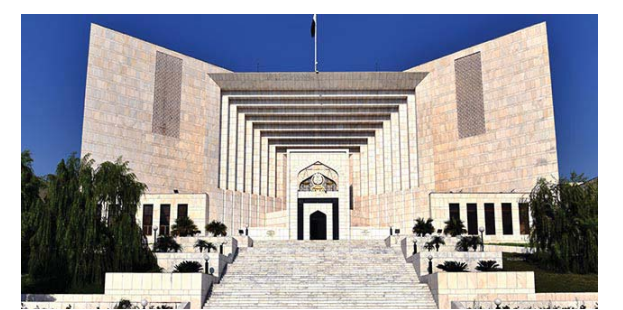
because we were heading towards a positive direction till yesterday. We made a forum, from which I have a hope that we will do legislation for the benefit of these institutions and democracy. But yesterday, an attack was made on democracy."

On Thursday, Khan made a post on X where he accused Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa, Chief of Army Staff

General Asim Munir, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, and accountability judge Humayun Dilawar of being anti-PTI.

"A small powerful elite dominates all the resources, power, and control of the country," Khan said and added that the Supreme Court "is the only institution somewhat safe from their influence, and now it is also being attacked."

## Supreme Court rejects ECP plea in reserved seats case



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) dismissed the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) plea seeking its guidance on the verdict in the reserved seats case of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ruling it as "dilatatory tactics."

Eight judges who gave a majority verdict including Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed and Justice Irfan Saad Khan issued the clarification.

"Putting together the record placed before us [top court],

and considering the same in light of the short order, leaves in little doubt that the clarification sought by the commission is nothing more than a contrived device and adoption of dilatory tactics," the eight judges ruled in the order.

"Having itself recognised Barrister Gohar Ali Khan as the chairman of PTI, the commission cannot now turn around and purport to seek guidance from the court with regard to how the certifications are to be dealt with. The commission cannot approbate and reprobate, taking whatever [shifting] stance as it desires and as may seem to suit its immediate purposes for the moment," the order read.

## Pakistan decries US sanctions as biased, politically motivated

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, on Saturday, said that Pakistan considered the United States' decision to impose sanctions on commercial entities over alleged connections to Pakistan's ballis-

tic missile program as biased and politically motivated.

In response to media inquiries about the US decision to impose sanctions on commercial entities over alleged connections to Pakistan's ballistic missile program, she stated that similar listings of commercial entities in past were based on mere suspi-

cion, involved items not listed by any export control regime, and yet were considered sensitive under broad, catch-all provisions.

It is widely known that some countries while claiming strict adherence to nonproliferation norms, have conveniently waived licensing requirements

for advanced military technologies to their favoured states.

Such double standards and discriminatory practices undermine the credibility of global nonproliferation regimes, increase military asymmetries, and endanger international peace and security, said the spokesperson.



# Sardar Tanveer, Chaudhry Anwar Haq discuss Kashmir, political situation at PM House

Abdul Tahir Majeed

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas met the Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Haq at Jammu Kashmir House Islamabad.

Member of Assembly Ali Shan Soni and Advisor to Government Sardar Ahmad Sagheer were also present on this occasion.

During the meeting, various issues including the situation of Occupied Kashmir, the construction and development of Azad Kashmir and the political situation were discussed.

On this occasion, there was a complete consensus on the issue that there is a mutual consensus for the construction and development of the



Kashmir Freedom movement and the state. A plan of action will be drawn up for the future.

## Stormy winds, heavy rainfall damage crops in Takht Bhai

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Stormy winds and heavy rainfall cause massive damage to crops and orchards in Takht Bhai, Last night's stormy winds and heavy rainfall have caused severe damage to standing crops and orchards in various areas of Takht Bhai due to the stormy winds and heavy rainfall. The affected areas include Jalala, Shergarh, Made Baba, Peer Sadi Takkar, Shah Nur Pul Garoon, Shah Par Khaw, Dheri, Sri Bhullol, Jehangirabad, and others. Local farmers say that the damage to fruit orchards, vegetables, and especially sugarcane and corn crops is estimated to be in crores. The crops in the fields, especially vegetables and corn, have been severely affected. Compared to last year, this year's strong winds have caused more damage to the crops. Farmers in Takht Bhai are demanding that the government declare the area as calamity-hit and provide aid to save their crops and prevent economic exploitation and hardship. The damage to solar panels installed to meet electricity needs is also estimated to be in lakhs.



## Billions spent on Takht Bhai Tehsil Headquarters Hospital, yet it lacks basic



Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Billions spent on construction and upgrade, but Takht Bhai Tehsil Headquarters Hospital lacks basic medical facilities. Despite being constructed and upgraded at a cost of billions of rupees, the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital in Takht Bhai lacks basic medical facilities, forcing poor and helpless patients to seek treatment at private hospitals. The hospital, which was built and upgraded during the MMA government's tenure at a cost of billions of rupees, was meant to provide free and timely healthcare facilities to patients from far-flung areas of Takht Bhai. However, unfortunately, the hospital has only become a grand building, devoid of any healthcare facilities. Due to the lack of facilities, the hospital staff is unable to provide healthcare services. Political and social circles in the area have appealed to the Chief Minister, Secretary Health, and other high officials to take pity on the deplorable state of the hospital and take steps to ensure that doctors are held accountable for their duties and provide healthcare facilities to the people's.

## CTD Foils Major Terror Plot. Arrested Nine Linked to Terrorist Organisations in Punjab

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in the Punjab province has foiled a major terror plot by arresting 9 suspected terrorists linked with a banned group, during operations in different areas of Punjab. According to the spokesman, the CTD Punjab conducted 71 intelligence based operations in different districts of the province to effectively deal with any untoward incident of terrorism, in which 69 suspected persons were interrogated and 9 terrorists were arrested with weapons, explosives and other prohibited materials.

Among the arrested terrorists are Abdul Karim, Muhammad Usman, Imran Siddiqui, Muhammad Thani, Mustajab Hussain Shah, Shaikatullah, Ahmed Khan, Shiraz Mahmood and Saeedur Rehman, he said and added that the terrorists belong to banned organizations Sipah Sahaba Pakistan, Lashkar Jhangvi and Daesh.

The arrest of these terrorists was carried out during intelligence-based operations in Rahim Yar Khan, Okara, Bahawalpur, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Mianwali, he said and added that explosives 4895 grams, hand grenade 02, IED bomb 02,

Detonators 26, safety fuse wire 73 feet, 30 bore pistol 04 with 19 bullets, pamphlets of banned organization 17, magazines 07, books 15, pamphlets 121, stickers 156, receipt books 04, mobile phones 02 and cash of Rs.99660 have been recovered from the possession of the terrorists.

The spokesman said that the terrorists had planned to sabotage across the province and wanted to target important installations and other religious places. The police have registered 9 cases against the arrested alleged terrorists and shifted them to an unknown location, he added.

He said that 978 combing operations were also conducted during this week with the help of local police and security agencies, 34694 persons were checked, 78 suspects were arrested, 79 FIRs were registered and 63 recoveries were made.

## PTI to develop national-level cricket ground for youth of Attock: MPA

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: In PTI's tenure, a national-level cricket ground will be built for the youth of Attock this they said while speaking as special guests, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) representatives Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari and former provincial minister Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari during the final match of the Shehryar Cricket Mela 2024 in Attock which was organized by prominent public figure Asghar Ali in Attock, where a large crowd was present. Both speakers highlighted Imran Khan's imprisonment and expressed their commitment to supporting PTI, stating that when PTI returns to power, a national-level cricket ground will be built for the youth of Attock.

They emphasized the importance of promoting sports and healthy activities, noting that where sports fields flourish, hospitals become desolate. MPA Syed Ijaz Bukhari mentioned that he had seen matches from Karachi to Khyber but had never witnessed such a large public turnout at a private event. He promised that whenever PTI returns to power, the people will be provided with top-quality sports facilities.

## Protest

LAHORE: Residents of Nizam Pura hold placards during protest in favor of their demands outside press club, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# AJK Govt: amends Section 505 to make defamation of government an impeachable offense

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: By amending Section 505 of the AJK Penal Code, 1860, the AJK government has made criticism of the government an impeachable offense. can be registered and the punishment for this crime has been set at least 7 years imprisonment, in the session of the Legislative Assembly held a few days ago, the government presented the First Amendment Ordinance 2024 in the Azad Jammu

and Kashmir Penal Court which was passed by the Majlis-e-Muntabata. It was handed over to the elected Majlis consisting of Law Minister Mian Waheed, Senior Minister Colonel Waqar Noor, Communications Minister Azhar Sadiq and Leader of the Opposition Khawaja Farooq. Moving the motion to pass in the House, which was carried unanimously, the Law Minister merely stated that the amendment was made to remove ambiguity in the definition of commu-

nity in Section 505 of the Penal Code, 1860 when passed. According to the draft law, the president, prime minister, ministers, government officials and other personalities have been included in the definition of the community. A case can be registered under this case, this case has been kept bailable, but if the charge is proved, the punishment of seven years has been fixed. Instead of passing the pending defamation law in the assembly to stop the growing criticism from the civil soci-

ety and the media, the government amended the criminal code on emergency grounds in view of the retaliatory actions against the civil society and journalists guilty of criticism. But have tried to apply this law, the approved law is being called dangerous by the TADA and POTA laws in occupied Kashmir, journalists, civil society and lawyers strongly condemned this law and called it a black law. It has been announced to challenge it in the Supreme Court.

# Effects of Kashmir conflict are felt hardest by Kashmiri women: Speakers

Abdul Majeed Tahir

GENEVA: Speakers at a seminar hosted by International Muslim Women's Union in collaboration with KIIR, AHRAAM and others while highlighting the plight of Kashmiri women Speakers said that the effects of the long-drawn Kashmir conflict were felt hardest by the Kashmiri women who are more vulnerable to conflict than other segments of society.

The seminar titled "Women in Conflicts" was addressed by noted human rights activists, academicians and international law experts hailing from different parts of the world including, Mrs Shamim Shawl, Ms. Caroline Handschin Moussir, Barrister Margaret Owen, Ms. Wendi Momen, Ms Zarin Hansworth, Ms. Setlla Harris, Ms. Naila Altaf Kayani, Ms. Hadia Sartaj.

During global human rights organizations to take necessary action to halt the vicious cycle of violence and widespread mistreatment being carried out by Indian forces against the women of Kashmir in the occupied region.



The speakers emphasized the suffering of Kashmiri women, stating that as a vulnerable segment of society, they have borne the brunt of Indian state terrorism. Citing media reports, they said, Indian occupation forces have been using physical and sexual violence as a weapon of war against women in Kashmir.

Despite more than 32 years passing, the rape-victims of Kunan-Poshpora village are still awaiting justice. "It is quite ironic that Indian state, which gives a notion of being a progressive society, is using rape as a weapon of war against Kashmiris to suppress the

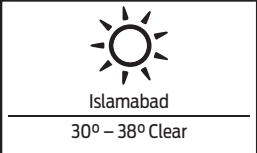
Kashmiris' ongoing resistance for the realization of the right of self-determination", the said adding that hundreds of cases of rape and harassment against women were reported in which Indian army personnel were found guilty but so far not a single army personnel has been held accountable for his heinous crimes.

The speakers criticized the Indian judiciary and judges for failing to deliver justice to Kashmiri rape victims. Stating that delaying justice was tantamount to denying justice, they pointed out that the Indian judiciary's approach to appease rulers has hindered its ability to hear cases on merit and provide speedy

justice to victims.

They said that it was high time that the international community must pay heed to the situation in the region and hold the Indian government accountable for the crimes its forces were committing against the people of Kashmir.

Given the precarious situation in the region it has become even more important for human rights activists to keep a constant vigil over the situation in the restive region where people are being killed, maimed and murdered day in and day out by the Indian trigger-happy forces", they added.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:26 am  
Zohr ..... 12:04 pm  
Asr ..... 4:30 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:15 pm  
Isha ..... 7:39 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 92766044  
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

**CEO CBD Punjab chairs key meeting on Walton Road and Celestia IT Tower Development**

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: CEO of Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), Imran Amin, presided over review meeting to evaluate the advancements in the Walton Road upgradation and the construction of the Celestia IT Tower within CBD NSIT City. The session convened key stakeholders involved in these pivotal projects.

Attending the meeting were Riaz Hussain, Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab, Sameer Aftab Sial, Director Architecture & Planning, Asif Babar, Director Construction, Asif Iqbal, Director Project Management, alongside officials from NLC and NESPAK. The focus of the discussion centred on assessing the status and outlining the next steps for both initiatives.

While addressing the meeting CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin said, "Walton Road is scheduled to be operational by the end of October 2024, aligning with the directives of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz. CBD NSIT City is poised to revolutionize the IT sector in Punjab, setting new benchmarks for innovation and growth."

CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, emphasized the urgency of accelerating progress on both projects, directing a round-the-clock operational schedule spanning 24 hours.

# Large Reserves of Coal, Copper in Pakistan: A. Aleem Khan

**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: More than 2000 companies from 107 countries around the globe are participating in the International Fair for Trade in Services in Beijing while from Pakistan 150 entrepreneurs are also included in this grand event. In a virtual address at the opening session of this Expo, Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has said that there is an ample scope for investment in Agriculture, Livestock, Food processing and Minerals sectors in Pakistan. He added that this country has the second largest coal reserves and the seventh largest copper stoke including minerals. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan



appreciated the participation of Pakistani companies in a large number in Beijing and said that the eternal history of friendship between China and Pakistan is getting stronger with time. He indicated that under CPEC, Transport, Infrastructure, Energy and Communication in Pakistan has been developed visibly and there has been a significant improvement in these sectors. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said in his address that Pakistani companies are getting opportunities to increase Business-to-Business activities from China while to establish or shift industries in Pakistan as compare to North America and Europe is low cost up to 70% lesser. In his virtual address to the International Trade Fair, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem

Khan lauded the efforts of the staff of the Pakistani Embassy in Beijing for huge representation of Pakistan in this global conference. Abdul Aleem Khan said that this international event will be an excellent opportunity and positive step for investment with great expectations. He said that Pakistan will ensure all possible support for investment from China and for this purpose should benefit from the best opportunities like Special Economic Zones, Export Processing Zones and Gwadar Free Zones. Abdul Aleem Khan said that after the Prime Minister's visit to China in June, there has been a breakthrough for bilateral investment and business development in Pakistan which will be carried forward in a positive manner, as well.

## Traditional Items

ISLAMABAD: Citizens visiting different stalls at Sixth Islamabad Expo at Pak-China Friendship Center in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Sightsavers and Federal College of Education Launch Course on Inclusive Education



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step towards promoting inclusive education in Pakistan, Sightsavers, an international organisation working to prevent avoidable blindness and to promote inclusive education, and the Federal College of Education hosted an event to launch a new course on Inclusive Education. The event, featured key stakeholders from the education and development sectors.

This launch represents the culmination of extensive planning and dedicated efforts aimed at enhancing inclusive learning opportunities for children and youth with disabilities across Pakistan. The course is designed by experts and has been approved by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Punjab University (PU). The Federal College of Education has already started offering the course, further strengthening efforts to foster inclusive education.

Prof. Dr. Samia Rehman Dogar, Director of Federal College of Education, delivered the welcome remarks, sharing her vision for an inclusive future in education. She highlighted the course's development journey, from its inception to approval, and emphasized its pivotal role in promoting equitable learning for all students.

Ms. Munazza Gillani, Director for Pakistan and the Middle East at Sightsavers, offered insights into Sightsavers' mission and commitment to social inclusion, highlighting the importance of this course in their work to integrate inclusive practices in education and health across the region.

Prof. Dr. Tariq Mehmood Chauhdary, Director, Institute of Education and Research, Punjab University, remarked, "This course marks a vital step toward inclusive education in Pakistan."

Dr. Shamsa Aziz, Chairperson, Department of Education, International Islamic University Islamabad and Dr. Zahid Majeed, Assistant Professor at Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad were among the experts who shared valuable knowledge and information with the participants.

The launch of this course aligns with SDGs and Pakistan's national education goals and reflects a broader commitment to meeting the needs of children and youth with disabilities. It is a key step in ensuring that no one is left behind, empowering teachers and educators with the tools and knowledge to foster inclusive learning environment.

## ICT Police nab suspect in Girl's assault case

ISLAMABAD, SEP 14 (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police Team from Golra Police Station and the Special Sexual Investigation Unit (SSIOU) have successfully apprehended the accused involved in the sexual assault of a young girl.

According to a police spokesperson, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered at Golra Police Station following the victim's report.

Upon receiving the report, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Islamabad, Syed Ali Raz, ordered an immediate response and directed the SSIOU team to take swift action, he said.

As a result, the accused, identified as Noman Shafiq, was arrested," he added. He said DIG Islamabad, Syed Ali Raz, assured the public that the suspect will be prosecuted based on strong evidence to ensure a fitting punishment.

Syed Ali Raz further emphasized that protecting women and children is a top priority, declaring them a 'red line' and warning that those involved in such crimes will not escape the law, he added.

# Sindh Education Foundation Honors School Adopters for Revitalising government Schools

**Zainab Hyder**

KARACHI: The Provincial Minister for Education and Mineral Development of Sindh, Syed Sardar Ali Shah, stated that despite the federal government's announcement of an education emergency a few months ago, nothing clear has emerged about the collaboration with the provinces to improve education. He added that no consultation was done with them before the education emergency was announced. He expressed these views while speaking to the media after attending a ceremony as the chief guest, organized by the Sindh Education Foundation at Marriott Hotel Karachi.

He further added that the federal government should consult with all provinces regarding the issue of out-of-school children. Earlier, the Sindh Education Foundation held a ceremony in a local hotel in Karachi to honor the school adopters who took on the responsibility of reactivating non-functional government schools. On this occasion, Secretary of School Education Sindh Zahid Ali Abbasi, Managing Director of Sindh Education



Foundation Kazi Kabir, former Governor of Sindh and school adopter Lt. General (Retired) Moimuddin Haider, and other school adopters, teachers, and students were present.

On this occasion, Secretary of School Education Sindh Zahid Ali Abbasi said

that Sindh was the first province to introduce a school adoption policy, which has yielded clear benefits. He added that Sindh has led many initiatives for the development of education, and those who come forward to adopt schools are driven by a spirit of service.

# Beijing: Pakistan embassy hosts major investment conference during CIFTIS

**Spokesman Report**

BELJING: The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing hosted the "Pakistan Investment Conference - Together for a Shared Future" alongside the renowned China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) with the goal of attracting foreign investment across various sectors in Pakistan.

The event brought together key figures from both the Pakistani and Chinese business communities, highlighting investment opportunities in strategic sectors such as agriculture, industry, ICT, and banking. Pakistani organizations participating in the event showcased their potential to capitalize on these sectors' growth, emphasizing Pakistan's increasingly favorable business environment.

Among the attendees were several high-ranking Chinese officials, including Liu Meiyang, Deputy Secretary General of Beijing, Han Bin, President of the Dekezhou City Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Zhang Yanqing, Deputy Secretary General of the People's Government of Pingdingshan City, and Li An, Deputy Director General, MOFCOM.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi underscored Pakistan's strong commitment to deepening economic engagement with China. He noted the enduring momentum of B2B engagements that began with Business Conference in Shenzhen in June 2024.

The ambassador highlighted the significance of this conference as the embassy's initiative to engage Paki-

stani enterprises and connect them with Chinese counterparts and to showcase success stories of previous investments.

He also shared the Embassy's roadmap for future B2B conferences being planned in the months ahead, encouraging Chinese investors to avail these opportunities.

Ambassador Hashmi expressed confidence that the interactions at CIFTIS would not only strengthen Pakistan's service exports but also enhance economic integration between the two nations.

Liu Meiyang echoed these sentiments in her remarks, welcoming the participation of Pakistani businesses in CIFTIS. She emphasized the complementary nature of the two economies and expressed optimism



that Pakistani and Chinese enterprises would mutually benefit from the opportunities created through these exchanges.

The conference also featured keynote video messages from Federal

Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Federal Minister for Investment, Privatization, and Communication Aleem Khan. Both Ministers reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to facilitating Chinese invest-

ments in the country's key economic sectors. They expressed optimism that the conference would serve as a platform to unlock new opportunities for Pakistani businesses, particularly in accessing the vast Chinese market.

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# Trump to Reverse US Russia-Ukraine Policy

The world is currently grappling with the profound impacts of two high-intensity, high-stakes international conflicts: the Palestine-Israel conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war. These wars have inflicted deep financial, economic, emotional, and psychological wounds, affecting those who still hold human dignity and the value of life in high regard. The resolution of these tragic and inhumane conflicts largely depends on the leadership of the next President of the United States, who holds significant influence over the international diplomatic landscape.

In the last article titled "Trump or Harris: There is No Respite for Palestine," the central argument was that both U.S. presidential candidates have aligned closely with Israel, leaving little hope for change in the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. However, their views diverge significantly on the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Kamala Harris has taken a firm stance in support of Ukraine, emphasizing that the conflict not only threatens Ukraine's sovereignty but also undermines international norms and global stability. She has reiterated repeatedly that U.S. military and financial support for Ukraine is not only a moral obligation but also in the strategic interest of the U.S. and its allies. Should she become President, it is likely that this support will continue for the foreseeable future, suggesting that the war may persist under her leadership. Her approach aligns with the belligerent stance of the European Union (EU), which, in line with Biden's policy, has imposed multiple sanctions on Russia, targeting its financial, energy, and military sectors. The EU has also provided extensive military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine to prevent Russia from redrawing borders by force. Most EU countries advocate for

Ukraine's complete victory and caution against any concessions to Russia.

Unlike the Israel-Palestine conflict, which is unlikely to be significantly affected by who becomes the next U.S. president, the Russia-Ukraine war could see a dramatically different approach if Donald Trump wins the presidency. The first action he is likely to take would be to halt military aid to Ukraine and stop funding the defense of the European Union, which heavily depends on the formidable support of the U.S. military. Trump would likely demand that the EU shoulder the full financial burden of the U.S.'s intervention in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

In 2024 alone, the cost of military intervention to the U.S. amounted to \$175 billion in aid to Ukraine, with \$107 billion directly allocated to the Ukrainian government for military and economic support. Meanwhile, the EU has provided over \$126 billion in financial, military, and humanitarian aid since the war began, with an additional \$54 billion committed for Ukraine's recovery, bringing the total EU contribution to \$167 billion.

Under Donald Trump, Russia is likely to have a much easier time navigating the conflict. Unlike Joe Biden, Trump would likely pursue serious negotiations with Russia and use the threat of Russia's potential use of nuclear arms to pressure the European Union into aligning with his stance. Ukraine could face significant setbacks as U.S. aid may dry up, and EU support could dwindle due to the shift in U.S. policy toward the war under a Trump administration.

Given this scenario, stakeholders are likely developing strategies based on the potential outcomes of the 2024 U.S. presi-

dential election. If Kamala Harris becomes president, the U.S. is expected to maintain its current approach, continuing military and financial support for Ukraine. However, a Donald Trump presidency introduces unpredictability. His maverick behavior, aggressive rhetoric, and belief that he can swiftly end the Russia-Ukraine conflict create a highly uncertain and challenging situation for all involved.

Stakeholders are likely scrambling to find a viable solution to navigate the potential challenges they may face if Donald Trump becomes the next U.S. president. One practical and effective way to avoid a highly volatile and unpredictable situation is to adopt the China-Brazil formula to end the conflict and prevent further loss of life and destruction of civilian and military assets.

The China-Brazil joint peace plan focuses on de-escalation, diplomacy, and humanitarian aid to resolve the Ukraine-Russia conflict. The plan urges all parties to refrain from expanding the battlefield or escalating tensions, emphasizing that dialogue and negotiations are the only sustainable solutions. It proposes an international peace conference with equal participation from all sides. Additionally, the initiative stresses the importance of expanding humanitarian aid, protecting civilians and prisoners of war, and preventing the use of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. The proposal also highlights the need for international cooperation on critical issues like energy, food security, and safeguarding key infrastructure to ensure global stability.

The EU, Russia, and Ukraine should proactively pursue this peace formula to achieve key objectives: reducing military confrontations, protecting civilian

infrastructure and lives, and entering into serious, objective negotiations as the primary method of resolving the conflict. History shows that even the most devastating wars ultimately end at the negotiation table.

Brazil and China, as the main proponents of this peace formula, should employ all tools of traditional and public diplomacy to foster acceptance of the plan among primary and auxiliary stakeholders. These tools should include high-level diplomatic engagement, such as bilateral and multilateral meetings with the key countries involved or affected by the conflict. Additionally, track-two diplomacy—non-governmental, informal, and unofficial dialogues between influential parties—should be used to build broader consensus and momentum for peace.

In terms of public diplomacy, they should employ strategic media campaigns to shape public opinion and influence key stakeholders, highlighting the humanitarian and geopolitical benefits of the proposal. Additionally, cultural diplomacy, such as leveraging cultural exchanges and showcasing shared values, could foster a favorable environment for dialogue. Brazil and China can also use multilateral platforms, such as the United Nations, BRICS, and G20, to rally broader international support for the initiative. They should also engage civil society organizations and academic think tanks to promote dialogue and develop policy recommendations to further enhance the formula's acceptability.

This approach would save the stakeholders from the war mongering policies of Kamala Harris and from the unpredictable, illogical and impractical approach of Donald Trump.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Pakistanis in Houston rally to support badly wounded student

The Pakistani-American community in Houston, Texas, has rallied around a Pakistani student who was severely injured by a hit-and-run driver and lying in pain in intensive treatment at a hospital, according to media reports.

Dania Zaheer, 25, was crossing the street near a Houston shopping centre on Sept 7 when a man behind the wheel of a vehicle hit her and drove off.

He has still not been found. Interviewed by a television reporter, Dania, who looked battered, spoke through an oxygen mask, said, "I have a broken pelvis, broken arm, broken femur, broken hip, skull fractures, a broken eye socket, and fluid in my lungs, which makes it hard to breathe."

Dania had left her family behind in Karachi a few months ago to earn her master's degree in business administration in Houston.

She said she thought she would face recovery alone, but fortunately, some local organizations are jumping in to help.

"To see somebody who is about the same age as my daughter laid up and crying like that and in pain, it was very painful to see," Salman Razzaqi, president of the Pakistani Association of Greater Houston, said after visiting her.

Police said they still have no leads on who hit Ms. Zaheer. They have a witness who saw what happened, but they couldn't provide the suspect's description.

Detectives are still looking for video, but they have yet to find any since ABC13's TV's last call.

She suffered a myriad of injuries in the crash. When Razzaqi watched ABC13's interview on Thursday with Ms. Zaheer, he rallied together community leaders and even Pakistan's Consul General Aftab Chaudhry visited her.

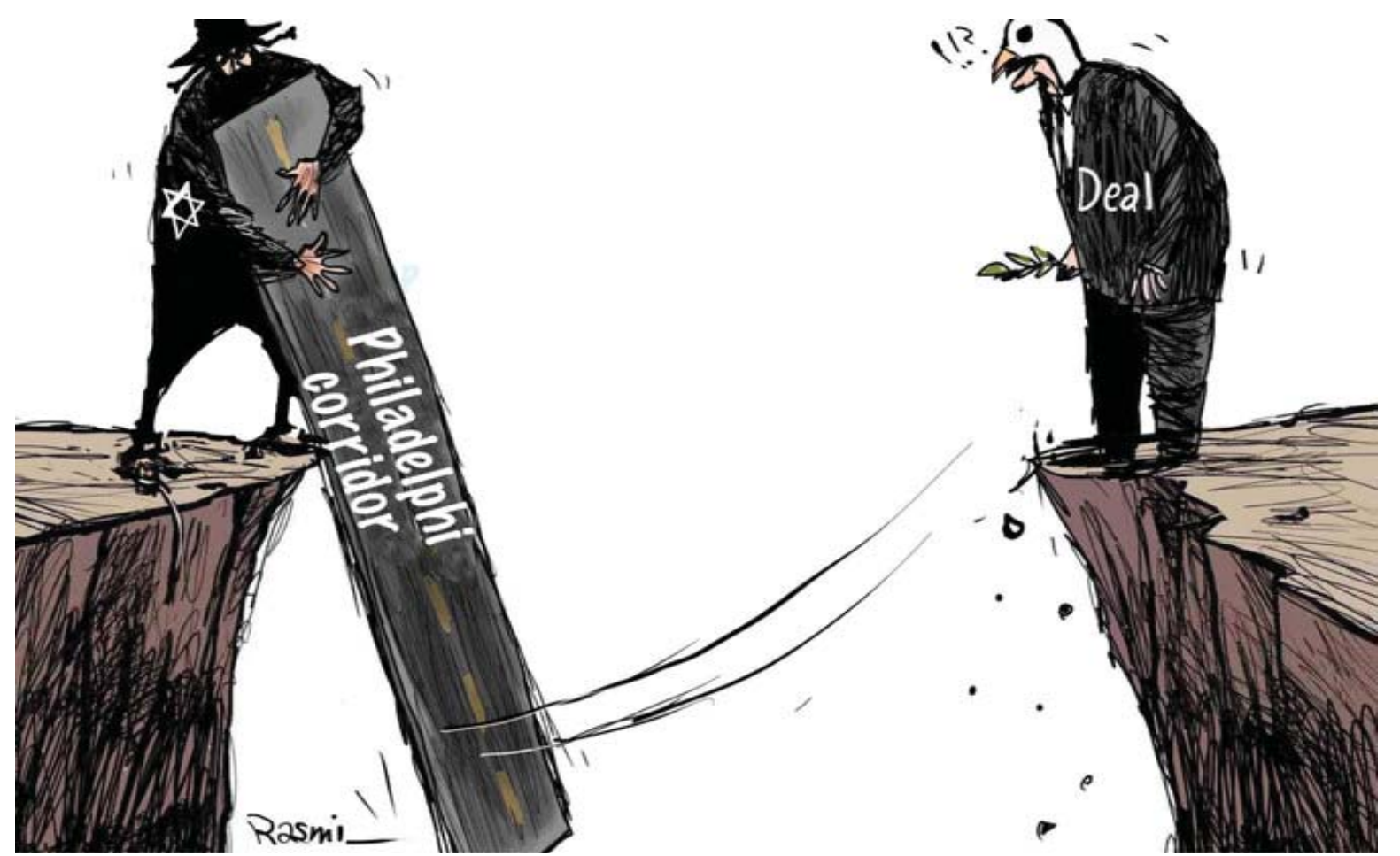
"I think she is coming back to normal. She saw this response, help, support and heard comforting words from all of us," Razzaqi said. "Our goal is to get her back on her feet, go back to college, get her degree, and find her American dream."

One of the people now in Ms. Zaheer's corner is Houston businessman Ali Sheikhan. He said that through a foundation that started in memory of his late mother, he plans to do everything to help Ms. Zaheer.

"I told her, 'Please, focus on your health. Don't worry about the (finances). We will take care of the (finances). We will talk to her mom and dad (and) pay for school fees. We will take care of everything,'" Sheikhan, CEO of Sheikhan Group Inc., said.

When she spoke from the hospital, she had no idea how she could get through recovery.

"I am all alone here. I have no one here, not even someone to take care of me. I don't even know after getting out of the hospital who will be there," Ms. Zaheer said.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Ashfaq Al-Awcat)

## Mighty-K2: An arduous challenge for climbers

Saif ur Rehman

Located on Pakistan-China border, K2 stands tall at 8,611 meters (28,251 feet) as the second-highest mountain in the world and a jewel in Pakistan's crown making it prominent among nations with mountain ranges.

Its sheer size, rugged terrain and unpredictable weather distinguish it from other peaks of the world making a formidable challenge for even the most experienced climbers.

First discovered in 1856 by the Great Trigonometric Survey of British India, led by Thomas Montgomery, the mountain was initially named "Montgomery's Peak" but later renamed as K2, with "K" standing for Karakoram and "2" indicating it as the second highest peak in the range.

As climbing season kicks off, hundreds of local and foreign climbers make their way to Gilgit-Baltistan to climb eight-thousand peaks, including K2 with many facing severe weather and sometimes unfortunate accidents that also claim their lives.

He said after an increase in successful attempts, as of August 2023, an estimated more than 800 people have summited K2, with more than 100 deaths during attempted climbs.

"Climbing K2 is a serious undertaking that requires extensive mountaineering experience, physical endurance and mental toughness," Imtiaz stated. "The climb typically takes around 60 to 90 days, depending on the route and weather conditions. Climbers must navi-

gate treacherous terrain including steep rock faces, icy slopes and exposed ridges."

The K2 was referred to as The Savage Mountain since 1953, when American climber and physicist George Bell, who would have nearly perished in a six-men fall on the mountain. There are several routes to summit K2, each with its own unique challenges and risks. The most popular route is the Abruzzi Spur, also known as the Southeast Ridge. Other notable routes include the North Ridge, West Ridge, and South Face.

Guided or not, K2's upper slopes are one of the least hospitable places on earth. And for anyone who wants to escape the crowds, the mountain is also host to nearly a dozen existing but rarely attempted routes, many of which climb from the mountain's frighteningly remote Chinese side. "K2 is a beast of mountains. It's unforgiving and demands respect. I've climbed it twice and both times it has been a humbling experience. The terrain is treacherous and the weather is unpredictable. But the sense of accomplishment when you reach the summit is unparalleled," narrated Kacho khursheed, a renowned climber from Baltistan region.

K2 is also known for its unpredictable and extreme weather conditions. Climbers must contend with frequent snowstorms, avalanches and temperatures as low as -60°C (-76°F). The weather can change quickly, making it essential for climbers to be prepared and flexible. No matter whatever the comments globally and locally, K2 offers great adventure opportunities despite its harsh and unpredictable weather in winter and earns distinction for Pakistan.

Local people also see it as a gift of Nature for them as besides making them prominent across the world, K2 also brings in revenue for them. But, the same time they are worried about its beauty and environment.

"K2 is our pride and joy. It's a source of inspiration for our community. We have seen many climbers coming and going and it is amazing to see how they push themselves to conquer this mountain," said Muhammad Iqbal a local resident of Gojal Hunza.

"The stunning natural beauty of K2 also contributes to Pakistan's global reputation as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts, further boosting tourism," Iqbal stated. "But we also worry about environmental impact and want to see sustainable tourism practices for climbers and our community."

"The economic benefits of K2 are substantial as it attracts adventurers and tourists from around the world, generating revenue through trekking and climbing fees and jobs for local people," Iqbal stated.

"K2 is a mighty and glamorous peak. It's strong and powerful and we must respect it," say the local people as they feel that increased traffic from guiding companies has heightened some of the ethical concerns that often accompany high-altitude climbing and labor especially when under-equipped and under-trained porters face accidents.

Therefore, it is urgently required to ensure safer expeditions as well as preservation of natural beauty and ecosystem of the area right from base camp to the top for our future generations to enjoy its beauty and wonders.

## Kiln workers - Braving tougher times

Iftikhar Ahmed

Amidst challenges of economic slowdown and price hike, the poor in anywhere in the world had to toil hard for survival and earn living for their families.

In an environment where capitalists take it as their just right to exploit them, these workers had to go extra miles for keeping their families go as they are paid a meager share out of millions and billions earned by their employers.

Brick kiln workers are also not an exception to this exploitation who despite flourishing business, seldom enjoy basic amenities and are forced to work in the most vulnerable situation along with their families.

Categorized in six types, they are Munshis (accountant), Jalai Wala (fire man), Bharai Wala (brick setter), Nakasi Wala (brick excavator), Jamadar (sweeper) and Patheras (brick molder). But, Patheras are the most vulnerable segment like Jalaiwala and Nakasiwala.

"Patheras have to live at sight along with their families with minimum facilities. They have to work for long hours to fulfill demand of owners," stated Akbar Ali, worker at a kiln house. "Not they alone, but their families also have to work till odd hours because they are often bound in debt bondage."

Workers or laborers are generally registered with Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI), Employees' Old-age Benefits Institution (EOBI) and Workers' Welfare Fund and are eligible to get marriage and death grants, talent scholarships and other incentives.

But most of kiln workers are ignorant of these facilities while the kiln owners

are also hesitant to pay their mandatory contribution on one pretext or the other. For this, they do not even hesitate to offer bribes to officials who ask them to get their employees registered.

Kiln workers are also forced to work without health cover. Their children cannot get education and their families unable to benefit from social cover like death, health and other grants sanctioned by the workers welfare fund due to their non-registration.

Amidst all this, Ghulam Shabbir Kalyar Director Labor West Faisalabad claims, there are 478 brick kilns across the district with a number of 21632 registered kiln workers. "After brick kilns were declared an industry, their workers are entitled to all incentives and facilities admissible to industrial workers."

He said the Punjab government is fully cognizant to its duties. The kiln workers are registered with PESSI or EOBI and can avail a marriage grant of Rs.400,000 while the government pays Rs.800,000 as death grant to worker's family if he dies while performing his duties. "Similarly, educational scholarships were also admissible for their children if they wanted to get higher education at colleges or universities."

Kalyar informed that Labor and Human Resource Department had chalked a strategy to implement minimum wages notification. "Therefore, the teams of Labor Department visit industries including brick kilns and force kiln owners to pay minimum wages announced by the government."

Rana Muhammad Azam Khan, a social activist said he observed lives of kiln workers very closely as he remained teacher at a private school run by an NGO to educate children of

kiln workers. "Their lives are miserable and major reason behind this is their illiteracy and ignorance of their basic rights. Hence they cannot raise their voice if someone exploits them and usurp their rights," he said.

Azam said it is very common that kiln workers borrow money from kiln owners to run their families but spend this money on frivolous activities like taking drugs, gambling, pigeon flying etc. So when under debt, the owners force them to work as per their desires and pay lesser amount.

"Consequently, they approach another kiln owner, borrow money from him to retire the previous debt and are further trapped and this vicious cycle goes on throughout their lives," Azam regretted.

He said some kiln philanthropists have launched special education for children of kiln workers and facilitate them on religious and other occasions but all are not covered.

Some of NGOs also exploit this situation and grab grants from donors for kiln workers welfare but spend a nominal amount keeping remaining with them in the name of other expenditures.

No doubt that the government has repeatedly assured and directed the PESSI to issue social security cards to kiln workers but it is not fully implemented apparently due to kiln owners' refusal to submit their contribution.

Therefore, in the prevailing situation, the government must take strict measures and introduce revolutionary reforms for this unorganized sector to extend all facilities to kiln workers admissible under the relevant laws. It should also force kiln owners to pay their contribution so these workers could get their due share from concerned departments.

# High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan congratulates new Foreign Secretary on appointment

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: His Excellency Ambassador Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, paid a courtesy call on the newly appointed Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Her Excellency Ambassador Amna Baloch, who officially assumed her post on 11 September 2024.

During the meeting, Ambassador Dato' Azhar extended his warmest congratulations and heartfelt felicitations to Her Excellency Ambassador Amna Baloch on her appointment as Foreign Secretary. Considering her extensive diplomatic experience, including her tenure as High Commissioner of Pakistan to Malaysia from 2019 to 2023, Ambassador Dato' Azhar expressed his confidence that the excellent bilateral relationship between Malaysia and Pakistan will be elevated to greater heights.

Both sides held extensive constructive discussion aimed at



advancing the strategic partnership between the two nations. They explored new collaboration in emerging areas such

as automotive industry, blue economy, education, energy production and technical and vocational education and

training (TVET) for skilled and semi-skilled workers. Ambassador Dato' Azhar emphasised that despite the highest bilat-

eral trade recorded at USD1.8 billion previously, there existed immense potential for growth, and that both countries should put efforts to increase the figure through new trade and investment initiatives.

In the regional context, Ambassador Dato' Azhar highlighted the opportunities presented by ASEAN, particularly Malaysia's strategic position as a gateway to the ASEAN market, offering immense potential for Pakistan to expand its economic engagement in the region. Malaysia would assume the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2025. Both sides also touched on issues of mutual concern, including the situation in Palestine and Afghanistan.

As both sides were preparing for the upcoming visit by the Honorable Prime Minister of Malaysia to Pakistan, Ambassador Dato' Azhar acknowledged the importance of the visit in reinvigorating relations between the two nations. Given the last Prime Ministerial



visit five years ago, he stressed that the timing was crucial for strengthening ties. The meeting also touched on potential deliverables of the visit, focusing on trade, halal cooperation, air connectivity, and tourism sector.

The meeting marks a renewed step towards further deepening cooperation and cementing the long-standing fraternal ties

between Malaysia and Pakistan. Considering that both Foreign Secretary and High Commissioner have had the privilege of working together during the former's stint in Malaysia and the latter as Undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia overseeing Malaysia-Pakistan relations, the atmosphere of the meeting was warm and friendly.

## ISSI hosts think-tank dialogue with Chinese Delegation on Arms Control and Disarmament Issues



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized an In-House Meeting with a Chinese delegation led by Mr. SUN Xiaobo, Director General, Department of Arms Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Beijing. Other members of the delegation included: Mr. Xie Xinping, Deputy Division Director, Ms. XIAO Yue, Deputy Divi-

sion Director, and Jiang Yingbo, Second Secretary, Department of Arms Control, MFA; and Mr. Xu Hangtian, Minister Counsellor and Ms. WanYiQiu, Third Secretary, Embassy of China, Islamabad.

The Session was attended by distinguished former diplomats, practitioners, academics, and think-tanks experts including: Ambassador Zamir Akram; Ambassador Masood Khalid; Ambassador Tehmina Janjua; Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi; Ambassador Babar Amin; Mr

Haroon Rashid, DG SECDIV; Maj Gen (R) Ausaf Ali; Maj Gen. (R) Naseer Ali Khan; Dr. Salma Malik, QAU; Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, QAU; Air Commodore (R) Khalid Banuri; Mr Kamran Hashmi, NIMA; Dr. Adil Sultan, Air University; Mr. Imran Ahmad Khan and Mr. Rashid Sultan, PAEC; and Dr. Ghulam Mujaddid, NDU.

Participants from the ISSI included Director General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Chairman BoG Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Centers'

Directors, and members of the ACDC team. The event was moderated by director ACDC Malik Qasim Mustafa.

The participants discussed a wide range of subjects including global trends and challenges facing arms controls and disarmament regime; challenges posed by emerging technologies; managing the risks of AI; rising major-power competition; militarization of outer space; ongoing Ukraine conflict and the increased risk of nuclear

clash; deepening Indo-US strategic partnership; regional and global security dynamics; and China's Global Security Initiative.

The wide-ranging interaction exuded the spirit of Pakistan-China relationship marked by strategic mutual trust and reinforced common perceptions and convergent positions on security and strategic issues of common interest.

At the end, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood presented ISSI shield to the Chinese delegation.

## North Korea commits to strengthening ties with Russia during security chief's visit



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has expressed a commitment to enhance relations with Russia during a meeting with Russian Security Chief Sergei Shoigu.

This visit is significant amid accusations that North Korea is supplying ammunition to Russia in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

State media reported that Kim and Shoigu engaged in "constructive" discussions focused on deepening strategic dialogue and cooperation to protect mutual security interests.

The meeting took place in a friendly atmosphere, with Kim wishing President Vladimir Putin good health.

Recent military collaborations between North Korea and Russia have increased, highlighted by Putin's visit to Pyongyang earlier this year, where a mutual defense agreement was signed.

This meeting follows North Korea's recent missile tests, which South Korea suggests could be related to arms intended for Russia.

Despite international sanctions, North Korea remains determined to bolster its military ties with Russia, a historical ally.

## Pakistan and China hold the 9th Round of Bilateral Consultations on Arms Control and Nonproliferation



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 9th Round of Pakistan-China Bilateral Consultations on Arms Control and Non-proliferation was held on 13 September 2024 in Islamabad.

Ambassador Tahir Andrabi, Director General (Arms Control & Disarmament Division), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and Mr. Sun Xiaobo Director General (Department of Arms Control), Ministry of Foreign Affairs People's Republic of China led their respective delegations.

The two sides held in-depth discussions on the entire spectrum of arms control & nonproliferation issues; global and regional security; new and emerging technologies; cyber-security; artificial intelligence; outer space; and bilateral cooperation in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Agenda and dynamics at multilateral forums such as the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and various Conventions/Treaty Bodies related to disarmament were reviewed.

Director General Sun Xiaobo also called on Foreign Secretary Ambassador Amna Baloch. Noting the positive trajectory of Pakistan-China bilateral relations, they underlined the importance of regular exchanges and consultations on arms control & nonproliferation as an important part of the Pakistan-China Strategic Dialogue.

Pakistan and China will hold the 10th Round of Bilateral Consultations on Arms Control & Nonproliferation next year in Beijing.

## Shrinking Spaces for Civil Society Cause Frustration, Brain Drain

ISLAMABAD: Civil society representatives and concerned citizens at the Devcom-Pakistan Open Public Forum underscored the urgent need for collaborative efforts to address the shrinking spaces for civil society in Pakistan. Participants emphasized the need for enhanced collective advocacy to reform restrictive regulations impacting civil society. Building alliances with business groups, academics, and international organizations was highlighted as crucial for advancing policy changes that support greater freedom for CSOs.

They said the social development sector has shrunk to the historic low because of undue regulatory frameworks, and lack of donors' trust in the nongovernmental sector. Instead of engaging civil society to counter anti-state propaganda and to support development, many restrictions were imposed on them. The forum underscored the importance of working with legal experts to challenge and seek reforms for laws that severely restrict CSO activities, such as those related to registration, foreign funding, and operational constraints. The forum encouraged

engaging with international organizations and networks to gain support and advocacy for a more favorable environment for CSOs. Participating in global dialogues and forums was also suggested to share experiences and influence international policy.

Devcom-Pakistan, a leading development organization, hosted the Open Public Forum on Saturday to address the pressing issue of shrinking spaces for civil society in Pakistan. The forum brought together key stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), policymakers, digital experts, and community leaders, to discuss the challenges faced by CSOs and propose actionable recommendations for fostering a more enabling environment.

The guest speakers included Human Resource Development Network Executive Director Robeela Bangash, PAKAID chief Executive Haseeb Kiyani, Kinnaird College associate professor Dr. Khushboo Ejaz, Bahria University faculty member Dr. Hayyam Qayyum, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, and ECI executive Director Azhar Qureshi.

HRDN Executive Director Robeela Bangash said undue regulatory frameworks, political instability, inconsistency of policies, and the negative perception about the nongovernmental sector marred the spaces, and undervalue their work in the development of communities. The CSOs need to change the sector's perception as well as need to harness public-private partnerships. They can better navigate regulatory constraints, overcome digital barriers, and continue to drive positive societal change.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed highlighted the importance of building local partnerships and mobilizing community volunteers to support CSO activities and advocacy efforts. We need to rationalize our freedom of expression that most of the time crosses the redlines because of vested and political interests, and camouflaged narratives. He also suggested comprehensive training for CSO staff and volunteers on navigating regulatory environments and enhancing digital security was emphasized. Building skills in advocacy and legal literacy was also considered vital. Trans-

parency and merit could change the negative perception of civil society organizations.

PAKAID chief executive suggested to change the work behavior and patterns to seek partnerships and funding. Most of the funding is available with the government projects that shall engage the nongovernmental sector to reach out to the communities. He recommended diversifying funding sources and strengthening organizational management practices to enhance adaptability and efficiency in the face of regulatory and operational challenges.

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has welcomed the Lahore High Court's ruling, under which the federal government's 2022 policy requiring NGOs to register with the Economic Affairs Division if receiving foreign funds—has been declared unlawful because it lacks legal cover. The writ petition was filed earlier in February by HRCP on the grounds that such policies violate NGOs' right to association.

This policy was framed some months after its 2013 precursor was declared

invalid by the Sindh High Court in February 2022. This is a key decision for civil society organizations and for civic spaces in general. Many NGOs' operations have been curtailed by what is an intrusive policy imposing onerous requirements and giving security agencies the authority to arbitrarily deny organizations clearance.

It is also worth pointing out that the State Bank of Pakistan, in its response to the petition, clarified that it had not instructed banks to withhold NGOs' funds if they were not registered with the EAD.

The federal cabinet has notified the formation of a committee to review foreign funding received by both international and domestic nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), it emerged on Wednesday. The committee will "review the channels through which NGOs receive foreign funding, suggesting concrete measures to ensure transparency and visible funding trails," the notification read. The committee will also ensure that any funding received by NGOs will be "utilised for the purpose for which they have been received".

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
79,333.05	79,017.61
Day's High	Day's Low
80,016.73	79,262.72
Index Value	Change
12,649,814,568	+315.44
Percentage	Time
+0.4%	13 Sept, 2024 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,273.09	+32.12
Percentage	Time
+0.39%	13 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
41,456.42	+359.65
Percentage	Time
+0.88%	13 Sept, 1:34 pm GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
36,581.76	-251.51
Percentage	Time
-0.68%	13 Sept, 3:15 pm GMT+9

# Business Forum at ICCI highlights UAE-Pakistan Investment Potential

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Hamad Obaid Alzaabi of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) highlighted the deep-rooted bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the UAE, built on mutual respect, cultural ties and strong economic cooperation. Addressing the UAE-Pakistan Business Forum, themed "Invest Emirates: An Opportunity for Inbound and Outbound Investments," he emphasized the growing trust-worthy strategic partnership between the two nations.

Alzaabi showcased multiple investment opportunities in the UAE, encouraging business-to-business collaboration between Pakistani and Emirati entrepreneurs. He praised the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) for its support in organizing the Forum, which aims to enhance linkages between the business communities of both countries.

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari acknowledged the UAE as Pakistan's third largest trading partner and a significant source of remittances, contributing to Pakistan's economic stability. He highlighted the robust



and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries, encompassing various sectors such as investment, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation.

ICCI President said that the Pakistani diaspora is enthusiastically contributing to the

development of the UAE and that its skill development will be a value addition in its performance enabling it to have reasonable wages.

Chairman Founder Group ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik said that UAE with its robust economy, innovative spirit and global hub for trade and

commerce offers immense potential for Pakistani businesses and investors. He went on to say that together we can create a future where both the nations can thrive, grow and prosper.

The Forum featured a presentation on investment opportunities and incentives offered by the UAE government to foreign investors. Head of Economic Division UAE Embassy Mr. Mohammad Alkaiatob also addressed the gathering.

ICCI Vice President Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar in his vote of thanks by mentioning the close relationship between the two countries expressed the hope that the Forum will go a long way in further strengthening this relationship.

Earlier ICCI member Ms. Naeema Ansari apprised the attendees about the purpose of the Forum.

Those prominent among the participants included Ambassador of Iraq, Hamid Abbas Lafta DHM Palestine, Nader K. Alturk, United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, former Presidents ICCI Mian Akram Farid, Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, Mian Shaikat Masood, business community leaders, ICCI Executives and members.

## Investment Conference

Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Khalil Hashmi speaking at "Pakistan Investment Conference: Together for a Shared Future" organised by the Embassy of Pakistan at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) in Beijing on 14th September, 2024.



Photo: Online

## LCCI elections: Leather, shoe merchants declare full support for PPP Alliance

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: The Leather and Shoe Merchants Association have expressed complete and unconditional confidence in PIAF (Anjum Nisar Group), announcing their support for the PIAF Pioneer Progressive Alliance (PPPA) for the upcoming LCCI elections.

In presence of print and electronic media at office of PIAF the Leather and Shoe Merchants Association President Mehmoodul Hasan, General Secretary Fazeel Saqib and Artificial Leather Manufacturers and Traders office-bearers held a meeting with the PIAF patron-in-chief Mian Anjum Nisar and PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol. The meeting was also attended by the Chamberlain Road Traders President Abid Saeed Pal and Vice President Fazal Javed, besides the representatives of Cooper Road, Biden Road, Bilal Ganj and other adjacent markets.

Speaking to the delegation, Mian Najam



Nisar and Fahimur Rehman Saigol said that the service of traders from the platform of PIAF has been going on for the past 52 years and the presence of a large number of traders and industrialists in every event is the proof in this regard. It shows that PIAF is not just a show but a name of service to the business community

and the voters of Lahore Chamber make the Alliance successful.

PIAF Patron-in-Chief Mian Anjum Nisar, Chairman PIAF Fahimur Rahman, Muhammad Ali Mian, Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice Chairman PIAF Nasrullah Mughal, Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry and others participated.

## TECNO Launches PHANTOM V Fold2 & Flip2 5G - Innovation Redefined

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: TECNO Pakistan, smartphone brands, has just launched its two latest AI-powered, second-generation flip and foldable smartphones from the PHANTOM V series — the PHANTOM V Flip2 5G and the PHANTOM V Fold2 5G.

With an expansive foldable display and a fun, fashionable, yet functional flip experience, these second-generation foldable and flip smartphones, enhanced by cutting-edge AI, are designed to boost efficiency for business professionals and creatives alike.

These paragons come packed with TECNO's brand-new AI suite, including the upgraded Gemini-integrated Ella AI Assistant, AI Artboard, AI Wallpaper, and much more. Whether you're prepping for a presentation, leading a meeting, or managing your day-to-day tasks, the Ella AI



Assistant is there to streamline your workflow. Additionally, the new AI suite offers a significant creativity boost, empowering content creators and fashion-forward individuals to push their boundaries even further.

Upgrading the flip experience, PHANTOM V Flip2 5G's stunning ThruPool Cover Screen is a stylish creation inspired by infinity pools. The cover features a 3.64" screen that is perfectly integrated with the slightly curved main body, while the suspended camera lens is immersed in the pixels that beautifully flows across the display.

## Weekly inflation edges up in Pakistan

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's short-term inflation edged up by 0.01% WoW during the week ended September 12, 2024, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said on Friday.

During the week, out of these items, prices of 15 (29.41%) items increased, 14 (27.45%) items decreased and 22 (43.14%) items remained stable. On a weekly basis, major increase was observed in the prices of Tomatoes (6.62%), Electricity Charges for Q1 (4.13%), Chicken (3.77%), Pulse Gram (2.43%), and Garlic (2.24%).

On the other hand, a major decrease was observed in the prices of Bananas (6.04%), Pulse Mash (1.33%), Wheat

Flour (0.97%), LPG (0.96%), and Eggs (0.91%).

On a yearly basis, analysis of SPI change across different income segments showed that SPI increased across all quantiles ranging between 9.65% and 17.15%.

Yearly SPI for the Lowest Income Group increased by 9.65% while the highest income group recorded an increase of 13.09%.

The average price of Sonu urea stood at Rs4,667 per 50 kg bag which is 0.35% lower than last week's price, while 20.82% higher when compared to last year.

Meanwhile, the average Cement price rose to Rs1,475 per 50 kg bag, which is 0.16% lower than the previous week and 23.56% higher than prices last year.

## India accuses Samsung, Xiaomi of colluding with Amazon, Flipkart

**News Desk**

DUBAI: Samsung, Xiaomi and other smartphone companies colluded with Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart to exclusively launch products on the e-commerce firms' Indian websites in breach of antitrust laws, according to regulatory reports seen by Reuters.

Antitrust investigations conducted by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) have found that Amazon and Flipkart violated local competition laws by giving preference to select sellers, prioritising certain listings, and steeply discounting products, hurting other companies, Reuters reported this week.

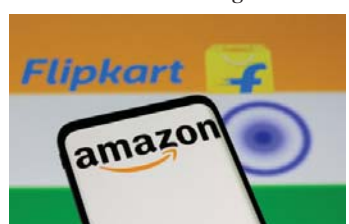
The CCI's 1,027-page report on Amazon also said the Indian units of five companies — Samsung, Xiaomi, Motorola, Realme and OnePlus — were "involved in the practice of exclusive" phone launches in "collusion" with Amazon and its affiliates, breaking competition law.

In Flipkart's case, a 1,696-page CCI report said the Indian units of Samsung, Xiaomi, Motorola, Vivo, Lenovo and Realme conducted similar practices.

The inclusion of smartphone makers like Samsung and Xiaomi in the case could increase their legal and compliance headaches.

"Exclusivity in business is

anathema. Not only is it against free and fair competition but also against the interest of consumers," CCI's additional director general G. V.



Siva Prasad wrote in the Amazon and Flipkart reports, in identical findings.

Reuters is first to report the smartphone companies have been accused of anticompetitive behavior in the

CCI's reports which are dated Aug. 9 and are not public.

Xiaomi declined to comment, while the other smartphone makers did not respond to requests for comment.

Amazon, Flipkart and the CCI did not respond, and have not so far commented on the reports' findings.

Both the CCI reports said that during investigations Amazon and Flipkart "deliberately downplayed" allegations of exclusive launches, but officials found the practice was "rampant".

Counterpoint Research data shows that South Korea's Samsung and China's Xiaomi are two of India's

biggest smartphone players, together holding an almost 36% market share, with China's Vivo on 19%.

India's e-retail market is set to exceed \$160 billion by 2028, up from \$57-60 billion in 2023, consultancy firm Bain estimates.

The investigation findings are a major setback for Amazon and Flipkart in a key growth market where they have faced the ire of small retailers for years for hurting their offline businesses.

The CCI has also said both companies used their foreign investments to provide subsidised rates for services like warehousing and marketing to a select number of sellers.

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices in Pakistan continued their upward trend on Saturday, following a rise in international rates. In the local market, the price of gold per tola increased by Rs400, reaching a record high of Rs266,300.

Similarly, 10 grams of gold were sold for Rs228,309, reflecting an increase of Rs343, according to the rates provided by the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association.

On Friday, the price of gold had surged by Rs2,900, settling at Rs265,900.

In the international market, gold prices also saw a significant rise on Saturday. According to association, the rate reached \$2,577 per ounce (with a premium of \$20), marking an increase of \$11 for the day.

Meanwhile, silver prices remained stable at Rs2,950 per tola. This ongoing rise in gold prices is impacting both consumers and investors across the country.

## FBR to impose heavy fines on large retailers for issuing non-certified receipts

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is set to impose significant fines on large retailers caught issuing non-certified electronic invoices or receipts to customers.

The FBR is drafting regulations aimed at penalizing Tier-1 retailers that fail to report sales tax through the FBR's electronic system accurately.

The proposed fine is Rs 500,000 for each non-compliant receipt, and the FBR plans to reward consumers with Rs 5,000 for reporting these non-certified electronic receipts to tax authorities.

Initially, the FBR mandated the electronic integration of point-of-sale (POS) systems for all Tier-1 retailers in the textile and leather sectors to ensure accurate sales reporting and proper tax collection.

Retailers are required to install a software extension provided by the FBR on their systems, which enables real-time reporting of sales tax to the FBR's server.

The FBR has identified four categories of Tier-1 retailers: national and international chain stores, retailers located in shopping malls, plazas, or centers; those with cumulative electricity bills exceeding 1.2 million rupees over the past 12 months; and wholesalers who also retail consumer goods.

In 2022, the FBR launched a POS invoicing prize scheme to encourage tax compliance and improve economic documentation. This scheme included monthly computerized drawings, awarding cash prizes to 10,000 lucky winners.

However, the FBR suspended the prize scheme in October 2022 after conducting 10 ballots.

## Gold prices reach new high of Rs266,300 per tola in Pakistan



**News Desk**

# India thump Pakistan in Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

**Sports Desk**

HULUNBUIR CITY: Pakistan succumbed to a 2-1 defeat against arch-rivals India in the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024 here at the Moqi Hockey Training Base on Saturday.

Pakistan started the blockbuster clash on a high as they took the lead just 10 minutes into the first quarter, courtesy of a precise assist from Hannan Shahid, who fed the ball inside the circle to Nadeem.

Nadeem effortlessly smashed the ball into the net to give Pakistan a head start.

Pakistan's lead, however, was short-lived as India earned a penalty corner.

India's skipper Harmanpreet Singh took the penalty corner for India and successfully sent his drag-flick into the bottom-right corner, helping India equalise just a few minutes later.

The defending champions took the lead in the second quarter when Abhishek fed the ball to Harmanpreet near the circle, who similarly converted it into a goal.

The remaining two quarters of the blockbuster Asian Hockey Champions Trophy clash between arch-rivals Pakistan and India remained goalless despite both sides making ferocious attacks on each other's goalposts.

The 2-1 victory over Pakistan, meant India won all of their group-stage fixtures



and topped the standings with 15 points. Whereas, Pakistan had two victories and as many draws before their defeat against India.

Remember, Pakistan have already qualified for the semi-final of the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024 after thumping China 5-1 on Thursday.

Abdul Rehman opened the scoring for Pakistan before Nadeem Ahmed and Hannan Shahid scored two goals each to secure a dominant 5-1 victory for the Green Shirts.

This is Pakistan's second consecutive victory in the tournament as they defeated Japan 2-1 yesterday after two

drawn games.

Ahmad Nadeem opened the scoring against Japan in the ninth minute after finding Shahid Hannan and sending the ball to the back of the net. Sufyan Khan soon doubled Pakistan's lead in the 21st minute with a sublime drag flick.

However, Raiki Fujishima helped Japan make a subtle comeback six minutes later and reduced the deficit.

Japan made efforts to level the scores, but the Green Shirts' dominant gameplay maintained their lead until the final hooter.

Prior to this game, Pakistan's second fixture in the Asian Hockey Champions

Trophy ended in a 2-2 draw as they failed to defend their narrow one-goal lead in the final quarter against South Korea.

South Korea opened the scoring in the dying minutes of the second quarter, courtesy of Hyun Jigwang. Their lead remained intact until the third quarter and it appeared that Pakistan were closing in on their first defeat in the ongoing tournament.

The national team, however, made an astounding comeback as Shahid Hannan scored back-to-back last-minute goals to give the Green Shirts what appeared to be a decisive lead.

But just a few seconds before the final whistle, South Korea equalized through Kim Sunghyun and denied Pakistan a victory.

Pakistan tasted the same fortune in their Asian Hockey Champions Trophy opener against Malaysia. They started their campaign with a 2-2 draw despite dominating the majority of the match.

The Green Shirts started the game strongly, taking the lead in the second quarter, thanks to a goal by Sufyan Khan.

In the third quarter, Nadeem Ahmed extended their lead with another goal, before Malaysia made a comeback with a goal from the penalty corner.

Pakistan were cruising towards victory with a 2-1 lead, however, Aiman Rozemi's late goal helped Malaysia level the scores in the dying minutes of the game.

# Former Pakistan captain advises Babar Azam to focus on performance

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Younis Khan offered a piece of advice to white-ball captain Babar Azam, stating he should focus solely on his performance.

Younis addressed the media here on Saturday and shared that he only has one piece of advice to under-fire Babar Azam and that is to "perform".

"My only advice to Babar Azam is to perform. He became the captain [of the national team] only because he was a performer," said Younis.

"There are high expectations from Babar, and while players use social media, their real answers should come through the bat and ball," he added.

Younis Khan further advised Babar Azam to think beyond captaincy. He also cited an example of India's batting star Virat Kohli, who according to the



former Pakistan captain, excelled after relinquishing the role.

"Performance is what matters;

captaincy is a small thing," Younis stated.

Younis, who holds the record of scoring the most Test runs for Pakistan,

also asserted that Babar has the potential to surpass him, stating that the star batter can accumulate 15,000 runs in the format.

Younis Khan then went on to urge the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to revamp departmental cricket.

"I could play cricket because of UBL. Departmental cricket has sustained many players, and its revival is crucial," he said.

The former captain also acknowledged the prominence of franchise league cricket but emphasized that domestic cricket should not be overlooked.

Remember, the PCB decided to hold a high-profile meeting on September 22, dubbed "Connection Camp", to discuss the future of the national cricket team as well as all-format captaincy.

But Younis Khan was of the view that the cricketing body should refrain from sudden changes, specifically in coaching setup and leadership.

## Inspections

FAISALABAD: CPO Kamran Adil and other officers are visiting the stadium regarding security during the Bahria Town Champion One Day Tournament held at Iqbal Stadium.



Photo: Online Abdul Majid

# PCB makes one change to Champions One-Day Cup schedule

**A Sports**

FAISALABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Saturday, unveiled the revised schedule for the Champions One-Day Cup, underway at Iqbal Stadium here.

According to the cricketing body, the 17 September fixture between Dolphins and Markhors has been rescheduled to 18 September due to the Rabi-ul-Awal public holiday.

The PCB further shared that the fans, who have bought tickets for the 17 September match, can use the same tickets for the 18

September fixture. "The fans who have bought tickets for the 17 September match can use the same tickets for the 18 September fixture (no exchange of ticket required), which will now be a day game with the toss taking place at 9am and the first ball expected to be bowled at 9.30am," shared PCB.

The five-team tournament commenced on 12 September as Mohammad Rizwan-led Markhors (previously Wolves) faced Shadab Khan-led Panthers in the opening match. Meanwhile the final is scheduled to be played on

29 September. The Champions One-Day Cup features the country's top cricketers. This 50-over tournament is being played in a single-league format.

The five competing teams are being mentored by stalwarts such as Misbah-ul-Haq (Markhors), Saqlain Mushtaq (Panthers), Sarfaraz Ahmed (Dolphins), Shoaib Malik (Stallions) and Waqar Younis (Lions).

The winners of the Champions One-Day Cup will receive PKR 30 million, while the runners-up will take home PKR 15 million.

Revised Schedule of Champions One-Day Cup (from 14 to 22 September):

14 September - Dolphins vs Panthers (d/n) 3pm

15 September - Markhors vs Stallions (d/n) 3pm

16 September - Lions vs Panthers (d) 9.30am

18 September - Dolphins vs Lions (d) 9.30am

19 September - Stallions vs Dolphins (d/n) 3pm

20 September - Lions vs Markhors (d/n) 3pm

21 September - Panthers vs Stallions (d/n) 3pm



## PCB announces commentary panel for Pak-SA Women's T-20 series

**Sports Desk**

MULTAN: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has officially announced a five-member commentary panel and a presenter for the highly anticipated Pakistan vs South Africa Women's T-20 series, set to take place at Multan Cricket Stadium.



The three-match series will be held on Sept 16, 18, and 20, 2024.

The commentary team includes former cricketers Bazid Khan, Ijaz Ahmed, Hijab Zahid, Kainat Imtiaz, and Sana Mir, while the well-known sports presenter Sawera Pasha will serve as the series presenter.

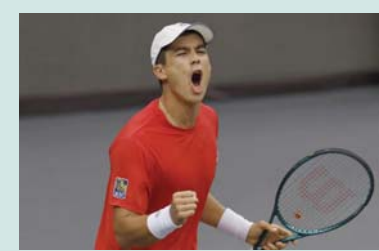
The first two T-20 matches will begin at 7:00 PM, while the third match was scheduled for a morning start at 10:00 AM.

The PCB has announced that the fans across Pakistan can catch the action live on A Sports HD, and for those preferring online streaming while the matches will be available on PCB's official YouTube channel.

In an effort to encourage live spectators, PCB has announced that entry to the stadium will be free of charge. Fans attending the matches were only required to bring their original CNIC (National Identity Card) for entry into the stadium.

## United States, Germany seal Davis Cup final eight berths

**Sports Desk**



The United States booked their ticket to the Davis Cup final eight with a 3-0 win over Slovakia in Zhuhai on Friday, with Germany also advancing.

Mackenzie McDonald beat Lukas

Klein 6-4, 6-3 in the opening singles rubber before Brandon Nakashima eased past Jozef Kovalik 6-3, 6-3 to give the Americans an unassailable 2-0 lead.

Austin Krajicek and Rajeve Ram then teamed up in the doubles to battle past Klein and Norbert Gombos 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/4), 10-1.

Bob Bryan's US team, playing without top players including US Open runner-up Taylor Fritz and semi-finalist Frances Tiafoe, also beat Chile 3-0 earlier this week.

The US victory meant Group C rivals Germany also qualified for the Final 8 which will be held in Malaga in November 19-24.

Germany and the US will go head-to-head for top spot in their final group game on Saturday which will determine their seeding for Malaga. Sixteen countries are competing in the group stage finals in four cities with the top two from each group advancing to the eight-team final.

"It means a lot," said 40th-ranked Nakashima. "To be able to be in this position right now, to be clinching that spot, it's very important for us."

The US, 32-times tournament winners, most recently in 2007, failed to progress out of the group stage finals last year after defeats to the Netherlands and Finland.

McDonald, ranked 149, has been returning from an injury-plagued season.

"I'm really proud of myself for performing well today and putting the team on the board," he said.

Later Friday, reigning Davis Cup champions Italy will bid for a second Group A win against Belgium in Bologna with Great Britain and Argentina playing in Group D in Manchester, England.

## Talha Ali Memorial CC, Pak Shaheen and Mujahid Gymkhana win in Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Under the auspices of Regional Cricket Association Karachi, three more matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament with the Collaboration of Master Oil Lubricants. In the first match, Talha Ali Memorial Cricket Club beat Korangi Friends by 5 wickets, in the second match, Pak Shaheen Cricket Club defeated Bob Woolmer Cricket Club by 5 wickets, in the third match, Mujahid Gymkhana defeated Modern Cricket Club by 9 wickets. Batting first, Korangi Friends were bowled out for 167 runs. Waleed Mir scored 46 runs, Samir Rao 38 runs, Ali Raza scored 37 runs, Misam Tamar took 4 wickets. Talha Ali Memorial Cricket Club achieved the required target in 26.2 overs for the loss of 5 wickets. Abdul Basit scored a brilliant century while Misam Tamar scored 27 runs. Muhammad Owais and Ibsar Akhtar took two wickets each in the second match Bob Woolmer CC batting first, they got out after scoring 194 runs. Oman Rehan scored 58 runs, Muzamil Tahir 45. Shahan Naeem captured 4 wickets. In reply, Pak Shaheen Cricket Club completed the required score for the loss of 5 wickets. Rashid Hussain 49, Taha Khan 42, Osama Ahmed scored 34 runs. In the third match, Modern Cricket Club batted first, Got out after scoring 105 runs. Aqeel Asim 34, Arslan Malik 25 runs Nasir Bukhari bowled devastatingly and took five wickets for 15 runs while Adil Ashfaq took 3 wickets. In reply, Mujahid Gymkhana completed the required score in 14 overs for the loss of one wicket. Sikandar Hassan scored 50 runs and Burhan Mehmood scored 39 runs not out.

## A political dinner

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a banquet he hosted in honor of Parliamentarians on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## IMF agreement will be made public on Sept 25: Aurangzeb

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan inches closer to its 24th International Monetary Fund bailout package, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has claimed that his five predecessors had not been able to negotiate such favourable terms with the global lender.

"I urge everyone to read this IMF agreement, which will be made public on September 25," he said while addressing the 21st Annual Excellence Awards organized by CFA Society Pakistan in Karachi on Saturday.

The IMF board would meet on September 25 to discuss the \$7 billion programme agreed in July with Pakistan, an IMF

spokesperson said earlier this week.

Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the 37-month loan programme in July. The IMF said the programme is subject to approval from its executive board and obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners".

The South Asian country has also taken loans from commercial banks, foreign lenders, and friendly countries to improve the economy.

The finance minister expressed hope that it could be Pakistan's last IMF programme, contingent upon the country imple-



menting agreed-upon structural reforms.

While emphasizing the necessity for economic transformation, Aurangzeb stated: "We need to change the basic DNA of our import-based economy to achieve GDP growth beyond 4 per cent."

"friendly" countries have helped Pakistan meet the requirements necessary to secure an IMF bailout.

He said he would not provide further details on the assistance at this moment. Pakistani officials had said they were trying to arrange up to \$2 billion to meet a financing gap, and were in discussions with commercial banks for this.

To meet the ambitious goal of a 40% increase in tax revenue, the government plans to digitise the taxation system, aiming to reduce human intervention and enhance transparency. Aurangzeb also noted efforts to improve revenue collection from sectors that are under-taxed or untaxed.

## Jam Pushes for Licensed Fuel Stations to Boost Balochistan's Economic Growth

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Oil Marketing Association of Pakistan, led by its Senior Vice Chairman Tariq Mehmood, met with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to explore the expansion and development of the fuel oil industry in Balochistan.

The discussions focused on increasing the presence of licensed fuel stations across the province, aiming to provide



quality products and better services for the local population.

During the meeting, Tariq Mehmood emphasized the need for a gradual rollout of licensed fuel stations in Balochistan, stating that this would ensure high-quality fuel products for the region and improve overall consumer experience. He called for increased facilitation to the people through these regulated stations.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan suggested that each oil company should have at least two to three fuel stations in each district of the province to boost business activities and create employment opportunities. Such initiatives would support Balochistan's economic growth, he added.

Jam Kamal Khan contacted Chief Minister of Balochistan, Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, during the meeting to seek his support.

## 09 out of 11 DISCOs' BoDs notified by Power Division, Musadik tells Senate

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy, Senator Musadik Masood Malik on Saturday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that nine out of the total 11 electric power distribution companies (DISCOs)'s board of directors (BoDs) have been notified by the Power Division after fulfilling the codal obligations.

He was responding during the calling attention notice of Senator Saifullah Abro on delayed appointment of new Chairmen and Members of Board of Directors of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company, Sukkur Electric Supply Company and Power Planning & Monitoring Company (PPMC) as



the Government has already dissolved the other Boards of DISCOs.

Senator Abro had alleged that there were 10 DISCOs across the country and out of that eight's board of directors were nominated but the two in Sindh were still awaiting namely Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) and Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO).

Minister for Energy

development ratio this means that some improvement is taking place and I would like to present the economic indicators when the House permits," he said.

Senator Musadik Malik noted that there were 11 DISCOs under the Power Division out of which nine of them got their boards notified while three were pending.

Among the pending, the first was PPMC whereas its Board nomination committee was held and the board was formed. However, the BoDs' list was sent to the Prime Minister and he has approved it whereas it was also presented before the cabinet committee on SOEs which has also approved it. However its gazette notification was pending, he added.

He highlighted key components of the IMF agreement, which includes maintaining a tax-to-GDP ratio above 13% and implementing reforms in state-owned enterprises and the energy sector.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Thursday that

*Will never let country's precious reserves be sold at low prices: CM Maryam Nawaz*

Bureau Report

LAHORE: "Pink salt is like a treasure trove for Pakistan," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif while chairing a meeting to review proposals on getting maximum revenue from the export of pink salt. She directed the authorities concerned to prepare a plan for setting up value-added industry for the pink salt. She said, "Ban the export of raw pink salt."

Madam Chief Minister sought a comprehensive plan on improvement in the export of pink salt. She directed to ensure safety of mining workers, and considered a proposal to use modern technology for the extraction of minerals in Punjab.

Provincial Information & Culture Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Dal and Secretary Minerals Babar Aman Babar attended the meeting.

## PM emphasizes Parliament's supremacy, calls for legislation in national interest

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday highlighting the importance of legislative efforts in the national and public interest, said that Parliament was the supreme institution of the country.

He underscored that the sanctity of Parliament must always be upheld, adding that national issues should only be resolved through Parliament.

He was addressing a banquet, he hosted in honor of Parliamentarians here. The prime minister said the incumbent government had steered the country away from the risk of default and towards stability.

"Political stability is crucial for ensuring economic stability and advancing the country on the path of development," he added.

He pointed out that the anti-state elements made every effort for the country to default. He said there were attempts to drag constitutional institutions and non-political figures into politics and make them a party.

"The Charter of Democracy was signed under the leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif and the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto that permanently blocked the path for unconstitutional

actions," the prime minister said.

He added that politics will continue, but the continuity of policies was crucial to save the country.

He highlighted that the country was making significant progress before 2018 under the leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif, however a well-planned conspiracy was executed to remove him from the political landscape.

"This conspiracy proved to be very expensive for Pakistan and its people as within the next three years, an incompetent government brought the country at the verge of default," he added.

The prime minister said "when Allah Almighty entrusted us with the responsibility of pulling Pakistan out of economic quagmire, all political parties sacrificed their politics to save the country."

"I have complete faith that the sacrifices we all, including myself, are making for Pakistan's economic security will not go in vain," he added.

The dinner was attended by the federal ministers and members of parliament from Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Balochistan Awami Party, National Party and Pakistan Muslim League Zia.

## Evacuating the northern Gaza Strip is a consecration of its occupation and displacement of its population: Palestine



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates warns of the dangers resulting from the occupation's evacuation of the northern Gaza Strip of Palestinian citizens residing there, and considers it a prelude to starting to annex the Strip and essential parts of it in preparation for settlement there, which seriously threatens to displace Palestinian citizens after cramming them into a narrow area, especially since the crimes of brutal bombing of civilians have clearly served this expansionist colonial goal on the one hand, as well as an attempt to consolidate the division of the Strip into three parts isolated from each other. This is at a time when the ruling Israeli right is mobilizing all its tools and capabilities to explode the situation in the occupied West Bank with the aim of facilitating the annexation of the West Bank and overthrowing the Palestinian National Authority, which is what Smotrich and Ben Gvir are openly

inciting under the slogan of stifling the opportunity to embody the Palestinian state on the ground.

The Ministry believes that the international failure to stop the war of extermination and displacement provides the extremist Israeli government with the time needed to implement its colonial plans in the West Bank and Gaza, and encourages it to continue to strike at the foundations of the Palestinian state and liquidate it.

The Ministry affirms that implementing the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice through the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of executive mechanisms to implement it is of great importance in deterring the occupation and ending it once and for all. It also affirms that imposing deterrent international sanctions on the occupying state is the correct approach to force it to stop the aggression and respect the decisions of international legitimacy and the orders of the International Court of Justice.

## Govt, opposition court Fazl as 'constitutional package' set to roll through Parliament

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Members from the treasury and opposition benches courted JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman as the "constitutional package" set to roll through Parliament on Sunday (tomorrow), sources said.

The desired legislation for the three-year tenure of the CJP needs 224 votes in the National Assembly for its passage and the ruling coalition is short of 12 votes. If the JUI-F gives a nod to the proposed law, the government will still need four to five more votes in the National Assembly.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has asked PML-N lawmakers and his coalition partners to ensure their attendance in the august houses tomorrow. It was revealed during a dinner hosted for MPs in Islamabad. To counter the government's



plans, Imran Khan's party has also consulted other opposition parties regarding potential legislation.

It was expected to be tabled in Parliament on Saturday, however, the government postponed it for one day.

Speculation intensified after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed members of the PML-N and its allies to remain in Islamabad until Monday, indicating that the constitutional amendment bill would not be presented on Saturday.