

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
یزید بن ابی حبیب نے بیان کیا ان سے کہیں  
بن عبد اللہ نے بیان کیا ان سے سلیمان بن  
یوسف نے بیان کیا ان سے عبدالرحمن بن جابر  
بن عبد اللہ نے بیان کیا اور ان سے ابو ہریرہ  
رضی اللہ عنہ نے بیان کیا کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ  
علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا جو دو اللہ کی مقررہ حد  
کے سوا کسی اور سزا میں دس گونے سے زیادہ  
بطور توبہ و سزا مارے جائیں۔  
(بخاری ص 6848)

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RAWALPINDI



## Trump proposes military intervention for election day security

Former Republican president Donald Trump suggested deploying the military to counter the "domestic enemies" on election day. Trump, during an interview on Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures", said he is threatened more by the "radical left lunatics" than foreign enemies. "I think the bigger problem are the people from within. We have some very bad people. We have some sick people", Trump said.



## Gwadar airport, CPEC-II to open new avenues of prosperity in Pakistan: Ahsan

Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal on Monday said that Gwadar airport and CPEC-II, would open new avenues of prosperity for Pakistan. We are going to start CPEC-II, with the help of China, he said while talking to a private television channel. Five economic corridors would also be opened in near future with China's support, he added. A Cargo hub could be set up in Gwadar to increase business activities for the people of Balochistan, he said.

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## A Gift from China

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Premier H.E. Li Qiang unveiling a plaque to mark the completion of New Gwadar International Airport.



Photo: PID

## Chinese Premier Li arrives to a red carpet welcome on a four-day visit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Premier of the State Council of China Li Qiang on Monday was accorded a red carpet as he arrived here on a four-day bilateral visit to meet Pakistan's civil and military leadership and attend the meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

He was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising ministers and senior officials including from the ministries of foreign affairs and commerce, the National Development and Reform Commission and the China International Development Cooperation Agency. This is the first visit of any

Chinese premier to Pakistan after 11 years.

On his arrival at the airport, Premier Li was warmly received by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Deputy Prime Minister and



Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, other federal cabinet members and senior government officials.

Clad in traditional Pakistani dresses, two children presented bouquets to the dignitary as a 21-gun salute in the backdrop heralded his arrival. The static guards of Pakistan's armed forces presented a salute to the dignitary.

# PM terms Gwadar Int'l airport a gift from China

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the completion of Gwadar International Airport showed Chinese leadership's commitment and dedication to support Pakistan's economic agenda and develop its backward areas.

Addressing a ceremony of virtual inauguration of the newly completed Gwadar International Airport here, the prime minister said that the landmark achievement was all about time-tested friendship between the two countries.

He expressed the hope that the completion of this international airport would transform Gwadar's economy in particular and the economy of Pakistan in general.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang were at hands to unveil the plaque of Gwadar International Airport. The ceremony was attended by members of the both delegations, ministers, military leadership and senior officials.

The prime minister said that today, both sides had witnessed the signing and exchange of

MoUs between the two countries in various fields of industry, commerce and agriculture.

"No doubt these MoUs will shape into agreements very soon through joint efforts of both countries. Once again, I thank you for your visit to Pakistan out of your busy schedule which is a reflection of your commitment to promoting friendship between the two countries," PM Shehbaz told the Chinese premier.

He further said that earlier today, the two sides held comprehensive discussions.

The prime minister also thanked President Xi, the

Chinese premier and the people of China for their generous gift in shape of Gwadar International Airport.

He said "This gift is another feather in CPEC's cap" and assured his Chinese counterpart to work closely with him to complete the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the peace and security of the people of Pakistan and China.

Prime Minister Sharif further said that the completion of project reflected the untiring efforts of the Chinese and Pakistani engineers and workers who

made it possible as world class airport.

"It will be remembered as another gift by China," he added.

Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang, in his remarks, congratulated the Pakistani nation and the government on behalf of the Chinese government and his people on the completion of Gwadar airport which was a manifestation of the commitment of the Chinese and Pakistani engineers and workers and also thanked the Pakistani society for their support.

Continued on page 8

## Pakistan emerges as important player in region: Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Monday that Pakistan which faced isolation on foreign policy affairs in the past, had now emerged as a key player in the region.

Talking to the media after the inauguration of the Media Facilitation Center at Pak-China Friendship Center, he said the present government had succeeded to end diplomatic isolation of the country and now high level delegations from many countries have been visiting Pakistan in the recent past.

"We are a very active player in the region, and we have to



play an active role in the region", he remarked. He said recently Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim concluded a highly successful visit to Pakistan and both countries signed arrange-

ments to enhance bilateral cooperation in various sectors.

Tarar said after his visit a high-level Saudi delegation led by a Minister arrived and inked many MoUs for Saudi investment worth

2.2 billion dollars in Pakistan.

He said that all economic indicators of Pakistan were positive with inflation decreasing to record 6.9 as compared to 32 per cent last year.

He said that foreign exchange reserves and IT exports had witnessed surge and remittances during the first quarter of the current fiscal year had touched \$ 8.8 billion mark.

International financial institutions like International Monetary Fund and World Bank praised Pakistan's economy and renowned financial journals like Bloomberg had termed Pakistan stock exchange as the most emerging market in the region, he remarked.

## Government ready to conduct medical examination of Ex-PM Khan: sources

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The government arranged a medical examination for the former prime minister Imran Khan, with doctors set to examine him at Adiala Jail tomorrow (Tuesday), sources within the interior ministry said on Monday, as it agrees to the condition set by the PTI.

They added that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has informed PTI Chairman Gohar Khan about the decision. Gohar has requested

time for consultation regarding the matter. Doctors at PIMS Hospital would conduct the examination of the PTI founder. Furthermore, the government has not granted permission for Khan's personal physician to meet with him.

Moreover, no party officials would be allowed to meet with the founder during this process.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has informed PTI leadership about the government's decision, paving the way for the planned medical evaluation.

The PTI has called a meeting of its political committee for Monday night, which would be attended by the party's central leadership. Sources added that the meeting would focus on consultations regarding the planned protest on October 15 (tomorrow).

It merits mentioning that the PTI has announced a protest at D-Chowk on October 15, coinciding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. The party has set a condition that the protest would be postponed if they are granted a meeting with Khan.

## Govt stops payment to 18 IPPs to renegotiate contracts

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government has temporarily suspended payments to 18 Independent Power Producers (IPPs) with a combined capacity of 4,267 MW. This move precedes negotiations to shift their power purchase agreements (PPAs) from a "take-or-pay" to a "take-and-pay" model. The change is intended to be temporary, lasting until the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) is fully operational in two years.

The affected IPPs, established under 1994 and 2002 power generation policies, are being targeted for contract renegotiation. While the government hasn't publicly explained the payment halt, sources suggest it's linked to settling outstanding dues with Chinese IPPs ahead of a visit by Chinese Premier Li Qiang, and finalizing payments to five IPPs for prematurely terminated contracts. Some insiders claim the moratorium is temporary, although reasons remain undisclosed.

## Chinese Premier Li given a guard of honour at PM House

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Premier of the State Council of China Li Qiang on Monday was given a guard of honour at the Prime Minister's House as he arrived there to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and hold the delegation-level talks.

As Premier Li arrived at the venue of formal welcome reception, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warmly welcomed him. The national anthems of Pakistan and China were played as the dignitary stood at the salute dias.

The smartly turned-out contingents of three armed forces presented a guard of honour which Premier Li reviewed.

Later, both the prime ministers introduced their respective delegations to each other before proceeding for the bilateral meeting and delegation-level talks.



Premier Li also planted a saplings in the lawn of PM House.

Earlier, as Premier Li arrived here on a four-day bilateral visit, he was received by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and other cabinet members.

He also wrote on his X timeline that he was looking forward to a "historic and productive" visit by Premier Li that would further strengthen and deepen the bilateral friendship.

## Naqvi did not assure Gohar of meeting with Imran in jail, clarifies ministry

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has assured Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Barrister Gohar that a meeting with Imran Khan will be arranged in Adiala Jail on Monday, sources claimed. However, a ministry spokesperson clarified that the minister has only assured that the PTI chairman's request will be 'considered'.

According to sources, the meeting can potentially take place in jail later on Monday.

Naqvi and Gohar reportedly talked to each other on the phone on Monday, where Gohar asked for a meeting to be arranged with Imran Khan. Gohar also requested that Khan's personal physician to be allowed access to him in jail. A spokesperson for the Interior



Ministry confirmed that the call did take place, but Naqvi only assured Gohar that the request would be considered.

The spokesperson added that only allowing meetings for Imran Khan would amount to preferential treatment.

Imran Khan is incarcerated in Adiala Jail along with wife Bushra Bibi. However, jail authorities have enforced a blanket ban on meetings with inmates till October 18. The decision to ban meetings was taken in view of the security situation necessitated by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Islamabad.

# Sajjad Aheer says investment opportunities in Pakistan 'bright'

Shahzad Anwar

MULTAN: Chairman of Institute of Cost Management and Accounts International Multan Branch Council Muhammad Sajjad Aheer has said that the coming 10-15 years of Pakistan are very bright. Due to good policies, Pakistani and Foreign investors and business community should invest their money in Pakistan. Investors and business community of Pakistan should use their money in Pakistan. There is no other country more profitable than Pakistan. ICMA will continue to conduct such seminars for the development of the country. Speaking at a seminar on the occasion of World Investment Day in collaboration with International Multan Branch Council and SECP

The Chief Finance Officer of the event Damir Bhasha Dam Abdul Qoum said that to make Pakistan a developed country we need to build more dams. Bhasha Dam has also been completed. The government should activate it soon.

From the ceremony, Chairman of Footwell Hub Private Limited, Muhammad Saleem, said that the delegation of Saudi Arabian capitalists and the arrival of the Prime Minister of China to Pakistan today is a proof that Pakistan is moving towards development.

Speaking at the ceremony,



ICMA Multan Branch Secretary Muhammad Yusuf Siddiqui said that we have to research the secret of the development of the developed countries of the world, in which before investing, invest in doing business free from pollution and all kinds of diseases. All SOPs will be observed. This will also bless the business and bring prosperity to Pakistan. The

pessimism must be ended. From the seminar, CFO Waqas & Company Muhammad Waqas Khalid, Rana Akbar from Fatima Group, Amir Zaki from the company, Syed Nawazish Zaidi, Regional Manager of Al Habib Estate Management, Muhammad Shahbaz Member MBC, Muhammad Shoaib Vice Chairman MBC also addressed and highlighted the invest-

ment in the event.

In the ceremony, ICMA Joint Director Samina Khan Kayani thanked all the participants and said that the institution will continue to conduct such seminars for the information of students and the development of Pakistan. In the end she distributed commemorative shields to all the chief guests

## Takht Bhai, Dengue Fever Spreads Rapidly in Takht Bhai, Causing Concern



Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: The rapid spread of dengue fever in Takht Bhai has become a cause for concern. The number of patients admitted to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital and Type D Hospital in Lund Khwar has increased significantly.

According to Dr. Bilal Islam, Focal Person for Dengue Control at Tehsil Headquarters Hospital, The health department is working on an emergency basis to eradicate the disease. Awareness teams have been active since day one, and mosquito nets have been distributed in large numbers, exceeding last year's figures. Moreover, the health department and TMA have conducted insecticide spraying in numerous homes. However, the public's failure to take precautions, such as covering water containers and tanks, has contributed to the spread. So far, 14 positive cases have been reported from the tehsil, with 20 dengue patients visiting the OPD daily, experiencing high fever and body aches. The situation has taken an epidemic form, with multiple patients reported in every household. Critics argue that the provincial government has neglected public health concerns, and citizens' health is being compromised. To control the spread and protect citizens, the district administration, health department, and PHA must adopt a joint mechanism.

## Takht Bhai, Deputy Commissioner Mardan's Crackdown

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Mardan, Additional Assistant Commissioner Ben Amin, Conducted a crackdown on unauthorized doctors; sealed one clinic. Checked markets in Sher Garh, inspecting hotels, bakeries, and grocery stores. Expressed dissatisfaction with cleanliness; directed owners to maintain hygiene and follow official price lists. District Administration's Action Against Brick Kilns, Following Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's directives, Deputy Commissioner Mardan Mian Behzad Adil ordered administrative officers to take action against brick kilns burning rubber/tires/plastic with coal, posing health risks. Additional Assistant Commissioner Ben Amin, Warned brick kiln owners in Takht Bhai Jalala to use only coal. Threatened legal action against violators.

## Tariq Najeeb Najmi visits Al Khidmat Anwar Naz

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Former Principal Secretary to President of Pakistan Mr. Tariq Najeeb Najmi visited Al Khidmat Anwar Nazir Hospital, Vice Chair Person Management Committee Prof. Maimoona Ruhi and Secretary Management Committee Dr. Abdul Jabbar Abbasi welcomed him and informed him about the performance of the hospital. Tariq Najeeb Najmi praised the efforts of Al Khidmat Anwar Nazir Hospital for the treatment of poor and deserving patients. Considered a blessing for the residents of this area. He also reviewed the constructions of the hospital. On this occasion, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Faisalabad Mahmood-ul-Zaman Butt was also present.



## Italian ship

KARACHI: A view of an Italian ship anchored at Karachi Port.



Photo: Online

# In Inner Wheel District 343 to start breast cancer awareness campaign in schools, colleges

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Chairman of Inner Wheel District 343 Club Mrs. Shaheen Moazzam Khakwani has said that women have to step forward to prevent breast cancer and through awareness campaigns. And this disease can be prevented, which is increasing due to lack of awareness among

women. With a little effort and timely treatment, breast cancer can be avoided to a large extent. Addressing the breast cancer prevention campaign and seminar at Girls High School Gulgasht Colony, Dr. Sidra Yasin informed in detail about all the measures to prevent cancer.

She said that this disease is curable, women can avoid

cancer by self-examination of their body and tell their family members on time and consult a good doctor

Many women are scared and shy to tell, there is no need for these things, women have to take care of themselves. They told the ways to do full body checkup. On this occasion, Secretary Inner Wheel iDistrict

343 Club Mrs. Jaina Ijaz said that all our clubs will carry out awareness campaign to prevent breast cancer.

And its good results will also come, especially in schools, colleges and universities, this awareness campaign has to be successfully conducted. In the end, a walk was also conducted with the students in connection



with the awareness campaign and clothes for the uniform were also given to the students. a large number of other teachers Principal School Hina naz and and students participated.

# The Business of Interest and the Prohibition Act 2022

When a person lends money and demands profit in return, it is considered interest (riba). Undoubtedly, interest is strictly prohibited in Islam because it is a curse that not only fosters economic exploitation, greed, selfishness, and cruelty but also leads to economic devastation. This is why the Holy Quran forbids it: "O believers, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah so you may be successful." (Surah Aal-e-Imran)

The practice of taking and giving interest is an ancient economic and social activity. People often take loans to meet their financial needs. However, when the time comes to repay, procrastination and delays are common. This problem leads to severe individual,

social, and moral consequences. Since not everyone has access to large sums of money at once, they resort to borrowing. The lender provides money with interest not only to secure the amount but also to earn profit over time.

However, borrowers frequently fail to repay on time and employ various excuses and delaying tactics. Several factors may contribute to this behavior, such as the hope that their financial situation will improve. If it doesn't, repayment becomes even more challenging. The burden of repayment creates mental pressure, further complicating the borrower's situation. Additionally, people often prioritize unnecessary expenses over debt repayment, making it even more difficult to clear the loan. Sometimes, the interest rate is so high that paying both the principal amount and the accumulated interest becomes

unbearable.

Rather than settling their debts, some borrowers seek ways to avoid repayment. Instead of pursuing legal recourse, they often turn to media and newspapers for support. Unfortunately, news reports often do not highlight the borrowers' legal right to seek justice in the courts. As a result, people rely on journalism rather than the judiciary. This pattern sometimes emboldens borrowers, as they assume that public pressure will reduce the demand for repayment.

Media reporting on interest-related matters tends to be emotional and one-sided, portraying lenders negatively and borrowers as victims, which

leads to sympathy for the latter. This can create a sense of irresponsibility among borrowers, encouraging them to intentionally avoid repayment. The absence of legal guidance from the media results in a focus on lenders, treating them as villains while borrowers are given undue leniency. Consequently, people prefer the media over the courts, which is not a sustainable solution. Media outlets must act impartially and guide people toward legal resolution through the judicial system.

It has been observed that borrowers often misjudge their financial situation when taking out loans, assuming their income will increase in the future. When

this expectation is not met, repayment becomes difficult. Delays in repayment create further social problems, as the trust between lenders and borrowers erodes. If such issues arise within families or close relationships, they can damage personal bonds. Moreover, when loans are not repaid, the financial system is affected, impacting businesses and other individuals as well.

Islam declares interest unlawful and forbidden because it constitutes exploitation. Instead, it promotes Qarz-e-Hasanah (interest-free loans) to help those in need. Both the Quran and Hadith emphasize timely repayment of debts and discourage any delays. While borrowing on interest may seem like a quick solution, delayed repayment can lead to significant complications. Borrowers must consider not only their needs but also their responsibility

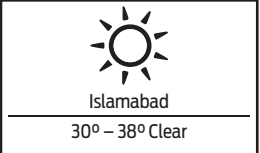
to repay the loan on time. Procrastination not only damages the borrower's reputation but also negatively impacts social and family relationships.

The solution to the problems associated with debt and interest lies in financial planning, moral education, and promoting an interest-free economic system. To prevent people from lending money for profit, Punjab's Prohibition of Private Money Lending Act, 2022 (Act XV of 2022) is in force. The law aims to curb private lending with interest, and any offenses under this Act will be tried in the court of a Judicial Magistrate of the first class.

Borrowers should bring their matters to court to seek justice, even though it may be challenging. However, this is a better course of action than publishing news about themselves and the lender in newspapers.



Zain-ul-Abideen Abid



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	4:49 am
Zohr	11:54 am
Asr	3:55 pm
Maghrib	5:35 pm
Isha	6:58 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

# Chairperson BISP Senator Rubina Khalid meets Sindh Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, held an important meeting today with the Sindh Education and Literacy Minister, Syed Sardar Ali Shah, at his office. The discussion focused on the skill development of BISP beneficiaries, the allocation of campsites in schools during BISP's quarterly payment disbursements, and the promotion of technical and vocational education in the province.

Also present were the Secretary of School Education, Zahid Ali Abbasi, BISP Sindh Director General Zulfiqar Ali Shaikh, and other senior officials.

During the meeting, Chairperson BISP emphasized that the program is working on various initiatives related to skill development and technical education to enable beneficiary families to become self-sufficient through technical training. She added that BISP and the Government of Sindh can collaborate on providing technical

training under this flagship initiative.

Chairperson Rubina Khalid highlighted that beyond financial assistance, BISP is making significant efforts to help families achieve self-reliance. "We aim to focus more on the technical education of children from BISP-registered families," she said.

Provincial Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah praised BISP's efforts and commended the Chairperson for her dedication. He remarked that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's vision of economic stability and self-sufficiency for Pakistani women remains clear. He stressed the importance of helping children who cannot complete their education due to family obligations. "By imparting both education and technical skills, we can empower our youth to achieve economic stability," the minister added.

Both parties agreed to develop an action plan for enhancing technical education and prepare a working paper outlining final recommendations. Minister Shah also briefed



Chairperson Rubina Khalid on the recent reforms in the Sindh Education Department.

Concluding the meeting, both Chairperson BISP Rubina Khalid and

Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah pledged their full support for the promotion of technical education and skills development.

Later, Chairperson Rubina Khalid

visited the Government Higher Secondary School in Shireen Jinnah Colony, where she encouraged the students to pursue diverse fields and contribute to the nation's progress.

## Capital Deserted

ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted Jinnah Avenue due to three day holiday ahead of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit 2024, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Karachi Arts Council presents Theatrical Masterpiece 'Hamlet Ki Khudkalami'

**City Desk**

KARACHI: The 38-day World Culture Festival Karachi, organized by Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, is in full swing, showcasing vibrant cultural displays. On the 19th day of the festival, the theatrical performance "Hamlet Ki Khudkalami" was presented, written and directed by Peerzada Salman. Both Peerzada Salman and Khizer Salman delivered remarkable performances in this production. A large audience gathered in the hall, thoroughly enjoying the actors' performances. It is based on the seven soliloquies that the protagonist, Hamlet, in Shakespeare's most famous tragedy about the Prince of Denmark, uses in the drama to inform the audience about his innermost thoughts. The play juxtaposes the timeless relevance of the seven speeches to the 21st century world in general and Pakistan in particular with reference to some famous personalities and situations. The play has a storyteller (played by Peerzada Salman) sitting at a desk in the right corner of the stage who will tell his personal life journey in seven stages. Each stage is accompanied by Hamlet, played by Khizer Salman, performing the corresponding soliloquy. A large screen is placed between the two performers, displaying visuals of the personalities mentioned in the narration. World Culture Festival Karachi at the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi will continue until November 2. Tickets can be purchased from the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi and TicketWala.com, and Arts Council members get it at a 50% discount.

## 'Dining in the Dark' on White Cane Day

**City Desk**

KARACHI: In a groundbreaking display of solidarity and empathy for the visually impaired community, Khaas Foodz and Zaamin Group hosted an exclusive event, "Dining in the Dark," in celebration of White Cane Safety Day 2024. This invite-only evening brought together diplomats, corporate elites, media personalities, and social leaders for a unique sensory experience that went beyond sight.

Led by the founder of Khaas Foodz, the blind chef Fizza Hussain curated a menu that delighted the senses in innovative ways. With no reliance on visual cues, guests experienced the full range of flavors and textures in each dish, highlighting the remarkable abilities of the chef and other visually impaired individuals.

Adding to the ambiance of the evening was a soul-stirring musical performance by Adnan Ahmed and Khalid



MK Anwer, whose talents resonated deeply with the audience. The performances brought a sense of emotional connection, reinforcing the idea that the visually impaired are not defined by their disabilities but by their immense potential.

Among the notable attendees were members of the Rotary Club, Khudi, academia, media professionals, govern-

ment officials, and diplomats including the Counsel General of Iran, Mr & Mrs Ataka from the Japanese Embassy in Karachi. Through this collective experience, the guests demonstrated their support and solidarity with the visually impaired community, fostering a deeper understanding of their daily challenges.

Ali Tareen, CEO of Khaas

Foodz, emphasized the mission of the event "We're bridging gaps and empowering the visually impaired through culinary excellence."

Sarwat Nasim Shah, Managing Director of Zaamin Group, shared her thoughts on the partnership "Our collaboration with Khaas Foodz showcases our commitment to social responsibility and inclusivity."

## World Sustainability Day: Pakistan's First Sustainability Summit and Awards

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD / KARACHI / LAHORE: In a pioneering effort to mark World Sustainability Day, Devcom-Pakistan (Development Communications Network), the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, and NUSTainable (the NUST office of sustainability), have joined forces to organize the first-ever "Pakistan Sustainability Summit and Awards". The event will take place on Thursday, October 24 at Best Western Premier Hotel, Islamabad.

The summit aims to address Pakistan's rising environmental challenges and promote sustainable development. It is being organized to mainstream World Sustainability Day, which is globally celebrated on October 26 but remains less recognized in Pakistan.

The Executive Director of Devcom-Pakistan, Munir Ahmed emphasized the urgency of addressing sustainability: "Sustainability practices are less understood and often compromised in Pakistan, despite mounting environmental challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss. We face economic disasters that require an urgent transition toward sustainable development." He added the summit aims to bring key stakeholders together to explore strategies for promoting green practices and building a resilient, sustainable Pakistan.

The summit will serve as a platform to foster collaboration between government agencies, private enterprises, NGOs, academia, and other key stakeholders. It will promote the responsible use of resources, economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity. Pakistan's premier sustainability event is set to promote sustainable development, facilitate knowledge sharing and innovation, encourage public-private partnerships, raise environmental awareness, showcase green business opportunities, and promote best practices in sustainability.

## AKUH Wins 'Best Hospital of the Year' Award, Presented by President Zardari



**City Desk**

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) has been honoured with the prestigious 'Best Hospital of the Year Excellence Award' at the 12th Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) Achievement Awards.

The award was presented by the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, to the AKUH, Pakistan CEO, Dr Farhat Abbas, T. I., S. I., at an award ceremony held in Islamabad on Tuesday, 8 October 2024.

Expressing his gratitude on the occasion, Dr. Farhat Abbas, CEO of AKU Health Services, Pakistan, said, "I am deeply thankful to our faculty and staff for their unwavering dedication to serving our patients. Our chancellor's vision and our teams' tireless efforts have elevated AKUH into a leading and one of the most trusted healthcare systems in Pakistan."

## ABHI Partners with People™ to Enhance Employee Financial Well-Being with Earned Wage Access

**City Desk**

KARACHI: ABHI, a leading embedded finance platform in the MENAP region, has partnered with People™, Pakistan's largest HR services provider, to offer earned wage access (EWA) to People™ clients. This collaboration will empower employees across industries to access their earned wages in real time, promoting financial wellness and reducing financial stress.

Through this partnership, ABHI's EWA solution will be integrated into

People™'s HRMS platform, allowing employees to access a portion of their earned wages before payday via the ABHI app or SMS.

Rayaan Saeed, Head of Sales of ABHI, shared his thoughts on this partnership: "Our partnership with People™ represents our shared vision of promoting financial wellness. By providing employees with Earned Wage Access, we are enabling them to take control of their finances and alleviate the stress associated with traditional payday schedules. Abraham Butt, Director Marketing

& Product Development, emphasized the importance of the collaboration, stating: "At People™, our commitment to enhancing employee well-being drives every partnership we form. By introducing Earned Wage Access (EWA) in collaboration with Abhi, we are empowering our workforce with greater financial flexibility and control."

ABHI, founded in 2021, is aimed at increasing financial inclusion across the region and has been serving Pakistan, UAE, and KSA through its credit-bridging products.



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Lahore Office: 7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.

Shanghai Conference and Political Point Scoring

As part of a media group, we visited two provinces in China, Xinjiang and Shanxi in August this year, both of which are central to many aspects of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). We witnessed firsthand the impressive infrastructure, including railroad links, warehouses, border markets, ports, dry ports, as well as air and land links. This expansive and efficient system, with a total estimated value exceeding \$1 trillion, serves as the vital arteries for seamless trade between China, Central Asian states, Russia, and Europe, facilitating over \$600 billion in trade annually, with investments exceeding \$150 billion.

open new avenues for regional cooperation, especially in sectors like infrastructure, trade, and technology.

However, it is unfortunate that the government, political parties, and other power brokers are exploiting this event for political point-scoring. This has resulted in further suppression of opposition parties, particularly the PTI, by suspending public services, disrupting the education of thousands of children, and shutting down businesses. Major transportation arteries have been closed, turning the capital into a near ghost town.

services, suppression of protests, or the shutdown of cities, courts, or businesses during such events. In countries with robust administrative systems and established democratic norms, high-profile international events like VVIP summits are managed without severe disruptions to daily life or the suspension of fundamental rights.

For instance, countries like France, Malaysia, and the United States have hosted major international events such as the G7, APEC summits, and COP climate conferences with minimal disturbance. During the Paris Climate Agreement and G7 Summits, France implemented advanced security protocols while ensuring that public institutions remained operational, allowing citizens to carry on with their daily routines.



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Moreover, fundamental rights have been suspended under the guise of providing security for the SCO meeting. Protests and public meetings have been banned, meetings between PTI leaders and their incarcerated members prohibited, and courts and offices closed. These actions are being used as an opportunity to push through controversial constitutional amendments, detracting from the event's potential for positive diplomatic and economic outcomes. This exploitation not only undermines the essence of hosting such a significant international meeting but also jeopardizes the opportunity for Pakistan to benefit from deeper regional cooperation and enhanced credibility.

On the other hand, PTI and other opposition parties must approach the event with a sense of political maturity. While they have the right to voice dissent and protest, they should avoid actions that could disrupt or undermine the significance of the SCO meeting. Given the potential long-term benefits for the country, including increased trade, investment, and diplomatic relations, PTI's role should be constructive—promoting dialogue and ensuring that their political activities do not harm Pakistan's standing on the international stage. Both the government and the opposition need to recognize that hosting such events is a national duty, and political point-scoring should not take precedence over the broader national interest.

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

SCO Summit 2024 Islamabad

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2024 takes place in Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 15-16. Hosting this prestigious event signifies Pakistan's growing importance in regional affairs. The summit's theme, "Strengthening Multilateral Dialogue; Striving towards a sustainable peace and Prosperity," reflects a focus on collaboration and progress.

The SCO participants will be represented by the prime ministers of China, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as well as the vice president of Iran and the external affairs minister of India.

Pakistan can enhance diplomatic ties with major powers like Russia, China, and Central Asian nations. This summit can even offer a platform for potentially easing tensions with India.

Economic Growth: Hosting the SCO Summit presents opportunities to attract foreign investment, boost trade, and expand markets beyond existing projects like CPEC.

Climate Change Advocacy: Pakistan, a country significantly impacted by climate change, can use this platform to raise awareness and seek support for developing countries.

Internal Issues: Political instability and governance concerns within Pakistan could hinder its ability to fully engage and influence the SCO.

Dominant Powers: Major members like China and Russia hold significant influence within the SCO, potentially overshadowing the voices of smaller nations like Pakistan.

Western Perception: Some may perceive the SCO as a counterweight to Western alliances, requiring careful diplomacy from Pakistan to avoid straining relations with the West.

Confidence Building Measures: Promote initiatives to reduce regional tension and pave the way for lasting stability.

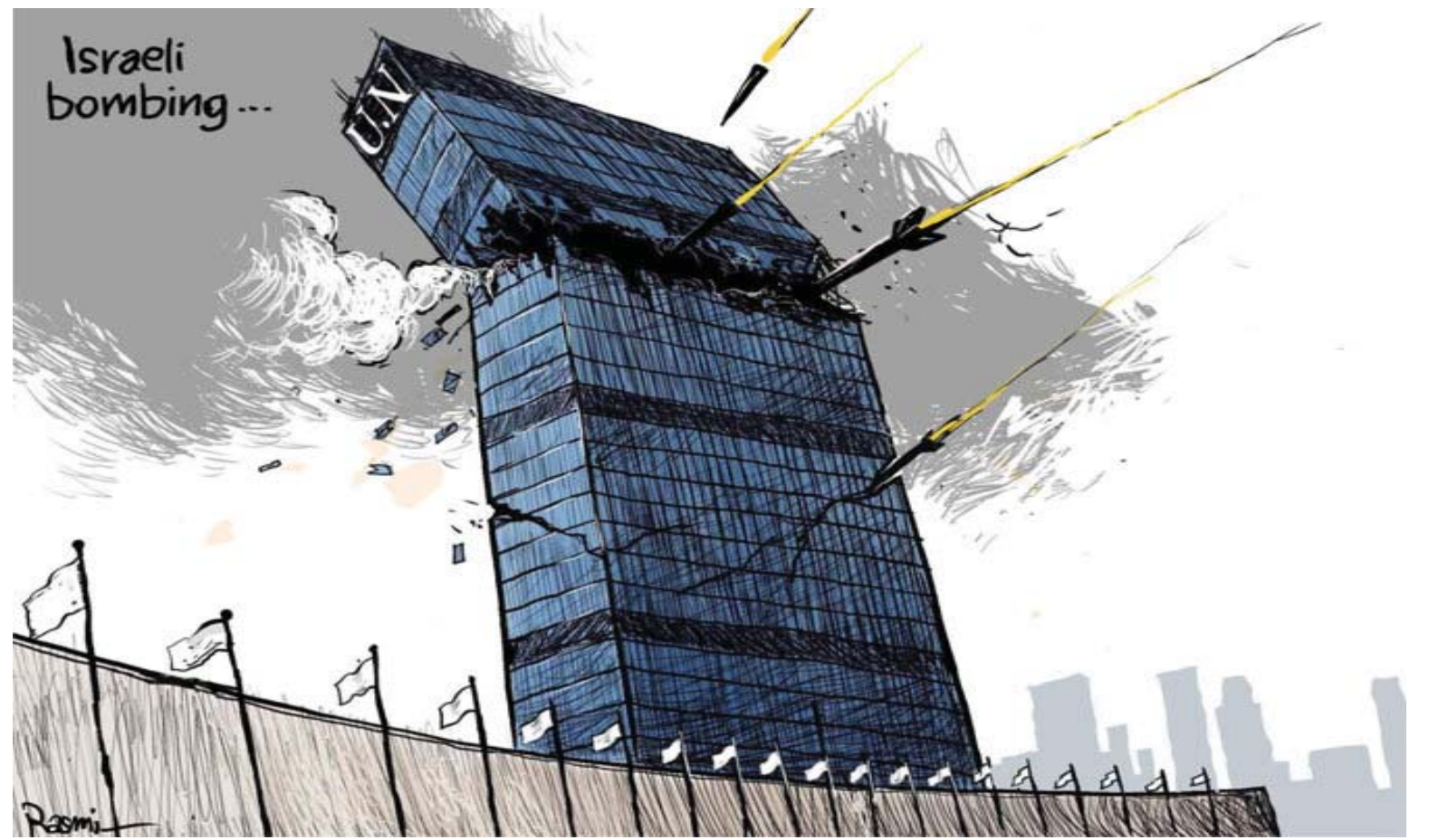
Focus on Collective Issues: Avoid politicizing the forum by keeping bilateral conflicts separate from regional discussions.

Advocate for Equality: Advocate for equal representation in decision-making processes within the SCO to ensure a fair voice for all members.

Climate Change Cooperation: Push for collaborative efforts within the SCO framework to address climate challenges through initiatives like climate funds.

Hosting the SCO Summit 2024 presents Pakistan with strategic opportunities and diplomatic challenges. By focusing on regional cooperation, economic advancement, and climate change awareness, Pakistan can leverage this summit to solidify its position as a key player in regional and global affairs. However, addressing internal issues and navigating the influence of major powers will be critical for Pakistan to maximize the benefits of this prestigious event.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional international organization founded in 2001, aiming to promote economic, political, and security cooperation among its member states. The SCO emphasizes mutual trust, equality, and non-interference in internal affairs, focusing on regional stability and development. The SCO has 9 member countries: China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, and Iran. Additional countries hold observer or dialogue partner status. The SCO cooperates in areas such as security, counterterrorism, trade, energy, infrastructure, culture, and education, fostering cooperation and stability in Central Asia and beyond.



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

SCO summit, an opportunity to propagate the Pakistan

The upcoming annual session of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which will be hosted by Pakistan, is a significant event that offers the country a rare and valuable opportunity to enhance its reputation on both the regional and international stage. The importance of this event cannot be overstated, especially with the participation of India's foreign minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, whose presence signals the global and regional significance of the session. This presents Pakistan with a golden opportunity to project its "soft image" to the world, not only through diplomatic efforts but also across multiple domains such as culture, industry, tourism, and human resource development.

could leverage the SCO session to its advantage. Pakistan's rich cultural and natural heritage, from the ancient ruins of Mohenjo-daro to the stunning landscapes of the Karakoram mountain range, makes it an attractive tourist destination. However, Pakistan has struggled to fully realize its potential in this sector, often due to concerns about security and accessibility.

During the SCO session, Pakistan should propose agreements that streamline visa processes for citizens of SCO member states, making it easier for tourists, investors, and professionals to visit the country. By easing travel restrictions and promoting tourism-friendly policies, Pakistan could tap into the growing interest in regional tourism and attract visitors from countries like China, Russia, and Central Asian republics, all of which have historical and cultural ties to Pakistan.



Analysis

M Azam Tariq

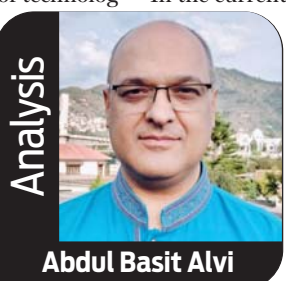
Additionally, special visa policies could be introduced to facilitate not just tourism, but also business travel and investment-related visits. These policies could be tailored to specific sectors, encouraging foreign entrepreneurs and investors to explore opportunities in Pakistan's burgeoning industries.

In addition to cultural and economic exchanges, Pakistan should seek to formalize special agreements with SCO members in fields where each country holds particular expertise. For example, Pakistan could collaborate with China on infrastructure projects, draw on Russian expertise in energy development, or partner with Central Asian states on agricultural innovations. By pooling resources and knowledge, Pakistan and its SCO partners can address mutual challenges and promote sustainable development in the region.

State, People, Army & Anarchy-II

Pakistan benefits from a substantial demographic advantage. The substantial pool of young talent in Pakistan offers significant opportunities for economic growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship. By investing in education and skill development, this youthful demographic can be transformed into a powerful driver of technological progress and economic advancement. Pakistan is rich in diverse natural resources, including minerals, energy reserves, and agricultural assets. Proper exploration and development of these resources can stimulate industrial growth and reduce dependence on imports. Strategic management and investment in sectors such as mining, energy, and agriculture can greatly contribute to national development and economic self-reliance.

critical time, and it's the responsibility of the people to collaborate for the greater good, rejecting those who prioritize their own interests. For the citizens of Pakistan, it's crucial to appreciate the importance of Pakistan and the Pakistan Army, recognizing their potential for growth. Our enemies and anti-state elements are actively working against us. In the current situation, the country cannot afford the anarchy and hatred spread by certain political factions in Pakistan and the Awami Action Committee in AJK. These actions are not only disrupting daily life for the people but also threatening the inflow of investment and economic growth. The tourism industry in AJK has been particularly impacted by the ongoing protests. The violence associated with these protests is unacceptable to the people of both Pakistan and AJK. Those instigating hate and violence have been fully exposed, and the public recognizes that their actions serve their own interests and align with the agendas of our adversaries.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Embracing innovation and technology is crucial for driving progress. Pakistan's growing tech industry and increasing digital connectivity offer opportunities for advancements in sectors such as fintech, e-commerce, and digital services. Supporting research and development and implementing policies that encourage technology adoption can position Pakistan as a hub for technological innovation. People also need to recognize what is beneficial for them and what is harmful. The ongoing protests in Pakistan and AJK are unjustified. Once the issues in AJK are resolved, further protests from groups like the Awami Action Committee are unfair. Similarly, in Pakistan, some political leaders and parties seem to be inciting protests for their own agendas, potentially leading to violence, which plays into the hands of our adversaries. No one should take the law into their own hands; everyone must adhere to regulations governing peaceful protests. The country requires unity, stability, and peace during this

In a global environment marked by geopolitical tensions, national resilience is crucial. Propaganda aimed at destabilizing Pakistan by targeting its institutions plays into the hands of adversaries. A united and supportive populace strengthens national resilience. By rejecting divisive propaganda and attempts, Pakistan can enhance its cohesiveness and ability to face both external and internal challenges. A positive national identity, rooted in respect and support for the country and its institutions, is vital. Negative narratives that spread mistrust can erode this identity. Embracing a supportive view of the country and its armed forces fosters patriotism and collective well-being, reinforcing the bond between the state, its people, and the army, ultimately driving Pakistan towards further growth and prosperity.

# Li Qiang's visit to Pakistan to expand bilateral cooperation, build high quality CPEC: China

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: Chinese Premier Li Qiang official visit to Pakistan would enhance traditional friendship, strengthen strategic communication, expand bilateral cooperation across the board and building of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in a high quality way, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Monday.

Through this visit, China looks to working with Pakistan to enhance the traditional friendship, strengthen strategic communication, build China Pakistan Economic Corridor in a high quality way, deepen and expand cooperation across the board, and accelerate the building of a closer China Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era and jointly work for regional peace, development and prosperity, Mao Ning said during her regular briefing held here.



At the invitation of Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif, Chinese Premier Li Qiang is visiting Pakistan from October 14 to 17.

The spokesperson said that China and Pakistan are ironclad friends and all weather strategic cooperative partners and added, Our relations have

stood the test of time and remained rock solid.

She pointed out that this June Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif paid an official visit to China. The two sides actively delivered on the important common understandings reached by the leaders of the two countries and the bilateral relations have maintained sound momentum of development.

She said that this is primarily Li Qiang first visit to Pakistan after he took office and marks exchange of visits at the head of government level between the two countries within a year, which is of significance to deepening all weather strategic cooperative partnership.

During the visit, Premier Li Qiang of the State Council will attend the 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to be held in Islamabad.

# CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif Warmly Greets Chinese Prime Minister H. E. Li Qiang

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif warmly welcomed the arrival of Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "We heartily welcome Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang from the core of heart on behalf of the Punjab government and its people. The visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to Pakistan is deemed as the beginning of a new chapter of mutual friendship. The relations between China and Pakistan are the guarantors of world peace, prosperity and development of the region."

The credit for the warmth and cordial relations between Pakistan and China goes to the Quaid of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif is playing a vigorous role in strengthening and stabilizing Pakistan-China

relations. The launching of CPEC during the regime of PML-N gives an undeniable proof of Pakistan-China friendship."

The Chief Minister added, "With the arrival of the Chinese Prime Minister, the CPEC projects will accelerate and lakhs of employment opportunities will be generated. The mutual friendship between Pakistan and China is built on a solid foundation of trust and respect."

Pakistan and China's mutual cooperation in every hour of distress and difficulty has become a part of history. Pakistan and China are moving together towards a prosperous and peaceful future.

Pakistan-China friendship is getting further stronger with each passing day. The Belt and Road Initiative profoundly expresses China's commitment to global prosperity. People across the globe are benefiting from the fruits of China's economic development."

## Delegation Level Talks

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif and Chinese Premier H.E. Li Qiang in delegation level talks on Monday.



Photos: PID

# Pakistani Business Leaders and SAARC CCI Strengthen Economic Ties at 2024

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Butt, Secretary General, SAARC CCI, alongside Mr. Mubashir Ahmed Shahid, Managing Director, INFONEX BPO, and Mr. Nasir Mehmood, CEO, Shah Posh, represented Pakistan at the 2024 Sichuan-South Asia & Southeast Asia Business Development Cooperation Conference.

The conference convened on September 11, 2024, in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China was organized by SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SAARC CCI) with China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), and the Provincial Government of Sichuan under the theme "Green, Open and Sharing"- Together Build the Belt and Road and Draw a Blueprint for Cooperation.

Mr. Molana Abdul Ghafoor Haidri, Member of Pakistan's National Assembly and Former Deputy

Chairman of the Senate, in his address, echoed the need for stronger regional cooperation and the role of China in fostering economic growth across South Asia.

Mr. Chandni Raj Dhakal, Acting President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI) shared that South Asia is one of the largest markets in the world in terms of size and capacity. With untapped natural, social, and economic resources, it offers a very investable opportunity. However, South Asia is confronted with several challenges, such as deficient technological infrastructure.

Mian Anjum Nisar, Vice President, SAARC CCI (Pakistan Chapter) extended his warm wishes and underscored the importance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in strengthening bilateral relations between China and Pakistan. He stated, "CPEC exemplifies the strategic partnership between our two brotherly

nations. Through its network of roads, railways, energy projects, and transport infrastructure, it will transform the regional landscape and unlock vast economic potential."

In his remarks, Mr. Hu Yun, Vice Governor of Sichuan Provincial People's Government reiterated the need to strengthen economic ties between China and South Asia for mutual benefit.

The plenary session featured esteemed speakers, including Mr. Thanousone Phonamat, Vice President of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Mr. Chen Zhengyong, Head of United Front Work Department and President of Federation of Trade Unions of Guangyuan.

On the sidelines of the conference, several parallel events took place, including South Asia and Southeast Asia Opportunities and Investment Environment Promotion Conference

& Business Matchmaking, Sichuan - Vietnam Construction Cooperation Project Promotion Conference, and Dialogue Activity on Pluralistic Resolution of International Commercial Disputes in South Asia & Southeast Asia.

A significant highlight of the conference was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI) and the Chengdu Institute of Standardization. The MOU aims to promote economic and trade exchanges, industrial cooperation, and personnel exchanges between Chengdu and South Asian countries through standardization.

The conference provided a platform for business leaders, policymakers, and entrepreneurs to engage in meaningful discussions, forge new partnerships, and explore opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.

## APC: AJK govt always supports Kashmir freedom struggle: Ch Anwar

Bureau Report



MIRPUR (AJK): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Prime Minister (PM), Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has reiterated his government's all out support to Kashmir cause of self-determination.

The AJK PM said this while addressing an All-party conference held in Poonch Division's Rawalakot city under the aegis of Jammata Islami Azad Jammu and Kashmir late Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the basic purpose for establishing base camp was to strengthen the freedom movement and liberate the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The ideological basis of a nation is something that one cannot compare with that of development", the PM said, adding that AJK had progressed beyond imagination since 1947. He said that the people of Azad Kashmir enjoyed every kind of facility.

"We are providing electricity to our citizens at three rupee per unit and 40 KG flour at 2000 rupees", the PM said.

"Do the people in Indian occupied Kashmir enjoy same rights and privileges as people of Azad Kashmir do?", the PM asked.

He said that there was no need to adopt an apologetic tone when it comes the issue of Kashmir, adding that infidels could never be our friends. "We are all guilty if we fail to our voices against the injustices meted out to the people of Kashmir and Palestine", he added.

## Canada expels Indian diplomats as police probe Sikh leader killing

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, right, shakes hand with Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau during the G20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi, September 9, 2023. AFP/File

In a significant escalation of diplomatic tensions, Canada has expelled six Indian diplomats following a police investigation that revealed a "campaign of violence" targeting dissidents, Canadian government sources told Reuters and the Associated Press.

In a retaliatory action, the Indian foreign ministry announced that it has expelled six Canadian diplomats, giving them until Saturday to leave the country.

This came after designated Indian High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma and several other diplomats as "persons of interest" in the investigation into the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Sikh leader and Canadian citizen.

Relations between Canada and India have been strained since September 2023, when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that there was credible evidence linking Indian agents to the assassination of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil earlier that year.

# Israel kills at least 18 in strike on Christian town in north Lebanon

Reuters

Israel expanded its targets in its war with Hezbollah in Lebanon on Monday, killing at least 18 people in an airstrike on the Christian-majority town of Aitou in the north, the Lebanese Red Cross said.

So far, the main focus of Israel's military operations in Lebanon has been in the south, the Bekaa Valley in the east and the suburbs of Beirut.

The strike in Aitou hit a house that had been rented to displaced families, Aitou mayor Joseph Trad told Reuters. In addition to the deaths, four people were injured, the Red Cross said.

In the south, Israel ordered residents of 25 villages to evacuate to areas north of the Awali River, which flows east to west some 60 km (35 miles) north of the Israeli frontier.

The Israeli military said it had killed Muhammad Kamel Naim, commander of the anti-tank missile



unit of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force, in a strike in the Nabatieh area of south Lebanon.

Hezbollah did not immediately comment.

The operations come amid tensions between Israel and the U. N. peace-

keepers, as Israel keeps pushing forces through the area in an attempt to wipe out Iran-backed Hezbollah and its military infrastructure while it also battles Hamas in Gaza.

The U. N. said Israeli tanks had burst into its base on Sunday, the latest allegations of Israeli violations against peacekeeping forces.

Israel disputed the U. N. account and Netanyahu said UNIFIL was providing "human shields" for Hezbollah, an allegation Hezbollah denies.

Meanwhile, the entire Middle East remains on high alert for Israel to retaliate against Iran for an Oct. 1 barrage of long-range missiles launched in response to Israel's assaults on Lebanon.

The Pentagon said on Sunday it would send U. S. troops to Israel along with an advanced U. S. anti-missile system.

Israel and the United Nations have been trading accusations over the

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
85,261.38	85,483.40
Day's High	Day's Low
86,105.02	85,156.11
Index Value	Change
18,568,833,435	-222.02
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	14 Oct, 2024 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,292.66	+39.01
Percentage	Time
+0.47%	14 Oct, 4:35 pm GMT+1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
43,016.97	+153.11
Percentage	Time
+0.36%	14 Oct, 1:37 pm GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,605.80	+224.91
Percentage	Time
+0.57%	11 Oct, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186.89	189.14
Bahrain Dinar	731.21	739.21
Canadian Dollar	202.80	205.20
China Yuan	38.88	39.28
Danish Krone	40.29	40.69
Euro	301.75	304.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.37	35.72
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	897.37	906.87
Malaysian Ringgit	64.13	64.73
New Zealand \$	170.21	178.21
Norwegians Krone	25.65	25.95
Omani Riyal	715.71	724.21
Qatari Riyal	76.24	76.94
Saudi Riyal	73.60	74.15
Singapore Dollar	210.75	212.75
Swedish Korona	26.46	26.76
Swiss Franc	322.20	324.88
Thai Bhat	8.18	8.33
U.A.E Dirham	75.35	76.00
UK Pound Sterling	360.70	364.2
US Dollar	278.00	279.50

# China economic development group visits FPCCI to explore investment, trade opportunities

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that a high-profile delegation of The China Asia Economic Development Association (CAEDA) has visited FPCCI to explore investment, joint ventures and trade opportunities in mines & mineral; information technology and IT-enabled services (ITeS); agriculture & livestock; food processing & storage; infrastructure development and renewable & alternative energy sources.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh explained that next phase of China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) can be the real game-changers for the national economy - as we have geographical contiguities; economic complementarities; regional trade advantages and ability to look East & diversify our economic partners.



Mr. Abdul Mohamin Khan, VP FPCCI & Reginal Chairman, said that bilateral trade between Paki-

stan and China is showing increasing trend since the implementation of the China - Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA). Bilateral trade volume between the two countries has surpassed \$20 billion, he added.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha, Chairman of FPCCI's Pakistan - China Business Council, stated that currently Pakistan exports cotton yarn, rice, refined copper, fish, chromium ores & concentrates, aluminum, unwrought, dry fruit and ethyl alcohol to China.

The China Asia Economic Development Association (CAEDA) delegation was led by Mr. Qian Qiu Zhu, who is the President of Cross-Border Trade Development Committee. He stressed that CAEDA wants to establish Pakistan Zero - Tariff Trade Zone; establishment of service center in Pakistan for Chinese imports and exploring opportunities in multiple sectors of the economy.

## Inauguration

DUBAI: H.E. Faisal Nirmizi, Pakistan's Ambassador to UAE inaugurated Pakistan Pavilion at GITEX GLOBAL at Dubai World Trade Centre on Monday.



Photo: Online

## UBG's Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari Visits Aiwan-e-Karkunan-e-Pakistan, Lahore



**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Secretary General United Business Group and member of Nazaria Pakistan Trust's Board of Governors, Zafar Bakhtawari, visited Aiwan-e-Karkunan-e-Pakistan, Lahore, accompanied by family members, Punjab Health Advisor Zahid Bakhtawari, Citizen Forum Islamabad President Abid Bakhtawari, and their families.

During the visit, Bakhtawari paid homage to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Iqbal, and other national heroes who sacrificed for Pakistan's independence. He also visited the

"Pakistan Movement Photo Gallery" and "Dr. Nazir Qaiser Library".

Bakhtawari reaffirmed his commitment to raising awareness among the younger generation about the sacrifices made for Pakistan's independence and its ideology. He emphasized the importance of preserving Pakistan's historical legacy.

He praised Nazaria Pakistan's efforts in promoting Pakistan's ideology and safeguarding its ideological borders. He stressed the need to educate youth about Pakistan's struggle for independence, its ideology, and the sacrifices made.

## Jubilee Life Insurance signs on to Sponsor the Next Three Pakistan Insurtech Summits

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Jubilee Life Insurance, Pakistan's largest private insurer, recently signed an MOU with the Pakistan Fintech Network (PFN) for sponsorship of the upcoming Pakistan Insurtech Summits in 2024, 2025, and 2026. The annual Pakistan Insurtech Summit aims to drive innovation in the insurance sector, bringing together the key stakeholders in the sector and focusing on how technology can transform insurance services across Pakistan.

The 2nd Pakistan Insurtech Summit will take place in November 2024, at Karachi following a theme of "Transforming Pakistan's Insurance Landscape: Synergy of Tech, Partnership and Policy" where industry professionals will come together to shed light on various pressing issues concerning the industry right now. The third and fourth Pakistan Insurtech Summit are slated to take place in 2025 and 2026 respectively.

Mr. Farhan Faridi, Group Head - Retail Operations, Marketing, and Admin at Jubilee Life Insurance, shared his thoughts on the partnership stating,



"Jubilee Life has always been committed to advancing innovation in the insurance sector.

Mr. Fahad Sajid, CEO of Pakistan Fintech Network, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, noting, "We are thrilled to have Jubilee Life Insurance on board as the title sponsor for the Pakistan Insurtech Summits.

The Pakistan Insurtech Summit serves as a platform to discuss emerging technologies, exchange ideas, and build collaborations that will shape the future of insurance in Pakistan. The event highlights how digital platforms, AI, and analytics can improve efficiency, enhance customer experience, and enable better risk management across the industry.

## Arrests on Accusation of Sales Tax Fraud

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In pursuance of the press conference held on 10-10-2024, collectively by the Finance Minister, the Chairman FBR & the Director General, Intelligence & Investigation, Inland Revenue informing about the crackdown to be conducted against beneficiary businesses of fake/flying invoices and their CFOs involved in tax malpractices, Regional Directorates of Intelligence & Investigations Inland Revenue arrested five accused on 14-10-2024 across the country including one of the leading fraudsters engaged in creating chains of dummy businesses and four members of top management of

End users/beneficiaries (CFOs) responsible for the tax fraud involving billions of sales tax loss to the National Exchequer.

While taking action in a registered FIR involving billions of sales tax fraud, the Directorate of Intelligence & Investigation-Inland Revenue, Hyderabad, has arrested the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Purchase Officer of a leading Lahore-based Battery Manufacturer on charges of abetment/connivance in Sales Tax fraud by claiming fake input tax on Lead. In this intelligence-based operation, the Hyderabad team was assisted by the Directorate Lahore. The revenue loss caused by the arrested accused alone is more

than a billion to the National exchequer.

In a separate intelligence-based operation, the Directorate of Intelligence & Investigation-Inland Revenue, Faisalabad, has arrested Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) of TWO (02) sister concerns and leading Faisalabad-based textile unit on the charges of abetment/connivance in Sales Tax fraud by claiming fake input tax on coal. The revenue loss caused by the fraudulent practices involving a gang of fraudsters runs in hundreds of millions of PKR to the national exchequer. An FIR had already been registered against the suppliers, beneficiaries, connivers, and others.

In another development, the pre-arrest bail of accused Taswar Shahid, nominated in several FIRs, was rejected by the Court on 14-10-2024. Subsequently, he was arrested from outside the Courtroom. He is a leading member of the Gang operating fake and dummy units for generating fake sales tax input, which is used by the End Users/Beneficiaries, causing billions of losses to the National Exchequer.

These arrests have been executed in the wake of the country-wide crackdown against the organized mafia and beneficiaries involved in sales tax fraud and in line with FBR's enforcement measures to enhance tax compliance.

## Alhaji Vohra welcomes SCO delegations to attend the Summit

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Central President Cloth Board Ethihad Group Pakistan Alhaji Naseer Yousuf Vohra has welcomed the arrival of the delegations to attend the SCO Summit and said that Islamabad: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is scheduled for October 15 and 16 in the federal capital. (SCO) extend a warm welcome to the delegations on their arrival to attend the Summit. He has further said that the 23rd meeting of the heads of the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be held in Islamabad from October 15 to 16. Which will have a deep impact on the economy of Pakistan. All the business community of Pakistan will express good thoughts for the guest. While the member countries of the conference



will be represented by the Prime Ministers of China, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Iran's first vice president and India's foreign minister will also attend the meeting and the meeting will discuss cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, socio-cultural relations, environment, while important decisions related to the promotion of cooperation and the organization's budget will be discussed. Approval will also be given.

We hope and pray that the outcomes of the SCO conference will lead to lasting peace and security, both regionally and internationally. We urge the government to consider measures that can mitigate the economic impact on local businesses, while also ensuring that such sacrifices are recognized as an integral part of our national contribution to fostering regional cooperation.

We pray to Almighty Allah for a successful conference and a peaceful, prosperous outcome that benefits not only Pakistan but the entire region, President Qureshi concluded.

## Gold prices up by Rs.200 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.200 and was sold at Rs.275,700 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs. 275,500 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs. 171 to Rs. 236,368

from Rs. 236,197 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 216,671 from Rs. 215,256, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs. 3,050 and Rs. 2,614.88, respectively.

*An event of immense significance for fostering regional stability: President ICCI*

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad is honored to host the prestigious Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference, an event of immense significance for fostering regional stability, prosperity, and socio-economic development. We are confident that the agreements and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) formed during this conference will have the potential to transform the economic landscape, bringing new opportunities and partnerships for member countries. With China and Russia's capable leadership, we believe this conference could create a balanced global power dynamic, enhancing the socio-economic influence of the entire region, this has been stated by the President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in a statement issued here on Monday.

Despite the multiple challenges being faced by it, the business community of Islamabad fully understands the importance of this event for Pakistan and the region. We view our economic sacrifices during this period as a contribution to the greater national interest and regional stability. It is our belief that the short-term losses we are enduring will ultimately pave the way for long-term peace, security, and economic growth. This sacrifice is not just for the benefit of Pakistan, but for the collective good of all SCO member states.

We hope and pray that the outcomes of the SCO conference will lead to lasting peace and security, both regionally and internationally. We urge the government to consider measures that can mitigate the economic impact on local businesses, while also ensuring that such sacrifices are recognized as an integral part of our national contribution to fostering regional cooperation.

We pray to Almighty Allah for a successful conference and a peaceful, prosperous outcome that benefits not only Pakistan but the entire region, President Qureshi concluded.

# There is only one reason behind it that we take 20 wickets and win the matches

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan's Cricket Team Bowling Coach and Former Pakistan Star Cricketer Azhar Mehmood has said that why the pitch is kept the same in the second Test match played at Multan Cricket Stadium? There is only one reason behind it that we take 20 wickets and win the match, there will be more opportunities for the spinners. The only reason for playing the second consecutive Test on the pitch was to take 20 wickets.

The new management tried to make a grass pitch first, now towards spin. We had a clear plan. We made the pace against Bangladesh and the spin track against England according to the plans.

Changes in the team were necessary. There is so much cricket in Pakistan's FTP, so the selectors rested Babar. Pakistan's bowling coach Azhar Mehmood paid tribute to Babar Azam and said that he is the number one batsman. He was not dropped, he was rested. Cricket is the only thing till April and he will make a comeback.



In the press conference at Multan Cricket Stadium, he has said that it was difficult to take out all the experienced pacers at once, but you see the results of all the Test matches last year. They were not able to take 20 wickets. Now there

has been a change. This time more than the spinners. It is expected. Naseem Shah had some problems and Shaheen Afridi had played a lot of cricket.

If you see, the change is the same. There is one change in place of Babar.

In the spin, we replaced pacers with spinners. Babar wanted to play but decided this for the betterment of Pakistan and Babar. He also decided this for Shaheen.

In response to a question, Pakistan bowling coach Azhar Mehmood has said that he was preparing the pitches as he wanted.

Azhar Mehmood has claimed that all are experienced players. Having been playing for a long time, we have decided to feed the players at our home. Multan's hot weather has improved now. When you are fit, conditions are secondary. Goes to No. Fitness is very important. England are not affected by the weather. In response to a question, they said that we have made the pitch for spin. Pakistan's 11-member team has been announced. The supporting staff and management committee along with the PCB made a unanimous decision to change the team. There is no disagreement.

Mehran Mumtaz is a left arm spinner, he toured Australia with Shaheens, performed well.

## 16-member Pak squad arrives in Indonesia to participate in the 6th Asian Open Kyorugi Taekwondo Championship

Sports Desk

KARACHI: A 16-member taekwondo squad of Pakistan has arrived in Indonesia to participate in the 6th Asian Open Kyorugi Taekwondo Championship played in Tangerang, Indonesia.

The event will be played from October 15 to 18 at the Indore Stadium Sports Center. More than 275 athletes from other Asian countries including India, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal and the host Indonesia will be in action.

Among the male players of the national squad are Haroon Khan (-58 kg) Numan Khan (-63 kg) Saud Alam (-63 kg) Muhammad Arbaz Khan (-68 kg) Mazhar Abbas (-80 kg) Ikhtsham-ul-Haq (-87 kg) and Hamza Omar Saeed (+87 kg) while the names of Noor Rahman (-57 kg), Maleeha Ali (-73 kg), and Manisha Ali (+73 kg) are included in the women's team.

Lieutenant Colonel Zeeshan Aslam is the head of the team, Master Yusuf Karami is the head coach, Syed Sadaqat Hussain is manager and



Faisal Nadeem Butt is the physio of the team.

The national players have started their training session in the indoor stadium under the supervision of the head coach Master Yusuf Karami.

Hamza Saeed, who will partici-

pate in the +87 kg weight category in the competition, has said that a lot of preparation has been done for the championship.

During the event, there will also be an opportunity to discuss with our contemporaries and profes-

sional coaches from other countries, which will be beneficial for us in the future. -57 kg female taekwondo player Noor Rehman says that she will not take any fight lightly and present good news to the nation by winning medals for Pakistan.

## Pakistan determined to win 2nd test against England: Azhar Mahmood

Sports Desk

MULTAN: Pakistan cricket team's Assistant Coach Azhar Mahmood expressed strong optimism ahead of the second Test against England, vowing to utilize the conditions in their favor and make every effort to secure a victory.

Talking to the media on Monday, Mahmood reflected on the first Test, admitting that the team had hoped for more spin but did not get the desired turn from the pitch. "We were expecting the ball to spin more, but it did not until the final day. This time, we are hopeful the ball will behave differently," he said.

Responding to the questions about the absence of star player Babar Azam for the upcoming match, Mahmood clarified that Babar had not been dropped but was instead given rest. "Babar is our



number one player. He has not been dropped, he was just resting. The selection committee made the decision to rest not only Babar but also Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi," Mahmood explained.

He highlighted the mental toll on players in recent months, noting, "No matter how strong a player may seem, ongoing challenges can take a mental toll and that was important to give Babar and

Shaheen a break."

The assistant coach also emphasized the importance of player fitness ahead of upcoming tours to Australia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, adding that there was a lot of cricket ahead. This was the best time to give our key players some rest. I am confident that Babar, Naseem, and Shaheen will return refreshed and ready for action, he maintained.

Mahmood praised England's fitness and resilience, acknowledging that when players were in top physical condition, weather and other external factors matter less. Nonetheless, Pakistan was confident in their preparations and eager to even the series. The second Test promises to be a thrilling encounter, with Pakistan determined to bounce back from the challenges of the first match and put in a strong performance.

### That I worked hard for fitness: Ben Stokes

Asim Tanveer



MULTAN: England Cricket Team Captain Ben Stokes has said that there are 2 Tests in a row on one pitch, smiling and saying that I think it is like that. "If it's the same pitch, I hope we win the toss and bat first," Ben Stokes said.

Addressing the press conference at the Multan Cricket Stadium, English captain Ben Stokes has said that I worked hard for fitness. When I was sure that I was completely physically fit, the physios cleared me. I have worked hard in the summer, now I can play. I will play. In response to a question, Ben Stokes says that I love Test cricket and I will continue to play. We have selected the team for the second test match against Pakistan. I don't think we will add any more spinners. Already 2 spinners are included.

In response to a question, the English captain has said that the pitches are thought of, but there are equal opportunities for both teams. Let's see who will benefit. This pitch can also be on the 5th day and it can also be called the 6th day pitch. We will continue our policy. There are equal opportunities for both teams. The result can be clear on the third day of the match. Maybe on the fourth day. A lead of 100 to 150 against Pakistan is very important. We know that we can win against Pakistan. We can, that's why we tried. Even after scoring 823 runs, we were sure of victory.

Ben Stokes says that DRS is used on chance but it has to be assumed that it will happen. Babar Azam is not playing for Pakistan. No problem for us. Me Babar Azam. Apart from Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah and Sarfaraz what can I say about?

### HEC secures 3rd position in inter-departmental Karate championship

Sports Desk



ISLAMABAD: The team of Higher Education Commission (HEC), gave an impressive performance at the Inter-departmental Karate Championship held at Nishtar Park Sports Complex, Lahore, and secured 3rd position. Watch live sports online

HEC team demonstrated exceptional skill and dedication, winning a total of 18 medals, including 1 gold, 6 silver, and 11 bronze medals.

In the female category, Nimra Ali won the silver medal in Individual Kata, while the team comprising Hafiza Iqra Anwar, Summaya Rafaqat, and Aayira Faisal won bronze medal in Team Kata. The team also won one bronze medal in Team Kumite. Other notable female performances included four silver medals and three bronze medals in various weight categories.

The male team also gave a very good performance with Haris Nadeem winning a bronze medal in Individual Kata. The team comprising Haris Nadeem, Dilawar, Nouman Arshad, and Alyan secured bronze medal in Team Kata. The team won silver medal in Team Kumite, while Syed Wasi Haider clinched a gold medal in the below 75 kg weight category. Other male athletes won five bronze medals in various weight categories.

Expert guidance, up to the mark training, teamwork, athletes' dedication and hard work led to this impressive performance.

HEC's participation in the championship demonstrates its commitment to promoting sports excellence and empowering university students to achieve laurels in both academics and athletics.

### Jannik Sinner wins Shanghai Masters to deny Novak Djokovic 100th career title

World number one Jannik Sinner defeated 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 on Sunday to win the Shanghai Masters.

Sinner took a crucial break in the fourth game of the second set to defeat the Serb in 1hr 37min and deny him a 100th career singles title.

"He was just too good today, too strong, too fast," said Djokovic after the match.

Sinner saluted his opponent as a "legend" who kept playing "incredible tennis... year after year".

In a nod to former Djokovic rival Roger Federer, who was watching from the stands, the 23-year-old joked: "There are legends everywhere, I just try to keep up a little bit."

Facing off before an impassioned crowd, neither player blinked in the first set, unable to break the other's serve.

In the tiebreak Sinner quickly took control, breaking Djokovic's serve on the first point and going 5-1 up.

## Australia name 14-member squad for Pakistan ODIs

Sports Desk

MELBOURNE: Cricket Australia (CA) on Monday, announced a 14-member squad for the three-match home ODI series against Pakistan.

The reigning world champions will be without Travis Head and Mitchell Marsh as both key players will be on paternity leave.

The duo has been replaced by Jake Fraser-McGurk and Matthew Short, who are likely to open the innings together.

Furthermore, all-rounder Cameron Green has been sidelined from Australia's 14-member squad for the ODI series against Pakistan as he is set to undergo a back injury.

However, Pat Cummins, who was

absent from Australia's recent white-ball tours to England and Scotland, has returned to the side and will captain the world champions for the first time since leading them to the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 glory.

Furthermore, all-rounder Marcus Stoinis has also been recalled to the squad after being left out of the away series against England. Rising youngsters Cooper Connolly and Aaron Hardie have also been named in the squad.

Australia's chief selector George Bailey termed the upcoming series "crucial" for the preparation of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan in February-March next year.

"This is our last ODI series before

the Champions Trophy, and the balance of the squad was focused on that, as well as preparing individuals for the upcoming Test summer," said Bailey.

The highly-anticipated series between Pakistan and Australia will get underway on November 4 with the first ODI scheduled to be played in Melbourne. The remaining two ODIs will be played on November 8 and 10 in Adelaide and Perth.

Australia Squad for ODI series against Pakistan: Pat Cummins (c), Sean Abbott, Cooper Connolly, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Marcus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.



## Meeting

Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan and Italian Navy Officials during call on with Commander Pakistan Fleet.



# PM welcomes Palestinian students as they arrive to complete studies

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday welcomed the first batch of Palestinian medical students who arrived in Lahore to complete their medical education.

"Pakistan warmly welcomes Palestinian medical students for completion of their studies. Their presence further strengthens the bonds of solidarity between our peoples," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

He reiterated that Pakistan stood firmly with the people of Palestine in support of their inalienable rights to



education, health, and a brighter future for all. Earlier, Deputy Prime

Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar also said that the first batch of Pales-

tinian students arrived at Lahore and from Wednesday onwards, more students

would reach Islamabad.

He said a total 190 students will be arriving in Pakistan for medical education.

In July, the Government of Pakistan had announced to allow medical students from Gaza to complete their medical education in Pakistan on humanitarian grounds.

The decision was made to enable Gaza students to continue the final years of their medical education in the fields of cardiology, orthopedics, oncology, pediatrics and surgery to address critical needs in Gaza's health care system.

# Israeli war on Palestinian people in the northern Gaza Strip 'not yet over': Palestine

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Within the framework of the major war of genocide and displacement, the occupation has continued for more than a year to commit the most heinous forms of genocide against our people, which has escalated more bloodily in the past ten days in the northern Gaza Strip and is practicing the most heinous forms of crimes in an open and ongoing massacre against Palestinian civilians to empty the area of all citizens either by direct killing or ethnic cleansing and forced displacement, the latest of which was the horri-



ic massacre it committed this morning at a food distribution center in Jabalia, in addition to another massacre yesterday morning against the tents of the displaced in the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospi-

tal in Deir al-Balah.

The ministry affirms that the international failure to stop the war of genocide and displacement encourages the Israeli government to continue implementing its plans aimed at

starving our people, displacing them, and dismembering their homeland through the crimes of gradual annexation, buffer or border zones, and deepening settlement, which leads to the liquidation of the foundations of the embodiment of the Palestinian state on the ground. The Ministry also believes that our people are not only victims of the prolonged occupation, but also a continuing victim of international double standards and the inability of international legitimacy institutions to respect and implement their decisions on the Palestinian cause.

For its part, Palestinian

diplomacy continues its international political and legal movement to expose the crimes of genocide and displacement and the Israeli government's plans aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause at all levels, and is making every possible effort to translate the international consensus to stop the Israeli aggression into binding practical steps and a political action program that ensures the implementation of the UN General Assembly resolution that adopted the advisory decision of the International Court of Justice, leading to the end of the occupation within 12 months.

## PM terms ...

Continued from Page 1

He said that it was a critical step for realizing the vision of regional connectivity and whatever they had achieved in the last many years, demonstrated the strength of Pak-China friendship, adding the inauguration would significantly capitalize to promote shipping and port activities and enhance regional connectivity in the entire region.

Li Qiang, referring to the Pak-China ties, termed them as of 'special relationship and friendship' and said that this all-weather strategic partnership was further deepening. "The unique and unbreakable time-tested ironclad friendship stood the global changing landscape," he added.

He reiterated to work hand in hand with the Pakistani friends to accelerate the mutual economic development in the future.

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, expressed his deepest gratitude to the Chinese premier for his inspiring input and dedication.

He said the completion of state-of-the-art Gwadar International Airport underscored the strength of their bilateral ties, adding the airport was not only a symbol of economic prosperity but would also pave way for the regional connectivity.

# ML-1 project to initiate with help of China: Dar

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday said that Pakistan would initiate Main Line-1 (ML-1) railway project from Karachi to Hyderabad with the support of China.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is set to launch a railway project connecting Karachi to Hyderabad, he said while talking to a private television channel.

The up-gradation of Karakoram Highway (KKH), was also in progress, he said adding that talks for establishment of Economic Zones through CPEC-II, are underway.

Commenting on SCO in Pakistan, he said all the high dignitaries were participating in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

conference.

In reply to a question about trade talks with India, he said, If India wants to hold dialogue on trade and economic sector, Pakistan will also move forward.



Dar said Pakistan had highlighted the issue of Palestine at all important international forums. He said Pakistan wanted an independent Palestine state and for this, all diplomatic efforts would be made to achieve the objectives. He further said that a relief fund has been established to help Lebanon and Palestine.

To a question about terrorism, he said, terrorism issue had reemerged due to weak policies of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's last regime.

Lauding the Pakistan Muslim League-N governments efforts, he said PML-N had made tremendous success on war on terror. Pakistan Armed Forces had rendered unprecedented sacrifices in fighting war on terrorism, he added.

To a question regarding the role of PTI, he said that PTI should welcome the SCO in Pakistan and added that economic progress and prosperity was the top priority of the incumbent government.

To another question about foreign policy, he said Shehbaz Sharif's leadership has been steering Pakistan's foreign policy in the right direction, particularly focusing on strengthening ties with traditional partners.

# Maiden visit of Italian Aircraft Carrier to Pakistan: Italian Navy Carrier Strike Group visits Karachi

## Khurram Jaffrani

KARACHI: The Italian Navy Carrier Strike Group comprising Aircraft Carrier ITS CAVOUR and Frigate ITS ALPINO, arrived in Karachi on a three-day visit followed by a bilateral exercise.

Upon arrival in Karachi, the Italian Navy ships were warmly welcomed by senior officials of Pakistan Navy and the Ambassador of Italy.

Following the arrival, an Italian delegation led by the Ambassador of Italy, Marilina ARMELLIN, along with Rear Admiral Stefano BARBIERI, Capability Director of the Italian Defence General Staff, called on Commander Pakistan Fleet, Rear Admiral Abdul Munib. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including interoperability, avenues for future collab-

oration to enhance regional maritime security and defense cooperation were discussed.

Commander Karachi, Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi also visited ITS CAVOUR and was briefed about the Aircraft Carrier's capabilities by Commanding Officer Captain Francesco FAGNANI.

The capabilities of Italian defence industries were also showcased in a Defence Industries Exhibition held onboard ITS ALPINO.

ITS CAVOUR also hosted a comprehensive brief for Pakistani media. During the media brief, Ambassador of Italy, Capability Director of Italian Defence General Staff, and Commander of the Carrier Strike Group endorsed the role of Pakistan Navy in regional maritime security and highlighted the importance of interoperability between the two navies.

# SCO Summit: City streets shine with lights, decorations



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has finalized all administrative arrangements, with final touches in place, and the city is ready to welcome the delegates of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.

Meanwhile, the streets, buildings, and public spaces have been carefully prepared for the international event.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, in preparation for the SCO meeting, the city has been fully decorated. Before the guests arrive, streets have been adorned with lights and decorations, giving

the city a fresh look. Major highways now feature green spaces and crescents, adding a touch of nature to the urban landscape.

As part of a beautification drive, various statues have been installed at key intersections. Government offices, private business centers, and buildings have also been revamped, ready to greet the visiting dignitaries.

Private businesses, including plazas, petrol stations, and restaurants, are prepared to accommodate the needs of international guests during the summit. At night, the city offers an even more impressive view, with lights illuminating the skyline and key areas across the city.

# SCO conference highlights Pakistan's regional, int'l importance: Professor Cheng Xizhong

## Spokesman Report

BELJING: Senior Research Fellow at the Charhar Institute, Professor Cheng Xizhong on Monday emphasized the significance of Pakistan hosting the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference, noting its role in promoting Pakistan's standing within the region and internationally.

He, in a statement, underscored Pakistan's recognition by the SCO member states, with nine heads of government attending the event, showcasing the country's pivotal role in the organization.

Addressing concerns regarding Pakistan's security, Professor Cheng said the successful organization of the event in Islamabad signals the capability of Pakistan's security forces, further bolstering Islamabad's image as a secure city.

He said Pakistan, as a growing emerging economy, is continuing to demonstrate its importance in regional and global affairs through platforms like the SCO.

He stressed the importance of the 'Shanghai Spirit', mutual trust, equality, and respect for diversity, urging that bilateral issues should

not impact the collective cooperation within the SCO.

On China-Pakistan relations, Professor Cheng highlighted the close ties between the two countries, lauding their cooperation across political, economic, and military fields.

He also praised the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a transformative initiative for Pakistan's development, noting its contribution

to infrastructure and energy projects, which have significantly boosted the nation's economy.

He concluded by advocating for stronger China-Pakistan defense and counter-terrorism cooperation, noting the two nations' shared commitment to regional peace and stability.

He expressed confidence that the strategic partnership between China and Pakistan would continue to play a vital role in fostering economic prosperity and ensuring peace in the region.

