



Pakistan urges resolution of Palestine and Kashmir

Pakistan will continue to uphold the core values of the United Nations, Ambassador Mumin Akram said on Thursday...



UN chief underscores BRICS' role in boosting global cooperation

The BRICS intergovernmental organization can play a stronger role in strengthening multilateralism for global development and security...

Multinational exercise Indus Shield-2024

COAS visits PAF operational air base to witness ongoing multinational exercise Indus Shield-2024



Photo: APP

COAS visits PAF to review Indus Shield-2024 exercises

Exercise highlights Pakistan Air Force's advances in modernisation and operational readiness

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir visited an operational air base of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Thursday...

Economic Agenda

PM calls for exploring opportunities to promote investment

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directs completion of timely reforms in FBR

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has instructed the officers concerned to seek employment opportunities for skilled labor from Pakistan...



Pakistanis are an asset to the country, contributing billions of dollars in valuable foreign exchange. He urged them to always keep Pakistan's interests in mind...

in Islamabad, he emphasized that a cordial and friendly environment should be ensured in the FBR for taxpayers. The Prime Minister stressed the need to use modern technology to make the taxation and revenue collection system more effective...

IK terms 26th Amendment 'attack on Constitution'

ISLAMABAD: In a meeting with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyers held on the Islamabad High Court (IHC) orders, party founder Imran Khan termed the newly enacted 26th Constitutional Amendment, which empowers parliamentarians to pick chief justice, an "attack on Constitution of Pakistan."

26th Constitutional Amendment wasn't possible under any other CJP: Bilawal

PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari praises outgoing CJP Isa, says top judge did not undermine parliament

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said that enacting the 26th Constitutional Amendment was not possible under any other chief justice, as he praised outgoing CJP Qazi Faez Isa.

When asked about the timing, he said: "In the judicial history of Pakistan, there's one man [...] that has shown us that he's willing to obey parliament even at the cost of his personal power."

[of the judiciary]." Bilawal said that the allies had a window "of a man who would not undermine what we were doing."

Finance Minister invites US enterprises to invest in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has invited the US enterprises to invest in agriculture, IT and energy sectors of Pakistan.

Economic and Business Affairs in Washington, he acknowledged the importance of the Pak-US economic partnership in Pakistan's socio-economic development.

Affairs of the UAE Mohamed bin Hadi Al Hussaini and appreciated the UAE's continued support for Pakistan's external account.

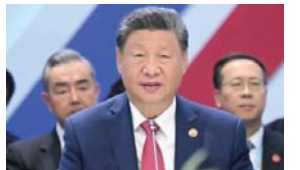


During a meeting with a team of Standard Chartered Bank, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciated the Bank's longstanding partnership with Pakistan.

Global Politics

BRICS to invite more countries to join as partners: Xi

BELJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping has said that the ongoing BRICS summit has decided to invite a number of nations to become partner countries.



In a speech addressing the summit in Kazan, Russia, Xi hailed the decision as another important development in the course of BRICS development.

Xi pointed out that the enlargement of BRICS is a major milestone in its development history and a landmark event in the evolution of the international situation.

Xi urged BRICS countries to jointly pursue a path of development, advocate a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and stay committed to the principle of common development.

# Federal Minsters inaugurates Hub Bridge

Spokesman Report

HUB-KARACHI: Federal Ministers Abdul Aleem Khan and Jam Kamal Khan inaugurated the newly constructed Bridge on Hub River N-25 at the confluence of Baluchistan and Sindh Provinces which has been completed in 2 years at a cost of 1180 million rupees. Addressing inauguration ceremony, Federal Minister for Communications, Board of Investment & Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan said that for the development of any area there must be business activities and we have to ensure maximum development of Balochistan even by collecting revenue from other provinces.

He said that the largest network of the National Highway Authority across the country exists in Balochistan which is 4500 km long but unfortunately lesser toll tax is collected from this Province. Abdul Aleem Khan declared the width of Hub Bridge insufficient and announced



the construction of another bridge parallel to along with it. In the same way, approval was given by Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan to make the highway N-25 from Karachi to Quetta two way where accidents occur due to traffic pressure.

Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that we will build new bridges and roads in Balochistan while a new bridge has already been completed at "Pinjara" which will be opened very

soon. In his address, Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that he wants to build the 6-lane Karachi-Hyderabad Motorway in the mode of Public-Private Partnership, similarly, the Northern Bypass will also be constructed as a major Highway.

During his visit to Karachi, Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan called on Sindh Chief

Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and had a detailed discussion with him on the issues related to Highways and Communication sector of Sindh province.

Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan While presiding over the high-level meeting of National Highway Authority Karachi said that financial stability in Government Institutions should be our first priority, similarly, NHA should also increase its own resources.

He said that NHA Sindh should achieve the target of 25 billion rupees in the current fiscal year. Federal Minister for Communications directed the NHA officials to speed up the work on the ongoing 43 projects in Sindh and ensure high quality. Meanwhile, Federal Ministers Abdul Aleem Khan and Jam Kamal Khan also arrived at the residence of Ms. Rana Ansar, Member of the National Assembly of MQM where they expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the sudden death of her young son Shahzeb Naqvi.

## Dr Aslam Ansari passed away in Multan

Quratul Ain Asim



MULTAN: The death of well-known researcher, critic, educationist, Urdu, English, Siraiki and Persian writer and famous poet Dr. Aslam Ansari has been termed as the end of an era by the writers and intellectuals of Multan as an irreparable loss to the academic and literary circles of writers and poets. It is said that Dr. Aslam Ansari was an association and institution in his own right, the chairperson of the Academy of Literature of Pakistan, Dr. Najiba Arif, the director general, Sultan Muhammad Nasir, the former president of the national language, Dr. Anwar Ahmad, the editor of the magazine Adab Latif, Mazhar Saleem Majuka, a well-known critic, Dr. Mukhtar, Dr. Zafar Dr. Muhammad Amin Dr. Hameed Raza Siddiqui Professor Anwar Jamal Ex-Vice Chancellor Bahauddin Zakariya University Tariq Muhammad Ansari Ex-Vice Chancellor Women's University Dr. Asmat Naz Renowned columnist Muhammad Azhar Saleem Majuka Renowned poet Syed Qamar Raza Shehzad Mir Kamran Magi Waseem Mumtaz Advocate Prof. Naseem Shahid Dr. Shahida Rasool Bazm Patron of Kitab Dostan Syed Taseer Naqvi General Secretary Nasir Basheer Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Rana Academy of Literature Multan Office Incharge Rizwan Gul Dr. Akram Atiq Dr. Shafiq A. Saf Shakir Hussain Shakir Razi Uddin Razi Tahsin Ghani Nawazish Ali Nadeem Aamir Shahzad Siddiqui Bazm Ahl Chairman of the Pen Dr. Farhat Abbas Ali Raza Khan Director Arts Council Salim Qaiser Dr. Khalid Iqbal Raja Kausar Saeedi Inayat Ali Qureshi Ali Imran Awan Ali Imran Mumtaz Muhammad Abdullah and others condoled their sons Asif Ansari and Qasim Ansari. Prayed

## Umarzai's efforts for society are unparalleled

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Arshad Khan Umarzai, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) MPA, is a sincere and trustworthy individual and a popular leader among the people of constituency PK-63. His doors are always open to the public. Provincial leader Shah Faisal Safi praised Arshad Khan Umarzai's selfless services, saying:

Umarzai's efforts for the people's progress, peace, and development in the region are unparalleled. He has successfully mediated disputes through jirgas, establishing harmony in PK-63. As a PTI MPA, Umarzai works tirelessly under the party founder's leadership, providing opportunities for neglected communities' progress, health, and employment. The locals request Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, to appoint Arshad Khan Umarzai as provincial minister, recognizing his exceptional service and dedication to public welfare. Umarzai is a courageous, educated, intelligent, and hardworking individual who has earned popularity through his remarkable services.

## 26th Constitutional Amendment is a victory for dictatorship: says Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Member of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari Advocate, has stated that the current 26th Constitutional Amendment is a victory for dictatorship. He added that Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif should feel ashamed to call himself the Prime Minister, as it is a disgrace for a Prime Minister to be referred to as a democratic leader. He expressed these views during an exclusive conversation with journalists at his residence, Al-Murtaza House, Attock City. Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari Advocate said that it is better for Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to consider himself a representative of dictatorship. Regarding the Shanghai Cooperation Organization conference, he mentioned that they praised each other a lot, but no neutral organization or figure gave it any significance. Bukhari further said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf did not participate in the solidarity conference held in support of Palestine because the party believes in practical struggle. He stated that crowns are not placed on the heads of incompetent people because trembling feet can never sit on the throne. He added that while Shariah offers mercy, in this world, you reap what you sow. He questioned the kind of democracy that exists in the country where innocent officials and workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf are not being spared, and they are being arrested from their homes with false and baseless cases being filed against them. He expressed concerns about inflation, unemployment, and the deteriorating law and order situation, saying that the country's future will only be secure when the people are prosperous. Currently, everyone is walking around with faces of hopelessness, helplessness, and despair.

## WASA steps up efforts for improved sewage, water supply facilities in Multan: Khalid Raza Khan



Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Managing Director WASA Khalid Raza Khan has said that according to the vision of the Punjab government, WASA is pursuing a policy of improving sewage and water supply facilities to the consumers of Multan. It is so that by improving the monthly recovery of Vasa, the institution which is always suffering from financial crisis can be moved towards self-reliance and the public service delivery can also be improved. While visiting the water testing lab, Director Recovery Abdul Salam, Director Engineering Muneem Saeed, Director Works Arif Abbas were also with him. After reviewing the scroll feeding, Director Recovery Abdul Salam briefed the customers about the progress made so far regarding the online payment of sewerage, water supply bills. Providing facilities at home is our first priority. He also ordered to upgrade the water testing lab as soon as possible. The training process is also ongoing on the part of the engineers. Yesterday, after the lecture to the officers and employees in the committee room, practical training was also done in the field session.

## Hard Work

LAHORE: A boy selling school bags in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# Seminar on Sharia Status of Online Earning and Insurance held in Women University Multan

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: A seminar on Sharia Status of Online Earning and Insurance held in Women University Multan, in which the students were informed about Halal and Tayyab sustenance. Under the chairmanship of The Women University and Chairperson of the Department of Islamic Studies and the Department of Arabic, a one-day seminar titled: Online Earning and Shariah Status of Insurance was held.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Kalsoom Paracha said that Allah Almighty has ordered human beings in general and Muslims in particular to distinguish between halal and haram sustenance.

It is surprising that there are few people in the Muslim society who distinguish between halal and haram food. It becomes easy for them to do good deeds, piety and purity are obtained from halal sustenance, and halal sustenance is such



great wealth that whoever gets it, he does not care if he does not get anything else.

Later, giving detailed answers to the questions asked by teachers and students regarding insurance and online business,

registrar Dr. Maimoona Khan urged the students to organize halal and tayyab while giving the closing speech and the seminar along with the guest speaker. Dr. Ruqia Bano, Dr. Sabiha Abdul

Qadoos, the organizers of the seminar were thanked. Director of Student Affairs, Dr. Adela Saeed, and heads of various departments also participated in the seminar.

# SAU hosts seminar on Agri Financing and Entrepreneurship Development

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam, Dr. Fateh Marri, emphasized the crucial role of agricultural modernization as the sector transitions towards industrialization. He urged the banking sector to invest in agricultural innovation alongside production, highlighting the importance of micro-financing in promoting employment opportunities and entrepreneurship among agricultural graduates.

Dr. Fateh Marri shared these insights while addressing an "Awareness & Training Seminar on Agri Financing and Entrepreneurship Skills Development for University Students," hosted by SAU's Business Incubation Center and Department of Agricultural Economics, in collaboration with the National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) Islamabad of the State Bank of Pakistan.



on Thursday.

Dr. Marri stressed the importance of advancing agricultural modernization to boost national development. He also noted that various forums have emphasized the significance of agricultural graduates in Agri.

Muhammad Mazhar Shehzad, Joint

Director of the State Bank of Pakistan Karachi, shared key details about the financial initiatives, explaining that loans of Rs. 500,000 and Rs. 1.5 million are being provided for agricultural businesses without guarantees. He also mentioned that loans up to Rs. 1.5 million are being offered with a 5% interest rate, while loans

up to Rs. 7.5 million are available at a 7% interest rate to encourage young entrepreneurs. Dr. Aijaz Ali Khunharo, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, discussed the university's ongoing efforts to enhance entrepreneurial skills among agricultural graduates by offering specialized training and fostering connections with the private sector.

UBL's Zonal Manager for the South region, Arif Ali Shah, highlighted their collaboration with SAU on a seed project, urging young people to take advantage of the entrepreneurship opportunities emerging in agriculture.

Other speakers included Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar, Director of University Advancement and Financial Assistance; Sibghatullah Noonari, Assistant Director of the State Bank of Pakistan Hyderabad; Dr. Hakimzadi Wagan; Ghulam Hussain Wagan, Deputy Director of the Business Incubation Center; and Ghulam Fatima Nizamani.



Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:57 am  
Zohr ..... 11:52 am  
Asr ..... 3:45 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:23 pm  
Isha ..... 6:47 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**Railway Premium Union has achieved another milestone**

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: The Railway Premium Union has crossed another milestone in the struggle for the rights of the employees. With the efforts of the President of the Railway Premium Union, Sheikh Muhammad Anwar, the management of Yellowhawk has paid tribute to Muzamil Khan, a resident of Faisalabad railway guard, who died on duty in the Millat Express on the day of Eid. Son Muhammad Ahmed Khan has been given the job of railway guard in grade 14 under PM package. Prime Union's central chief organizer Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry and other leaders Fayyaz Ahmed Shehzad, Malik Jameel, Zaheeruddin Babar, Bautahir Nooruddin, Basit Shafiq expressed their happiness on this good decision and said that all the credit goes to the leader of Prime Union Sheikh Muhammad Anwar, CEO of Railways Amir Baloch, DS Lahore Hanif Gul, CPO Athar Riaz along with the railway administration. He said that despite the restrictions on recruitment, Sheikh Muhammad Anwar as a special case convinced the railway administration and approved this decision. Railway Premium Union Day and night for the welfare of railway employees. He said that the Government of Pakistan, the Ministry of Railways and the Railway Administration have always paid attention to the welfare of the railway employees, which is the result of giving all the attention to the Prime Union.

# Climate Change ministry signs nitric acid mitigation pact to boost climate action

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination signed the crucial Nitric Acid Climate Action Group (NACAG) Statement of Undertaking (SoU), committing to reduce nitrous oxide emissions in the country's nitric acid industry.

During the signing ceremony in Islamabad, attended by Ms. Janine Rohwer, First Secretary at the German Embassy, and Mr. Wolfgang Hesse, Coordinator for Energy, Climate Change and Just Transition at GIZ Pakistan, the Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam confirmed present government's intention to implement policies to cut nitrous oxide emissions from nitric acid production in the long-term.

Following this decision by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Fatima Fertilizers Multan Plant has become eligible for financial support from the NACAG Secretariat to install catalysts for mitigating nitrous oxide emissions and measuring technology in its production facilities.

Addressing the SoU signing ceremony, PM's climate aide Romina Khurshid Alam said that with the SoU signing with private sector, Pakistan has become the

11th country to formally sign the understanding of collaboration, alongside Argentina, Colombia, Georgia, Jordan, Mexico, Peru, Thailand, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe to reduce over four million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions annually in the country's nitric acid sector.

"Today marks a significant step forward in Pakistan's efforts to combat climate change and advance sustainable development. The NACAG initiative plays a vital role in our climate action strategy, and we are grateful for the support from the German government and GIZ," Romina Khurshid Alam remarked.

The nitrous oxide emission reduction potential in fertilizer sector in Pakistan has been estimated at around 1.86 million tons of Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) per year.

Nitrous oxide is an odorless, colorless, non-flammable gas. Its global warming potential is nearly 300 times that of carbon dioxide over a 100-year time scale.

The coordinator to Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to reduce the country's green house gas emissions by aligning national actions with international agreements like the Paris Agreement.

Ms. Aisha Moriani, Secretary at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination highlighted the



importance of the nitrous oxide emissions initiative, saying the NACAG initiative would be crucial in helping Pakistan meet its carbon mitigation targets by reducing nitrous oxide emissions from the nitric acid sector.

## National Day

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing & Works, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Ambassador of Hungary in Islamabad, Béla Fazekas and others cutting a cake on the occasion of the National Day of Hungary on Wednesday in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## 30th meeting of SZABMU Syndicate held

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: 30th meeting of the Syndicate of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) was held on 22nd October 2024 under the chairmanship of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Tariq Iqbal. The meeting discussed the various agenda items. Prof. Iqbal highlighted that the University plans to launch DNA testing services through a public-private partnership in the near future. He added that currently the specimens are sent abroad for this purpose, due to the absence of this facility, which incurs a lot of expenses. However, the scientists at SZABMU can use their expertise to provide this service economically and save foreign exchange used in the process. Furthermore, PhD in Clinical Sciences is also being offered, along with enhanced research



budget, so as to improve the quality of research.

Prof. Tariq Iqbal presented the report of the recently conducted MDCAT examination. A total of 21884 students undertook this examination, which was prepared in line with PM & DC Guidelines. During the examination, sixteen people were inducted by the law enforcement for use of unlawful means. The members of the Syndicate commended the

transparency of the examination process and advised strict action against those responsible for spreading baseless rumors.

The University recognized a critical need for highly skilled Clinicians and Researchers, and consequently, approved a policy to engage them and tap into their expertise. Senator Dost Muhammad Jeesar also reiterated that such individuals are an asset for the nation, and their expertise should not be wasted.

The duration of Suib-specialties was reverted back to five years from six years. Professor Tariq Iqbal thanked the members of the Syndicate for their valuable input and contribution. In addition to the Senior Parliamentarians, Mr. Tahir Ahsan, Dr. Iqbal Memon, Dr. Anser Muxood, Dr. Bilal Ahmed, Dr. Shakaib Anwar, Dr. Moosa, Dr. Altaf, Dr. Shajee Siddiqui and Dr. Anber Saleem also attended the Meeting.

## Strengthening Cooperation for Industrial Development in Energy sectors



**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Bahra Electric and Pakistan Cables Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen partnerships between the two organizations ushering a new era for collaboration in the industrial and energy sectors between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Kareem Idris, Deputy Chief Executive - Bahra Electric and Mr. Fahd K. Chinoy, CEO - Pakistan Cables at a signing ceremony in Islamabad on October 10th. The value of the MoU is estimated to be up to USD 100 million and is anticipated to contribute towards the strong economic relation between both the countries.

This was one of several MOUs signed during the visit of a Saudi delegation led by Honourable Mr. Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih, Minister of Investment, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## Center for Int'l Strategic Studies Azad Kashmir to celebrate 77th Foundation Day of Azad Government

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: On the occasion of the 77th Foundation Day of Azad Government, a function was organized under the auspices of the Center for International Strategic Studies Azad Jammu and Kashmir (CISS-AJK), which was hosted by Research Officer Saba Ghulam Nabi, who is the Director of Jammu and Kashmir. Highlighting the importance of this day in the historical backdrop of the Azadi movement. Research faculty members of CISS-AJK discussed the growing distance between the youth of Azad Kashmir and the Kashmir cause and emphasized the importance of countering India's hollow territorial claims. The participants while addressing the event said that the event was organized on the occasion of completion of 77 years of independence, which is an important milestone in the history of the region. The event not only celebrated the independence of Azad Jammu and Kashmir but also endorsed the ongoing struggle for the freedom of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Research Officer Abdul Rehman presented a detailed analysis of key historical events, including the Maharaja's so-called annexation document and the Kashmiri Muslim struggle from 1847 to 1947. He stressed the need for unity and strong diplomatic efforts and highlighted the urgent need for a change in strategy to revive the freedom movement.

# Jammu and Kashmir foundation day ceremony held in Jonjal Hill/Sidhnuti

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

JONJAL HILL/SIDHNUTI: A ceremony organized by the Jammu and Kashmir People's Party was organized in connection with the 77th foundation day of the independent state of Jammu and Kashmir at Jonjal Hill, the first capital of Azad Kashmir.

Former federal minister Qamar Zaman Kaira was the chief guest of the ceremony. Speaker of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar presided over the ceremony while President Pakistan Peoples Party Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad

Yasin, president Jammu and Kashmir peoples party and Member of Assembly Sardar Hasan Ibrahim Khan, former government minister Dr. Najeeb Naqi, Amir e Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Azad Kashmir Maulana Saeed Yusuf Khan also specially participated in the event.

A large number of people from different schools of thought including leaders of political parties, workers, civil society participated in the foundation day ceremony.

Addressing the event, former Federal Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira said that the freedom of Kashmir is essential for the freedom of Pakistan. Paki-

stan continues to support its Kashmiri brothers on all fronts for the freedom of Occupied Kashmir. He said that the history of nations includes centuries of movement.

Azad Kashmir Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar said that Ghazi Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim led to liberate this region while facing great difficulties. At present, the facilities in this region are more, thanks to the government of Pakistan.

Addressing the ceremony, Pakistan People's Party President Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin said that Ghazi Millat will follow the path of Sardar

Muhammad Ibrahim Khan and complete his mission. The flag of Azad Kashmir will be hoisted at Srinagar. Listen to those spreading trouble, we are with the idea of annexation of Pakistan.

Shaheed Zavalafiqar Ali Bhutto did not take the American threats into consideration. Started nuclear technology program, they used to say that India is not recognizing Pakistan. Nuclear technology is necessary to fight them.

Speaking at the event, Member of Assembly and President Jammu and Kashmir People's Party Sardar Hasan

Ibrahim thanked the guests.

Addressing the ceremony, former government minister Dr. Najeeb Naqi Khan said that Jonjal is the land of brave people, where Ghazi Millat named it as the base camp after keeping the capital and following their footsteps, Occupied Kashmir will be liberated.

Amir Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Azad Kashmir Maulana Saeed Yusuf Khan while addressing said that

Our heroes risked their lives to get rid of slavery. Founded the movement by signing the death warrant. The gardens are due to the blood of the martyrs, the

blood of the martyrs has fallen on the face. Those who are calling Akbarin wrong at the moment are considering slavery as a good thing. He has made this place with blood. Break the hand that rises against this land and keep it. Ghazi Millat, Sheikh Al Hadith, Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan, including martyrs and heirs of Ghazis are present.

Nationalism is the reason for the collapse of the Ottoman Caliphate. People chanted "We are Turks, we are Arabs, we are Persians". Saeed Yusuf said that we are one nation and we are united in Allah and Allah Almighty will grace us the freedom.

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# America's Freedom of Opinion: Equality or Exclusivity?

**T**o truly understand a society, community, county, or country, the best approach is to engage directly with the people on the ground. Sitting comfortably in rooms or making high-level analyses from afar may be intellectually easy, but such approaches often lack genuine insight and fail to capture the true spirit, aspirations, fears, and realities of the community members. I had the unique opportunity to be part of Working America, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), hired by the Democrats to conduct a house-to-house survey across Michigan. This grassroots initiative aimed to explore the preferences of local communities regarding Michigan's future, identify the biggest issues they face, and gauge their thoughts on the presidential candidates best equipped to address those challenges. This experience provided invaluable insight into the real concerns of everyday people, bridging the gap between policy discussions and the lived experiences of the population.

Much like the Arab communities we previously surveyed, these South Asian groups, despite many being American citizens, exhibited a similar reluctance to express their political views. Perhaps out of fear of victimization—whether through the withdrawal of state assistance, harassment by the White majority, or denial of job opportunities—they often hesitated to discuss political matters. Some even feared being falsely implicated in minor legal issues, which could severely damage their careers. When asked whom they would vote for in the upcoming elections, the common response was to avoid the topic, with many stating they do not engage in politics. Their fear of repercussions appeared to suppress their willingness to express opinions, even on broader issues that weren't specific to their communities.

The legacy of slavery, segregation, and systemic racism continues to marginalize Black voices, while institutional biases in law enforcement, media, and the criminal justice system often lead to harsher scrutiny and suppression of Black dissent. Economic and social inequities limit access to platforms for free expression, while media misrepresentation and surveillance of Black activism create further barriers. These factors, combined with cultural pressures to self-censor, result in Black Americans often facing more limitations on their freedom of speech compared to their White counterparts. The black though were less fearful compared to immigrants but as the same time they have their fears.

stepped out of their doors, listened attentively, and answered each question with ease. They expressed their opinions with a broad smile, freely criticizing either Trump or Harris, Democrats or Republicans, without reservation. They discussed any issue under the sun without any fear of intimidation or reprisal. This stark contrast prompted me to seek a historical context for why White Americans enjoy greater freedom of expression in the U.S.

The reason, as I discerned, lies in their historical dominance, institutional power, cultural acceptance, and less scrutiny. Since the country's founding, White populations have held social, economic, and political power, which allowed them to shape laws and institutions that protect their voices. Their perspectives have often been regarded as the societal norm, granting them broader acceptance and significantly less push-back compared to minority groups. Additionally, White Americans face less scrutiny and fewer legal consequences when expressing controversial views, and their economic advantages provide them greater access to platforms for free speech, reinforcing their privileged position in public discourse.

Although the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits laws that curb freedom of speech, expression, or opinion, this protection seems to disproportionately favor White Americans, as other communities often do not experience the same freedoms in practice.

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



Analysis **Qamar Bashir**

## BRICS summit

**C**hinese President Xi Jinping has said that the ongoing BRICS summit has decided to invite a number of nations to become partner countries.

In a speech addressing the summit in Kazan, Russia, Xi hailed the decision as another important development in the course of BRICS development. During a small-group meeting, Xi welcomed new members to the BRICS family and invited many countries to become partner countries, China Daily reported.

Xi pointed out that the enlargement of BRICS is a major milestone in its development history and a landmark event in the evolution of the international situation. It is for their shared pursuit and for the overarching trend of peace and development that BRICS countries have come together, he said.

Stressing that the world is undergoing accelerated changes unseen in a century, marked by new trends of multipolarity and the risks of a "new Cold War," Xi said BRICS countries should seize the historical opportunity, take proactive steps, remain committed to the original aspiration and mission of openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, conform to the general trend of the rise of the Global South, seek common ground while reserving differences, work in concert to further consolidate common values, safeguard common interests, and strengthen BRICS countries through unity.

"We must work together to build BRICS into a primary channel for strengthening solidarity and cooperation among Global South nations and a vanguard for advancing global governance reform," Xi said.

He stressed that the more turbulent the world is, the more BRICS countries should uphold the banner of peace, development and win-win cooperation, refining the essence of BRICS and demonstrating its strength. BRICS countries should raise the voice of peace, advocating a new path to security that features dialogue over confrontation and partnership over alliance, he added.

Xi urged BRICS countries to jointly pursue a path of development, advocate a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and stay committed to the principle of common development. He said BRICS countries should consolidate the foundation of cooperation, deepen cooperation in traditional areas such as agriculture, energy, minerals, economy and trade, expand cooperation in emerging areas such as green, low-carbon and artificial intelligence, and safeguard trade, investment and financial security.

The Chinese president then attended a large-scale meeting, made important statements on BRICS' future development and put forward five suggestions.

## Religious Extremism in Pakistan II

**P**rior to the Zia era, Pakistani society was largely secular; but, following 1970, Islam became ingrained in both the state and the populace. Users' expectations are not fulfilled by a subpar public policy. The Zia-era state-led madrasa reforms agenda fell short of the aspirations of the alumni and students of madrasas. Definitely, madrasa

The Madaris reforms were largely perceived as offering graduates job possibilities and avenues to participate in various aspects of life. Remarkably, however, during the General Zia era, very few well-known madrasa leaders were appointed as judges in the Federal Shariat Court, members of the Councils of Islamic Ideology, and numerous other newly established Islamic commissions, committees, and institutions. These individuals included Maulana Taqi Usmani of Karachi, Pir Karam Shah of Sargodha, Maulana Sami-ul-Haq of Akora Khattak, and other members of their associates. 28 Considering some events under Islamization, a significant portion of madrasa graduates were oblivious to their new imagined position.

The impact of the Zia era's radical Islamization on Pakistan's curriculum and educational system is the second and most important issue. Zia ordered that Islamic studies be made mandatory for students in elementary school through university. Lessons on history were revised to center on Islamic history, offering an idealized portrayal of Muslim leaders and detailing the struggle between Hindus and Muslims. In addition to discussing Muhammad bin Qasim, Tariq ibn Ziyad, and other Muslim

leaders, the textbook also promotes "jihad" as a major subject. This was a small portion of the 1981-1989 Afghan-Soviet war. Pakistan provided assistance to the Afghan Mujahideen through print and electronic media, as well as through discussions in classrooms and public spaces. The prevalent and maintained conservative milieu that limits women as homemakers led to the promotion of Arabic as the language of Islamic studies and the usage of Islamic terminologies. The Taliban in Khyber Pashto on khawa strengthened the restriction on female education a few years later. The Taliban attacked Malalafzai in 2011 after she had become well-known as a young supporter of girls' education.

There were 12,000 madrasas, out of which 300 only produced terrorists in 2014, according to a poll.

This traditional civilization has us stuck in it. For seventy-seven years, we lived according to all these religious precepts and ideals, but our political, economic, and social structures are demolished whenever any kind of progress or reason is introduced.

Secularism, which is defined as shielding religion from the state and making sure that religious convictions have no influence over laws, public policies, or political processes, is the new ideology that will solve all of these issues. Everyone freely embodies their principles and ideas. Because of their radical beliefs and the power of the church and priests over them, Europe was plunged into darkness a millennium ago. The work of logical philosophers and the Protestant Reformation brought about change because the

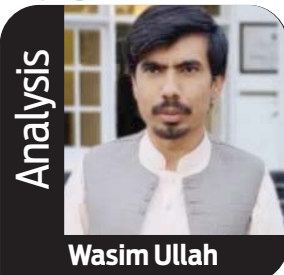
populace accepted everything as coming from God. They currently hold the top spots for both scientific and technological advancement and peace.

Twenty-two secular governments in the Muslim world have established a distinction between civil/governmental matters and religion, if we use the Muslim world's most peaceful and secular nations, such as Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The curriculum needs to be changed, and all references to the "jihad," the Hindu-Muslim war, and religious narratives should be removed. This is the second major area of reform in the educational system. It teaches the pupils about human rights, the rule of law, and secular ethics while including technology, contemporary science, philosophy, and Darwinism. Religious convictions have little bearing on moral instruction. Morality and ethics must be taught to us based on human experience and free from religious doctrine. When it comes to concepts of sin, shame, and eternal punishment, religion may have a variety of psychological effects on kids if we teach them religious views. Students should be educated to base their opinions on facts, reason, and analysis rather than on the authority of their culture or religion. Teachers should support a logical and scientific approach to teaching. The school system should support the promotion of rationalism.

The third is creating a modern madrasa, which entails teaching students a religious curriculum along with contemporary science, technology, and some skills. This way, upon graduation, they can start their own businesses and find other sources of income, avoiding involvement in other radical activities or being used by religious political parties for personal gain.

*Writer is student of Department sociology at University of Sargodha*



Analysis **Wasim Ullah**

## Youm e Tasees: A Celebration of the Bonding between Kashmir and Pakistan-II

**T**he narrative of shared struggle against perceived aggression from India has strengthened the belief that Pakistan can better protect the interests of Kashmiris. Cultural and linguistic ties to Pakistan play a significant role in shaping the aspirations of Kashmiris. A sense of shared history and identity fosters a desire for political union that reflects these connections. Numerous surveys and polls conducted in the region have indicated a preference for accession to Pakistan among various segments of the population. The desire for union with Pakistan remains a strong undercurrent in Kashmiri society. A small segment of Kashmiris argues that they do not wish to be part of Pakistan and instead aspire to establish an independent state, but this perspective is largely misguided. In practical terms, the idea of Kashmir as a sovereign entity would face significant challenges, making its viability as an independent state highly questionable. The geopolitical context is perhaps the most daunting obstacle for Kashmir. Since the partition of British India in 1947, Kashmir has been a flashpoint between India and Pakistan. An independent Kashmir would need to navigate these turbulent dynamics, potentially becoming a pawn in the larger India-Pakistan rivalry. The presence of nuclear weapons on both sides introduces an existential risk that complicates any aspirations for independence. While Kashmir boasts natural beauty and resources, its economy faces significant challenges. Primarily heavily reliant on tourism, the region lacks the robust economic infrastructure necessary for self-sufficiency. An independent Kashmir would struggle to implement stable economic policies without support from a larger nation. Kashmir is home to a diverse population with a range of political, religious, and ethnic identities. The desire for independence is not universally shared among its residents.

The security landscape in Kashmir is fraught with challenges due to significant militarization and a heavy Indian military presence. An independent Kashmir would need to establish its own military and security apparatus, requiring substantial investment and resources. Without a strong military, an independent Kashmir could be vulnerable to external threats, including incursions from India.

For an independent Kashmir to thrive, it would require international recognition and support. However, the geopolitical interests of global powers often align more closely with India and Pakistan than with an independent Kashmir. Gaining recognition from key players could be a monumental challenge, as nations may hesitate to support a new state in a region already marked by tension and conflict.

Despite its natural resources, Kashmir faces environmental challenges such as water scarcity and climate change. An independent Kashmir would need to manage its resources wisely while navigating disputes over water rights with neighboring countries. Sustainable resource management is critical for economic survival, and any missteps could heighten tensions both internally and with neighbors. Additionally, Kashmir lacks a port, complicating its ability to engage in international trade independently.

It is evident that an independent Kashmir would struggle to survive in a hostile environment, particularly with an adversarial neighbor like India. In contrast, Kashmiris in AJK enjoy freedoms and rights, living and working as first-class citizens of Pakistan, while the dire human rights situation in IIOJK serves as a stark reminder of the challenges faced under Indian rule.

On Youm-e-Tasees, Kashmiris reaffirm their commitment to their struggle for self-determination and to accede all of Kashmir to Pakistan. The day will come when India will be compelled to recognize the Kashmiris' right to self-determination and respect the will of the people in IIOJK.



Analysis **Abdul Basit Alvi**



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

17th Annual Rural Women Conference Conclude

# EU to support women in Pakistan in tackling gender inequality

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Voices of Resilience: Women Leaders Unite to Tackle Gender Inequality in Pakistan

Islamabad, Thursday 24 October: During the concluding ceremony of the 17th Annual Rural Women Leadership Training Conference organized by PODA, Dr. Riina Kionka, the European Union Ambassador to Pakistan, announced a new €4 million project aimed at enhancing gender equality and supporting women's political leadership in Pakistan. The initiative will focus on developing various aspects of leadership skills. In response to a question, she remarked, "After spending three years in Pakistan, I can now represent Pakistan on different EU platforms."

The EU Ambassador re-affirmed the representative women leaders that all EU projects are developed and designed to ensure 100 per cent gender equality.

The EU Ambassador, Dr. Riina Kionka, commended the women who are true 'troublemakers' in a positive tone, emphasizing the importance of questioning the status quo and pushing boundaries. She highlighted their resilience in challenging outdated norms, which drives meaningful change in the world. By pursuing their own aspirations, these women leaders empower others to do the same, fostering a more inclusive and cohesive society, she added.

Sharing insights from their youth, both Dr. Kionka and Marilina Armellini, the Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, addressed the women leaders representing approximately 130 districts



across four provinces, as well as AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan. They discussed their experiences with stereotypical mindsets in their respective countries, highlighting how they overcame these challenges through determination and resilience.

Emphasizing the urgent need to tackle gender-based inequalities worldwide, the Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan, assured the women leaders that half of the beneficiaries of their projects would be women. She noted that Italy is making significant strides in championing human rights. Reflecting on her childhood, she shared that even as a second-grade student, she was an effective negotiator, advocating for her classmates with the school administration. "I have two sons, and they have been taught to respect and empower women, as there is a pressing need to address the inequalities around us," she added.

Rakhshanda Naz, Ombudsman for

workplace Harassment Prevention, KP said amid rising religious extremism the space for women is shrinking. She expressed concern that cases of sexual harassment mostly go unreported due to social and family pressures. She asked the rural women leaders to draft a strongly worded conference resolution and give it to her which she will be sending with her covering letter to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister and other concerned officials.

The women leaders present at the concluding ceremony gave standing ovation to ED-PODA Sameena Nazir for her untiring efforts to make the conference as successful event which allows women to interact with those who represent almost all districts of Pakistan.

ED-PODA congratulated the women, saying, "We must continue to support and uplift these trailblazers as they lead the way toward a brighter



future for all."

Other speakers included: Dilshad Bano, Minister of Social Welfare and Women Development; Rukhsana Parveen, from Legal Aid Society, Sindh; Asia Arif, Executive Director, SPARC; Christina, Director, UNESCO, Pakistan; Lehar Mirza, (from transgender community) Tahafuz Markaz, Rawalpindi; and Mehak Butt, Home based workers, Multan.

During a special session on the women's rights to inheritance, Rukhsana Parveen Khokhar from The Legal Aid Society emphasized the importance of women asserting their rights to inheritance and claiming their rightful place in society. She also shared that the Sindh Legal Advisory Call Center offers legal aid in family, criminal, and economic issues, facilitated by retired Supreme Court judges and experienced

lawyers. Women leaders who spoke on the occasion were: Marvi Jamali, Khairpur, Sindh

Fatima Mental, Balochistan; Asifa Jamali, Naseer Abad, Balochistan; Amtul Aaleem Farooqi, Karachi; Fizza Kanwal, Quetta, Balochistan; Irshad Safdar, Kasur, Punjab

Khandana, Swabi, KP; Yasmeen Khakwani, Multan; Arooba, Kirk, KP; and Shaheen Akhter, Thatha, Sindh.

Women leaders described the conference as a valuable opportunity to learn, build a broader network, and strengthen their collective efforts for progress, ultimately fostering a greater sense of sisterhood.

ED-PODA, Ms. Sameena Nazir invited women leaders to present the conference resolution which was passed by the women leaders unani-

mously. One of the resolutions passed today was to end child marriages by ensuring a legal amendment to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years across the country, including the Islamabad Capital Territory. The resolution was presented by Aqeela Naz, Okara, Punjab; Ayesha Zafar, AJK; Robina Kareem, Khuzdar, Balochistan; Gul Rukh Aziz, KP and Zakia Bano, Pakpattan, Punjab.

PODA-ED, Sameena Nazir presented shields of honor to the dignitaries and women leaders whose support in field was noteworthy. The European Union Delegation to Pakistan, the Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad, Care, Strengthening Participatory Organization, National Endowment for Democracy, SPARC, and CABI supported the three-day conference in Islamabad.

## Turkmenistan is implementing the TAPI Project in cooperation with Afghan authorities

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Muhammetmyrat Amanov emphasized Ashgabat's commitment to the project's quality execution.

Muhammetmyrat Amanov, CEO and Chairman of the Board of TAPI Pipeline Company Limited (the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India TAPI gas pipeline project), commented on issues related to the security of the large-scale project during the OGT-2024 international forum in Ashgabat. A correspondent from "SNG. Today" in Turkmenistan reported this.

"In principle, every major project face challenge, and TAPI is no exception. Security issues in Afghanistan were relevant, but we can see that the security situation has significantly



improved. This contributes to confident progress. In this regard, we are working closely with the local government and communities to ensure stability and progress," said Amanov.

The company head pointed out that financial and logistical challenges are often integral to large-scale projects. He explained that the company is cooperating with international part-

ners and investors to address all issues in this area promptly.

Elaborating on his statements, Muhammetmyrat Amanov informed that work on the project is being carried out according to the planned schedule.

"At present, the ongoing activities on the important section of the gas pipeline Arkadagy ak ýoly (Serhetabat-Herat) include detailed engineering, staff, machinery mobilization, and procurement of necessary materials, such as line pipes and equipment. The seamless execution of the project is ensured here. This process highlights our commitment to the quality implementation of the project, resulting in economic benefits through job creation and infrastructure development," emphasized Muhammetmyrat Amanov.

## Experts highlight challenges and opportunities in shifting from coal to renewables

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A policy dialogue convened by Pakistan-German Climate and Energy Partnership (PGCEP) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Islamabad explored the economic, social, and environmental implications of early coal power plant retirement in Pakistan.

The session, titled "Political Economy of Early Coal Retirement in Pakistan," attracted stakeholders from government, civil society, and international organizations to discuss the challenges and potential solutions for transitioning to cleaner energy sources.

Mr. Sebastian Paust, Head of Development Cooperation at the German Embassy emphasized the importance of mitigating the negative social impacts of early coal retirement, drawing on Germany's comprehensive approach that balances economic needs with environmental protection. "Germany's green policies offer a model for managing coal retirement with a focus on nature conservation," Paust noted.

Ms. Sobiah Becker, Adviser, Pak-German Climate and Energy Partnerships (PGCEP) highlighted Pakistan's energy security needs, pointing to the significance of the power sector as both an employment generator and a driver of climate change. She explained that imported coal emissions exacerbate Pakistan's climate crisis, stressing the need for a sustainable balance between energy security and environmental responsibility.

Mr. Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director, Private Power and Infra-

structure Board, briefed about the ongoing efforts of the government to phase out inefficient thermal power projects, particularly those reliant on furnace oil. "Amid a tariff crisis and growing environmental concerns, we are phasing out inefficient power plants, though the cost of closing these projects is substantial," Mirza said. He also mentioned pointed to Pakistan's commitments under the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) goal of increasing the renewable energy share to 60% by 2030, acknowledging that the country's outdated transmission system requires urgent upgrades.

Mirza highlighted the success of the Thar Coal Power Plant in reshaping the local landscape. "The plant has significantly improved living conditions for displaced communities, providing new homes, community centers, and essential infrastructure," he said. However, he also noted the high costs and challenges associated with shifting from coal to renewable energy, particularly given the country's limited local gas reserves and seasonal variability of wind and solar power.

Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, Fformer Federal Minister for Environment-Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, expressed the dilemma Pakistan faces: "On one hand, we have an abundant coal resource—180 million tonnes for the next 200 years—while on the other, we are bound by global commitments to reduce emissions. This tension has intensified world over post-Russia-Ukraine war, as energy production through coal surged worldwide." Aslam called for financial support, such as concessional loans, to facilitate Pakistan's

energy transition and reduce reliance on coal.

Mr. Badar Alam, CEO of Policy Research Institute for Equitable Development (PRIED), focused on the environmental and social impacts in Thar, where coal mining has disrupted ecosystems and local livelihoods. "Air and water pollution from coal mines has severely affected livestock, wildlife, and human health," Alam said. He emphasized the region's potential for solar, wind, and hydropower, calling for a shift to renewable sources before the environmental damage becomes irreversible.

Dr. Khalid Walid, Research Fellow, SDPI underscored the importance of creating economic incentives for early coal retirement. He detailed the increasing pressure from global climate governance frameworks, such as the Paris Agreement, to decarbonize Pakistan's energy sector. "As consumer demand rises and international trade restrictions tighten, there is an urgent need to balance accessibility, affordability, and sustainability in our energy planning," Dr. Walid said.

Ms. Haneza Issad, Energy Finance Specialist at IEEFA, said that concessional finance is a must to retire inefficient coal or fuel-based power plants as without adequate funding the transition of such power plants is a challenge. The retiring is incomplete without redefining those power plants into green energy sources. Pakistan however lacks such frameworks or policy maps that can guide the transition.

She further added that retiring a coal power plant immediately would require approximately

\$1.14 billion per plant. However, if the plant is retired after 10 years, the financing requirement could decrease to between \$300 million and \$500 million, as the plants would be nearing the end of their power purchasing agreements. By that time, the debt and return on equity would have been paid off.

Prof. Dr. Majid Ali, Associate Professor at USPCASE, NUST proposed coal gasification as a potential method to reduce emissions, though further research on water consumption is necessary.

The dialogue concluded with a call for a national coal retirement plan, capacity-building for renewable energy projects, and the establishment of a "Just Energy Transition" framework. Experts also highlighted the importance of financing mechanisms and integrated planning to ensure a smooth transition.

In his closing remarks, Wolfgang Hesse, Cluster Coordinator Energy, Climate Change and Just Transition, stressed the need for practical solutions to the coal retirement challenge, acknowledging the complexity of evolving climate change jargons that complicates international negotiations. He emphasized that climate change is leading to significant losses and damages, particularly in economic terms. If these costs were factored into the price of coal, it would no longer be the cheapest energy source available.

The discussion underscored the delicate balance between economic, social, and environmental factors as Pakistan grapples with its energy future, highlighting the urgent need for international support and strategic policymaking to achieve a sustainable transition.

## Belgian Companies Participate in 5th International Textile and Leather Exhibition (TEXPO) in Karachi



Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: The 5th International Textile and Leather Exhibition (TEXPO) in Karachi has seen robust participation from Belgian companies, highlighting the growing commercial ties between Belgium and Pakistan. Mr. Muhammad Bilal Khan, Trade and Investment Attaché at the Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels, is accompanying the Belgian companies at the exhibition in Karachi, providing on-ground support and facilitating their engagement with Pakistani counterparts.

During a seminar, organized on the sidelines of the exhibition, by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) on "Sustainability and the Textile Sector of Pakistan," Economic Minister Omer Hameed discussed the sustainability standards within the EU and their relevance to the textile industry.

Mr. Faraz Zaidi, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels, emphasized the significance of Belgian participation, noting that the presence of these companies reflects the ongoing strengthening of trade relations between Pakistan and Belgium. "Pakistan's textile sector presents diverse and promising opportunities for foreign firms, and the participation of Belgian companies at TEXPO underscores their commitment to exploring these avenues," remarked Mr. Zaidi.

Belgian firms have commended TDAP for the well-executed organization of TEXPO 2024, which has facilitated numerous productive business-to-business (B2B) meetings. These engagements are expected to contribute to further growth in bilateral trade between Pakistan and Belgium.

Mr. Zaidi also reaffirmed the Embassy's commitment to supporting Pakistan's efforts in expanding its textile and apparel exports to Belgium. "We remain fully engaged in providing assistance and facilitating Pakistani exporters seeking to strengthen their foothold in the Belgian market," he added.

The 5th International Textile and Leather Exhibition (TEXPO) serves as a key platform for global textile and leather manufacturers, buyers, and investors to explore and capitalize on the opportunities within Pakistan's textile industry, which remains a vital part of the country's economy.

## OICCI Hosts "Dining in the Dark" to Unite Foreign Investors for Disability Inclusion

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) organized a unique event, the "Dining in the Dark Experience," in collaboration with Khaas Foodz Kitchen (KFK) on Thursday. This initiative brought together OICCI's member companies and foreign investors to emphasize the importance of disability inclusion and address the challenges persons with disabilities (PWDs) face in corporate environments.

The highlight of the event was a sensory dining experience, where attendees were blindfolded and led through the meal cooked by visually impaired chefs from KFK, a social enterprise committed to training and employing individuals with disabilities. This unique setting allowed participants to experience first-hand the difficulties PWDs face, fostering empathy and sparking discussions on inclusion.

Ahmed Bozai, Chairperson of OICCI's Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee, emphasized the need for corporate Pakistan to drive change. "Inclusive environments are more than just a moral responsibility—they are a business necessity. People with disabilities bring immense talent, and it's time we create pathways for them to fully contribute and thrive," said Ahmed during his keynote speech.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
88,945.98	87,194.53
Day's High	Day's Low
89,126.15	87,382.04
Index Value	Change
27,431,611,441	+ 1751.45
Percentage	Time
+2.01%	24 Oct, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,269.38	+ 10.74
Percentage	Time
+0.13%	24 Oct, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
42,333.78	- 181.17
Percentage	Time
-0.43%	24 Oct, 1:09 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,143.29	+ 38.43
Percentage	Time
+0.10%	24 Oct, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	185.25	187.63
Bahrain Dinar	732.22	740.22
Canadian Dollar	200.67	203.07
China Yuan	38.88	39.28
Danish Krone	40.29	40.69
Euro	297.55	300.30
Hong Kong Dollar	35.3	35.65
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	898.63	908.13
Malaysian Ringgit	64.13	64.73
New Zealand \$	165.23	167.23
Norwegians Krone	24.96	25.26
Omani Riyal	716.62	725.12
Qatari Riyal	75.45	76.15
Saudi Riyal	73.55	74.10
Singapore Dollar	208.64	210.64
Swedish Korona	26.46	26.76
Swiss Franc	319.20	322.00
Thai Bhat	8.15	8.3
U.A.E Dirham	75.25	75.90
UK Pound Sterling	357.75	361.25
US Dollar	277.30	278.80

# Pakistan & China trade relations FPCCI and CCPIT form alliance for land - sea corridor: President FPCCI

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that, in a landmark development, FPCCI and China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), have formed an alliance for land - sea corridor; which comprises of chambers of commerce & industries of 17 regional, sub-regional and economically-significant countries. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh participated in the session of the aforementioned alliance as the founding member; which was held in Chongqing, China. It is an important achievement for Pakistan on international stage, he added.



FPCCI Chief maintained that the apex body will 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 with their Chinese counterparts. The high-profile FPCCI delegation to the Alliance of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of International Land-Sea Trade Corridor also included Mr. Malik Sohail Hussain, Chairman Coordination, FPCCI and Mr. Karim Aziz Malik, Chairman Capital Office, FPCCI.

## Trade Delegation led by Mazhar Thathal meets France's Foreign Trade Advisor for Asia

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: A significant development in Pakistan-France trade relations has emerged. A trade and business delegation from Pakistan, led by the Chairman and CEO of Global Trade and Expo Center Pakistan, Mazhar Hussain Thathal, met in Paris. The delegation also participated in the BATIMAT Paris trade exhibition at the Paris Expo Center. Upon the arrival of the trade delegation, they were warmly welcomed by the Commercial Director of the Construction Division and the International Relations Manager of the exhibition. The Pakistani delegation, along with other European delegations, was briefed about the exhibition. Liaquat Thathal introduced the delegation and highlighted key sectors of interest for Pakistani businesses, which led to productive discussions. The delegation held meetings with France's Foreign Trade Advisor, the President of CCEF (French Foreign Trade Advisors), the Vice President of Île-de-France for the Asia region,



the Head of the Foreign Trade Advisor mission, and representatives from the Paris Chamber of Commerce. Mazhar Hussain Thathal presented commemorative gifts to French officials, appreciating their efforts in promoting bilateral trade between Pakistan and France. The CCEF President expressed great interest in fostering collaboration between businesses from both countries. Liaquat Thathal emphasized the importance of providing market data and opportunities for businesses interested in exploring trade between Pakistan and France. Kamran Shah, Senior Vice President of Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also expressed his enthusiasm for the collaboration between Global Trade and Expo Center and CCEF, noting that such initiatives would greatly benefit the business communities of both countries.

## InDrive launches first electric bike fleet in Pakistan as part of pilot project



**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: inDrive, the global ride-hailing platform, proudly announces the launch of its first electric vehicle (EV) fleet in Pakistan. In partnership with EZ Bike, inDrive has also introduced an EV charging station in Islamabad, making it the first ride-hailing company in the country to integrate electric bikes into its operations. This initiative marks a significant step toward providing eco-friendly, affordable transportation while reducing emissions in Pakistan's urban mobility sector. "We're thrilled to launch this initiative in Pakistan," Sidra Kiran, PR and Communication Manager of inDrive Pakistan, shared her thoughts on the launch: "Our collaboration with EZ Bike to launch an EV fleet

underscores our commitment to sustainable urban mobility. Ali Moeen, CEO of ezBike, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership; "We are thrilled to partner with inDrive to accelerate the future of clean, sustainable transportation in Pakistan. By combining our cutting-edge battery-swapping technology with inDrive's extensive network, we're providing riders with an affordable alternative to rising fuel costs. Together, we are not only helping to reduce expenses for drivers but also making a lasting impact on pollution and urban air quality. This launch reaffirms inDrive's leadership in revolutionizing the transportation landscape in Pakistan with sustainable innovations."

## CCP continues in-depth review of PTCL's acquisition amid industry concerns

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) remains committed to addressing concerns in the ongoing Phase II Merger Review of PTCL's proposed acquisition of 100% shareholding in Telenor Pakistan (Private) Limited and Orion Towers (Private) Limited. The review is being conducted by a distinguished Bench, led by Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, alongside Members Mr. Salman Amin and Mr. Abdul Rashid Sheikh. In an in-depth analysis, the CCP has thus far held five extensive hearings, beginning on September 30, 2024, with subsequent hearings on October 2nd, 3rd, 22nd, and 24th, 2024. The Bench posed critical questions regarding the potential impacts of the merger, ensuring thorough scrutiny of the competitive dynamics in the telecom sector. During the most recent hearing, Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan, Senior Counsel for PTCL, accompanied by Ms. Mariam Saleem Malik, Counsel for PTCL, presented responses to the concerns raised by Wateen, Jazz, and CM Pak (Zong) in earlier hearings. The CCP Bench facilitated discussions, offering all stakeholders, including PTCL, Wateen, Jazz, and Telenor, the opportunity to provide their respective comments.



PTCL emphasized the merger's competitive benefits, particularly highlighting the expected reduction in the market share gap between the two leading players. PTCL also addressed potential risks of input and customer foreclosure, outlining the evaluation principles, while highlighting the merger's efficiencies, including cost savings, increased network capacity, accelerated technological advancements, and the roll-out of 5G services. Jazz and Wateen, in turn, reiterated their concerns over critical industry matters, particularly tariff regulations, infrastructure sharing, national roaming, and the operations of Cellular Mobile Operators (CMOs). Throughout the proceedings, CCP officials, including Mr. Shahzad Hussain (Director General/Registrar), Barrister Ambreen Abbasi, Hafiz Naeem, Mr. Arshad Javed (Legal Department), Ms. Maryum Pervaiz (HoD Merger Department), Mr. Noman Ahmed (Merger Department), raised pertinent questions, ensuring a comprehensive review process. The CCP is committed to ensure that any potential competitive risks arising from the merger are fully addressed, safeguarding market competition and consumer welfare.

## PSX crosses another milestone, reaches 88,945.99 points

ISLAMABAD: Continuing with positive sentiments, the 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) remained on bullish trend on fourth consecutive day and crossed another milestone by reaching a historic level of 88,945.99 points on Thursday. Overall the index gained 1,751.45 points, showing a positive change of 2.01 percent when compared to last day's trading of compared to 87,194.54 points. A total of 757,648,007 shares were traded during the day as compared to 699,294,030 shares the

previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 36.047 billion against Rs. 26.824 billion on the last trading day. As many as 454 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 238 of them recorded gains and 167 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 49 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 113,202,208 shares at Rs 4.82 per share, PTCL with 41,105,281 shares at Rs 16.76 per share and Fauji Cement XD with 23,272,920 shares at Rs 31.46 per share.

## PSO's 48th AGM: Accelerating Growth through Innovation & Alternative Energy

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Pakistan State Oil (PSO), the nation's leading energy company, successfully convened its 48th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Karachi, chaired by Chairman, Board of Management, PSO - Mr. Asif Baig-mohamed, Managing Director & CEO, PSO-Syed Taha, other board members, and senior management were also present. PSO reinforced its market leadership, achieving impressive financial results for FY24. The company posted a gross



revenue of PKR 3.8 trillion, with a profit after tax of PKR 15.9 billion, translating to earnings per share of PKR 33.79. A

dividend of PKR 10 per share, equivalent to 100% for FY23-24, was declared. The management briefed share-

holders on vertical expansion initiatives through CERISMA (Private) Limited and PSO Renewable Energy.

CERISMA, PSO's fintech arm, drives nationwide financial inclusion through accessible digital services, expanding its reach to e-commerce and international payments. Meanwhile, PSO Renewable Energy focuses on solar capacity expansion, bolstering profitability, creating new revenue streams, and contributing to Pakistan's renewable energy growth. Shareholders praised PSO's consistent performance, strategic focus on innovation through vertical expansion, financial empowerment, and reinforced leadership in Pakistan's energy landscape.

*Equitable energy access for all consumers urged amid solar surge*

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The rapid growth of rooftop solar systems is transforming Pakistan's energy landscape but also creating disparities for lower-income electricity consumers who remain dependent on the traditional grid. To address this, ensuring equitable energy access for all consumers is crucial. This concern was the focal point of a session titled "Navigating the Solar Surge: Ensuring Equitable Energy Access in Pakistan's Power Sector," hosted by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The session featured insights from Khalid Rahman, IPS Chairman, Ameena Sohail, senior IPS associate and energy advocate, Abubakar Ismail, head of energy & sustainability, Amreli Steels, Muhammad Musaddiq, CEO of Siddique Renewable Energy, Asad Mahmood, renewable energy expert, and Mirza Hamid Hassan, former federal secretary for Water & Power. Wali Farooqui, research officer IPS, presented the study and pointed out that while falling solar costs have led to its mass adoption, it is mostly elite consumers benefiting from these savings. He noted that this shift is creating a two-tiered energy system, where those who cannot afford solar are at an increasing disadvantage, burdened with higher bills. Khalid Rahman emphasized that the lack of timely amendments to net metering policies is exacerbating these inequities. Ameena Sohail warned of the strain that unchecked solar growth could place on grid operations. She called for a reassessment of Pakistan's energy generation planning to prioritize solar integration without jeopardizing the financial and operational stability of the grid. Asad Mahmood highlighted the growing divide between those who can afford solar energy and those who cannot, stressing that while solar adopters benefit from significantly lower bills, many consumers are left facing increased economic pressure. Abubakar Ismail emphasized the importance of equitable policymaking in the transition to solar energy, highlighting the challenges posed by solar intermittency. He pointed out that while renewable energy and decarbonization are universally supported, maintaining a reliable energy supply requires continuous power, even when solar generation is not available.

## IS Third Test

## Shan, Saud make Pakistan steady after bowling out England for 267

Men in Green conclude day 1 of series decider at 73/3

RAWALPINDI: After bowling out England for 267 in their first innings, Pakistan faced trouble due to slumping top order batting line-ups as they lose three wickets on the first day of the deciding third Test being played at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

England's Shoaib Bashir sent off Abdullah Shafique (14) in 9th over, whereas, Jack Leach ended Saim Ayub's innings at 19 in 12th over. Gus Atkinson gave a big blow to the hosts by claiming Kamran Ghulam's wicket for 3.

However, skipper Shan Masood (16) along with Saud Shakeel (16) made Pakistan's slumping lineup steady at the conclusion of day 1 of the series decider at 73/3.

The three-test series is level at 1-1. Earlier, Jamie Smith (89) and Ben Duckett (52) scored fifties but

England's most frontline batters overall struggled against the turning ball.

Pakistan's spin duo of Sajid Khan and Noman Ali ran through the England lineup as they claimed six and three wickets, respectively, followed by Zahid Mahmood took one wicket.

After departure of skipper Ben Stokes (12), Jamie Smith revived his side by scoring crucial 89 runs off 119 balls along with Atkinson's 39 off 71. Zahid removed Smith in 62nd over, whereas, Atkinson was caught and bowled by Noman.

Pakistan's spin trap led by Sajid Khan and Noman Ali on Thursday wreaked havoc on England to dismiss the top half of their batting lineup in one session reducing the tourists to 110-5 on the opening day of the deciding third Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

Ben Duckett (52) gave England a

decent start but captain Ben Stokes, batting on six, was left to rue his decision to bat first on a turning track. Jamie Smith was batting on five at the break with England facing a massive job to rebuild the innings.

With the series levelled at 1-1, Pakistan attacked with spin from both ends with Sajid and Noman, who shared all 20 England wickets in the previous test in Multan, bowling in tandem.

Left-arm spinner Noman drew first blood when he tempted Zak Crawley (29) with a flighted delivery, the opener trying for a drive but edging it to Saim Ayub at gully.

England vice-captain Ollie Pope (three) fell to Sajid for the third time in three innings after fluffing a sweep shot.

The off-spinner then delivered a body blow when he trapped Joe Root, currently the top-ranked test batter,



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's Saud Shakeel and Shan Masood in action running between the wickets against England on Thursday. — Reuters

lbw for five with a sharply turning ball. Duckett hit a six off Sajid en route to his fifty and got a reprieve when

Noman spilt a return catch. The spinner got his man though, dismissing Duckett lbw in the same over with a

delivery that kept low.

Sajid's trademark thigh-slap celebration was on display again when he bowled Harry Brook (five), who looked ill at ease against the turning ball.

Currently, England are 118-6 with Jamie Smith batting at 7\* and Gus Atkinson on zero, while Pakistani spinners Sajid and Noman's tally of wickets stands at four and two, respectively. Agencies

## Playing XIs

Pakistan: Abdullah Shafique, Saim Ayub, Shan Masood (captain), Kamran Ghulam, Saud Shakeel, Muhammad Rizwan (wicketkeeper), Salman Agha, Aamer Jamal, Noman Ali, Sajid Khan, Zahid Mahmood.

England: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (captain), Jamie Smith (wicket-keeper), Rehan Ahmed, Gus Atkinson, Jack Leach, Shoaib Bashir.

## 'A lot has changed', Jason Gillespie expresses frustrations

Gillespie acknowledged the challenges he has faced since taking on the role

LAHORE: Pakistan head coach Jason Gillespie has admitted to feeling "frustrated from time to time" over the reduced scope of his job, particularly following the recent changes in the selection panel. Gillespie, who was removed from the selection panel alongside captain Shan Masood, expressed that his current role "wasn't what he signed up for" but that he was committed to adapting to the situation.

In an interview with Sky Sports, Gillespie acknowledged the challenges he has faced since taking on the role.

"I think there's always frustrations from time to time. For me, when I came on board with Pakistan cricket, I was told there was a long-term plan, and we need to make sure our communication's spot on. I made that a real focus and so you can get frustrated if those things aren't done how you would



like," Gillespie said.

The former Australian legend had initially envisioned a more significant role in shaping the team's direction. However, the recent changes in the selection panel have limited his influence.

"It wasn't what I signed up for, I'll be completely honest. But this is one of those situations in which you just need to go with the flow. As I said, I'm in a different environment and things are done differently. One can agree or disagree with how things are done, but ultimately I'm here

to help the Pakistan team do well, help the players get better, improve. So I've put all my focus and energy into that," he said.

The decision to remove Gillespie and Masood from the selection process came after Pakistan's heavy defeat in the first Test against England. The reshuffle brought the number of selectors working with the team to over two dozen since 2021. He noted that he and Masood were not consulted for the second Test squad or the pitch preparation, underscoring the lack of clarity

around his role.

"A lot's changed. Since I've been involved, we're already on our third selection panel. These are the things you just got to take it all in your stride and understand that we're in a different environment and go with the flow. I ask a lot of questions and ask for clarity, which as head coach I'm well within my rights to ask," he said.

"But I want to make it really clear that everyone in Pakistan wants what's best and there's a lot of very passionate people here. That's driving me to continue to help the players, and it's been a great experience so far working with them. I really excited about what the future holds and as a coach," he added.

The former right-arm pacer also acknowledged the cultural differences in how cricket is managed in Pakistan compared to his native Australia. Agencies

## Former spinner praises Aqib Javed's tactics in Pakistan's win

LAHORE: Pakistan's cricket team recently celebrated a much-needed victory against England in second Test match played at Multan, bringing joy to fans who had been frustrated by a long losing streak.

Former cricketer Iqbal Qasim expressed his thoughts on this win, stating, "The most important thing is that Pakistan has not won for a long time, and people's frustration had increased. Selectors, managers, and coaches had been criticized. This victory has boosted everyone's morale. Now, people

are once again standing to support their team."

Iqbal Qasim also discussed the strategy for upcoming matches. He pointed out that during home series, Pakistan often creates spin-friendly pitches, which help spinners perform better.

He said, "Whenever Pakistan has a home series, there is always at least one Test match where they create spin-friendly wickets. I, Qadir, and Tauseef played in such matches. After that, Saqlain Mushtaq and others also played. My point is that this strategy wasn't

considered in the last 3.5 years when it should have been."

He praised the team's new strategy developed by Aqib Javed, which not only led to the recent win but also improved the players' morale.

"Anyway, it's a good sign that Aqib Javed has developed a strategy that has helped win the match and also improved morale. Most importantly, the spinners who had been discarded and hadn't played for 2-3 years have been recalled, given a job, and they stepped up," he

further added.

Looking ahead, Qasim mentioned plans to prepare the pitch for series-decider.

"Now, the next strategy is that the big fans have been placed, and efforts are being made to dry out the wicket, aiming to create a spin-friendly surface. Although the pitch in Rawalpindi typically favors seam bowlers, but we can maneuver things; we can soften the soil. Efforts are being made, and in my opinion the same team should play in Rawalpindi that played in Multan," he concluded. Agencies

## Morikawa says 'winning is tough' ahead of Japan title defense

The American romped to last year's title by six shots to end a two-year title drought

INZAI, JAPAN: Two-time major champion Collin Morikawa said that "winning is tough" as he looks for his first victory of the year at the US PGA Tour's Zozo Championship in Japan this week.

The American romped to last year's title at Narashino Country Club near Tokyo by six shots to end a two-year title drought.

He has not lifted a trophy since and described his 2024 season, which has included two runner-up finishes, as "solid" rather than spectacular.

Morikawa was part of the United States team that beat the Internationals at the Presidents



Cup in Montreal last month and is hoping to keep that form going this week in Japan.

"It's a place I look forward to every year. Knowing that I won last year, lot of good memories,"

said the 27-year-old, who has Japanese heritage.

"It was my first win in two years. Look, winning's tough. No matter what it is, winning is tough. You have to learn how to win."

Morikawa will be up against fellow American Xander Schauffele, who won the PGA Championship and British Open in a breakthrough 2024, and Japan's Olympic bronze-medalist Hideki Matsuyama.

Morikawa finished runner-up behind Scottie Scheffler at the season-ending Tour Championship last month but said "you just never know what to expect"

when play begins.

"Every tournament's different, you never know how you're going to play on a Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday," he said.

"You've got to treat each day and each shot and take everything that's in front of you, and not take anything for granted."

Morikawa struggled to keep his emotions in check when he lifted the Zozo Championship trophy last year.

"Honestly, I'm not that emotional of a guy," he said.

"Whenever something happens, you just never know what it's going to be." AFP

## Copa Sudamericana: Lanus hold Cruzeiro in semifinal first leg

RIO DE JANEIRO: Ramiro Carrera scored a late equalizer as Argentina's Lanus earned a 1-1 away draw with Brazilian side Cruzeiro in the first leg of their Copa Sudamericana semifinal.

Kaio Jorge gave the Brazilian side the lead just after halftime with a close-range finish, but Carrera put the Argentine outfit on level terms by heading home 17 minutes from time.

The return leg will be played at La Fortaleza in Lanus next Wednesday.

"We didn't play well," Cruzeiro manager Fernando Diniz told reporters after the match. "We knew that we had to lift our game today, and we weren't able to do that."

"But there's a long way to go, and now we have to concentrate on the second leg because the contest is wide open," he added. Xinhua

## UEFA Champions League: Liverpool reap narrow win at Leipzig

BERLIN: Liverpool made it three wins on the bounce as Darwin's lone goal secured a narrow 1-0 victory over a tenacious RB Leipzig side in the third round.

Leipzig came into the game highly motivated and put Liverpool on the back foot as Amadou Haidara tested goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher, while Benjamin Sesko's dangerous curled shot went just wide in the opening stages.

It took Liverpool some time to get going, but they shocked the home side with their first chance in the 27th minute when Darwin tapped home Mo Salah's header from close range.

Leipzig goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi was forced to tip promising headers from Darwin and Virgil van Dijk over the bar as the visitors gained momentum.

The Reds almost doubled their advantage on the stroke of half-time, but Cody Gakpo shot wide from close range after Dominik Szoboszlai's good build-up work.

Leipzig tried to respond after the restart but were too hasty in the final third to create any clear-cut chances against the well-organized visitors.

Liverpool were the more threatening side in front of the goal as Alexis Mac Allister hit the woodwork with a shot from 16 meters in 70 minutes.

## Saeed Ajmal criticizes ICC for 'biased' pitch ratings

LAHORE: Former Pakistan cricketer and renowned spinner Saeed Ajmal has shed light on the development of spinners and their performance in international cricket.

In an exclusive interview with a local sports platform, Ajmal, famous for his mastery over spin bowling, pointed out that most successful spinners tend to be over the age of 30, as that's when they truly mature and reach their peak.

"Spinners are typically played after 30 when they've lost some of their initial edge. A spinner starts to mature after 25, but it's after 30 that they truly understand their skills and begin performing at their best," Ajmal explained.

He further emphasized that spinners need experience, particularly in first-class cricket, to learn the tricks of bowling with a red ball.

"After starting in your early 20s and spending about five years in first-class cricket, you begin to understand how to deceive batsmen with variations. White-ball cricket can be unpredictable, but red-ball cricket demands skill and cunning to take wickets," he said.

The off-spinner was vocal in his criticism of the International Cricket Council (ICC) for what he perceives as bias in pitch rating standards.

He argued that Pakistan's pitches are often customized for visiting teams, giving them an advantage, but when Pakistan benefits from favorable conditions, the ICC raises concerns.

"Pakistan's pitches are tailored to visiting teams, giving them an advantage, we win when we choose the pitch, yet, the ICC only raises issues when we play on spin or flat tracks, but not when teams face similar conditions in India, Australia, or England," he concluded.

It is worth noting that the ongoing three-match Test series between Pakistan and England has seen contrasting fortunes for both teams.

The Three Lions started strong with a commanding victory by an innings and 47 runs in Multan. However, the home side responded emphatically in the second Test, clinching victory by 152 runs to level the series. The ongoing clash in Rawalpindi promises to be a thrilling conclusion to this competitive series. Agencies

## Wawrinka outlasts Mannarino at Swiss Indoors and Rublev advances



BASEL, SWITZERLAND: Stan Wawrinka became the oldest match-winner in the Swiss Indoors tournament history when he outlasted Adrian Mannarino 6-3, 3-6, 7-5.

Playing in front of a home crowd, the 39-year-old Wawrinka earned his first win over Mannarino after having lost to the Frenchman three times.

Wawrinka will next face 22-year-old Ben Shelton for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Also Wednesday, top-seeded Andrey Rublev beat Alejandro Tabilo 7-6 (3), 6-1 to reach his 13th quarterfinal of the season.

Roberto Bautista Agut beat second-seeded Casper Ruud 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Two-time defending champion Felix Auger-Aliassime defeated Sebastian Baez 7-5, 6-1.

David Goffin and Pedro Martinez also advanced. AP

## Atletico Madrid bid to host 2027 Champions League final

MADRID: Atletico Madrid has presented their candidacy for the club's Metropolitan Stadium to host the 2027 Champions League final, UEFA confirmed.

The Metropolitan currently has just one rival to host the biggest game in European football, which is the Baku Olympic Stadium in Azerbaijan, but the window is open until March 19, 2025 for other candidacies to be presented.

The 64,000 capacity stadium hosted the 2019 Champions League final between Liverpool and Tottenham that Liverpool won 2-0 with goals from Mohamed Salah and Divok Origi.

One factor against Atletico is the behavior of their fans, after UEFA recently handed the club a 30,000-euro fine after a section of their supporters made Nazi salutes in their recent 4-0 defeat to Benfica. Agencies

## FO rejects OHCHR's statement about constitutional amendment

Spokesperson says Pakistan considers the latest action by the US to blacklist two dozen firms as biased and politically motivated

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office has rejected the statement made by the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) regarding the 26th constitutional amendment saying it is based on misinformation and inaccurate understanding of the developments in Pakistan.

At her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has made unwarranted and misplaced conclusions based on media reports, social media posts and speculative analysis of manifestly political nature.

The spokesperson advised the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to focus on actual and grave situation of human rights violations where either the international human rights have been rendered ineffective or draconian laws have been enacted to oppress



the illegally occupied peoples.

When asked about blacklisting of about two dozen companies by the US, the Spokesperson said Pakistan considers the latest action as biased and politically motivated. Similar listings of commercial entities in the past were based on mere suspicion. She said it involved items not listed under export control regime and yet were considered sensitive under broad catch-all provisions. She said it is widely known that some countries while claiming strict adherence to non-proliferation norms have conveniently waived licensing requirements for advanced military technologies to their favourite

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

The spokesperson confirmed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has written a letter to the US President requesting for a favourable consideration of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's mercy petition on humanitarian grounds. She said Pakistan has remained in contact with the US to extend all possible support for Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's welfare.

Responding to a question, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan has never accepted the validity of Indian constitution in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. She said the people of Jammu and Kashmir shall decide their own future on the basis of the UN Security Council resolutions. Agencies

## NEPRA slashes power tariff for August by Rs0.86 per unit

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has approved a reduction of Rs0.86 per unit in August's fuel charges adjustment (FCA) for electricity consumers.

During a public hearing on the matter, NEPRA decided on the reduction, which is higher than the Rs0.57 per unit decrease initially requested by the Central Power Purchasing Agency. The hearing took place on September 26, 2024.

NEPRA stated that this adjustment is Rs0.49 per unit less than the FCA charged in July, offering consumers a greater reduction in their October bills. Consumers who have already received their bills will receive this relief in November.

The adjustment will be applicable to all consumers of distribution companies (DISCOs), except for lifeline users, prepaid consumers, electric vehicle charging stations, and K-Electric customers. Agencies

## Pakistan values its ties with Sri Lanka: CJCSC

Pakistan, Sri Lanka pledge to enhance security, defence ties



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Sri Lanka have reiterated their commitment to enhancing bilateral security and defense collaboration.

According to ISPR, this commitment was expressed at a meeting between Commander Sri Lankan Air Force Air Marshal RAUP Rajapaksa and Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza in Rawalpindi on Thursday.

The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee said Pakistan values its enduring

relationship with Sri Lanka, highlighting a shared commitment to fortifying bilateral ties, particularly in defense and security.

Air Marshal RAUP Rajapaksa, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, appreciated the high professional standards of Pakistan Armed Forces, their achievements in fight against terrorism and continued efforts for regional peace and stability.

Earlier, upon arrival at the Joint Staff Headquarters, a smartly turned out tri-services contingent presented 'Guard of Honour' to Commander of the Sri Lankan Air Force.

## Youth empowerment top priority: DPM Dar

Dar for increased investment in digital infrastructure

Spokesman Report

APIA (SAMOA): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday calling the youth leadership vital for a resilient and inclusive Commonwealth emphasized Pakistan's strong commitment to providing platforms that empowered youth to take on leadership roles.

The deputy prime minister, in his remarks at the Commonwealth Intergenerational Dialogue held in Samoa, highlighted initiatives like the Prime Minister's Youth Programme in Pakistan, which has supported millions of young people in education, employment, and engagement.

DPM Dar outlined Pakistan's efforts in youth empowerment, including the revision of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Memorandum of Understanding (CYP-MOU) and the launch of the Commonwealth Asia Youth Alliance (CAYA).

ance (CAYA).

Stating that young people were not only the leaders of tomorrow but were actively contributing to policymaking today, the deputy prime minister commended the contributions of young leaders in climate action and driving digital innovation.

He also urged fellow Commonwealth leaders to embrace the youth as partners in building a stronger, more sustainable future and called for continued intergenerational collaboration to ensure lasting progress for the Commonwealth community.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar has called for increased investment in digital infrastructure and transformative technologies to accelerate economic modernization and enhanced productivity across the Commonwealth.

Addressing the Commonwealth Business Forum in Samoa, he underscored the crucial role of the Commonwealth Business Forum as a platform for collaboration, trade, and investment, impacting millions across the Commonwealth. The Deputy Prime Minister emphasized the critical importance of transforming the workforce across the Commonwealth.

He called for urgent investment in education, skill development, and entrepreneurship to harness the potential of our workforce, which is a key driver of technological innovation and economic transformation.

Ishaq Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to contributing to the prosperity of the Commonwealth and called for a shared vision for sustainable growth, enhanced intra-Commonwealth trade, and economic and social progress.

## Jl to file petition against 26th Constitutional Amendment

Hafiz Naeem criticizes government and PTI over the approval of the 26th Constitutional Amendment

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JI) chief Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman has criticised the government and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) over the approval of the 26th Constitutional Amendment, announcing plans to challenge it in court.

Speaking to media in Lahore, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman said JI had warned PTI against getting involved with others on the amendment from the start. "We told PTI not to fall into anyone's trap," he said.

The JI chief expressed concern over PTI's cooperation with Jamaat-e-Islami-Fazl (JUI-F) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman, questioning the party's

stance. "If they were in opposition, why did they agree to it?" he added, calling the matter "suspicious."

Rehman accused the government of manipulating the situation to pass the amendment, stating that parties which should have taken a stand on Form 47 failed to do so. He also condemned those involved in alleged vote-buying during the process, saying, "Their names will not be remembered kindly in history."

"This amendment has allowed a takeover of the judiciary," he warned, declaring that Jamaat-e-Islami has decided to approach the judiciary over the issue. He criticised the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)

for pushing the amendment through, calling it an unfair move.

In reference to PTI's involvement, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman questioned why the party had submitted names to the committee if it opposed the amendment. "It raises suspicions when you submit names but then don't participate," he said.

Rehman also expressed concern over political prisoners in Pakistan, urging the government to release them. "Rather than enforcing the law, people are imprisoned on political grounds," he said. He further called for steps to be taken to ensure their release, describing it as a positive action. Agencies

## Pakistan Sustainability Summit highlights vulnerability to climate change: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday said that Pakistan Sustainability Summit highlighted its vulnerability to climate change, especially given its disproportionate impact on developing countries.

Pakistan Sustainability Summit was organized by the Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) with the technical support of Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) here and Sherry Rehman was the chief guest of the closing session, said that Pakistan needs to equip its communities and institutions to face the challenges of the day such as floods, droughts, and glacial melt.



She called for climate justice and demanded fair climate financing for countries like Pakistan, urging developed nations to fulfill their commitments under the Paris Agreement.

The senator emphasized the need for global financial support to help developing countries adapt to climate impacts and transition to greener economies.

Sherry Rehman said, "Pakistan has spearheaded several policy initiatives to mitigate the effects of climate change, but implementation remains very low at the grass-root

level, especially to promote climate-resilient agriculture, water conservation efforts, and transitioning to clean energy sources.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed termed the event first step towards the long journey of mainstreaming of sustainability concepts, adding that Pakistan is going through the "climate emergency", especially following the devastating 2022 floods, which displaced millions and caused billions in damages.

He called for a comprehensive response to the crisis, emphasizing the urgency of climate adaptation and disaster management.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed said that the sustainability regime is essential to ensure the responsible use of resources, protect the envi-

ronment, and support long-term economic and social well-being. It addressed critical issues like climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, promoting practices that balance economic growth with environmental protection, healthy ecosystems for wholesome life, and social injustices, he added.

"As global environmental challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss intensify, Pakistan faces an urgent need to transition toward sustainable development. In alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Pakistan Sustainability Summit aimed to bring together key stakeholders to explore actionable strategies and promote green practices across various sectors. APP

## Pakistan, Iran underline importance of strengthening energy ties

QINGDAO, CHINA: Pakistan and Iran have underlined the importance of strengthening energy cooperation in power plants operations and maintenance.

The understanding to this effect reached during a meeting between Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Leghari and Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Ali Abadi, on the sidelines of the Third Belt and Road Ministerial



Conference at Qingdao in China. Awais Leghari underscored the importance of cross-border energy

projects in boosting connectivity and trade.

The two sides discussed future collaboration, particularly focusing on the development of electricity projects in Gwadar area of Balochistan.

They also exchanged views on the need for enhanced energy connectivity amongst the regional countries and emphasized the need for regular coordination and communication.

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