



UN chief slams deadly attack in Mastung, urges action against those responsible

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres strongly condemned Friday's attack in Pakistan Balochistan province, and called on the government to ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable. Nine people, including five school children, were killed and 23 others injured in the bomb attack.



Trump's fraud claims revive fears he may again seek to overturn election results

False claims about voter fraud in Pennsylvania have raised concerns that Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump may once again seek to overturn the vote there or in other battleground states likely to determine the winner next Tuesday. Opinion polls, both nationally and in the seven closely divided states, show Trump locked in a tight race with Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris with four days to go before election day.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Business opportunity

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with a delegation of Qatar Businessmen Association.



Photo: PID

Pakistan, Qatar leadership agree to enhance cooperation, high-level exchanges

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The leadership of Pakistan and Qatar agreed to deepen cooperation, explore new horizons to strengthen bilateral ties underscoring the importance of high-level exchanges to enhance mutual understanding. The bilateral ties were discussed during the two-day official visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Qatar where he met Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh

Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. The two sides discussed key opportunities in a number of fields in Pakistan in the context of previous investment pledges. Key regional and global developments of mutual concern were also discussed, according to a joint statement issued by PM Office following the conclusion of his visit. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and generous hospitality, expressing his keenness to strengthen bilateral relations and develop existing cooperation to broader horizons. The prime minister expressed his appreciation for the continuous support provided by the State of Qatar to Pakistan in various fields, and highlighted investment opportunities in vital economic sectors in Pakistan. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries, with a particular emphasis on investment and trade, alongside discussions on cooperation in other fields. The Amir of Qatar stressed the

importance of fraternal relations between the two countries and the two sides' aspiration to enhance economic partnership, increase trade exchange, and promote investments. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Qatar Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani also held a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz where the two sides discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations and explore various avenues of collaboration in the areas of economy, trade, investment and cultural exchange.

Prime Minister Shehbaz praised the diplomatic efforts and humanitarian initiatives of the State of Qatar to promote peace in the region, especially the role of the State of Qatar as a mediator regarding the Palestinian issue and its commitment to supporting efforts to establish security and stability in the region. During the visit, Prime Minister Shehbaz and Amir of Qatar viewed the exhibition "Manzar: Art and Architecture in Pakistan from the 1940s to the Present" organized by the Qatar Museum.

Children among seven killed in Mastung blast

Bureau Report

QUETTA: The death toll from a remote-controlled bomb blast near a girls' high school in Mastung's Civil Hospital Chowk has risen to seven. Police report that the victims include children, a police officer, and passersby, with the children's ages ranging from five to ten years old. The explosion, which police say was caused by explosives planted on a motorcycle and detonated remotely, also injured over 22 people, many of whom are school children. A police mobile and a rickshaw were also damaged in the



blast. The injured are being treated at the Civil Hospital. Police are currently working to determine the nature of the explosive device and the circumstances surrounding the attack. The injured have been transported to the Civil Hospital for treatment. Further details are expected to be released as the investigation unfolds.

Acting President, PM condemn bomb blast in Mastung

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have strongly condemned bomb blast at a Girls' High School in Mastung district of Balochistan.



In their separate statements, they expressed deep grief over the death of children and a policeman in the incident. They also expressed condolence to the bereaved families, and prayed for granting fortitude to bear this loss. The Acting President, in his statement, reiterated the resolve to root out terrorism from the country. He said terrorists are the enemies of humanity and entire nation stands united to support the security forces and law enforcement agencies to eliminate terrorism.

Shehbaz Sharif said such cowardly acts of terrorists cannot undermine the nation's morale. He said such attacks can also not shake the unwavering resolve of the government for promotion of education and development in Balochistan. He said the whole nation feels proud of its policemen and soldiers for rendering sacrifices for the sake of the country. The Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to apprehend the perpetrators of the blast and award them exemplary punishment. He also instructed to provide the best medical treatment facilities to the injured. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti also strongly condemned the blast and expressed sympathy with bereaved families. The Chief Minister reaffirmed that terrorists will not succeed in their nefarious designs.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in his statement, expressed the determination to continue war till complete elimination of the scourge of terrorism from the country. He said the attack on a school exposes terrorists' animosity towards education in Balochistan.

Supreme Court (SC) Practice and Procedure Amendment Ordinance, 2024 introduced in Senate

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar laid before the Senate the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024 (Ordinance No. VIII of 2024), as required by clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The Senate deputy chairman referred the bill to the concerned standing committee. On October 25, the federal government decided to amend the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act. As per the received details, the federal government has decided to propose an amendment in the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act – increase the number of SC

judges – while the preparations are reportedly underway for the approval of the bill. Sources close to the development claimed that Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), PML-N and MQM-P members have been instructed to ensure their participation in the house. Sources further revealed that the leadership of PML-N, PPP and MQM-P issued instructions to the members.

US delegation visits Adiala Jail

City desk



ISLAMABAD: A three-member delegation from the US Embassy visited Adiala Jail and was granted consular access to three detained US citizens. The delegation met with the three American citizens – Abid Malik, Sadiqa Saeed, and Alex Pleado – who are being held under the Foreign Act. The meeting, which took place in the Additional Superintendent's office, lasted for one hour. The US delegation comprised Irfan Jan, Mike Murphy, and Raheel Javed. Following the meeting, the delegation left Adiala Jail.

Qatar to invest \$3 billion in Pakistan, says Information Minister Attaullah Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Qatar would invest \$3 billion in Pakistan, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Friday after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif concluded his visit to the Gulf country where he wooed investors.



"This investment is expected to bolster Pakistan's economic growth further," he said at a press conference in Islamabad. Tarar accompanied the premier to the country during the two-day visit. A joint statement on the premier's visit to Qatar did not mention anything. The Arab country has also not mentioned any such thing. On Thursday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif engaged in a "very extensive and productive" meeting with his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. The premier encouraged Qatari

investors to explore various sectors of Pakistan's economy. In addition to his discussions with the PM, he met with the emir of Qatar and visited the 'Manzar' art gallery, which features works by Pakistani artists. He also met with a delegation from the Qatar Business Association to discuss enhancing economic relations and identifying new opportunities for collaboration. According to the information minister, Qatar would invest in energy, minerals, and IT sectors, with a Qatari delegation expected to visit the country soon.

In letter to Centre, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government intends to buy PIA

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has expressed its desire to purchase the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) through a bid exceeding Rs10 billion, a day after the federal government failed to garner enough bids for the national flag carrier. In a letter to the privatisation ministry on Friday, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment stated their interest in participating in the privatization process of the PIA. The board expressed their intention to acquire the national airline by offering a bid that surpasses Rs10 billion. Cash-strapped Pakistan is looking to offload a 51-100% stake in debt-ridden PIA to raise funds and reform bleeding state-owned enterprises as envisaged under a \$7 billion International Monetary Fund programme. "The PIA is a national asset and an important part of the country's identity. Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandpur is keen on being part of its privatisation process," it said. The letter added that the provincial government would not allow the national asset to fall into the hands of any domestic or foreign private entity, reiterating their commitment to securing the PIA with a bid greater than Rs10 billion. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment has stated it wished for national institutions to remain under government control.

Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandpur is keen on being part of its privatisation process," it said. The letter added that the provincial government would not allow the national asset to fall into the hands of any domestic or foreign private entity, reiterating their commitment to securing the PIA with a bid greater than Rs10 billion. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment has stated it wished for national institutions to remain under government control.

Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Azad Kashmir president discuss region's deteriorating situation

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD/MUZAFFARABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here today. During their one on one meeting, the duo discussed in detail the issues of mutual interest with special focus on ongoing political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir. On this occasion, Barrister Chaudhry, while apprising the federal minister about the fast deteriorating political and human rights situation in the held territory, said that Indian occupation forces have unleashed reign of terror in the region by killing innocent civilians day in and



day out. About the recently concluded elections, President Chudhary

said that the so-called elections held under the shadow of guns was a ploy to deflect world attention away from the real issue.

He, however, maintained that India cannot mislead the world by using such mean tactics. Stressing the need for exposing India's nefarious designs in the region, the president said that it was high time to sensitize world about the early and amicable settlement of lingering dispute that has been the main cause and consequence of human rights violations in the region. On this occasion, the Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam assured the AJK President of his country's continued political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris' legitimate struggle for right to self-determination.

Former PM Raja Farooq Haider calls on President Azad Kashmir



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here today. On this occasion, the duo discussed issues of mutual interest. Meanwhile, Vice Chancellor Mirpur University of Science and Technology Brigadier (ret'd) Dr. Muhammad Younis Javed and Vice Chancellor Women University Bagh Prof. Dr. Abdul Hameed in a separate meeting with the president in which they briefed him about the issues relating to their respective universities. The President Barrister Chaudhry directed the VCs to use all their energies to improve the quality of education in the universities.

Sardar Attique condemns Mastung bomb attack on innocent children

Bureau Report



MUZAFFARABAD/DHIRKOT: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has condemned the blast in Mastung and said that terrorists have now targeted innocent children along with poor laborers. The monster of terrorism can be fought only by working together. Terrorists have now targeted innocent children as soft targets, which is highly condemnable. The President of the Muslim Conference also expressed his condolences to the heirs of the martyred police personnel and innocent children. Condemning the bomb blast in strong words, the President of the Muslim Conference expressed his condolences over the loss of precious lives. He said that targeting innocent children is the height of cowardice, the attack near the school is a conspiracy to keep the new generation away from education. The people of Balochistan have rejected the terrorists. The people and security forces are united against the terrorists. The entire nation is proud of the police officers and soldiers who made sacrifices for the country and the nation. We express our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of the martyrs. No matter how much we condemn the incident of targeting innocent children, it is not enough. Cruelty was demonstrated by targeting children, the beasts who play with the lives of innocent children deserve no concessions. We stand with the families of the martyrs, praying for the speedy recovery of the injured.

PPP govt, JUI-F to work together to address water scarcity, dacoits factor



Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, in his meeting with the JUI-F delegation led by Provincial President Maulana Abdul Qayoom Halejvi and Secretary General Allama Rashid Soomro, discussed pressing issues impacting Sindh, focusing on water scarcity and security concerns in the province.

The meeting was held at the CM House, in which, at the outset, both the leaders exchanged thanks and greetings to the leadership of each other's party in the passage of the 26th Amendment in the Constitution. "The political wisdom of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazal Rehman made it possible, otherwise things were not moving well. The meeting was attended by Minister P&D Nasir Shah and Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar.

The JUI-F leaders Maulana Halajvi and Rashid Soomro extended an invitation to the chief minister and PPP members to participate in an upcoming multi-party conference on water scarcity aimed at addressing current concerns over water availability and discussing proposed canal projects.

In the meeting, they discussed security issues in the Kutchra areas of the Sukkur and Larkana divisions, where a significant operation against dacoits is underway. CM Murad Shah stressed the need to intensify these efforts, directing Home Minister Zia Lanjar to accelerate the operation and engage support from local political parties and notable figures to bolster community resistance against criminal groups.

In the meeting, both PPP and JUI-F leaders agreed to work together for the welfare of the people of the province, strengthen further harmony and develop community initiatives, affirming their shared dedication to addressing the province's pressing challenges.

DC seizes private company for not paying salaries to its employees

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

JAMSHORO: Upon receiving complaints, Wassan directed the Assistant Commissioner to resolve the matter, but due to the factory owners' non-cooperation, the factory was sealed. Wassan emphasized that no one is above the law and labor laws will not be violated, reaffirming support for the workers. Additionally, an investigation has been ordered into Rafhan Factory's unjustified termination of 42 workers.

These actions demonstrate Wassan's commitment to protecting workers' rights and upholding labor laws in Jamshoro.

It's heartening to see officials like Wassan taking proactive measures to safeguard workers' interests. This not only ensures justice but also promotes a fair work environment.

Souvenir

FAISALABAD: Dr. Ahmad Shehzad giving a commemorative shield to Dr. Riyaz Ahmed at the International Diabetic Conference at a local hotel in the city.



Photo: Online

Two weeks Digital Literacy and Citizenship Bootcamp held at the Women University

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Under a munificent grant from the U. S Embassy Islamabad and in collaboration with the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS), the Digital Rights Foundation, in coordination with Registrar Office Women University Multan conducted the inaugural session of the 10-Day Digital Literacy and Citizenship Bootcamp till 31st October, at Katchery Campus, the Women University Multan. The focal person of the bootcamp is Registrar, Prof Dr Mamoona Khan. The Bootcamp was attended by more than 50 students from different departments. The Digital Literacy Bootcamp has been designed to build the capacity of univer-



sity students on key digital rights issues like digital literacy, online information landscape, digital safety and digital citizenship, keeping in mind that online spaces are now reflective of our lived experiences in our offline lives and with our digital profiles opening new avenues

for us, it is crucial to be aware of our rights as digital citizens. The Bootcamp comprises a series of 40+ modules that are designed and aimed at fostering the knowledge of digital citizens in Pakistan. Addressing the inaugural session, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Kalsoom

Pracha said that this bootcamp is salient feature of the Women University Multan commitment towards equipping its students with the knowledge and professional skills necessary to flourish in the digital age, especially in the responsible use and sharing of information on social media. Registrar Prof Dr Mamoona Khan said that equipping the youth with digital skills for their capacity building is the need of the hour as better employment opportunities can be found through digital literacy. The students were encouraged to ask questions and share their experiences. The ceremony was attended by Controller Examinations Dr. Hina Ali, Director QEC Dr. Malika Rani and other faculty members.

Police efforts are being made to resolve the issues faced by the business community

Nadeem Kazmi

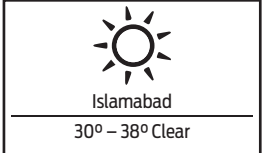
MULTAN: A Delegation led by Khawaja Salman Siddiqui, Central Chairman of the Central Traders Organization of Pakistan, met with Additional IG South Punjab Kamran Khan. Discussions focused on issues of law and order, controlling incidents of theft and robbery, and drug control. In this regard, a delegation of trade representatives led by Khawaja Salman Siddiqui met with the Additional IG South Punjab at his office. The delegation included Sheikh Javed Akhtar, President of South Punjab; Khalid Mahmood Qureshi, President of Multan; Mirza Naem Baig, General Secretary of Multan; Rana Muhammad Owais Ali, Vice President of Multan;



Sheikh Muhammad Faisal Mahmood, Vice President of District Multan; Malik Mazhar Abbas Khakhi of Suraj Miani; Moazzam Hussain Siddiqui, President of MDA Road; and Syeda Schrish Batool,

Chairperson of DRC in Thana Saddar. On this occasion, the Central Traders Organization of Pakistan presented a commemorative shield to Additional IG South Punjab Kamran Khan. While

discussing the law and order situation, incidents of theft, robbery, and street crime in South Punjab, Central Chairman Khawaja Salman Siddiqui said that the business community is ready to cooperate in every possible way to maintain public safety. Guards and CCTV cameras have been installed in markets and shops. However, to control theft, robbery, and street crime, it is essential to improve police patrolling in markets so that traders and citizens visiting these markets feel safe. He also stated that the business community resolves financial transactions mutually among themselves. The Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) in police stations was doing a good job, but it has been rendered ineffective.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings
 Fajr 5:03 am
 Zohr 11:51 am
 Asr 3:37 pm
 Maghrib 5:15 pm
 Isha 6:40 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 Enquiry 9270831-5
 WASA Rawalpindi 5555489
 CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

New 40-bed Gynecology Ward to improve health care at Taj Medical Complex

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Hamdard University Hospital, Taj Medical Complex has taken an important step in improving health care for its patients by opening a new state-of-the-art 40-bed Gynecology Ward full of advanced facilities.

The grand opening of the newly established ward was held yesterday at the hospital.

Ms. Sadia Rashid, President-Hamdard Foundation Pakistan attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony as chief guest. Brig (r)Dr Riaz-ul-Haq, CEO of Hamdard Hospital, Administrators of the new ward Prof Dr Anjum Ara and Prof Dr Irum Khalid and staff accompanied her.

After reciting verses from the Holy

Quran, Brig (r)Dr Riaz-ul-Haq said the establishment of a new 40-bed Gynecology Ward is a major advance for the health care we offer. We are committed to continuing to advance the mission of Ms. Sadia Rashid to provide high-level healthcare to all our patients.

He also said "The new ward has been designed and equipped to the highest standards, providing a safe and efficient environment for complex operations, gynecological treatments and offers personalized care."

"The ward has been staffed by trained and experienced medical and paramedic professionals skilled in using the latest machinery and equipment," he added.

Ms. Sadia Rashid toured various sections of the facility, where Prof. Dr. Anjum Ara and Prof. Dr. Irum Khalid

briefed her on the equipment, staff training, and advanced machinery and available facilities. Ms. Sadia Rashid also inquired about the patients' well-being and prayed for their swift recovery.

Faisal Nadeem - COO of Hamdard Pakistan, Abu Talib Bhutto - Group Director HR/Admin, Aliya Nasir - Principal of Rufayda Hamdard College of Nursing along with people with different walks of life also attended the opening ceremony.

The gynecology ward includes a total of 40 beds, offering private, semi-private, deluxe, and general ward options. The entire ward is centrally air-conditioned, with professional medical staff available 24/7 for patient convenience. It is also equipped with modern labor rooms to enhance patient care.

Inauguration

Karachi: Ms. Sadia Rahid, President, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan is cutting the ribbon to formally inaugurate a new state-of-the-art gynecological ward established at Hamdard University Hospital Taj Medical Complex. Brig (r)Dr Riaz-ul-Haq, Abu Talib Bhutto, Prof Dr Anjum Ara and the workers of Hamdard Pakistan, Hamdard University Hospital are also present with Ms. Sadia Rashid on this auspicious occasion.



Pakistan Television takes another step towards innovation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Television (PTV) is proud to announce significant advancement in visual presentation, taking another decisive step towards innovation that aligns with contemporary standards. The newly enhanced screen features an eye-catching logo and sophisticated graphics, setting the stage for a revitalized viewing experience. This initiative coincides with the introduction of new anchors and programming, marking a pivotal milestone in PTV's commitment to excellence.

These enhancements reflect PTV's ongoing dedication to technological progress and its mission to provide viewers with timely national and international news. In recent years, the breadth and depth of news coverage have expanded considerably, prompting PTV to refine its programming in response to current market trends.

Additionally, PTV World has adapted its programming to play a crucial role in articulating Pakistan's narrative on the international stage. The Information Technology Department at PTV remains dedicated to further enhancing visual presentation to meet the demands of the modern media landscape.

Launch of Caught in the Crossfire

City Desk

DUBAI, UAE: The book launch ceremony for Caught in the Crossfire: The Inside Story of Pakistan's Secret Services, authored by Brigadier (Retired) Naseem Akhtar Khan, was held at the Kutubna Cultural Centre in Dubai. The event brought together an impressive gathering of representatives from the Pakistani community in Dubai, alongside security professionals from the U. S., UK, UAE, India, Sri Lanka, and several other nations across the Middle East and Asia. General Ehsan ul Haq, former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Pakistan Armed Forces, graced the occasion as the chief guest.

Published by Pen and Sword Publishers UK, "Caught in the Crossfire" delivers a gripping narrative of powerplay in South Asia by the regional and global stakeholders directly impacting Pakistan's security landscape. Brigadier (R) Khan draws upon his



personal experiences in security and counter intelligence to offer a comprehensive analysis of the direction and intensity of the crossfire that Pakistan's Secret Services have to continuously face, as a consequence, to protect sovereignty and integrity of the country.

Tarak Rahman to complete 1600 km marathon in 35 days: APSMA

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Tabarak Rehman Chaudhry, who arrived in Pakistan from America with a mission to change life from education, will start the 1600 km marathon from Cadet College Hasan Abdal to Karachi on November 3 and win the honor of the longest race in the world. Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chief of Army Staff, Chief Minister of Punjab and Interior Minister should play their role in providing full security and all kinds of support.

This demand was made by Central President of All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association Kashif Adeb Javadani, North Punjab President Abrar Ahmed Khan, Colonel R. Fawad Hanif, Muhammad Tawfiq, Malik Hafeezullah, Ataur Rahman Chaudhry, Syed Asad Ali, Naeem Ashraf, Kamran Saif Qureshi and Others spoke at the reception held in honor of Tabarak Rehman Chaudhry. Kashif Adeb Javadani said that Tabarak Rahman is trying to promote education, with whom Apsma will fully cooperate. The entire Pakistani nation is proud of this child who came to Pakistan from America for the education of 7000 children just so that he could try for the education of the children. Abrar Ahmad Khan said that Tabarak-ur-Rehman Chaudhry will complete his long journey in 35 days and the funds received will be deposited directly in the account of The Citizen Foundation. The Citizen Foundation is running more than 2,000 educational institutions across the country in which poor, destitute and deserving children are studying. The teachers demanded from the government that the government should provide full security to Tabarak Rahman Chaudhry to fulfill his mission.

CBD Punjab Champions Breast Cancer Awareness with Exclusive Session for Female Employees



City Desk

LAHORE: Demonstrating its commitment to the health and well-being of its workforce, Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), held an exclusive Breast Cancer Awareness session dedicated to its female employees. This event, organized in observance of Pinktober, aimed to provide critical insights into early breast cancer detection, recognition of symptoms, and preventative health measures. The session reflected CBD Punjab's focus on creating a supportive and health-conscious workplace, where awareness and preventive health are prioritized.

Imran Amin, CEO CBD Punjab, expressed his commitment to the cause, stating, "At CBD Punjab, we believe that a healthy workforce is a productive one. Initiatives like these reflect our unwavering dedication to the well-being of our team members. By fostering awareness and promoting proactive health measures, we aim to build a workplace that genuinely cares for its people, both personally and professionally."

With initiatives like this, CBD Punjab showcases its dedication to the health and personal growth of its female workforce. The authority remains committed to prioritizing educational programs that enhance both the personal and professional lives of its team members, ensuring a workplace that cares for the whole person.

AIOU inaugurates its first "Literary Society"

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Inauguration ceremony of "Literary Society" and a first session held yesterday at Allama Iqbal Open University. Syed Nasir Shah, DG Quality Assurance Agency, HEC was the Chief Guest while Professor Dr. Muhammad Khalid, Principal, Post Graduate H8 College Islamabad presided over the event.

Guest speaker of the first session Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir, Dean, Social Sciences and Humanities, AIOU, said in his address that when the British came to the subcontinent, they first captured literature and culture.

The literature of the free nations remain alive and the nations that are slaves have no aesthetics. He further said that such events work as a lamp in the darkness in the promotion of knowledge, literature and language and this process will continue in the same way. Such sessions should be held continuously to keep the culture alive. The chairman of the English department, Dr. Muhammad Kamal Khan, gave the opening remarks and explained the aims and objectives of the literary society, while the Assistant Professor of the English department, Dr. Saira Maqbool, is performing the duties of the focal person of the society. At the end of the ceremony, the cake was also cut.

Government and private sector vow to collaborate on sports development

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Sports Board hosted an engaging "Dialogue on the Sports Economy" where a diverse group of stakeholders gathered to explore strategies for harnessing sports as a major economic force in Pakistan. Discussions covered critical facts of the sports economy, including tourism, branding, broadcasting rights, job creation, merchandising, ticket sales, infrastructure development, sponsorships, digital media, health and fitness, as well as sports goods manufacturing and exports.

Mr. Muhammad Yasir Pirzada, Director General of PSB, opened the event by welcoming partici-

pants and encouraging collaboration between public and private sectors to foster growth within Pakistan's sports economy. Later, the event was honored by the presence of Mr. Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Secretary IPC and President of the Pakistan Sports Board, as chief guest. He highlighted the dialogue's role in shaping a prosperous future for the nation's sports economy.

Prominent figures from various sectors, including builders, developers, chambers of commerce, manufacturers, exporters, and business leaders, brought valuable insights to the table. Senior officials, including the Additional Secretary IPC, Joint Secretary Sports, and officers from PSB/IPC, were also

present on the occasion.

Federal Secretary Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC), Nadeem Arshad Kiani, emphasized Pakistan's sports industry potential, citing tourism, player branding, broadcasting rights, employment, ticket sales, infrastructure, digital media, health, and fitness as key areas.

Addressing the conference, Kiani stressed private sector involvement in policy-making and encouraged stakeholders to contribute to sports development.

United Business Group's Zafar Bakhtawari praised the conference initiative, highlighting budget allocation challenges for sports, education, and health. He advocated for private sector inclusion in poli-



cy-making. Other speakers included Yasir Pirzada (Director General, Pakistan Sports Board), Air Vice Marshal Aijaz Malik, and Brigadier (R) Sultan Satti.

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Our farmers target of kleptocracy

A few days ago, the Chief Minister of Punjab launched a 400 billion rupee project for the farmers in Punjab's Hafizabad district. According to government statistics, ten projects for farmers have been made functional in a record time of just six months. A spokesperson for the Punjab government stated that, for the first time in Pakistan's history, the Chief Minister of Punjab has introduced the "Kisan Card" worth 150 billion rupees. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif launched the Kisan Card in Punjab in record time and announced an increase in the number of Kisan Cards from 500,000 to 750,000. Furthermore, it was announced that farmers cultivating wheat on 12.5 to 25 acres would be given free laser levelers, and those cultivating over 25 acres would receive free tractors. A project to provide agricultural machinery to farmers on a no-profit rental basis was also introduced, with an increase in the number of Kisan Card dealers to 3,000. According to the National Food and Security, Pakistan requires an average of 31 million metric tons of wheat annually.

However, the incentives and promises made by the government to farmers often seem dubious, as they usually aim to provide short-term benefits while ultimately harming farmers in the long run. This year, while the government announced benefits for wheat sowing, it chose not to buy wheat from farmers, claiming they had sufficient reserves from imports ordered just as the local harvest was ready. Farmers

were forced to sell their 100-kilogram wheat sacks at 6,200 rupees, again incurring a deliberate financial loss. This government action further destabilized farmers' economic condition, increasing their financial burdens.

Farmers have come to realize that the government's promises are merely words, with no positive impact on their lives. These actions have led to a growing sense of distrust among farmers, as they are now certain that the government has no genuine intent to improve their livelihoods.

It hasn't been long since the current government's wheat procurement turned into a scandal. The most alarming aspect of this scandal was that, during the caretaker government in October, a decision was made to import over 3 million tons of wheat instead of the initially planned 1 million tons. This decision was deliberately made by the government to benefit a select few individuals, or else they were unaware that the upcoming wheat crop would exceed expectations. Consequently, local farmers suffered as a result of these imports.

Although the government announced an official price for the new wheat crop in advance (set at 3,900 rupees per maund), they did not inform farmers that, unlike last year, the government would only procure a maximum of 2.5 million tons of wheat, rather than 4 million tons.

As a result, farmers did not receive fair prices for their wheat in 2024, as those in power are themselves traders and industrialists. They cleverly buy crops from farmers at low rates and then sell them at high prices.

If it wasn't a wheat crisis, it would have been a scandal involving the prices of sugar, cotton, gas, or electricity. It seems impossible for a year to pass without a mega crisis, where billions are funnelled from the pockets of millions into the hands of a few.

Perhaps, instead of democracy, a kleptocratic system is actually in place in our country, though the rulers have kept us unaware of it. Votes are taken in the name of democracy, but the government is formed by kleptocrats.

Kleptocracy is a form of government or social system in which thieves, corrupt individuals, and criminals rule. In such societies, the ruling and powerful classes exploit the nation's resources and public wealth for their own personal gain. Government officials and authorities in kleptocracies misuse their powers to amass wealth illegally, leading to the concentration of the country's assets in the hands of a few, while the general population suffers from poverty and hardships. In these societies, the rule of law is weak, and the justice system is fragile, causing the public to lose trust in the government.

Currently, a kleptocratic system is prevalent in Pakistan, where farmers

are merely used as fuel for the economy. They are viewed as sources of cheap labour and production assets, and they do not receive fair compensation or appropriate prices for their hard work. Claims by the government about providing aid or incentives to farmers are often just for show, aimed at temporarily appeasing or pacifying them. For example, setting extremely low prices for wheat or other crops, followed by claims of protecting farmers' interests, is actually a method of economic exploitation.

In this system, farmers are forced to buy fertilizers, seeds, and other agricultural necessities at high prices, while they receive low prices for their produce.

Subsidies and government aid also remain limited to powerful and influential individuals, leaving small and ordinary farmers deprived of these facilities. Due to these challenges, farmers fall into debt and experience worsening financial conditions.

In a kleptocracy, there is no genuine intent on the part of the rulers to address the issues faced by farmers. The voices of farmers are suppressed, and there is neither strong legislation nor a justice system to protect their rights. As a result, farmers remain in despair and hardship, struggling to meet their basic needs. In such a system, farmers suffer not only economically but also socially. Their lives become a continuous struggle, with little hope of prosperity or improvement in sight.

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Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

China, UAE presidents exchange congratulations on 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties

Chinese President Xi Jinping and President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Friday exchanged congratulatory messages on the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

China and the UAE are good friends who trust each other and good partners for win-win cooperation, Xi said.

Over the past 40 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties, China-UAE relations have maintained sound and steady development, with strengthened political mutual trust, deepening synergy of development strategies, fruitful practical cooperation in various fields, close people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and sound communication and coordination in regional and international affairs, he added.

Xi recalled that during Mohamed's state visit to China in May, the two heads of state reached an important consensus, which has charted the course for developing China-UAE relations in the next stage.

Xi said that he attaches great importance to the development of China-UAE relations and stands ready to work with Mohamed to take the 40th anniversary of the diplomatic ties as a new starting point to push the China-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership to a higher level, so as to make a greater contribution to regional and world peace and stability while delivering more benefits to the two peoples, CGTN reported.

In his message, the UAE president extended his sincerest congratulations and best wishes to Xi on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of UAE-China diplomatic ties, wishing the two countries continuous development and prosperity and more cooperation in various fields.

The UAE has always committed to consolidating and developing the UAE-China comprehensive strategic partnership for the benefit of the two peoples, he added. On the same day, Chinese Premier Li Qiang and UAE's Vice President and Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum exchanged congratulatory messages.

Li said that China is willing to work with the UAE to take the 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties as an opportunity to implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state and continuously enrich the connotation of the China-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership.

In his message, Mohammed said that the UAE is willing to deepen bilateral relations with China and strengthen cooperation in various fields.

Israeli incursions ...



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

Navigating Digital Technology: Promoting Peace and Tolerance in Pakistan

The contemporary landscape of Pakistan, digital technology has emerged as a double-edged sword, offering both opportunities and challenges. The pervasive influence of social media platforms and online communication tools has the potential to foster dialogue and understanding among diverse communities. Promoting peace and tolerance through these digital channels, Pakistan can address its longstanding issues of sectarianism and ethnic conflict. Educational initiatives that harness digital technology can serve as catalysts for social change, encouraging empathy and cooperation among individuals from different backgrounds. Leveraging digital technology for peace building requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. Campaigns that emphasize shared values and common goals can utilize social media to reach a broader audience, thereby countering extremist narratives that often proliferate online.

Furthermore, fostering critical thinking skills in young people will empower them to navigate the complexities of information dissemination in the digital age. Social media platforms serve as crucial arenas for public discourse, where diverse narratives compete for attention. A sense of community and shared identity among users, these campaigns can create an environment that encourages positive dialogue and mutual understanding.

In peace building efforts digital technology can enhance community engagement by mobilizing grassroots movements that advocate for social justice. By creating virtual spaces for collective action, citizens of Pakistan can unite in their pursuit of a more inclusive society. Embracing digital solutions will not only promote peace but also fortify the foundations

of democracy within the nation.

Pakistan, a nation characterized by its diverse cultures, languages, and traditions, possesses the potential to foster an environment conducive to harmony. Achieving this goal necessitates the implementation of innovative strategies that address the multifaceted challenges faced by its society. Education reform plays a pivotal role in this endeavor; curricula must be designed to promote tolerance and mutual respect among different communities. Incorporating teachings that celebrate diversity, educational institutions can serve as catalysts for social cohesion.

Inclusivity must be at the forefront of any initiative aimed at promoting harmony in Pakistan. This involves recognizing and valuing the rich tapestry of its society, which includes various ethnicities, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds. Policymakers should engage marginalized groups in decision-making processes to ensure their voices are heard and respected. Such engagement not only empowers these communities but also fosters a sense of belonging that is crucial for national unity. Cultivating an environment conducive to harmony in Pakistan requires both innovative strategies and a steadfast commitment to inclusivity. Embracing its diversity and promoting collaborative efforts across all segments of society, Pakistan can pave the way toward a more harmonious future.

The strategic integration of digital technology into peace building efforts may create avenues for collaboration and reconciliation. As Pakistan navigates its complex realities, leveraging technological advancements will be essential for fostering an environment conducive to lasting peace. The country's socio-political landscape is marked by multifaceted challenges, including extremism, sectarian violence, and socio-economic disparities. In this context, digital platforms can serve as powerful tools for promoting

dialogue and understanding among diverse communities. By harnessing social media and other online resources, individuals and organizations can facilitate communication that transcends traditional barriers.

Digital literacy plays a crucial role in empowering citizens to engage with technology constructively. Educational initiatives aimed at enhancing digital skills can enable individuals to access information critically and participate meaningfully in civic discourse. This empowerment fosters an informed populace capable of challenging misinformation that often exacerbates tensions within society. As society becomes increasingly reliant on technology, individuals must be equipped with the competencies necessary to navigate vast online resources effectively. Digital literacy encompasses not only the ability to locate information but also the capacity to evaluate its credibility and relevance critically.

These initiatives empower individuals by promoting informed engagement in public discussions and democratic processes. By cultivating a population adept in discerning factual content from misinformation, educational programs can facilitate a more informed citizenry. This is particularly crucial in an era characterized by rampant disinformation and polarized narratives that threaten cohesive discourse.

Digital skills through targeted education fosters not only personal empowerment but also strengthens democratic institutions. Ensuring that individuals can engage thoughtfully with information, society as a whole benefits from diverse perspectives and robust civic participation. Pakistan can cultivate an environment conducive to harmony. This requires not only innovative strategies but also a commitment to inclusivity that recognizes the rich tapestry of its society. As such, navigating digital technology effectively may well be key to achieving sustainable peace in Pakistan.

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Analysis

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

PAIDAR's Vision for Pakistan-Africa cooperation-I

The Pakistan and Africa Institute of Development and Research (PAIDAR) can play a vital role in exploring new dimensions of relations between Pakistan and African countries. Historically, Pakistan's relations with African countries have been stable but limited. In the current global environment, where nations are increasingly seeking more cooperative partnerships to explore new opportunities, there is a notable absence of robust multilateral cooperation between Pakistan and the African continent. Strengthening these relations is crucial for tapping into the vast economic, strategic, and cultural potential that both sides possess. This is where PAIDAR can make a significant impact by facilitating deeper and more meaningful cooperation.

The bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and African countries in the fiscal year 2022-23 stood at US \$48.359 million, with exports at US \$44.797 million and imports at a mere US \$3.562 million. Pakistan's major exports to African countries include rice, linen, cotton/textile products, ethyl alcohol, tractors, and cement clinkers, while Pakistan imports cocoa paste from Ghana. When we consider that Africa is a continent of 54 countries, this trade volume is notably low, especially when compared to the trade volumes that other developed and developing countries have with Africa. This low figure highlights the need for enhanced trade relations and

the identification of new areas for cooperation between Pakistan and African countries.

When PAIDAR was established, there were high hopes that relations between Pakistan and African countries would improve significantly. However, to date, there has been no significant momentum in this direction. One promising area for developing these relations is the blue economy, which encompasses the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs, while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems. Focusing on the blue economy could serve as a strategic bridge for fostering deeper ties between Pakistan and African nations. PAIDAR can effectively support this initiative, provided it is given the necessary opportunities and support to work on both sides.

To initiate this process, it is crucial to attract the attention of officials and policymakers from both Pakistan and African countries. The first step involves creating awareness among these officials about the vast opportunities that enhanced relations with Pakistan could offer. PAIDAR should actively engage in guiding policymakers and stakeholders on both sides about the potential benefits and areas of collaboration, especially in emerging sectors like the blue economy. This could involve organizing conferences, seminars, and policy dialogues to facilitate direct communication and exchange of ideas.

To be continued



Analysis

M Azam Tariq

Iranian Ambassador Honors Maroof Int'l Hospital Staff at Annual Staff Fest

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Maroof International Hospital held its Annual Staff Fest, a celebration dedicated to recognizing the hard work and commitment of its employees. The event was graced by the esteemed Iranian Ambassador, H. E. Reza Amiri Mughaddam, who praised Maroof's leadership for this motivating initiative. "Events like these not only boost morale but also reinforce the strong team spirit that is vital for any successful organization," he remarked, commending the hospital for its supportive and uplifting work environment.

In his address, the Iranian Ambassador highlighted the strong historical ties between Iran and Pakistan, referencing the scientific and medical advancements made by both countries, particularly after the Islamic Revolution in Iran. He expressed Iran's readiness to expand scientific exchange

and collaboration with Pakistan and discussed the potential for developing medical tourism between the two nations.

The event featured an exciting lucky draw with exceptional prizes, including an Umrah package as the grand prize, a laptop for second place, and an LED TV for the third prize, bringing joy and excitement to all participants.

Mr. Haroon Naseer, CEO of MIHL, and the Ambassador discussed potential collaboration in various medical fields, including research, surgery, and liver transplantation. The Ambassador was also briefed on the ongoing projects and facilities available at the hospital. Mr. Naseer took the opportunity to address a pressing issue in the healthcare sector: the global shortage of nurses. "In Pakistan, the nurse-to-patient ratio is approximately 1:40, significantly higher than the recommended 3:10 ratio. This shortage places immense pressure on the healthcare

system. At Maroof, we are dedicated to addressing this issue by investing in the training and development of our nursing staff to ensure high-quality patient care," he explained.

Fahad Hafeez, the Senior HR Manager, added to the excitement by announcing that the Annual Staff Fest will now be an ongoing tradition. "We are pleased by the success of this event and are excited to make it a permanent annual celebration for our staff. It's a way for us to show our appreciation for their dedication and hard work," he said.

The event received widespread national and international media coverage, showcasing Maroof International Hospital's commitment to fostering a positive and rewarding workplace culture. This initiative reflects Maroof's broader mission of excellence in healthcare, coupled with a deep focus on the well-being of its team.



27th SDC to host South Asian stakeholders including regional experts on pressing issues: Dr Suleri

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) on Friday hosted the curtain raiser media briefing for its flagship 27th Sustainable Development Conference (27th SDC) to start on November 4th at the Pak China Friendship Center. The conference will convene national, regional, and international experts to discuss solutions to pressing global challenges, including the rising climate crisis and economic challenges.

Addressing the news conference, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, said the Conference schedule has been shifted from December to November as the COP29 international climate conference is ahead. This will provide a convincing opportunity to gather collective tangible recommendations from all stakeholders for effective negotiations.

The theme for this year's Sustainable Development Conference is "From Fragility to Resilience" aiming to underscore the fact that despite the vulnerability of the Pakistani nation due to climate change and catastrophes it is resilient enough to resurrect again from its ashes, he said.

Dr. Suleri says, Pakistan only received one-fourth of the total pledges made in the post-2022 floods



Geneva Donors conference to rebuild its devastated areas due to massive floods.

Earlier, Deputy Executive Director, SDPI Dr. Shafqat Munir announced the inclusion of an expo and fireside chats in this year's event. The conference will feature over 40 sessions and panels covering themes such as water, agriculture, gender equality, climate change, economy, trade, and more.

Dr. Munir highlighted the increase in natural disasters, including floods and storms worldwide, noting their adverse effects on global development indicators. He mentioned that Pakistan's major urban centers' carbon emissions are affecting various regions of the country.

SDPI's Dr. Sajid Amin stated that this conference represents Pakistan's largest policy dialogue platform,

aiming to present public concerns directly to policymakers.

SDPI's Associate Research Fellow, Zainab Naem said, "The expo intends to engage the private sector in the sustainable development agenda. Local and international companies, along with startups and small businesses, will participate in the expo, which will be open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m."

LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship inaugurates its signature Incubation and Acceleration programmes



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship (LCE) has successfully inducted its inaugural cohorts for two signature programmes: the LCE Idea Launch Incubation programme and the Slingshot Accelerator programme. Both programmes underscore LCE's commitment to fostering a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem in Pakistan, catering to start-ups at different stages of growth.

The LCE Idea Launch Incubation programme is designed to support early-stage start-up founders at the beginning of their entrepreneurial journey. It provides essential resources including a co-working space, access to the Makers Lab for prototyping, and training modules that equip participants with skills to build and scale their businesses. Additionally, start-ups benefit from networking opportunities with seasoned entrepreneurs and industry experts, alongside guest sessions that enhance entrepreneurial knowledge.

On the other hand, the Slingshot Accelerator programme targets revenue-generating start-ups that are ready to scale. This acceleration initiative offers strategic mentorship from industry leaders, access to tailored resources, hands-on workshops, and opportunities to connect with investors. Start-ups in this programme gain practical insights into driving revenue growth and preparing for investment success.

Start-ups inducted into both programmes will have the unique opportunity to pitch their ventures to a panel of investors, successful founders, and venture capitalists at the Investor Summit held at the conclusion of their training. This summit will offer participants a valuable platform to secure potential funding, forge strategic partnerships, and gain insights that can accelerate their growth.

Unlock Incredible Offers in Dubai this Winter with My Emirates Pass

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Emirates has today announced the return of its popular My Emirates Pass, allowing passengers to enjoy exclusive offers at hundreds of locations in Dubai and the UAE. Starting from 1st November 2024 to 31st March 2025, My Emirates Pass enables customers to use their boarding pass to enjoy incredible discounts at restaurants, family days out, tranquil spa treatments, luxury shopping outlets, private pools and much more.

Emirates customers flying to or through Dubai can simply show their boarding pass and a

valid form of identification to unlock incredible offers to some of the world's most iconic attractions including At The Top Burj Khalifa, IMG Worlds of Adventure and Aquaventure Waterpark. To see all My Emirates Pass offers, please visit: emirates.com/myemiratespass.

Complimentary Access to Cultural Attractions

In addition to over 600 exclusive offers and discounts for retail, leisure, dining, renowned attractions, and luxury spas, passengers this year will also receive complimentary access to the Vision Pavilion and Expo Museum at Expo City for the season.

Dubai Shopping Festival 30th Anniversary

This year sees the acclaimed Dubai Shopping Festival proudly celebrate its 30th anniversary, with a host of A-list performers, exclusive experiences and unforgettable entertainment lined up to mark the occasion. The festival will run from 6th December 2024 to 12th January 2025 across the city, offering a month packed full of unmissable retail offers. While there, Emirates customers can use their boarding pass to enjoy exclusive offers at restaurants, spas, pools, family attractions and more.

Take Advantage of Some Winter Sun in Dubai



Whether it's indulging in world-famous hospitality offerings, unwinding on a sun-soaked

beach or immersing yourself in the festive celebrations, Dubai offers a host of iconic experiences and

attractions for every traveller. Emirates offers flights to more than 140 destinations around the

world, across six continents and currently operates 44 flights per week from the Pakistan to Dubai.

Kallar Kahar Salt Range: A Perilous Segment of the Motorway

Shah Asad Khan

The Islamabad-Lahore Motorway, commonly known as M-2, was inaugurated in 1997 and serves as a flagship project that has transformed Pakistan's road infrastructure. This motorway has revolutionized travel and transportation, making them more accessible and cost-effective. However, amid its many advantages, M-2 harbors significant dangers, particularly in the Kallar Kahar Salt Range—an area that requires urgent governmental intervention.

The 10-kilometer stretch through the Kallar Kahar Salt

Range, once known for its stunning landscape, has unfortunately become notorious for frequent accidents. The region's captivating salt formations and tranquil vistas are now overshadowed by a grim reality: a high incidence of accidents and fatalities. Since its inception, this segment has claimed many lives, leaving families shattered and communities in mourning. The financial toll, amounting to billions in property damage, adds another layer to this tragedy.

International road safety guidelines typically recommend a gradient of no steeper than 3% to 4% for motorways to ensure vehicle safety, particularly for heavy traffic. In contrast, the

Kallar Kahar Salt Range features gradients ranging from 6% to 8%, significantly exceeding these safe limits. This steepness increases the risk of brake failure and catastrophic accidents, resulting in devastating consequences.

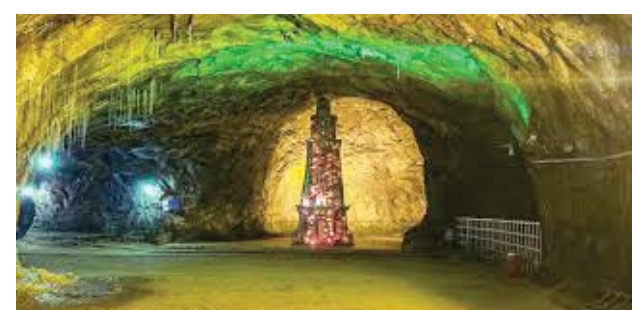
A tragic incident on June 09, 2024, underscores the dangers of this perilous segment. A gas bowser lost control on the steep slopes, colliding with a car and igniting a catastrophic fire. Tragically, a doctor, his wife, and their two children perished in the blaze, alongside the crew of the gas bowser. This is just one of many incidents; hundreds of accidents have occurred at this site since M-2's launch, leading

to numerous fatalities and immense property damage.

The Kallar Kahar Salt Range's most alarming feature is its steep inclines and sharp turns, which violate international safety standards.

These hazardous gradients demand exceptional driving skills and impeccable vehicle condition. A momentary lapse in judgment or a minor vehicle malfunction can lead to lethal consequences. Even well-maintained vehicles struggle to maintain control on these treacherous slopes, heightening the risk of accidents.

In response to the alarming situation, the National Highways & Motorways Police (NH&MP)



and the National Highway Authority (NHA) have taken several measures to mitigate road crashes in the Salt Range. These include deploying additional NHMP officers and patrol vehicles, utilizing advanced speed-measuring equipment, enhancing road signage, setting

up emergency climbs, improved banking on the curves, and initiating a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) convoy system. While these steps are commendable, they serve as temporary fixes rather than long-term solutions.

To ensure the safety of commuters and prevent further

tragedies, a more permanent resolution is imperative. This necessitates a thorough redesign of the existing road to eliminate steep slopes and sharp curves. Exploring design alternatives, such as gentler gradients could significantly enhance safety of commuters.

Transforming this notorious black spot into a safe passage for travelers is not just a challenge for the government; it is an urgent obligation. By prioritizing impactful design interventions that comply with international standards, we can transform this perilous stretch of motorway into a safer thoroughfare, ultimately safeguarding the precious lives and property of commuters.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
90,859.85	88,966.76
Day's High	Day's Low
91,133.28	88,852.68
Index Value	Change
18,264,341,311	+1893.09
Percentage	Time
+2.13%	1 Nov, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,177.15	+67.05
Percentage	Time
+0.83%	1 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
42,203.19	+439.73
Percentage	Time
+1.05%	1 Nov, 1:24 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,053.67	-1,027.58
Percentage	Time
-2.63%	1 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.29	184.54
Bahrain Dinar	731.21	739.21
Canadian Dollar	200.60	203.00
China Yuan	38.88	39.28
Danish Krone	39.82	40.22
Euro	299.90	302.65
Hong Kong Dollar	35.36	35.71
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	897.37	906.87
Malaysian Ringgit	63.34	63.94
New Zealand \$	165.23	167.23
Norwegians Krone	24.98	25.28
Omani Riyal	715.71	724.21
Qatari Riyal	75.54	76.24
Saudi Riyal	73.65	74.20
Singapore Dollar	208.64	210.64
Swedish Korona	25.82	26.12
Swiss Franc	320.15	322.95
Thai Bhat	8.18	8.33
U.A.E Dirham	75.35	76.00
UK Pound Sterling	355.55	359.05
US Dollar	277.25	278.75

Federation Demands Rational Single-Stroke 500 Basis Points Cut: President FPCCI

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the business, industry and trade community of Pakistan is disappointed with the monetary policy as it continues to be based on a heavy premium vis-à-vis core inflation. Currently, inflation as per government's own statistics, stood at 6.9 percent in September 2024; but, the policy rate is 17.5 percent – which reflects a premium of 1060 basis points vis-à-vis core inflation, he added.

Mr. Sheikh continued that, after deliberations across all industries and sectors, FPCCI demands an immediate, single-stroke rate cut of 500 basis points, in the upcoming monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting on Monday, to rationalize the monetary policy; and, align it to the vision of special investment facilitation council (SIFC) and the Prime Minister's vision for economic growth and exports. It is pertinent to note that the core inflation is



expected to be close to 7 percent for the month of October 2024, he added.

Saquiyy Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI,

proposed that the interest rate should come down to 12.5 percent immediately to enable Pakistani exporters to some extent to

compete in the regional and international export markets through reducing the cost of capital in a meaningful way. This step should be accompanied by the fulfilment of government's promise to rationalize electricity tariff for industry.

FPCCI, the apex trade & industry body of Pakistan, has persistently questioned the approach of government, on behalf of the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan, in bringing transparency & consultation in the economic policymaking; and, has reiterated its stance that the government should provide answers to the two sets of questions for businesses to plan their investments: (i) what are the measures that are being undertaken to stay on course the new IMF program and how would they affect cost of doing business in Pakistan (ii) what steps will be taken to put Pakistan back on a growth trajectory and how & when the government plans to take the business community into confidence on these measures.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting in CDA Headquarters on Friday.



Photo: PID

Faysal Bank Collaborates with Zaman Foundation to bring Clean Drinking Water to Tharparker

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Faysal Bank Limited (FBL), one of the leading Islamic banks in Pakistan is privileged to collaborate with Zaman Foundation to bring clean drinking water to the people of Ramiyo Gajju through a solar-powered Reverse Osmosis (R.O) water filtration plant. This initiative not only addresses the village's 78-year struggle for safe drinking water but also empowers the community by fostering healthier living conditions and lifting participation in sustainable development.

Farah Asim, Head of Corporate Affairs at Faysal Bank speaking at the inauguration of the R.O Plant said, "At Faysal Bank, our vision of sustainability is rooted in our Islamic value of Care/Khidmat, aiming to empower communities toward self-reliance and a better quality of life.



Omar Zaman, CEO, Zaman Foundation, expressed his gratitude saying, "Access to clean and safe drinking water

is a basic human right, and this project marks a significant step in transforming the lives of villagers in Umerkot, Thar.

Court backs CCP's role in regulating competition, dismisses challenge

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark decision, the Lahore High Court, led by Justice Jawad Hassan, has upheld the validity of show-cause notices issued by the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) in the poultry matter concerning price fixing of day-old chicks. The decision reaffirms CCP's authority to pursue investigations and act against monopolistic practices, ensuring a competitive market environment.

Justice Jawad Hassan emphasized that a show-cause notice issued on the basis of an inquiry report cannot be prematurely



contested in the High Court. Referring to the legal doctrine of "ripeness", he ruled that cases should proceed through CCP hearings, allowing appeals only after the CCP's final decision. The judgment clarifies the CCP's jurisdiction, safeguarding its autonomy to enforce competition laws without undue interference.

The CCP investigated suspected collusion and price-fixing by eight hatcheries for

day-old broiler chicks from 2019 to June 2021. Forensic analysis revealed that prices were coordinated via SMS and WhatsApp by an official of a member firm.

The Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA) was also found in possible violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act for involvement in pricing discussions. However, the poultry companies M/s Sadiq Poultry and M/s Islamabad Feeds challenged the show-cause notices and has secured a stay order, temporarily halting CCP's proceedings. This comprehensive 21-page judgment now stands as a precedent, strengthening the CCP's authority to enforce anti-trust

laws and foster fair competition within Pakistan's economic landscape.

CCP Chairman Dr. Kabir Sidhu has strategically strengthened the CCP's legal team to enhance its capability in dealing complex competition cases and regulatory challenges. This overhaul has improved efficiency, and prioritized resolution of legal backlogs. As a result, over 40 cases have been resolved by Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT), High Courts and Supreme Court of Pakistan. The resolution of cases resulted in recovery of Rs100 million from businesses involved in anti-competitive practices.

TCL expands its footprint in Pakistan with new biggest flagship store in Islamabad



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: TCL, Pakistan's No. 1 LED TV brand, proudly celebrated the grand opening of its flagship store in Islamabad, marking a significant step in expanding its presence in Pakistan. This new store represents TCL's dedication to bringing cutting-edge technology and immersive entertainment experiences to homes across Pakistan. We are excited to provide Islamabad's residents with an unparalleled opportunity to engage with our groundbreaking products.

TCL's valued Customers. Majid Khan Niazi, Director of Marketing for TCL Middle East and Africa, stated, "The opening of our flagship store in Islamabad is a monumental occasion for TCL as we continue our mission to bring innovative technology and superior entertainment experiences to homes across Pakistan. We are excited to provide Islamabad's residents with an unparalleled opportunity to engage with our groundbreaking products."

Khushhali Microfinance Bank Hosts Pivotal Breast Cancer Awareness Event for Pinktober

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: In a significant effort to combat breast cancer, Khushhali Microfinance Bank Limited (KMBL) hosted a comprehensive awareness event, marking Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The event, organized by the KMBL HR team in collaboration with Jubilee Insurance and Shifa International Hospital, aimed to enlighten attendees about the importance of early detection, prevention, and supportive care in the fight against breast cancer.

The session commenced with opening remarks from Ms. Saira Gabol, the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) of KMBL, who emphasized the bank's dedication to fostering a supportive work environment and promoting health awareness.

Dr. Arooj Akram, a prominent figure in women's health and the Women Health Awareness Lead at Shifa International Hospital, delivered an educational presentation that covered crucial topics such as breast cancer prevention, early detection methods, and treatment options. The event also featured a Q&A session, where attendees engaged directly with health experts to gain deeper understanding of breast cancer-related issues.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Aameer Karachiwalla, President and CEO of KMBL, reiterated the bank's commitment to employee welfare and health-centric initiatives. "Today's event is a testament to KMBL's unwavering commitment to not only the health of our employees but also to our role in the larger community. We stand in solidarity with all those affected by breast cancer and continue to advocate for education, early detection, and effective treatment," stated Mr. Karachiwalla.

This Pinktober event is part of a series of initiatives by KMBL aimed at fostering a supportive work culture and promoting health education, demonstrating the organization's role as a leader in corporate responsibility.

SECP alerts public to surge in the number of fraudulent trading platforms promoted through social media



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) warns the public regarding a surge in fraudulent investment schemes being promoted on social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These schemes are falsely presented as legitimate investment advisory services or training courses with the intent to deceive people into investing their money in these fraudulent schemes.

To ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response, the SECP has escalated the issue to key regulatory and law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the Pakistan Telecommunication

Authority (PTA), and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). These agencies are expected to take appropriate legal action against the individuals and entities involved in such fraudulent activities. The SECP has also brought this matter to Meta's attention, urging immediate steps to safeguard users in Pakistan and to preserve the integrity of its platforms.

The SECP once again urges the public to remain vigilant and verify the authenticity of any investment opportunity before committing any funds. Additionally, individuals are advised not to share personal or financial information with unverified sources or through social media platforms to avoid falling victim to financial scams.

Sports minister inaugurates Khelta Punjab Games

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar has inaugurated the Khelta Punjab Games 2024, the biggest sports event of the Punjab province, at a colourful opening ceremony at Nishtar Park Sports Complex (NPSC) Gymnasium Hall on Friday.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Pervez Iqbal, Sports Coordinator Malik Anooosh Khokhar, Director Admin M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Director Youth Affairs Rana Nadeem Anjum and other officials were also present on this occasion.

Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar also played a ceremonial badminton match with DG Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Pervez Iqbal on this occasion.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar said that the 'Sifarish' culture has been eradicated completely and all the affairs including selection process are being completed purely on merit. "120,000 players from across the province are participating in the Khelta Punjab Games which is definitely a big achievement".

He further said that the participating players of Khelta Punjab Games will be given prizes of ten crore rupees. "Besides this, Punjab Sports Department will also extend multiple facilities to players through Rs 2 billion Sports Endow-



ment Fund. We will invite Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz at the final competitions of Khelta Punjab Games".

DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal in his address said that Khelta Punjab Games are officially opened in all the districts

of the province simultaneously. "The competitions of six games—athletics, badminton, football, hockey, kabaddi and tape ball cricket—will be conducted in the first phase of Khelta Punjab Games".

He said that Sports Board Punjab

is taking all possible measures for the welfare of the players. "The members of our monitoring team will be present at every match of Khelta Punjab Games to assess the performance of all players minutely".

Pre-Australia Departure Cricket Camp for the Six Players in Pakistan

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: pre-Australia departure camp for the six players in Pakistan will commence at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi tomorrow. The camp is scheduled to run till 6 November, with the players set to depart on 10 November.

Pakistan will take on Australia in a three-match T-20 series from 14 to 18 November.

Jahandad Khan, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Omair Bin Yousuf, Sahibzada Farhan, Sufyan Moqim and Usman Khan will take part in the camp.

Camp schedule (all activities at the National Bank Stadium):

2 November - The players will train from 3.15pm till 5pm. Beforehand, Sahibzada Farhan will be available for brief stand-up media interviews at the venue.

3 November - The players will train from 3.15pm till 5pm. Before the training, Mohammad Abbas Afridi will



be available for brief stand-up media interviews at the venue.

4 November - The players will commence their training from 3.15pm

till 5pm. Beforehand, Usman Khan will be available for brief stand-up media interviews at the venue.

5 November - The players are sched-

uled to take part in the scenario-based practice match from 10.15am till 12pm. Afterwards, Sufyan Moqim will be available for brief stand-up media interviews at the venue.

6 November - On the final day of the camp, the players will take part in the scenario-based practice match from 3pm to 5pm. Beforehand, Jahandad Khan and Omair Bin Yousuf will be available for brief stand-up media interviews at the venue.

T20I squad for Australia: Mohammad Rizwan (captain), Salman Ali Agha (vice-captain), Arafat Minhas, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah (WK), Jahandad Khan, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Omair Bin Yousuf, Sahibzada Farhan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Sufyan Moqim, Usman Khan

Support staff for camp only: Saeed Bin Nasir (coach), Abdul Saad (coach), Imtiaz (physio) and Taimoor Mehmood (trainer)

Pakistan to face India on THIS date in Blind T20 Cricket World Cup

Sports Desk

LAHORE: World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC) has announced the schedule for the upcoming fourth edition of the Blind Cricket T20 World Cup, set to begin on November 23 in Lahore.

The mega event, which will run until December 3, will feature teams from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, South Africa, Nepal, Afghanistan, and host nation Pakistan. Defending champions India will compete to retain their title.

The opening match of the tournament will take place on November 23 between South Africa and Pakistan at the GIC Cricket Ground in DHA, Lahore. Traditional rivals Pakistan and India will face off on November 25.

According to Syed Sultan Shah, President of the World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC), foreign teams are expected to arrive by November 21.

The opening ceremony is scheduled for November 22 in Lahore. Lahore will



host 15 matches, including the opening match, while Multan will host the semi-finals, the final, and a total of 9 matches.

Blind T20 Cricket World Cup Schedule

Pakistan vs South Africa, 23 November
Sri Lanka vs Nepal, 23 November
India vs Bangladesh, 23 November
Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka, 24 November

Nepal vs Bangladesh, 24 November
India vs South Africa, 24 November
Pakistan vs India, 25 November
Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka, 25 November
Nepal vs Afghanistan, 25 November
South Africa vs Nepal, 26 November
Pakistan vs Bangladesh, 26 November
India vs Afghanistan, 26 November
South Africa vs Sri Lanka, 27 November
Afghanistan vs Bangladesh, 27 November
Pakistan vs Nepal, 27 November
Pakistan vs Sri Lanka, 29 November
India vs Nepal, 29 November
Afghanistan vs South Africa, 29 November
Pakistan vs Afghanistan, 30 November
South Africa vs Bangladesh, 30 November
India vs Sri Lanka, 30 November
Q1 vs Q4, 01 December
Q2 vs Q3, 01 December
Final, 03 December

72 Rumanza Golf and Country Club Golf Course



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The skilled golf playing ladies of the country converged at the world class par 72 Rumanza Golf and Country Club Golf Course, DHA, Multan to compete in the 3rd Ladies Golf Squad Rumanza Night Golf Tournament held yesterday. Lady contestants dressed in vibrant purple and magenta attire launched themselves to counter golfing challenges of the alluring Rumanza Golf Course.

In wonderful playing conditions the star of the competition in Diamond Category was Humna Amjad who displayed classy playing skills to emerge as top player with a gross score of 71. Her hitting off the tees was accurate and powerful were her drives on all par fours and par fives. And her superb control over every shot was an inspiration for the emerging lady golfers who are seeking attainment in national golf circuit of Pakistan. Runners up gross was Zahida Durrani, another golf player of eminence in the ladies category. And second runner up in gross category was Ana James who played steadily and had to be content with the 3rd gross, as the other two winners were just remarkable.

Net section outstanding performers in Diamond Category were Ayra Yasin, first net, Zaib un Nisa, second net and Tehmina Ahmed, third net.

As for the formidable ones in Gold Category playing to handicaps ranging from 25 to 36, the best in gross section were Sobia Waseem, first gross, Minaa Zainab, second gross and Humaira Zeeshan, third gross. And net honors went to Arooj Kawal, first net, Huma Bilal, second net and Saba Amjad, third net.

Senior Ladies who ended up with prizes were Shahbana Waheed, first gross, and Ayesha Hameed, second gross. Those who won net prizes are Shahnaz Moeen and Amra Leghari.

The event was organized by Mrs Minaa Zainab and Salman Abbasi and endorsed by Gourmet. Col Attique Ahmed Khan, Director of Rumanza Golf and Country Club distributed prizes to the winners in the Senior, Gold and Diamond categories

Four more fixtures decided of Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament



Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament at various cricket Grounds.

The highlights of the days play was dashing Century 125 by Amjad Khan with the help of 9 boundaries and 11 sixes.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Master Oil Lubricant.

Scores in Brief:
Sindh Rana Cricket Club beat Karachi Badshah Cricket Club by 5 Wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Karachi Badshah CC 158 all-out in 32.2 overs. Muhammad Luqman 37, Shahzaib Jilani 23. Muhammad Atif (sla) 4/27, Arsalan Khan 2/31, Shahryar Khan 2/36.

Sindh Rana CC 161/5 in 22.2 overs. Tahir Pathan 54 8x4 1x6, Shahryar Khan 38, Muhammad Hanif 27. Muhammad Adnan 2/34, Muhammad Luqman 2/35.

In the 2nd Match New Nest Cricket Club beat Karachi West Cricket Club by 9 Wickets at Afza Ground. Karachi West CC 149 all out in 24.1 overs. Muhammad Osama 39, Muhammad Ghufuran 27. Fazal-ur-Rehman 2/26, Ali Ahsan 2/26.

New Nest CC 151/1 in 16 4 overs. Naeem Ahmed 98 9x4 8x6, Fazal-ur-Rehman 36.

In the 3rd Match AlHamra Cricket Club beat Shadab Sports by 114 runs at Abbasi. Al-Hamra CC 311 all out in 37.4 overs. Amjad Khan 125 9x4 11x6, Fahad Hussain 43, Abdul Hadi 37, Muhammad Khan 24. Misbah Khan 22. Tariq Hanif 3/42, S Arsalan Masood 2/52, Naveel Khan 2/64.

Shadab Sports 197 all out in 27 overs. Haider Zubairy 68 9x4 5x6, Tariq Hanif 44, S. Arsalan Masood 36. Amjad Khan (ob) 4/45, Saifullah 2/8, Abdullah Idrees 2/58.

In the Fourth Match Union Sports beat Sabir XI by 6 Wickets at Pak Star Ground. Sabir XI 181 all out in 33.4 overs. Aamir Nazeer 33, Muhammad Faizan 26, Muhammad Ibrahim 23. S Owais Ahmed 3/21, Mehrab Ali 3/31, Umer Shah 2/24.

Union Sports 185/4 in 29.5 overs. Hasan Merchant 77 11x4, Salah Khan 58 1x4 2x6.

England announce central contract list for 2024-25

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has announced the updated Central Contract list for the Men's international cricket season for 2024-25.

A total of 29 players received England central contracts, including seven players who were awarded two-year contracts, 19 securing annual contracts, and three receiving Development contracts.

England Men's captains Ben Stokes and Jos Buttler have both signed extensions and are now contracted on two-year deals. Test captain Stokes was previously on a one-year contract and white-ball captain Buttler was on a two-year contract.

Five players have signed England Central Contracts for the first time under the new multi-year system that was introduced last year.

Jamie Smith has signed a two-year contract while Will Jacks, Shoaib Bashir, Phil Salt and Oly Stone have signed one-year contracts.

Jacob Bethell and Josh Hull have earned England Development Contracts for the first time to join John Turner.

A further three players who were already contracted have also renewed with Gus Atkinson signing a two-year contract while Jack Leach and Reece Topley have agreed on a further one-year contract each.

The system, which covers both

red-ball and white-ball players, considers the likelihood of players featuring in England teams across formats over the next period while recognising performances in the preceding year.

Managing Director of England Men's Cricket, Rob Key, said: "The strength and depth of talent across England Men's red and white-ball cricket is clear in the quality of players who are centrally contracted."

"These contracts reward the players we believe will play an important role for our England Men's teams. Both our captains, Ben Stokes and Jos Buttler, have signed two-year central contracts that showcase the commitment of all the players to prioritise playing for their country."

"I want to congratulate all the players who have signed new central contracts ahead of what is set to be an exciting period for England Men's cricket."

England Men Central Contract List

Two-year contracts: Gus Atkinson, Harry Brook, Jos Buttler, Joe Root, Jamie Smith, Ben Stokes, and Mark Wood.

One-year contracts: Rehan Ahmed, Jofra Archer, Jonny Bairstow, Shoaib Bashir, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Sam Curran, Ben Duckett, Will Jacks, Jack Leach, Liam Livingstone, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Oly Stone, Josh Tongue, Reece Topley, Chris Woakes

Development contracts: Jacob Bethell, Josh Hull and John Turner.



Meeting...

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



Photo: PID

Finance and Revenue Minister chairs ECC meeting

Commerce Desk

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

The meeting was attended by Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, Governor SBP (virtual) and Chairman SECP (virtual),

along with Federal Secretaries and senior officers from the concerned Ministries and Divisions.

The ECC considered a proposal from the Ministry of National Food Security & Research for allocation of domestic and imported wheat stocks of PASSCO among wheat-deficient agencies/regions for Food Year 2024-25. The ECC discussed the issue threadbare and decided that domestic and imported wheat would be allocated and released by PASSCO based on allocation ratio decided by ECC on 1st February 2024, till full disposal of imported wheat stock, and all seven

wheat-deficit agencies/regions would lift the wheat as per their committed demand during the Food Year 2024-25. The ECC however directed that the wheat to be picked up by agencies/regions be tested beforehand for purpose of quality and fitness for consumption.

The ECC considered and approved a proposal from the Ministry of Interior for grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant amounting to Rs. 252.711 million against the same amount surrendered by the Ministry of Housing and Works, for allocation to Capital Development Authority to ensure unin-

terrupted provision of civic services at the Prime Minister's Office (Public), Prime Minister's Office Internal and Prime Minister's Staff Colony.

The ECC also approved a proposal of the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives for transfer of Rs. 30 billion budgeted for FY 2024-25 under the "Flood Response Emergency Housing Project", to Finance Division as Technical Supplementary Grant for onward release to Government of Sindh as per Finance Division's release strategy for development budget and after authorization by the Ministry of Planning, Development &

Special Initiatives.

The ECC meeting also deliberated upon a summary by National Accountability Bureau for a TSG for allocation of Rs. 376 million in terms of Article 84 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973, in favour of NAB for meeting the expenditure in terms of Recovery and Reward Rules 2002, and approved it.

A proposal by the Ministry of Commerce for allocation of TSG amounting to Rs. 226.720 million to support its trade and investment missions in China was also considered and approved by the ECC.

Acting president for adopting international best practices to improve governance

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Friday called for adopting international best practices, focusing on innovation and using the latest technology to improve governance in Pakistan. He expressed these views while talking to the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course of the National Institute of Public Administration, Karachi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The acting president underscored the need for embracing digital governance, data-driven decision-making, and using artificial intelligence to improve service delivery. Addressing the participants, he highlighted that Pakistan faced multiple challenges, including economic issues, high inflation, rising population, unemployment, climate change, and



social injustice. He said that bureaucracy needed to play a proactive and constructive role to help address various challenges faced by the country. He emphasised the need to position Pakistan internationally as a competitive and forward-thinking nation, while also ensuring that every citizen benefitted from the fruits of our policies.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani said that bureaucracy should build strong networks, both within the government and with external stakeholders, to find sustainable solutions

to Pakistan's socio-economic problems. He stated that civil servants were required to be the problem solvers, innovators, and leaders who could help the governments steer the country out of its present socio-economic and governance challenges. The acting president advised the bureaucrats to adopt a service-oriented attitude, adding that government service required empathy, humility, and a genuine desire to improve the lives of others.

He said that the world was constantly evolving, and civil servants needed to evolve with it. He said that civil servants should seek out knowledge, equip themselves with the latest skills and tools, stay informed about global trends and developments, and continue refining their skills. "You must adopt ethical governance and treat the public humanely", he added.

PM expresses gratitude to Amir of Qatar for warm hospitality



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani for his warm hospitality during his two-day visit to Qatar.

"My sincere gratitude to Your Highness for your exceptionally warm hospitality!", he wrote on X in response to post written by Amir of Qatar.

"Pakistan deeply cherishes and values its special friendship with Qatar," he added.

In his post, Amir Tamim Bin Hamad emphasized the growing relationship, stating, "Today, I

discussed with Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif the prospects for expanding bilateral cooperation in various fields. The relations between our two countries are growing, and we are constantly looking forward to further developing them with our brothers in Pakistan."

In another post, the prime minister thanked Chairperson of Qatar Museum Sheikhha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani in response to her post regarding the visit of PM Shehbaz Sharif.

"Thank you Your Excellency! Your gracious gesture reaffirms the enduring bonds between our two nations," the prime minister said.

Iranian ambassador praises Pakistan Navy for rescue of fishermen



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam on Friday extended heartfelt gratitude to the Pakistan Navy for its swift and dedicated response to a recent maritime emergency, where 23 Iranian fishermen were rescued from a fishing boat accident in the open sea.

In a message of appreciation, Ambassador Moghadam praised the Pakistan Navy's professionalism and commitment, emphasizing the longstanding spirit of mutual support between Iran and Pakistan in international rescue and humanitarian assistance efforts.

He highlighted that both nations have consistently upheld strong cooperation in search and rescue

operations in international waters, cementing a history of solidarity and shared responsibility.

Reflecting on previous instances of collaboration, Ambassador Moghadam recalled a similar incident in March 2024 when the Pakistan Navy provided critical assistance by rescuing eight Iranian fishermen after a fire broke out on their vessel. He noted that this tradition of support is a testament to the enduring brotherhood between the two countries.

"The people of Iran are truly grateful for Pakistan's unwavering readiness to assist in times of need, exemplifying the close bonds and mutual commitment that Iran and Pakistan have cherished throughout their history," he said.

Punjab Green Tractor Scheme: Maryam Nawaz conducts lucky draw

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz on Friday launched 'CM Punjab Green Tractor Scheme' by conducting digital balloting in Lahore.

"We want to enter a modern era of mechanisation of agriculture in Punjab," said Maryam Nawaz Sharif while conducting digital balloting.

She said that the Nawaz Sharif's green tractor scheme has been relaunched in Punjab for farmers in Punjab after a lapse of 12 years.

The chief minister said that Rs. 10 lakh subsidy will be given on each tractor to 9500 farmers under the scheme. She also inspected four types of green tractors to be given to the farmers to review their features.

Pak-Saudi Ministers agreed road map for investment



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting of Pak-Saudi Ministers for Investment was held in Riyadh capital of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in which the roadmap for heavy investment between both countries was discussed and important decision was finalized. It was agreed to implement the mutual MOUs and agree-

ments in the light of the visit of Saudi delegation to Pakistan and arrival of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to KSA. According to details, Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan and Minister for Petroleum Musadaq Malik visited Riyadh along with a high-level delegation where Saudi Arabia's Minister

of Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Faleh and his high level delegation held detail discussion. They all agreed to move forward quickly to implement details finalized so far for boosting investment in Pakistan.

Saudi Minister for Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Faleh while welcoming the federal ministers to Saudi Arabia said

that his recent visit to Pakistan has been very pleasant, positive and constructive in the context of which future developments are being evaluated. He invited the Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan to participate in the Expo in Saudi Arabia being held on November 25 and 26 which will also help to get more details in this regard.

PTA says internet 'back to normal'



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's internet speed has returned to normal following the repair of faults in the SMW4 submarine cable, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has announced.

A PTA spokesperson stated that faults were identified in the SMW4 cable in June and the AAE-1 cable in August. The restoration of both cables has eliminated a shortfall of 1750 Gbps, resulting in the full restoration of internet speed and capacity.

Looking ahead, the PTA spokesperson also revealed plans to enhance connectivity further. Three additional submarine cables are scheduled to be installed within the next two years; two by Trans World International and one integrated into the PTCL cable system.

This expansion aims to significantly improve internet infrastructure and speed across the country.

Ambassador Farooq commends Saudi media ministry for hosting Pakistan Week at Suwaidi Park

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Ahmad Farooq praised the Saudi Ministry of Media for organizing Pakistan Week at Suwaidi Park under the theme 'Global Harmony'.

The event, aimed at promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity, showcases the richness of Pakistani culture in the Saudi Arabia's capital.

During a meeting with a delegation of Pakistani journalists currently on an official visit to Riyadh, Ambassador Farooq expressed his hope that this festive occasion would be enjoyed by both the Pakistani diaspora and Saudi citizens, presenting Pakistani culture in its true spirit.

He noted that the embassy, through its community welfare officers, is arranging transportation services to facilitate Pakistanis from various regions of the Kingdom to attend and partake in this celebration.