



PM felicitates Sri Lankan President on his party's victory

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday extended his heartfelt felicitations to President of Sri Lanka Anura Kumara Dissanayake on the resounding victory of his party in the parliamentary elections.



Council of Islamic Ideology declares VPNs usage 'un-Islamic'

The Council of Islamic Ideology has declared virtual private networks (VPNs) usage "un-Islamic" (against Sharia) as the interior ministry demands the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) block "illegal VPNs" across the country. He declared that taking measures to prevent or restrict the access to immoral and offensive content is in accordance with the Sharia.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Margalla Dialogue 2024

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir addresses the Margalla Dialogue 2024 on Friday.



Photo: ISPR

Pakistan won't be part of any global conflict, says General Asim Munir

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan would become part of any global conflict, however, the country would play its role in promoting peace and stability worldwide, Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir said on Friday as the world deals with conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine.

"Over 235,000 Pakistanis have contributed to United Nations peacekeeping missions," he said while addressing the Margalla Dialogue organised by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute in the federal capital.

The event brought together defence experts, journalists, and lawmakers from across the world. They discussed emerging

global realities, challenges and responses.

The nuclear-armed country has been "neutral" on the Ukraine issue and called for dialogue to resolve the issue. Moreover, Pakistan has slammed Israel's atrocities in Palestine and called for Israel's accountability for "war crimes" in Gaza.

While speaking on 'Pakistan's role in peace and stability', he highlighted that over 235,000 Pakistanis have contributed to United Nations peacekeeping missions and paid tribute to the 181 Pakistani peacekeepers who were martyred in the pursuit of international peace.

The army chief emphasised the challenges the world has faced in recent years, particularly the

rapid spread of misinformation and misleading narratives as a "major concern."

COAS Munir said: "The growing influence of non-state actors is also a significant challenge in the face of numerous global changes." He pointed out the transformations occurring in global economies, armed forces, and technology.

He identified violent non-state actors and state-sponsored terrorism as "major threats" on an international scale. COAS Munir stressed that while technology has played a "crucial role" in the dissemination of information, it has also facilitated the spread of misleading and false narratives.

He warned that without comprehensive laws and regu-

lations, the proliferation of false information and hate speech would continue to destabilise political and social structures.

"Lack of regulation" around freedom of expression

The army chief was of the view that the "lack of regulations" around freedom of expression was contributing to the "decline of ethical values" in societies worldwide.

He noted a growing trend of inequality, intolerance, and division based on religious, sectarian, and ethnic lines on a global scale.

COAS Munir emphasised that addressing critical challenges such as climate change, combating terrorism, and ensuring global health are essential shared goals. He reaf-

firmed Pakistan's commitment to playing a role in promoting peace and stability both regionally and globally.

According to the army chief, terrorism represents a common challenge for all of humanity. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the fight against terrorism.

He announced the establishment of a comprehensive border management regime aimed at securing Pakistan's western borders. He expressed concerns about the emergence of Fital-Khawarij, a new name for banned Tehreek-e-Taliban, which has become a "haven for various terrorist organisations and proxies worldwide."

Continued on Page 8

Air Chief of Pakistan receives Bahrain Medal



RAWALPINDI: On behalf of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy King of Kingdom of Bahrain, conferred Bahrain Medal-First Class upon Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Sakhr Air Base, Bahrain. The medal was awarded to Air Chief in recognition of his distinguished efforts to enhance military cooperation and defence collaboration between the two brotherly countries. The ceremony was witnessed by senior civil and military leadership of Kingdom of Bahrain.

His Royal Highness conveyed his heartfelt acknowledgement to Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu for the participation of Pakistan Air Force contingent comprising JF-17 Block-III fighter jets alongside air and ground crew in the Bahrain International Airshow. Chief of the Air Staff expressed his gratitude for the honour of receiving the Bahrain Medal-First Class.

On the sidelines of Bahrain International Airshow, Commander of Ninth Air Force (US Air Forces Central Command - AFCENT), Lieutenant General Derek France called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force. The Air Chief reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two strategic partners. Commander AFCENT appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and vowed to enhance cooperation in the fields of joint training, mutual exercises and military to military collaboration.

In a separate meeting, Chief of the Air Staff also called on Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force.

Atta Tarar calls for culture driven climate actions at high-level ministerial dialogue in Baku



Spokesman Report

BAKU: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday made a passionate call for taking culture driven climate action to address the global climate crises.

While delivering a speech at a high-level ministerial dialogue on the Cultural Heritage and Climate Change in Baku, the minister began his speech with a heartfelt commendation to Azerbaijan, the UAE and Brazil for bringing all the nations together for the second high-level dialogue on culture based climate action.

"Here in Baku, a city that breathes history and radiates cultural vibrancy, we find ourselves surrounded by the reminders of the strengths and resilience that heritage brings to our lives," he said while describing the city as "a testament to what a culture can achieve. It preserves the past, shape the present and guides us towards more resilient future," he added.

The minister remarked, as I reflects upon the legacies like Baku, I reminded of the cultural gems back home in Pakistan where the people of Indus civilization which originated along the banks and tributaries of the mighty river Indus which is also a home to one of the world UNESCO

Punjab govt declares health emergency

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab govt has declared a health emergency in Lahore and Multan. This emergency will entail a complete lockdown in both cities on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

During a press conference, Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb emphasized the seriousness of the situation, stating, "The smog has now escalated into a health crisis."

She also announced that restaurants will be permitted to offer takeout services until 8 PM.

This decision comes as Lahore remains one of the most polluted cities in the world, with smog levels reaching alarming heights.

The government is considering further measures, including extending school holidays.

Due to increasing smog intensity, Lahore continues to rank as one of the world's most polluted cities. Reports suggested that the Punjab government is contemplating additional holidays for schools, and if it doesn't rain, universities may be closed starting November 18.

Khan ready to cut deal with establishment, but military declines, claims The Guardian

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan has allegedly expressed his willingness to cut a deal with the establishment, however, the military has declined, The Guardian reported on Friday.

The purported statements come more than a week before the party's decision to protest on November 24 for the "restoration" of democracy and the judiciary.

His party has described it as a "final call" after a series of protests where, according to many, the party failed to achieve their objectives amid the government's crackdown and road blockades. In an interview with the English newspaper, the incarcerated former prime minister reiterated his willingness to engage with military leadership from his jail cell.

Khan is being held at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail and is prohibited from meeting with journalists. But in the recent past, many media outlets have



conducted his interview by sending him questions. Like he gave one to Zetco. The Guardian claimed that it also posed questions through his legal representatives.

In his responses, the cricket-turned-politician told the newspaper that he has had no direct contact with the military since his arrest and imprisonment in August of last year. Despite previously accusing the military of orchestrating his ousting and confinement, he indicated that he would not dismiss the possibility of negotiating with the military establishment.

The ex-prime minister stated that any potential deal with the military would prioritise "principles" and the interests of the people, rather than

personal benefit or compromises that could undermine the country's democratic values.

"I would rather live the rest of my life in prison than compromise on my principles," he said.

The military has no plans to negotiate or reach an agreement with incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan, The Guardian reported while citing senior military sources.

The newspaper claimed that sources within the senior military leadership stated that the former prime minister has been pressing for discussions with the military over the past few months, offering "unconditional" talks in hopes of securing a deal for his release.

But military officials remained firm in their decision not to engage in any negotiations with Khan. One military source stated, "Khan must confront the court cases against him and cannot expect any deals from the military. While he advocates for the rule of law, he does not seem to want it applied to himself"

Interior ministry asks PTA to block 'illegal VPNs' amid security concerns

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The interior ministry instructed the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority on Friday to block "illegal VPNs" throughout Pakistan, alleging their use by terrorists to facilitate violent activities and access indecent and blasphemous content.

"VPNs are increasingly being exploited by the terrorists to facilitate violent activities and financial transactions in Pakistan," the ministry said in a letter.

VPNs, or virtual private networks, are commonly used worldwide to bypass restrictions and access blocked sites. In Pakistan, they are frequently employed to reach websites such as X and other restricted platforms.

Earlier this week, the PTA announced plans to limit VPN usage in the future to reduce access to indecent material. This decision follows a recent disruption that rendered VPNs inoperable across the country.

Senator Rubina Khalid Meets Karandaaz Pakistan's teams

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Bilateral talks between the State Bank of Pakistan and the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) are scheduled in the coming days to enhance transparency in the distribution of funds and to digitalize payments for beneficiary women.

Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid, along with Secretary Aamir

Ali Ahmed, met with Karandaaz Pakistan's Chief Digital Officer, Sharjeel Murtaza, and Associate Director, Usman Kokab, at the BISP Headquarters today.

The meeting focused on key topics, including the implementation of the RAAST payment system to facilitate payments to BISP beneficiaries, biometric verification of women for enhanced security, and skill training programs aimed at providing employ-

ment opportunities to deserving families.

Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized the need to ensure transparency and dignity in transferring funds to deserving women. She highlighted that biometric verification is essential to strengthen the payment system and prevent unauthorized access to beneficiaries' funds.

Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad suggested utilizing the services of

BISP's existing partner banks to pilot the implementation of the RAAST payment system.

Senator Rubina Khalid also mentioned BISP's recent collaboration with Bank Alfalah's Alfa Mall project in Karachi. This initiative connects skilled women to the modern economy by enabling them to digitally showcase and market their products, promoting financial independence and empowerment.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid, along with Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad, met with Karandaaz Pakistan's Chief Digital Officer, Sharjeel Murtaza, and Associate Director, Usman Kokab, at the BISP Headquarters on Friday.



Photo: PID

Every Third Person is Suffering From Diabetes: Dr. Basit Ramzan



Shahzad Anwar Amrohi

MULTAN: Diabetes is a common disease. Thanks to the social awareness about this disease, there is a need to awaken Jihad under sustainable measures. Addition of sugar is becoming life-threatening for patients.

District Chairperson Health Services, Director Lions Club of Lahore host Izhar Ahmad expressed these thoughts in relation to World Sugar

Day organized by Multan Crescent Lions Club in Gulshan Market New Multan. On the occasion of the inauguration of the free medical camp for diabetes patients at Royal Health Care, doctor Dr. Basit Ram said Diabetes is Silent Killer: that every third person is suffering from diabetes at this time. Like licking it hollows out internally.

Most of the deaths of diabetic patients are due to heart attack. To control diabetes in Pakistan, there is

a need to work on the basis of Jihad. If serious efforts are not made to stop this disease, Pakistan can become the fifth largest destination for diabetes patients in the world.

Practical steps must be taken to make Pakistan a sugar free state. To keep the fall in balance, daily exercise, complete abstinence from smoking, special care in diet, and full adherence to doctor's instructions should be followed. On this occasion,

Muhammad Afzal Supra, Ahmed Chagatai, Professor Azam Hussain, Ghulam Abbas, Hameed Baloch, Umair Saeed, Imran Raza Jafri, Dr. Muhammad Ramadan were also present.

Dr. Basit Ramzan, Prof. Muhammad Afzal Supra, Prof. Azam Hussain, Ghulam Abbas, Hameed Baloch, Umair Saeed, Imran Raza Jafri, Dr. Muhammad Ramadan are with him.

By 2040, Farmer Field Schools will reach 40 million Farmers Globally

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: In a landmark event, the first-ever seminar on the review of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) implementation in Sindh, Pakistan was held in Sindh Agriculture University. This two-day seminar brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including FFS practitioners, public extension services, academia, civil society organizations, and farmer groups from across the province. The event aimed to evaluate the progress of Farmer Field Schools, share lessons learned, and identify opportunities for scaling its impact to build more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient agrifood systems.

The seminar, organized in partnership with the Sindh Agriculture University, is part of a broader initiative to review and advance FFS practices globally. The session also explored how Farmer Field Schools can help farmers adapt to emerging challenges, such as climate change, while strengthening local economies and enhancing livelihoods. A key focus is on placing farmers at the center of transformation processes, emphasizing that they must be provided with the knowledge and



capabilities to effectively participate in decision-making. This approach accelerates the transformation of agricultural and food systems in the region, ensuring that farmers become active stakeholders in their communities, not just passive beneficiaries.

In a virtual address to the participants of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) seminar at Sindh Agriculture University, Secretary of Agriculture Sindh, Mr. Rafique Ahmed Burriro, highlighted the

pivotal role of FFS in equipping farmers to face the evolving challenges of climate change. "In light of the urgent climate realities reshaping agriculture in our province, the outcomes of this seminar must guide actionable policy frameworks that empower our farmers with the knowledge and resilience to adapt," he said.

Vice Chancellor, Sindh Agriculture University, Dr. Fateh Marri said climate change was having impacts

on the agricultural sector evidently, requiring farmers to empower themselves to quickly adapt to those changes. "Farmers are the backbone of agriculture and by training them through the Farmer Field Schools (FFS), we can help them face climate challenges to drive sustainable growth," he stated.

Ms. Anne-Sophie Poisot, Leader of the Futuring Farmer Field Schools Unit at FAO, delivered a keynote address on the transformative potential of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) methodology.

Ms. Poisot stressed the importance of scaling FFS to reach a global audience, with a goal to engage 40 million farmers by 2040. "Digital tools such as mobile apps, online platforms, and data-driven decision-making are key to expanding FFS, helping farmers access real-time information, improve practices, and monitor progress," Ms. Poisot highlighted the role of FFS in ensuring equal opportunities for men, women, and youth in farming communities.

The seminar is part of FAO's broader strategy to scale the impacts of FFS, contributing to the development of fairer, more sustainable agrifood systems.

Scholarship checks worth 30 million were distributed in BZU

Zain Khan

MULTAN: Scholarship checks worth approximately 30 million PKR were distributed to students at Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and USAID. The event was presided over by Professor Dr. Muhammad Zubair Iqbal, with Dr. Farhat Abbas, Program Coordinator of the Higher Education Commission, attending as a guest of honor. Also present at the ceremony were Professor Dr. Muhammad Sohail Arshad, Director of the Scholarship Cell, and Ikhtikhar Alam, Financial Aid Officer.

Dr. Farhat Abbas expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Higher Education Commission to the administration of Bahauddin Zakariya University for their efforts in awarding scholarships. He praised the university's transparency and integrity in distributing scholarships among students, noting that Bahauddin Zakariya University is among the few institutions that maintain high standards in this process.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad Zubair Iqbal emphasized that students are the university's most valuable asset. He assured that the university will continue its efforts to support students' welfare and provide quality education in the future.

Students from Quaid-e-Azam University visit National Book Foundation



Iram Asim

ISLAMABAD: Students of Quaid-e-Azam University, led by Professor Dr. Nazia Rehman, paid an educational visit to the National Book Foundation (NBF). On behalf of NBF, Saleem Akhtar provided a detailed briefing during the visit to the National Book Museum, Kocha-e-Kitab, Wall of Honors, Indonesian Corner, and the NBF Bookshop. He elaborated on the collection of rare and sacred manuscripts of the Holy Quran, remarkable examples of historical calligraphy, rare books, and commemorative corners dedicated to notable literary and academic figures.

The delegation was informed about NBF's initiatives to promote book culture through book fairs, literary activities, and other efforts. They were told that writers, authors, teachers, students, and families from all over the country visit NBF to benefit from these resources. National and international dignitaries also visit, leaving their autographs on the "Pillar of Autographs," a unique and significant part of literary history. Every item in the museum reflects the history and culture of books, making it Pakistan's first book museum.

Book launch events for NBF publications have also commenced, with several already held successfully. Delegations from both Pakistan and abroad enrich their knowledge here and share their impressions in the visitor book. Foreign embassies in Pakistan have established special corners at NBF, representing the knowledge, art, literature, and culture of their respective countries. The National Book Museum, Wall of Honors, and various cultural corners offer great interest to local and international visitors. Dr. Nazia Rehman, the head of the delegation, praised the museum's exhibits, calling it a unique initiative valuable for writers, literary readers, and enthusiasts alike.

Multan chamber calls for urgent action to control smog in Multan

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Multan Mian Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh said that the government should introduce "Clean Air Act" for the complete elimination of smog and ensure its serious implementation. The increase in smog is not only affecting people's health and business activities, but it is having negative effects on the health and education of our children. He said that industrial activities and business affairs are also being adversely affected by smog; Road closures are causing disruptions in business transactions and industries are facing difficulties in the supply of raw materials and delivery of products. In a statement, he said that many cities in Pakistan are currently affected by smog. The adverse effects of which are affecting all citizens including children, the elderly and the disabled. He said that the government should take serious measures to control factors like industrial smoke, vehicle emissions and burning of crop residues, as China, USA, Germany, South Korea and Japan have adopted to control smog. The President of the House emphasized that private institutions and the public should also adopt environment-friendly behavior, planting trees around the city on a real basis, reducing the number of vehicles, improving the quality of petrol, waste tires and coal.



Ms. Anne-Sophie Poisot, Leader of the Futuring Farmer Field Schools Unit at FAO, delivered a keynote address on the transformative potential of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) methodology.

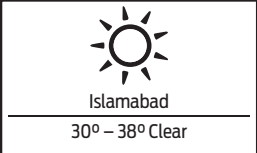
HESCO's history: a female officer promoted in Grade 20

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: According to the HESCO spokesperson, for the first time in HESCO's history, a female officer has successfully attained promotion to the position of Chief Engineer in Grade 20. Additionally, four senior officers have been promoted to Chief Engineer positions, and three senior officers have been granted time-scale upgradation from Grade 19 to Grade 20.

The officers promoted to Grade 20 include Javed Akhtar Akhund, Farha Diba. However, the promotion of Tufail Ahmed Shaikh, Similarly, the promotion of Abdul Ghafoor Shaikh is conditional upon a vacancy arising due to the retirement of Muhammad Roshan Otho on 01.01.2025.

The officers receiving time-scale upgradation from Grade 19 to Grade 20 are Abdul Haq Shaikh, Manager (Procurement), PMU Zulfikar Ali Memon, Acting Chief Operating Officer, Ramesh Kumar, SE GSO, Jalaluddin Abbasi (Retired) On this occasion, the HESCO Chief stated, "Success is achieved only through hard work, dedication, and honesty in performing one's duties. Your promotions are a testament to this, and we hope that you will continue to perform your responsibilities with the same commitment and integrity in the future."



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:14 am
Zohr 11:52 am
Asr 3:27 pm
Maghrib 5:06 pm
Isha 6:31 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6

Ethiopia, Pakistan agree on forging cooperation in education, science & technology sectors

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have agreed to forge a holistic cooperation in education, science and technology sectors for transforming lives of their nations.

Both sides explored various areas partnership and collaboration in the above-mentioned sectors during a meeting between H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia, and Federal Minister for Education, Science and Technology H. E. Dr. Kahlid Maqbool Siddiqui.

During the meeting, the two sides further discussed a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2023 between the two countries to enhance cooperation in the areas of science and technology.

Moreover, H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker stressed on establishing institutional linkages between the two countries under the MoU for joint research programmes in health, education and renewable sectors and exchange of the delegations of experts to elevate the already flourishing relations.

To this end, the ambassador said Ethiopia is building a market driven human resource development while taking robust policy to ensure a digital ecosystem to enable the citizens to catch and cope up with the changing technological landscape and global dynamism.

He said the Government of the FDR Ethiopia led by H. E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, has been taking tangible steps to empower its people through innovation and technology transformation roadmap that improve socio-economic revolution in fintech, and digital competitiveness. In this regard, the Ethiopian Government wants to cooperate with Pakistan in these sectors.

He said the Government of Pakistan is committed to the Look Africa and Engage Africa policy, and forging strong bilateral cooperation with the African countries in multiple sectors such as economy, health, education, science and technology.

The Minister assured the Ambassador of all-out support and assistance for strengthening the cooperation in education, science and technology sectors.

Federal Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology H. E. Sajid



Baloch and Coordinator General COMS-TECH H. E. Dr. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary were also present in the meeting.

CSOs applaud Director HE KP leadership ensuring education quota

City Desk

PESHAWAR: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) have expressed their deep appreciation for Dr. Farid-ullah Shah, director of the Higher Education Department, 's leadership, cooperation, and commitment. Dr Shah's efforts have led to remarkable progress in implementing the 2 per cent education quota for minorities, achieving full compliance across the province at intermediate and BS levels. This achievement, highly commended by CSO leaders, demonstrates Dr. Shah's dedication to ensuring educational opportunities for all.

Dr. Shah's advocacy has extended beyond the immediate goal of compliance. Under his leadership, the Higher Education Department has incorporated the minority quota into the newly announced Higher Education Policy, an initiative that will safeguard and expand educational access for underrepresented communities within higher education institutions in KP.

Qamar-Naseem, Program Manager at Blue Veins, emphasized the importance of Dr. Shah's partnership in promoting educational initiatives for gender and social parity. Recognizing the invaluable support from the Higher Education Department, Qamar-Naseem stated, "Dr. Shah's coordination and openness to civil society initiatives have been instrumental in organizing impactful seminars and outreach programs in girls' degree colleges in Peshawar and Kohat.

41st anniversary of TRNC

ISLAMABAD: Representative of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Dilsad Senol and others cutting the cake during celebrate the 41th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus ceremony, at a local hotel, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

School students visit AIOU

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A group of students of an Islamabad-based school, Saint Gabriel school, visited Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday.

The students visited Print Production Unit, Radio and Television Studios, Central Library, Students' facilitation center and call center of the University. Incharge Printing Press, Dr. Sarmad Iqbal briefed the students regarding the processes of designing, pasting, plating, and printing. Dr. Sarmad Iqbal informed the students that this is the largest printing press among Asian universities, producing 2 million books each semester. He further elaborated that these machines were imported from Japan, Germany, the UK, and China.



Sharing their impressions of the visit, the students remarked that they felt as if they were in a university of a developed country, given the exceptional educational facilities, administrative arrangements, and overall environment. Before leaving, the students enthusiastically chanted slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Allama Iqbal Open University Zindabad."

Swedes make smoke free history

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: IRADA Pakistan (The Initiative on Risk-Reduction and Dependable Alternatives) has urged Pakistan to take inspiration from Sweden, which has become the first nation in the world to achieve official 'smoke-free' status, according to sensational new data.

Swedes have hit this historic milestone 16 years ahead of the European Union target—while most of their fellow member states are set to miss it by a significant margin.

Official health data released by Sweden's public health agency shows that just 4.5% of the nation's Swedish-born over-16s smoke—significantly below the globally recognised benchmark of 5% for smoke free status.

Smoking rates in Pakistan are more than four times higher than Sweden's.

The Swedes' extraordinary success is the result of their pioneering policy approach to safer alternatives to cigarettes.

Dr. Delon Human, leader of Smoke Free Sweden, said: "This remarkable achievement marks a significant moment in global public health and stands as a testament to the progressive policies that have guided Sweden's approach to tobacco control.

Dr. Anders Milton, a physician and former president and CEO of the Swedish Medical Association, says: "Key to Sweden's success is its pragmatic focus on harm reduction rather than prohibition. A wide range of safer nicotine products, with a variety of strengths and flavours, is legally available both online and in stores, supported by advertising, which raises awareness and encourages uptake.

Dr. Human adds: "While Sweden celebrates this historic achievement, many other nations remain far from reaching their smoke free goals. Some countries continue to implement rigid, prohibitionist policies that limit access to safer nicotine alternatives, including oral nicotine products and e-cigarettes.

"Smoke Free Sweden calls on all nations to re-evaluate their tobacco control strategies and adopt harm reduction as a central pillar in their fight against smoking. Sweden's smoke free status should be a wake-up call to policymakers around the world: progressive, science-backed policies on nicotine alternatives can make smoking history without sacrificing public health goals."

Aga Khan University Hospital Introduces Groundbreaking 3D-Printed PEEK Implant Procedure

City Desk

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) has announced the successful implementation of 3D-printed PEEK implants, meticulously designed and manufactured by AKUH's experts. This transformative leap in medical innovation aims to improve healthcare access, affordability, and outcomes for patients needing complex bone replacement surgeries in Pakistan.

Dr. Shahzad Shamim, Professor and Section Head of Neurosurgery at AKUH, commented on the impact of this innovation: "3D-printed PEEK implants are a game-changer in surgery, not only improving the accuracy of surgeries but also offering better integration with the human body, leading to faster recovery times and improved patient outcomes."

Dr. Saleem Sayani, Director of the Technology Innovation Support Centre at AKU, added, "With in-house production, we can customize implants with precision, offering world-class treatments that were previously unavailable in Pakistan."

DIG Islamabad Raza briefs dolphin, ababeel squads, and ARU officers on Crime Control, Stresses Readiness

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza on Friday emphasized Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's commitment to eradicating crime during a briefing to the officers of the Dolphin Squad, Ababeel Squad, and Anti-Riot Unit (ARU).

DIG Raza tasked the officers with their respective duties and recognized the efforts of police officers who had performed exceptionally in recent days, awarding them certificates and rewards, a police spokesperson told APP.

DIG Islamabad Raza briefs dolphin, ababeel squads, and ARU officers on Crime Control, Stresses Readiness

DIG assured the officers, "Your dedication and hard work will not go in vain. Together, we will ensure the safety of this city and its residents while eliminating criminal elements."

Make all patrolling units more effective in curbing crime," said DIG Syed Ali Raza. During checks at checking points, treat citizens with courtesy and perform your duties with honesty and integrity," said DIG Raza.

Rewards will be given for good performance, while poor performance will lead to strict departmental action," DIG Raza added.

Maroof Int'l Hospital Concludes Three-Month Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan holds the highest rate of breast cancer in Asia, with one in every nine women expected to face the disease. Globally, breast cancer remains a critical health challenge, with 2.3 million women diagnosed and 670,000 deaths reported in 2022 alone. Speaking at the campaign's closing ceremony, Dr. Mir Waheed, Medical Director of MIH, emphasized the importance of early detection: "Raising awareness is crucial, but saving lives through early detection is our ultimate goal. Many patients with localized or regional breast cancer can survive for over 20 years with proper treatment."

Haroon Naseer, CEO of MIH, highlighted the campaign's wide reach,



stating: "Our mission was to make a real difference by engaging a broad spectrum of society, from international organizations to marginalized communities, empowering individuals to recognize the signs of breast cancer early.

Dr. Saira Mehmood, Breast Cancer Surgeon at MIH, discussed the global impact of breast cancer: "In 2024 alone, an estimated 310,720 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer. Early detection is critical, and our campaign focused on

educating people about the importance of regular screenings."

Dr. Ayesha Amin, Head of MIH's Radiology Department, reinforced the importance of mammography, noting, "Breast cancer is curable if detected early.

Extending beyond the typical Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, MIH's campaign spanned from September 1st to November, 2024, reaching diverse sectors of society through its Community Support Program.

In addition, MIH set up Free First Aid and Medical Camps at major public events such as Lok Mela and the Marathon, offering essential healthcare services and breast cancer education to the public, further solidifying its commitment to fighting this disease.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
 Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
Syed Afraz Ali Nazish
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: _____
 Head Office: **AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.**
 spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
 Phone: +92 51 2227123,
WhatsApp +92 346 5008408
 Karachi office: **A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,**
 Karachi Phone: 021-33399390
 Email: **spokesmankarachi@gmail.com**
 Lahore Office: **7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.**
 spokesmanlahore@gmail.com

What the Gulf wants from the incoming Trump administration

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

The speed with which Donald Trump is assembling his team indicates that he wants to hit the ground running come his inauguration on Jan. 20. Choosing Steve Witkoff, a close adviser and confidante, as special envoy to the Middle East could mean that the president plans to be hands-on when it comes to this region.

During Trump's first term (2017-2021), the Gulf Cooperation Council, collectively and bilaterally through its member states, enjoyed a close and mutually beneficial relationship, ever since Trump broke with tradition by choosing Saudi Arabia for his first trip abroad and meeting with GCC, Arab and Muslim leaders in Riyadh in May 2017. Although at times there were differences of opinion between the two sides, especially on the Israel-Palestine conflict, their strategic partnership continued through Trump's last days in office. Most likely, that spirit of cooperation will continue and strengthen over the next four years.

On Gaza and the underlying Israel-Palestine conflict, the GCC would like to work more closely with the US on ending the conflict. The international community has spoken clearly about the parameters of the solution, based on the UN Charter and resolutions. There are only a handful

of countries that still tolerate Israel's genocidal war in Gaza and its maximalist approach to the underlying conflict.

Last month, the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, of which the US is a member, together with about 90 other countries, articulated the global consensus on these issues. This includes an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, reunifying it with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority and embarking on an irreversible path toward an independent and viable Palestinian state along the 1967 borders.

The extraordinary summit held in Riyadh last week expressed the unified voice of the Arab and Islamic worlds on the conflict and called for accountability for the unspeakable atrocities committed by Israel in both Gaza and the West Bank.

So, what is needed in the region is de-escalation and for the way to be prepared for sustainable solutions in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and elsewhere. Diplomacy should also be the starting point in dealing with Iran and its regional network of supporters and allies.

At the economic level, the GCC shares Trump's interest in combating predatory economic practices but believes that this should be done by fixing the global trading system, which has pitted industrialized countries against developing countries. Because that system is dysfunctional, major trading nations have abandoned cooperation and engaged in a mutually destructive cycle of actions and retaliations.

The first Trump administration imposed a long series of protectionist tariffs, including on GCC exports to the US. To go by Trump's election rhetoric, his new administration may initiate additional punishing tariffs against China, which could spark another cycle of retaliation.

The best way to deal with trade disputes is through the World Trade Organization, by doubling efforts to reenergize the organization and strengthen its dispute resolution mechanism.

Finally, we want the new White House to lead on cultural reconciliation and mutual understanding. Cultural estrangement has led to a rise in hate speech and hate crimes in many parts of the world. Some of the pernicious outgrowths of this intolerance can be found in rising racist rhetoric, Islamophobia and antisemitism. The Trump administration would find ready partners in the GCC and the wider Arab and Islamic worlds to work together on toning down the rhetoric of cultural war and to reinforce cultural and religious tolerance.

Fortunately, there exists an extensive framework for cooperation under the GCC-US Strategic Partnership, which includes engagement at the heads of state level, as well as at the ministerial and technical levels. There are more than 10 working groups covering many aspects of this partnership, including political and defense issues, cyber threats, maritime security, air defense and counterterrorism. There are also working groups dedicated

to specific issues, such as Iran and Yemen. The GCC states and the US are active members of the US-led Combined Maritime Forces, a coalition of 46 nations that operates out of Bahrain through five task forces covering the Gulf, the Red Sea and areas in between.

The long-standing GCC-US Trade and Investment Dialogue and the 2012 framework agreement on economic cooperation provide appropriate channels for coordinating trade policies. As the US and GCC countries are major producers of energy, they have overlapping interests in both conventional and renewable energies. They have an abiding imperative to coordinate on both types of energy. As most GCC currencies are pegged to the dollar, it is important to continue to coordinate closely on monetary policy, as decisions taken by the Fed affect GCC economies and have a direct impact on monetary policy. On culture, the framework of the GCC-US Strategic Partnership allows for engagement to promote mutual understanding, although this area was in the past dealt with bilaterally with member states. Rising cultural tensions in the US and elsewhere make it necessary to develop and grow cooperation at the regional level to deal with this phenomenon.

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg is the Gulf Cooperation Council assistant secretary-general for political affairs and negotiation. The views expressed here are personal and do not necessarily represent the GCC. X: @abuhamad1

Israel's ban UNRWA

Pakistan has told a UN panel that the Israeli legislation to shut down UNRWA, the main lifeline for Palestine refugees in Gaza, will plunge millions of Palestinians into chaos, and called on the international community to throw its weight behind the U. N. agency.

"The demonization and delegitimization of UNRWA must be halted and we must take concrete measures to ensure that UNRWA remains operational and carries out its humanitarian work in accordance with its mandate," Pakistani delegate Ansar Shah said during a debate in the General Assembly's Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) on Thursday.

The Israeli Parliament, known as the Knesset, adopted two bills earlier this month banning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from operating in its territory and prohibiting authorities from having any contact with it.

"The international community must uphold the principles of justice, human rights, and international law to restore hope and dignity to the Palestinian people," Ansar Shah, a first secretary in the Pakistani Mission to the UN, said.

Pakistan had strongly condemned the Israeli attempts to dismantle the operations of the UNRWA as "flagrant violation of the UN Charter, international law, provisional measures: set by the ICJ (International Court of Justice) and the Court's Advisory Opinion of 19 July.

Shah highlighted the grave concerns of millions of Palestinians' that the Israeli move would cutoff essential public services on which their lives depend such as education, health, and social support.

"The entire population of Gaza fears that their only remaining lifeline will be cut. Without the intervention by Member States, UNRWA will collapse, plunging millions of Palestinians into chaos.

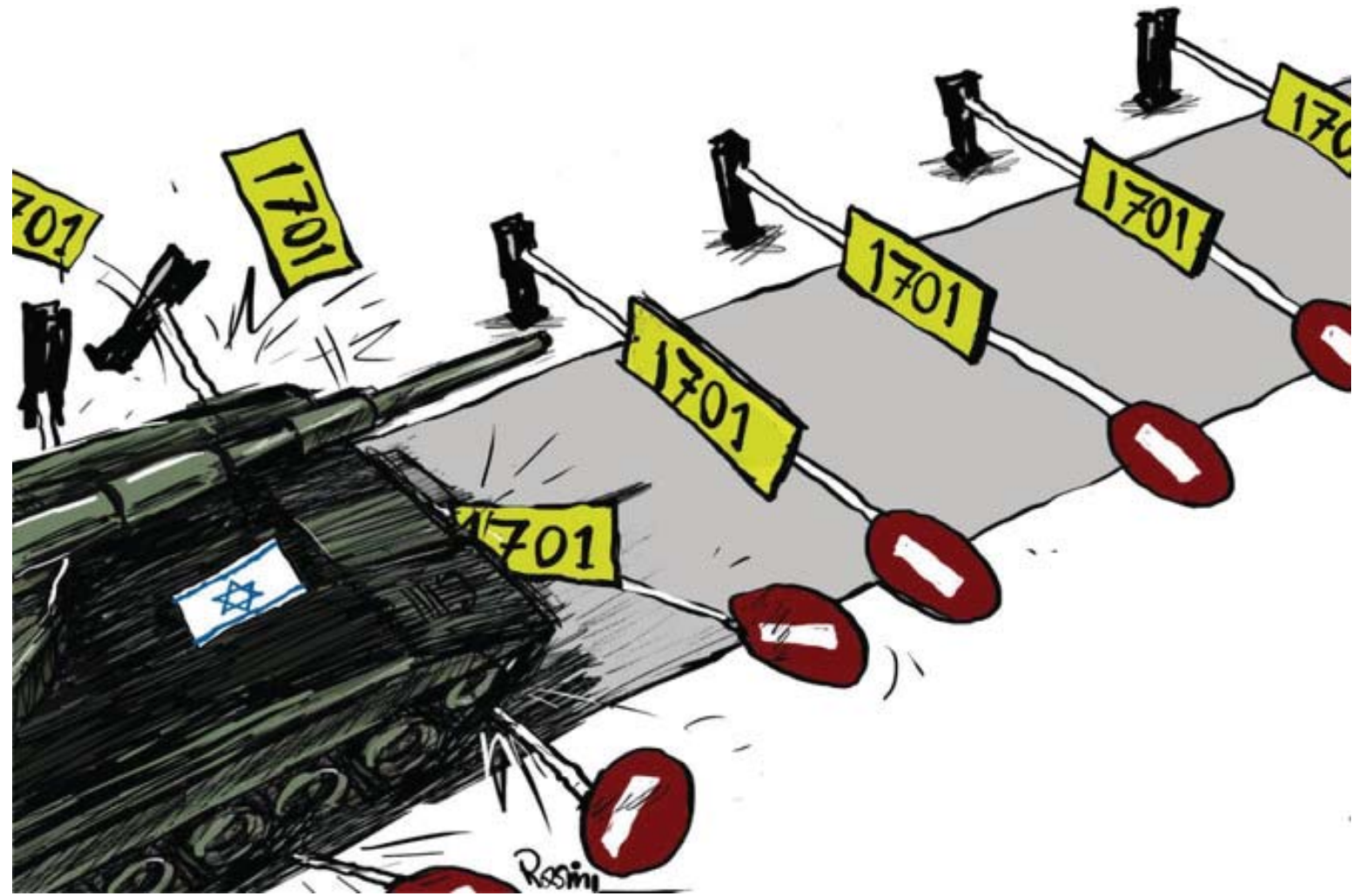
"We have to answer the call of Palestinian people," the Pakistani delegate added.

He warned that the international order built on the basis of the UN Charter could collapse if the international community did not take concrete actions to uphold the Charter and the international law.

Reaffirming Pakistan's steadfast support for Palestinians and their inalienable right to self-determination, he said, "The international community must uphold the principles of justice, human rights, and international law to restore hope and dignity to the Palestinian people.

Opening the debate, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Philippe Lazzarini highlighted catastrophic consequences: dismantling UNRWA would deny an entire generation of Palestinians the right to education and potentially leave 17,000 Agency staff in the Occupied Palestinian Territory unemployed. The risks posed would "fulfill an explicitly stated objective of the war in Gaza," he said, emphasizing the Agency's unique role in providing, not only education, but also healthcare and human development service to the Palestinian refugees.

"Today, UNRWA is a casualty of the war in Gaza," he said, detailing the severe toll of the war on the Agency, with at least 243 personnel killed and more than two-thirds of premises



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

Competitive higher education, still a challenge for our universities

Qaiser-uz-Zaman

As the world turns to be a global village, keeping aloof of international developments in different arena of life, especially in education sector leaves nations backward and under developed, missing several opportunities in research and inventions.

Since it is common dilemma of developing nations to excel in education and research sectors due to lack of political will or paucity of funds, such nations including Pakistan direly need to transform this sector for compete globally. Pakistan's cuisine

Experts believe that a multifaceted approach like reforming education system, industry academia linkages, faculty development, accreditation and quality assurance, updating curricula, adopting modern management practices and critical thinking can be some essential steps to promote quality education.

They also stress partnership between universities and industries to provide students practical training and exposure to latest researches, train faculty members in modern teaching methodologies and management practices and establish robust accreditation processes.

"We have launched the revamped Quality Assurance Framework, 'Pakistan Precepts, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PSG-2023)' in line with HEC's Vision 2025," informed Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC.

"The Revamped QA Framework is a testament to providing quality higher education and it will foster collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement of

education quality, creating a strong foundation for our students' success," he explained.

The new framework, he said, has been developed under the British Council's PAK-UK Education Gateway program to make quality assurance processes and systems more result oriented. "It incorporates international best practices for institutional quality standards and will be based on a combination of internal self-assessments and external reviews by Accreditation Councils and the HEC's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)."

He said, with this Pakistan has taken a significant step in its pursuit of academic excellence with the official launch of Revamped Quality Assurance (QA) Framework for Higher Education in collaboration with British Council Pakistan.

"Crafted in collaboration with international experts, the framework aligns Pakistan with global best practices to meet our quality education needs," he mentioned. "The Framework introduces a comprehensive review mechanism based on 16 Institutional Quality Standards to classify institutions into categorization based performance."

Dr Mukhtar said, major categories in this framework are Green (most effective), Blue (progressive), Yellow (average) and Grey (unclassified) - determining their funding and customized policy interventions.

He also revealed that Institutional Quality Standards also cover themes like Academic Quality and Curricula, Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Academia-Industry and External Linkage, Technology Infrastructure and Enhancement, Corporate Governance, Audit & Finance, Community Service & Engagement, and Graduate Quality and

Employability.

"Institutions will now undergo external accreditation reviews by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Accreditation Councils besides internal self-assessment processes," the Chairman said. "This multi-faceted approach ensures a holistic evaluation of institutional quality."

No matter that the HEC has also launched Higher Education Development to improve teaching, learning, and research environment, educationists have urged it to promote collaborations and partnership with foreign universities to bring in best practices and expertise.

"The HEC's ultimate goal should be to develop a sustainable, dynamic and internationally competitive higher education sector that contributes significantly to country's economic growth," these experts remarked. "By implementing these initiatives, the HEC can produce high-quality graduates who can compete in the global market and contribute to Pakistan's socio-economic development."

It is worth mentioning that mushroom growth of private sector universities in recent past has badly affected our educational standard as except a few, the students graduating from these universities massively lack knowledge and expertise to compete internationally and secure jobs in global market.

This tendency is also growing at public sector universities where the education standard had deteriorated in recent decades.

Therefore, for survival in international educational and research arena as well as job market, we must have to revisit our education policies, standards as well as curricula and pave way for producing well-educated workforce for our overall progress.

Kim Jong-un's Anti-National Actions Cannot Suppress the North Korean Soldiers' Yearning for Freedom

Kim Min-hyuk

Recently, Kim Jong-un not only proposed a "Two Hostile States Theory" that denies national unity and reunification, but he also amended the constitution to solidify this sentence. He has not only built anti-tank barriers and planted mines in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to block escape routes but has also demolished symbols of inter-Korean cooperation, such as the Donghae and Gyeongui railway lines, creating instability on the Korean Peninsula. Though Kim Jong-un attempts to seal the borders with the idea of "locking people up forever," he fails to realize that his betrayal of his predecessors' teachings only deepens the isolation of the regime and increases the suffering of its people.

Ill-fitting shoes are common, and due to a lack of proper clothing supplies, many soldiers resort to stealing civilian clothes to survive.

Soldiers wear a haphazard mix of clothes, making them appear ragtag. Such poor conditions have driven some soldiers to the point of death.

External information shocks soldiers enduring these harsh military conditions. North Korean authorities strictly educate soldiers not to look at or touch anti-regime leaflets, claiming they are coated with poison. However, it is impossible to shield soldiers completely from the truth. I, too, have seen the contents of these leaflets, which revealed the luxurious lives of the Kim family. What began as skepticism turned into a deep sense of betrayal as I realized the leader had deceived the people.

Young soldiers are especially sensitive to these leaflets and broadcasts. Those born after 1990, the generation who lived through North Korea's worst food crisis and grew up in the unofficial markets, known as the "Jangmadang Generation," now make up a significant portion of the military. For them,

survival and overcoming hunger are top priorities, and loyalty to the state is naturally weak.

In July, South Korea's Ministry of National Defense resumed broadcasting anti-regime messages, and within a month, a North Korean citizen defected by walking across the border. In response, North Korean authorities transmitted bizarre sounds to block these broadcasts and even issued earplugs to frontline soldiers. They also launched a campaign of sending "garbage balloons" southward, claiming it as a self-defensive measure, yet blaming South Korea for military tension. Despite these efforts, young soldiers, who already know the truth, are not easily deceived. Soldiers from the Jangmadang Generation dance to K-pop and enjoy South Korean clothing and mannerisms, reflecting the reality within North Korea today.

In the future, the Jangmadang Generation will become the mainstay across all areas of North Korean society. No matter what measures Kim Jong-un takes to correct the ideology of these young soldiers or block the influx of South Korean culture into the military, he will never fully control them. Some even refer to the Jangmadang Generation as a "major opposition party" against the Workers' Party.

We must continue to provide North Korean soldiers with information on the luxurious lifestyles of the Kim family, the corruption of the elites, the real differences in living conditions between the two Koreas, and possible escape routes. Just as East Germans toppled the Berlin Wall, the day will come when the young soldiers' yearning for freedom and resistance will tear down the walls Kim Jong-un has so carefully built.

(Former North Korean Military Officer, Served in Gangwon Province as a Soldier and defected in search of freedom in 2020 and now living in South Korea). Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect Daily The Spokesman point of view.

Women's financial inclusion imperative for economic empowerment: experts

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Experts on Wednesday deliberated upon the crucial role of financial inclusion in empowering women, noting its potential to drive both social and economic progress.

Sharing their views at a panel discussion titled 'Towards Economic Empowerment: Women's Financial Inclusion in Pakistan', the experts agreed that in the paradigm of empowerment and financial access, one was impossible without the other.

The panel was part of the Sustainability Development Conference (SDC) organized by the Sustainability Development Policy Institute (SDPI). The conference was also a launchpad for the Center of Adaptive Social Protection and Economic Empowerment (CASPEE) supported by GIZ at SDPI, which would further the objectives of women empowerment and financial inclusion.

At the panel, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad said: "Economic empowerment of society is contingent on the financial inclusion of women."

BISP, Pakistan's flagship social safety net programme, is a prime example, serving as a lifeline for many women, particularly those who were

heads of their households.

Further, he elaborated on how in partnership with GIZ and UNICEF, BISP has launched the digital financial literacy training program, training 25,000 individuals to date.

Helene Paust, deputy head of development cooperation at the German embassy, echoed this sentiment, stressing that gender inequality remained a significant barrier when it came to financial autonomy.

"The ability of women to make money and spend money is severely restricted due to them being dependent on male family members," Ms. Paust said.

Head of the Adaptive Social Protection Project at GIZ, Johanna Knoess, pointed out the positive impact of digital financial literacy on poverty reduction and women's financial inclusion, citing a successful case in Kenya, where 194,000 households were lifted out of poverty.

Senior Policy Adviser, GIZ Frank Schneider moderated the panel discussion alongside Dr. Fareeha Armughan.

Managing Director of Kashf Foundation Roshaneh Zafar gave a presentation on the financial empowerment of women.

She said while mobile phone pen-

etration had reached an impressive 80 per cent in Pakistan, their potential was far from being fully realized.

"Women are more willing than men to choose digital financial services and mobile wallets offer a critical opportunity for Pakistan's under-banked and unbanked population but addressing the social and cultural barriers that restrict women's decision-making abilities is also crucial," Ms. Zafar said.

Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Saleem Ullah shed light on the progress made in increasing account ownership in the country. However, many customers still lacked access to a full range of financial services, such as credit and investment opportunities.

"We took several initiatives, including remote account opening and Asaan Mobile Accounts (AMA), to facilitate access," he said.

President of Jazz Cash Murtaza Ali elaborated on how digital platforms were the only viable solution to increase female participation in the formal financial system.

At the regional level, CEO of the Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA) Ali Shehzad reinforced the economic importance of investing in women.

"Investments made in women are



the most beneficial in the long run, both socially and economically," Shehzad said.

GIZ Pakistan country director Maria-Jose Poddey gave the closing remarks and shed light on how the

new CASPEE center would advance Pakistan's development goals towards adaptive social protection and financial inclusion.

SDPI Executive Director Dr. Abid Suleri concluded the session by saying

that the learning from discussions, as today should be included in the curriculum taught to civil servants to truly sensitize the society and make a collective effort to strengthen women empowerment.

A three days Fourth Global High-Level Ministerial Conference held

Spokesman Report

JEDDAH: A three days Fourth Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance, held in Jeddah under the theme "From Declaration to Implementation - Accelerating Actions Through Multisectoral Partnerships for the Containment of AMR," started in Jeddah today.

The conference, is under the patronage of the Ministry of Health, will bring together health, environment, and agriculture ministers from around the world, along with representatives from leading international organizations and civil society.

The conference's goal is to strengthen international efforts to combat the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance, a global challenge that impacts health, economies, and societies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.



Minister of Health Fahad Al-Jalal said: "The 4th AMR Ministerial Meeting provides an opportunity for the international community to commit to a strengthened common roadmap and a set of clear deliverables that will help counter the rise in drug resistance in humans and

animals." WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said: "Antimicrobial resistance is not a risk for the future; it is here and now, making many antibiotics and other medicines on which we depend less effective, and making routine infections harder to

treat, debilitating or deadly."

Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme Inger Andersen said: "The environment plays a key role in the emergence, transmission, and spread of AMR. To reduce the burden of AMR and its risks, we must urgently strengthen and increase environmental interventions, with prevention at the core of the action.

Beyond health impacts, AMR is already affecting economies, with antimicrobial resistance projected to reduce global GDP by almost 4% by 2050 and cost the global economy an estimated \$100 trillion.

The meeting discussing priorities, including surveillance and stewardship, capacity building, funding provision, governance, innovation, research and development. From Pakistan under the supervision of Dr Mumtaz 3 doctors represented Ministry of Health of Pakistan

Pak-China example of mutual unity is nowhere to be found: Asma Butt



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation (APCOYF) and Chairperson of Dolphin Communication Ms. Asma Ismail Butt said that the relations between Pakistan and China are of great importance at the international level. The example of mutual unity between two countries is nowhere to be found. We have to play an important role at the diplomatic level to promote mutual relations and culture together.

Yesterday, President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation and Chairperson of Dolphin Communication Ms. Asma Ismail Butt specially participated in the overseas meeting at the Chinese Embassy Islamabad. Where she had an important meeting with the ambassador of China, Jiang Zaidong. On this occasion, Asma Ismail Butt and the Chinese Ambassador discussed important points related to the mutual values and strengthening of mutual relations between the two countries. Asma Ismail Butt while addressing the Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said that the relations between Pakistan and China are of great importance at the international level. The example of mutual unity between of Pakistan and China is nowhere to be found. We have to play an important role at the diplomatic level to promote mutual relations and culture together. On this occasion, Ambassador Jiang Zaidong congratulated Asma Ismail Butt for the well organized of the media award show to pay tribute to the services of the distinguished journalist community at the national level from the platform of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation, And said that I pay tribute to Asma Butt for her hard work, dedication and well organized program. On this occasion, Asma Ismail Butt was presented with gifts by the Chinese Ambassador for performing her duties in a good manner.

Petition Seeks Immediate Action to Address Severe Electricity Shortage in Gilgit-Baltistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A petitioner from Islamabad, originally a resident of Hunza, has filed a petition under Article 199 of the Constitution of Pakistan in the Islamabad High Court (IHC), calling for urgent intervention to resolve the severe electricity crisis in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). The petition highlights the energy shortage affecting over 2.3 million people in the region, depriving them of their fundamental right to reliable ener-

gy access.

The petition points out that many areas in GB are receiving as little as two hours of electricity every 72 hours, with voltage levels consistently falling between 140 to 170 volts, well below the required standard of 220 volts. This inadequate supply not only disrupts daily life but also leads to frequent damage to electrical appliances.

The petitioner asserts that the ongoing power crisis violates the fundamental human rights of GB's

residents, as access to consistent and reliable electricity is vital for essential services such as healthcare, education, and economic activities. Despite Gilgit-Baltistan's immense potential to generate up to 40,000 MW of affordable electricity, the region remains severely underdeveloped in terms of energy infrastructure.

The petition calls for immediate action to connect Gilgit-Baltistan to the national electricity grid and ensure the supply of 220 volts of electricity throughout the region. Such steps are

deemed essential for the socio-economic development of the region and for safeguarding the fundamental rights of its residents.

This case brings renewed attention to the long-standing energy disparity in Gilgit-Baltistan, a region rich in energy resources but largely excluded from the benefits of national energy development. The resolution of this issue could open the door to much-needed energy reforms and significant infrastructure advancements in the region.

Alibaba.com hosted the Key E-Commerce Leader Award Grand Finale

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Alibaba.com, a leading platform for global business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce, hosted the Key E-Commerce Leader Award (KEL) Grand Finale in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The event celebrated the achievements and contributions of outstanding B2B e-commerce sellers from across South and Southeast Asia, reflecting Alibaba.com's commitment to fostering the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the global e-commerce sector.

The finale featured ten top sellers from Pakistan, Vietnam, India, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Alibaba.com announced the top three awardees: Ms. Xuan Hai Yen (Proline Vietnam), Ms. Natasha Gogna (Shri Krishna International, India), and Mr. Tayyub Hussain (Norwich Streetwear, Pakistan). Mr. Hussain also received the People's Choice Award, selected by the audience, showcasing his story of resilience and entrepreneurial success through Alibaba.com.

These exceptional sellers exemplify the transformative power of Alibaba.com's platform, which enables local businesses to grow into global players by providing access to international markets and digital tools. The KEL Award spotlighted their achievements, resilience and leadership, inspiring other SMEs to embrace cross-border opportunities and reach international markets.

The judging panel included distinguished Alibaba.com leaders and experts: Mr. Shawn Yang (General Manager of Global Business Development at Alibaba.com), Mr. Roger Luo (Head of South and Southeast Asia at Alibaba.com), Ms. Ella Xie (Director of Global Business Development at Alibaba.com), and Ms. Savannah Zheng (CEO of CGCH & Awins).

Mr. Shawn Yang, General Manager of Global Business Development at Alibaba.com, shared: "Through the inspiring stories shared by the sellers at the KEL Award, Alibaba.com aims to motivate businesses across South and Southeast Asia to engage actively in the high-potential arena of global digital trade. For those who have already embarked on their digital trade journeys, we

hope these success stories offer valuable insights and strategies for breakthrough, innovation, and diversified growth to succeed on a global scale."

One of the 10 finalists, Tayyub Hussain from Norwich Streetwear (Pakistan), shared a compelling story that underscores the transformative power of ambition and innovation in e-commerce. After graduating from Govt. Murray College in Sialkot in 2014, he embarked on his career with a modest monthly salary of 16,000 PKR. He received a laptop from the Chief Minister of Punjab, which introduced him to Alibaba.com, where he secured his first major order of 770 pieces of clothing, an accomplishment that significantly boosted his confidence and led Hussain to leave his stable job and devote himself fully to building his business on Alibaba.com.

Ravin Sadh, founder of Conifer Handmade in India, showcases the power of digital trade through Alibaba.com. Since joining in 1999, Ravin has relied exclusively on the platform, with 100% of his business of sustainable gift bags and crafts, now reaching over



35 countries. His global success was achieved without traditional networking or travel; he obtained a passport solely to attend the KEL Award Grand Finale, highlighting his journey and dedication to digital trade.

Xuan Hai Yen, Deputy

Director of Proline Vietnam, transformed her family's business into a multimillion-dollar enterprise, achieving double-digit growth over nine years. By modernizing operations with Alibaba.com, she revitalized the company, which now

exports a wide range of products to 15 countries. Within months of joining Alibaba.com, Proline secured its first U. S. order, marking a pivotal moment in its international growth. These stories underscore Alibaba.com's role in empowering SMEs to

expand and thrive in the global market.

The Top 10 Finalists of the 2024 KEL Award Grand Finale included:

Ms. Xuan Hai Yen (Yanni), Deputy Director at Proline Vietnam Manufacture and Trading Limited Company, Vietnam

Mr. Can Quang Sang, Marketing Manager of VIHABA Co., LTD, Vietnam

Ms. Nguyen Thi Loan, Founder and CEO of Centie Vietnam JSC, Vietnam

Mr. Ravin Sadh, Founder of Conifer Handmade, India

Ms. Natasha Gogna, Managing Director of Shri Krishna International, India

Mr. Muzafar Hussain, Overseas Marketing Head of JNM Leather Safety Gloves, Pakistan

Mr. Tayyub Hussain, Founder of Norwich Streetwear, Pakistan

Ms. Nitcharee Ujjin, Co-founder of Thumbinthai Co., Ltd., Thailand

Mr. Nicholas Tee Kai Xuen, Vice President of L. K. Tee Enterprise Sdn Bhd, Malaysia

Mr. Fahmi Zaenal, Co-founder of PT Pohacee Cartens International, Indonesia

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
94,763.64	94,191.89
Day's High	Day's Low
95,278.26	94,431.18
Index Value	Change
20,728,709,043	+571.75
Percentage	Time
+0.61%	15 Nov, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,063.61	-7.58
Percentage	Time
-0.094%	15 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
43,423.28	-327.58
Percentage	Time
-0.75%	15 Nov, 1:38 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,642.91	+107.21
Percentage	Time
+0.28%	15 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181.25	181.43
Bahrain Dinar	731.21	739.21
Canadian Dollar	198.16	200.56
China Yuan	38.58	38.98
Danish Krone	39.58	39.98
Euro	290.85	293.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.37	35.72
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	894.99	904.49
Malaysian Ringgit	62.5	63.10
New Zealand \$	163.14	165.14
Norwegians Krone	24.78	25.08
Omani Riyal	715.66	724.16
Qatari Riyal	75.62	76.32
Saudi Riyal	73.65	74.20
Singapore Dollar	206.27	208.27
Swedish Korona	25.82	26.12
Swiss Franc	311.45	314.25
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08
U.A.E Dirham	75.35	76.00
UK Pound Sterling	349.55	353.05
US Dollar	277.40	278.90

Law Minister assures CCP support in tackling case backlog, cartel enforcement

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Mr. Azam Nazir Tarar, visited the head office of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) on Friday. The Chairman CCP, Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, along with CCP members Mr. Salman Amin, Mr. Abdul Rashid Sheikh, Mr. Saeed Ahmad Nawaz, and Ms. Bushra Naz Malik, warmly greeted the Minister.

During the visit, Mr. Tarar was briefed in detail on the CCP's operational challenges and the legal barriers hindering its work. The Minister expressed his commitment to facilitating the prompt appointment of Chairman of CAT and its members.

The CCP shared its efforts in addressing the backlog, highlighting the resolution of 69 cases in the past 12 months recovering penalties worth Rs. 100 million. However, the appointment of the CAT Chairman to the Supreme Court has left the Tribunal non-functional, exacerbating the delays in resolving key competition-related cases.



The Law Minister was informed that CCP's pending cases are spread across various courts, with 211 cases in the Supreme Court, 43 in the Lahore High Court, 44 in the Sindh High Court, and several more in the Islamabad, Peshawar, and High Courts. Additionally, there are 172 cases before the CAT. The CCP management discuss the possibility of specialized bench in Supreme Court to decide the

competition related cases. The CCP also updated the Minister on its efforts to fight cartelization, including the establishment of a Market Intelligence Unit (MIU) which has identified over 150 cases using advanced data analysis and media monitoring tools. The CCP is also establishing a Centre of Excellence in Competition Law to promote research and scholarship, and has

identified regulatory barriers in sectors like insurance, aviation, road construction, and power.

Minister Tarar's visit signals a renewed commitment from the government to support the CCP's efforts in ensuring fair competition and removing barriers to market entry, ultimately benefiting businesses and consumers alike.

Truck Art

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan is visiting at truck art stall in Punjab pavilion during Lok Mela at Lok Virsa, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Zamurd Khan inaugurates 100th draw of Rs. 1500 Prize Bonds at State Bank of Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zamurd Khan Inaugurates 100th Draw of Rs. 1500 Prize Bonds at State Bank of Pakistan

Rawalpindi: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) successfully hosted the landmark 100th draw of Rs. 1500 prize bonds, with former Member of the National Assembly, Zamurd Khan, presiding as the chief guest. The other distinguished guests included Senior Deputy Chief Manager SBP Rawalpindi Syeda Asma Aziz, Chief Manager SBP

Rawalpindi Ansar Iftikhar Butt, Member Cantonment Board Haji Zafar Iqbal, Founder of Sweet Home Zamarud Khan, Saeed Murad, Zubair Sahib, Hazoor Mehdi, and Director Kamran Anwar.

The event, held at the SBB building in Rawalpindi, featured a formal inauguration by Mr. Khan, followed by a cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate the milestone.

Dignitaries, SBP officials, and members of the public attended the event, celebrating the success and impact of Pakistan's national savings initiatives.

Federal Minister pledges support for textiles and apparel industry amid mounting challenges

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan has assured the delegation of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) of the government's commitment to facilitate textiles and apparel sector to promote value-addition and product/market diversification, and boost exports.

In a meeting with the APTMA representatives, led by its Chairman, Kamran Arshad, the minister emphasized the importance of the textiles and apparel industry vis-a-viz socio-economic development and growth.

The delegation of APTMA included Amir Fayyaz Sheikh, Chairperson

Textile Council (Kohinoor Mills), Anees Khawaja (Mahmood Group), Rahim Nasir (Ayesha Group), Naveed Ahmad (Indus Dyeing), Naveed Gulzar (Crescent Mills), Asad Shafi (Cross Stitch), Ali Ahsan (Ashiana Cotton), Shahid Sattar (Executive Director, APTMA), and Raza Baqir (Secretary General, APTMA North).

Kamran Arshad outlined the critical challenges facing the textiles and apparel sector and their implications, including potential disconnection of gas supplies to industrial captive power plants, high electricity prices, high taxes and liquidity crunch which may erode the industry's competitiveness and adversely impact exports.

Arshad urged the government to rene-

gotiate its commitment to the International Monetary Fund and reconsider the decision of cutting off captive gas supply by end of January 2025 so that sector could be able to regain the lost grounds and enhance exports.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed the government's support, recognizing the textiles and apparel sector a cornerstone of Pakistan's exports and economy.

"The textiles and apparel industry is the established sector, and government will extend maximum support for its sustainability and growth," he stated.

The minister expressed optimism about increasing textiles and apparel exports through collaborative efforts and supportive policies.

Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited CEO inaugurates Pakistan Agro Show 2024



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: CEO of Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited (AGTL), Sakib Eltaff inaugurated the Pakistan Agro Show 2024 at the International Expo Center, Lahore today. The ceremonial opening marks the commencement of one of the country's most anticipated agricultural exhibitions, running from November 14-16.

During the inaugural ceremony, Mr. Eltaff emphasized the transformative potential of agricultural mechanization in Pakistan. "Today, as this remarkable exhibition

opens its doors, we're not just showcasing machinery - we're opening new possibilities for Pakistan's farming future," he stated while cutting the ribbon.

The opening ceremony gathered prominent agricultural stakeholders, industry experts, and farmers, highlighting the show's significance in Pakistan's agricultural calendar. AGTL's pavilion, featuring the newly launched New Holland NH-850 tractor, immediately drew attention from attendees, demonstrating the industry's eagerness for innovative farming solutions.

PSX announces top 25 companies awards recipients for the Year 2023

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) is proud to announce the list of Top 25 Companies Awards recipients for the year 2023. The PSX Top 25 Companies Awards, launched in 1978, are a prestigious and widely-respected awards recognising excellence in the corporate sector & industry of Pakistan. The companies that make it to the list of the coveted awards are selected on the basis of their financial performance, governance & operational achievements as well as Sustainability and ESG related initiatives.

The PSX Top 25 Companies Awards recognizes companies achieving certain key pre-requisites for this prestigious award which include having a minimum dividend

distribution of 30% and shares of the company having been traded at least 75% of the total trading days in a year, among other pre-requisites. Subject to achieving these pre-requisites, the companies are further weighed based on certain quantitative and qualitative criteria. In terms of quantitative criteria, PSX selects listed companies which have performed exceptionally in the context of profitability ratios, dividend related ratios, and turnover of shares, among other specifics. In terms of qualitative criteria, PSX selects high-performing listed companies based on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), reporting on SDGs, ESG related initiatives, and Diversity & Inclusion, among other considerations.

Announcing the PSX Top 25 Companies Awards winners for 2023,

Mr. Nadeem Naqvi, Acting CEO of PSX, stated, "On behalf of Pakistan Stock Exchange, I extend my heartiest congratulations to the recipients of the PSX Top 25 Companies Awards for the year 2023. These awards show-



case excellence in Pakistan's corporate, business and industrial landscape whereby the top performing companies who have excelled based on financial, governance, ESG, D&I and other quantitative and qualitative criteria, are duly recognised and awarded". He further stated, "The winning

of this accolade by the respective companies will send a strong message to investors globally and locally that these Pakistani companies and industries are at par with global corporate and industrial performers. Furthermore, winning this prestigious and distinctive award is a clear reflection of the competence and capabilities of such companies in their ability to do business successfully with current, future or potential local and international business partners".

The companies that made it to the Top 25 Companies Awards list in 2023, in order of their ranking, are:

- 1 Engro Corporation Limited
- 2 Engro Fertilizers Limited
- 3 Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited
- 4 The Hub Power Company Limited
- 5 Bank Alfalah Limited
- 6 Habib Bank Limited

- 7 Habib Metropolitan Bank Limited
- 8 Mari Petroleum Company Limited
- 9 Systems Limited
- 10 Cherat Cement Company Limited
- 11 Lucky Cement Limited
- 12 Meezan Bank Limited
- 13 Engro Polymer & Chemicals Limited
- 14 Pakistan Oilfields Limited
- 15 Image Pakistan Limited
- 16 MCB Bank Limited
- 17 Faysal Bank Limited
- 18 Nestle Pakistan Limited
- 19 Adamjee Insurance Company Limited
- 20 Indus Motor Company Limited
- 21 International Industries Limited
- 22 United Bank Limited
- 23 Pakistan State Oil Company Limited
- 24 Security Papers Limited
- 25 Bank AL Habib Limited

ICCI President Nasir Qureshi Advocates 'Survival of the Fittest' for Personal and Community Growth

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), highlighted the importance of fitness as a cornerstone for success in the modern world. Speaking at the anniversary celebration of a well-known health and fitness center in Islamabad, he emphasized that mental and physical health are essential for achieving personal and societal advancement.

Dr. Waseem, the center's founder, thanked President Qureshi and the community for their steadfast support, reaffirming his dedication to fostering healthier lifestyles. The event concluded with a celebration and renewed plans to expand health services to further uplift the community.

Pakistan to follow Sweden's lead in achieving smoke-free status

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: IRADA Pakistan (The Initiative on Risk-Reduction and Dependable Alternatives) has urged Pakistan to take inspiration from Sweden, which has become the first nation in the world to achieve official 'smoke-free' status, according to a data released recently.

Sweden has hit this historic milestone 16 years ahead of the European Union target, while most of its fellow member states are set to miss it by a significant margin. Official health data released by Sweden's public health agency shows that just 4.5% of the nation's Swedish-born over-16s smoke - significantly below the globally recognised benchmark of 5% for smoke free status.

Contrary to that, smoking rates in Pakistan are higher than four times of Sweden's.

"The Sweden's extraordinary success is the result of its pioneering policy approach of gradually shifting to safer alternatives of cigarettes", IRADA added.

Sports Board Punjab to hold Ind-Provincial Games trials: DG Sports

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry has presided over an important meeting at the National Hockey Stadium on Friday.

Director Admin Dr M Kaleem, Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Deputy Director Ata ur Rehman, Deputy Director Tariq Khanzada attended the meeting in person while all the divisional and district sports officers of the province participated in the meeting through video link.

The performances of all district sports officers in the first phase of Khelta Punjab Games were reviewed in detail during the meeting. Besides this, the revenue generation process in all districts and divisions of the province was also discussed in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that the arrangements are completed to organize the indoor trials of Sports Board Punjab teams for Inter-Provincial Quaid-i-Azam Games. "The U-22 players from all divisions of the province will participate in the



trials and the best players will be selected purely on merit for the mega event," he added.

Director General Sports and Youth

Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry congratulated those District Sports Officers who showed excellent performance in the first phase of Khelta Punjab

Games. "Show-cause notices will be issued to those officers who failed to impress in Khelta Punjab Games," DG Sports Punjab warned.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry informed that the district level competitions of Khelta Punjab Games have been completed while the divisional level competitions will be organized with the permission of Punjab government.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry directed all the district and divisional sports officers of Punjab to take all possible measures to increase the revenue in their respective districts and divisions. "All sports officers of the province should improve their performance and take effective steps for the promotion of sports culture across the province," he added.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that Sports Board Punjab will be organizing DSOs conference in every month in future. "Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar will chair this conference in a bid to improve performance.

Pakistan play 2nd T-20 International Cricket Match against Australia today in Sydney

Asim Tanveer

SYDNEY: Australia defeated Pakistan to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match T20 series. Led by Josh Inglis, Australia won in Brisbane, while the Pakistani team, under the captaincy of Mohammad Rizwan, now has one last chance to level the series.

It is worth noting that earlier, when the ODI series began at the MCG, Pakistan lost. However, they made a comeback by winning the ODI matches in Adelaide and Perth, securing their first ODI series win in Australia after 22 years.

Here, Pakistan not only needs to win the first T20 match against Australia but also aims to claim the T20 series. It is important to note that this is Australia's weakest T20 team, while Pakistan is playing with its full-strength squad.

After Gabba, it's Sydney. Pakistan's cricket team has never won a T20 match against Australia in Australia. While their first-ever encounter at the Gabba in Brisbane just took place, the second match of the series, being played in Sydney, holds significant importance for Pakistan. A loss here would mean losing the series. However, a win would keep them alive in the contest.

There is another scenario: if the match cannot be completed for some reason. This reminds us of a previously sched-



uled T20 match between Pakistan and Australia in Sydney, which was washed out due to rain and ended without a result.

Pakistan's cricket team will be playing its sixth T20 match against Australia in Australia. Out of the five matches played so far, they have lost four, while one ended without a result.

In the 26 T20 matches played between the two countries overall, the competition is tied 12-12. One match ended without a result, and another was tied, where Pakistan eventually emerged victorious, making the head-to-head record 13-12 in Pakistan's favor.

In Sydney, according to Pakistan

Standard Time, the Pakistan vs. Australia match will begin at 1 PM. It is expected to be a tough contest, and the weather will be an important factor to watch.

In Sydney, there is a forecast for rain in the morning and early afternoon. However, during the match hours, scheduled for 7 PM local time, the weather is expected to improve.

Sydney's pitch has always been favorable for spinners. One change in Pakistan's lineup seems inevitable, but the question remains: who will be left out, and who will be brought into the playing XI?

After a 29-run defeat in the first T20 in Brisbane, Pakistan is now preparing

to face Australia in a must-win second match of the ongoing three-match series. Under Mohammad Rizwan's captaincy, rain-affected conditions in the first game didn't allow Pakistan to gain momentum.

One standout performance for Pakistan came from Abbas Afridi. In addition to taking two crucial wickets, the right-arm fast bowler scored an unbeaten 20 runs lower down the order. However, the performance of several big names was disappointing, which is why the think tank, led by Mohammad Rizwan, might make some bold changes for the second T20 in Sydney.

Fast bowler Naseem Shah, who troubled Australian batters with his seam movement during the ODI series and played a key role in Pakistan's clinical series win, had an expensive outing in Brisbane. He conceded 37 runs in two overs while taking one wicket and might be dropped for the next match.

An in-form Shaheen Afridi, alongside Haris Rauf and Abbas Afridi, could form the pace attack. In Naseem Shah's place, left-arm spinner Suifyan Mueem might prove to be a valuable addition.

In the middle order, batter Irfan Khan Niazi didn't look impressive in the first T20. As a result, Pakistan may consider replacing him with Arafat Minhas in the playing XI instead of giving him another chance.

World Jr Tennis Championships finals on Saturday

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The finals of the ITF Pakistan J30 Ali Embroidery World Junior Tennis Championships 2024 will be played here at the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Tennis Complex on Saturday. Pakistan's cuisine

The event has brought together 47 junior players from around the globe, including 28 boys and 19 girls representing

countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Canada, Korea, Germany, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Maldives, and Singapore. Additionally, 28 Pakistani players (22 boys and 6 girls).

The finals of Girls Singles, Boys Doubles and Boys Singles will be played on Saturday.

In Boys semi finals played Friday, Sion Ji of Korea beat Nadir Mirza of Pakistan 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 while Xiuyuan Guo of China



defeated Muhammad Talha Khan of Pakistan 6-2, 6-4.

In Girls' semi finals, Dianara Di Silava of Sri Lanka beat So Yuna of Korea 6-3, 6-4 while Karolina Ligai of Kazakhstan

defeated A Hyun Jo of Korea 7-5, 6-1.

In Girls Doubles final, Yeonn Joo Cha (KOR), So Yuna (KOR) beat Haruhi Katsube (JPN), Hinata Wada (JPN) and won the girls doubles titles 1-6, 7-6(10-4).

Burhan, Munirur Rehman, Arbab, Hasseeb Shine in Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

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

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Burhan Mehmood 114, Munirur Rehman 108, Abbas Sohail 111 and deadly bowling by Medium Pacer Mirza Haseeb capturing 5 wickets for 23 runs.

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

Scores in Brief:

Mujahid Gymkhana beat Mazhar Gymkhana by 191 runs at Student Ground. Mujahid Gymkhana 297/8 in 40 overs. Burhan Mehmood 114 12x4 2x6 not out, Munirur Rehman 108 7x4 8x6, Dawood Shah 32. Rohail Nasir 4/58, Waqar Ahmed 2/40, Shakirullah 2/59.

Mazhar Gymkhana 106 all out in 25.1 overs. Usman Malik 39, Muhammad Moosa 18. Munirur Rehman 3/12, Adil Ashfaq 2/16.

In the 2nd Match Millat Cricket Club beat Pak Lovers Cricket Club by 5 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Pak Lovers CC 193 all out in 35.2 overs. Abdullah Arif 72 6x4 3x6, Hammad Rana 42, Zain Bin Haris 37. Burhan Ali 2/21, Muhammad Zubair 2/22, Zeshan Khan 2/29, Sultan Ali 2/42.

Millat CC 195/5 in 19.1 overs. Hamza Khan 77 14x4 1x6, Salman Khan 42, Sultan Ali 37. Zubair Ahmed 2/19, Roshan Ali 2/42.

In the 3rd Match Hydri Gymkhana beat Ibne Insha Cricket Club by 54 runs at Asghar Ali Shah Stadium. Hydri Gymkhana 205/9 in 40 overs. Rameez ul Haq 50 2x4 4x6, Muhammad Moheeb 39, Saeedur Rehman 34, Azhar 26, Waqar Iqbal 23. Ahsan Latif 3/28, Muhammad Zahid 3/36, Muhammad Zohaib 2/31.

Ibne Insha CC 151 all out in 34.4 overs. Muhammad Zohaib 40, Muhammad Ashraf 31. Sumer uz Zuhra 4/30, Badar uz Zuhra 2/14, Muhammad Moheeb 2/26, Azhar 2/27.

In the fourth Match Pak Mughal Cricket Club beat Cantt Sports by 40 runs at Afza Ground. Pak Mughal CC 272/5 in 40 overs. Abbas Sohail 111 14x4 2x6, Naveed Ahmed 42, Faheem Ahmed 26. Shahid Ali 2/34, Shahbaz Qureshi 2/42.

Cantt Sports 232 all out in 31.2 overs. Shahid Ali 97 13x4 4x6, Muhammad Ibrahim 29, Aqib Saeed 22, Shoaib 22. Mirza Haseeb (mf) 5/23, Muhammad Sajid 3/53, Muhammad Tahir 2/39.

Jazz Partners with Members of Pakistan Women's Cricket Team to Champion Empowerment and Inclusion



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, has partnered with the resilient stars of the national women's cricket team, including captain Fatima Sana, Sidra Amin, Nida Dar, Nashra Sandhu, and Gul Feroza, to champion women's empowerment and uplift female athletes across the country. This forward-thinking partnership, marked by a contract signing during the cricketers' visit to Jazz's head office in Islamabad, reaffirms the company's long-standing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

As part of the collaboration, Jazz will support various initiatives to advance women's cricket, nurture emerging talent, and strengthen community connections by encouraging young girls to pursue sports. These initiatives include training programs to mobilize the next generation of female athletes. The partnership underscores Jazz's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Speaking at the occasion, Ali Fahd, Vice President Marketing at Jazz said, "At Jazz, we are committed to driving positive societal change by fostering an environment where gender equality and women's empowerment are paramount. Our collaboration with the Pakistan women's cricket team aims to promote inclusivity. We believe that by investing in women's sports, we are not only uplifting individual athletes but also inspiring a generation of young girls to pursue their dreams with confidence and ambition."

Pakistan women's team captain, Fatima Sana, appreciated Jazz's support, saying, "It is incredibly encouraging to see Jazz champion women's cricket in Pakistan. This partnership will inspire young girls to pursue their passion for sports. With Jazz's support, we are confident that women's cricket will continue to thrive and attract new talent."

Jazz is committed to promoting women's sports in Pakistan. Through its video streaming platform, Tamasha, the company recently live-streamed the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024, supporting the growth and visibility of women's sports. With over 15 million monthly active users, Tamasha continues to bring female athletes to a wider audience across Pakistan.

Lahore Blues' Saleem, Umar and Qasim slam centuries in Quaid-e-Azam Trophy

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Lahore Blues' batters Mohammad Saleem (117), Umar Siddiq (115), Qasim Akram (101 not out) struck centuries against Sialkot at Gohati Cricket Stadium, Swabi as they declared their first innings for 439-7 in 100.1 overs on the second day of the fourth round of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 2024-25.

Lahore Blues continued from their overnight total of 142-2 as only 65.5 overs of play was possible on day two with bad light forcing an early close.

Islamabad and Karachi Blues romped to victories against Hyderabad and Dera Murad Jamali (DM Jamali), respectively.

Test pacer Musa Khan rattled the Hyderabad batting line-up with figures of 7-28, as they only managed 99 in their second innings losing the game by an innings and two runs at Diamond Cricket Ground, Islamabad. Earlier, Islamabad had gained a 101-run first innings lead scoring 194 all out in reply to Hyderabad's first innings total of 93.

At Mirpur Cricket Stadium, Karachi Blues beat Dera Murad

Jamali by an innings and 56 runs to register their second win of the tournament. Karachi Blues could only add 13 runs to their overnight total of 144-8, gaining an 107-run first innings lead. In reply, Aftab Khan, Mohammad Hamza and Tabish Khan shared eight wickets among them to bundle out DM Jamali for 51 in 19.5 overs. Hamza took his match tally to 10-34 in 14.5 overs.

Peshawar's Mohammad Amir Khan took 6-98 to dismiss Multan for 292, who continued from their overnight score of 120-2. In turn, Peshawar trailed

by 222 runs with six wickets in hand when stumps were drawn at Ashfaq Cricket Ground, Sirdheri in Charsadda.

Elsewhere, Azad Jammu and Kashmir were 125 runs behind Karachi Whites at the Abbotabad Cricket Stadium after the latter managed 356 all out in first innings. Karachi Whites' Rameez Aziz brought up his seventh first-class century after adding 11 runs to his overnight score of 96. Larkana finished the day with 238-8, leading by 133 runs against Faisalabad in the second innings after Umar Waheed struck 105 off 143 balls



at National Ground Islamabad.

Earlier, Faisalabad took a 105-run lead scoring 196 all out in their first dig. At Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, only 66 overs of play was possible as Rawalpindi closed the day with

306-9 on the board, stretching their first innings lead to 73 over Bahawalpur.

At Marghar Cricket Ground, Lahore Whites inched closer to victory as they took a 53-run first innings lead and then reduced

Abbottabad to 125-8 by close of play. Quetta managed 187 all out in their first innings after continuing from their overnight score of 89-4 at Railway Cricket Ground Haripur. In reply, FATA were 152-3.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives (PDSI) and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Ahsan Iqbal chaired the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) meeting and approved three major development projects worth Rs. 58.857 billion on Friday.



Photo: PID

Ahsan suggests countrywide Mobile Learning Festival in collaboration with Pakistan Railways

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday suggested launching a Mobile Learning Festival in collaboration with Pakistan Railways, providing students from every district an opportunity to listen to the struggle stories of successful personalities and set their future goals.

"The Ministry of Education will be asked to take this initiative. It will help students explore their capabilities and set their future direction with complete determination," he said while addressing students at the inaugural ceremony of the Pakistan Learning Festival-2024, held at Islamabad College for Boys, G-6/3. He remarked that Muslims of the Indian subcontinent managed to secure Pakistan

after great sacrifices, and it was the responsibility of the younger generation to make it a proud nation by 2047, when both Pakistan and India would celebrate their 100th year of independence.

"Pakistan's youth should celebrate this milestone with pride, without any excuses for lagging behind in development," he emphasized.

Citing an example, he said the country needed to give

its full effort over the next 23 years, much like an athlete running a 1,200-meter race: maintaining a calculated pace for the first 1,000 meters, and then giving full energy during the final 200 meters to cross the finish line and clinch victory.

He also mentioned Pakistan's development journey since its inception in 1947, when the newly-born state had nothing even common pins to

bind papers in offices.

Today, however, he said Pakistan manufactured the JF-17 Thunder aircraft, became the world's first Islamic nuclear power and seventh overall, and has built a digital backbone with fiber optic cables running from Gilgit-Baltistan to Karachi. Additionally, the country has increased its number of universities from 2-3 to around 250, he added.

NDMA, UNDRR reaffirm commitment to disaster resilience in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik and UNDRR's Kamal Kishore on Friday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening joint efforts for disaster-resilient management in Pakistan.

This came after a comprehensive briefing by the Chairman on the capabilities of the National Emergencies Operation Center during their meeting at COP 29.

He highlighted key initiatives including the Development of Early Warning (DEW) systems, Combined Integrated Simulation Exercises (CISE), anticipatory actions and risk communication strategies



aimed at enhancing disaster risk reduction through adaptation and mitigation measures.

NDMA, UNDRR reaffirm commitment to disaster resilience in Pakistan

The Chairman NDMA and Kamal Kishore, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) also discussed the Disaster Management (DM) audit of disaster-resilient infrastructure and the "Build Back Better" approach, which focuses on improving resilience in the aftermath of natural calamities.

The discussions extended to the framework of risk financing and access to carbon markets.

Status of Provincial Surplus for Q1 in respect of Government of the Punjab

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Finance endorses the views of Government of the Punjab on achievement of a provincial surplus of Rs. 40 billion during Q1 for FY 2024-25. Government of the Punjab has remained one of the most important contributors to provincial surplus during recent years; for FY 2024-25 it has budgeted a provincial surplus of Rs. 630 billion as agreed with the IMF.

It is highlighted that MoF shared the updated Q1 fiscal operations figures with the IMF on 14th November, 2024. With concurrence of the Fund, MoF has updated the revised figures at its website, showing a provincial surplus of Rs. 40 billion for Punjab.

It is further pointed out that as per the revised figures agreed with the Fund; Government of Pakistan has managed to achieve a cumulative provincial surplus of Rs. 360 billion against a target of Rs. 342 billion agreed with the IMF for Q1 for FY 2024-25.

Palestine hails U. N. General Assembly on Palestinian right to self-determination

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine welcomed the adoption by the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly of the resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on their land and in their state, as an inalienable right, not subject to any conditions, and not negotiable.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that 170 countries voted in favor of the resolution, including countries that have developed their votes in favor of this basic right, which is considered a pivot and pillar of the United Nations Charter.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine thanked the brotherly and friendly countries, and those that sponsored and voted on the resolution, at a time when the Palestinian people are being subjected to genocide and continuous violation of all rights, including the right to self-determination.

It stressed that the positive vote of the countries sends a glimmer of



hope to our people that the world will stand by them in the face of genocide, colonial settlement, and settler terrorism.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed the importance of implementing the General Assembly resolution that adopted the legal advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the illegality of the Israeli occupation and called for its end as soon as possible and to stop the violation of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people and prevent them from exercising this right.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the countries that did not support the resolution to review their positions, especially the six countries (Israel, the United States, Argentina, Paraguay, Micronesia and Nauru) that were isolated by their negative vote, and to join the moral majority consistent with international law.

Sufficient fertilizer stocks available for Rabi season: FRC



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Fertilizer Review Committee (FRC) on Friday expressed complete satisfaction with the country's current fertilizer reserves, ensuring adequate supplies of both DAP and urea for the upcoming Rabi season.

The committee met under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Industries, Production, and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain to assess the stock position of DAP and urea fertilizers for the Rabi season 2024-25, said a news release.

The minister highlighted the increasing demand for DAP fertilizer in the country, with a 44% surge in DAP off take. This rise in demand is attributed to the Punjab government's Kisan Card initiative.

The DAP offtake estimate for October 2024 was 215,000 tonnes, which has increased by 44% to 309,000 tonnes.

This increase is mainly due to the disbursement of Rs 75 billion by the government of Punjab as an interest-free loan through the Kisan Card (Rs 30,000 per acre for seeds, phosphorus, and nitrogen) for 500,000 farmers, each with up to 5 acres (Rs 150,000 per farmer).

So far, farmers have drawn Rs 18 billion to procure fertilizer.

This initiative by the Punjab government is expected to encourage the farming community to apply more DAP for balanced fertilizer use.

The trend of increased DAP off-take in October is expected to continue through November and December 2024.

Second Round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Second Round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina was held today in Islamabad.

Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Shafiq Ali Khan, led the Pakistani side, while the Bosnian side was led by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Edin Dilberovic.

In an atmosphere of high trust and

mutual understanding, the two sides comprehensively reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations. They reaffirmed their mutual commitment to further develop and deepen political, trade, economic, social, humanitarian relations. Important regional and global developments came under discussion.

Ambassador Dilberovic also called on Foreign Secretary Ms. Amna Baloch. The Foreign Secretary reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further expand and diversify mutually beneficial cooperation.

Pakistan won't be part of any global conflict, says General Asim Munir

Continued from Page 1

COAS Munir also conveyed Pakistan's expectations from the Afghan interim government, urging them to ensure that Afghan territory was not used for terrorist activities and to take measures against such threats.

COAS Munir highlighted that the "commitment to stability" was a "crucial component" of the National Action Plan aimed at eradicating terrorism and extremism.

He expressed concerns over the rise of extremist ideologies in India, noting that minorities abroad, particularly in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, were "at risk" due to such an ideology. The

army chief condemned the oppression in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, linking it to the continuation of Hindutva policies.

He stressed the need for a resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with United Nations resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. The army chief reiterated Pakistan's longstanding call for a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

He noted that Pakistan has repeatedly provided humanitarian aid to Gaza and Lebanon and mentioned the country's advocacy for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Atta Tarar calls for culture driven climate actions at high-level ministerial dialogue in Baku

Continued from Page 1

heritage sites Mohenjo Daro which dates back to 2500 BC.

He said, "today, as we convene here to discuss about how we channel these values, our ingenuity, creativity and resilience to address one of the greatest challenges of our times, the global climate crises, the communities, across the world, are

feeling the devastating impacts of climate change."

Highlighting Pakistan's meager contribution to the global carbon emission, he said that his country was among the top ten countries that was most vulnerable to the climate change which not only posed great threat to the lives and livelihoods but also culture and national heritage.