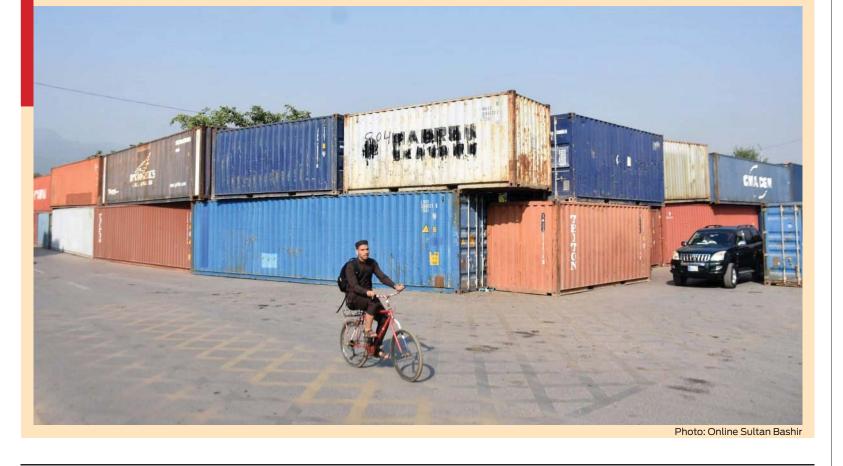


# Security arrangements

ISLAMABAD: Heavy shipping containers at D Chowk for road block ahead of upcoming PTI protest in the Federal Capital.



# **PM Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates Kachi Canal Restoration Project** at Taunsa Barrage

# Army Chief visits Peshawar following **Apex Committee** meeting

## 腾 City Desk

**RAWALPINDI:** General Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited Peshawar today, as a follow up of the National Apex Committee meeting held on 19 November 2024 and prelude to Provincial Apex Committee Meeting to be held soon. COAS was provided a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation and the progress of ongoing counter-terrorism operations in the region.

Chief Minister KPK and field commanders were also present at the occasion Paying profound tribute to the Shuhada and Ghazis,

COAS emphasized the unparalleled sacrifices being rendered for the defense of the motherland. He remarked that these sacrifices serve as a cornerstone of national resilience, inspiring and unwavering dedication of the Armed Forces and of Law Enforcement Agencies.

COAS commended the high morale, operational readiness, and unyielding commitment of the troops in effectively countering all forms of threats. He reiterated the Army's firm Commander Peshawar.



resolve to dismantle hostile terrorist networks and eradicate the illegal spectrum undermining national security.

Highlighting the collective determination of the nation and its security forces to combat terrorism, COAS stressed that thwarting the nefarious designs of inimical elements remains a top priority. He assured that through synchronized and robust operations, Pakistan Army in collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) will relentlessly hunt down the enemies of peace to

ensure lasting stability and security. Upon his arrival, COAS

was received by the Corps

Islamabad police block roads to halt PTI

#### 🐞 Asim Tanveer

TAUNSA BARRAGE/KOT ADDU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Kachi Canal restoration project, stated that spewing venom against Saudi Arabia is an unforgivable crime. He emphasized that any attempts to hinder the strong bond between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would be met with severe consequences, and those who try to disrupt this friendship will be dealt with decisively.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, while praising Saudi Arabia's unconditional financial and diplomatic support for Pakistan, categorically stated that it is an unforgivable crime to spew venom against such a brotherly country. He said that any hand that tries to create an obstacle in Pakistan-Saudi friendship will be broken by the nation. He further emphasized



to jeopardize Pakistan's inter- and firmly confront the enemies ests by spreading baseless propaganda against Saudi Arabia, a long-standing ally. He urged that political interests should not be pursued by sowing seeds of hatred and putting Pakistan's welfare at risk. To achieve the development and prosperity of the people of

of the country. He expressed these views while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Kachi Canal rehabilitation project in Taunsa on Friday The Prime Minister said that

Saudi Arabia is a friend and brotherly country of Pakistan, to contractors without a tender, that no one would be allowed Pakistan, the nation must unite whose praise is never enough. In leading to the reckless wastage of

every era and under every government, Saudi Arabia has supported the people and government of Pakistan financially, economically, and diplomatically without any discrimination. It has always fought Pakistan's case on the global stage and provided unparalleled support in every field. In return, over the course of 77 years, Saudi Arabia has never made any demands or political ambitions. It has always helped us unconditionally, like a brother.

The Prime Minister congratulated the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Sardar Sarfraz Bugti, for his personal efforts and interest in the restoration of the project, which was completed with the support of the Punjab Government, Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal, and WAPDA. He stated that the feasibility study for this project began in 1998 during Nawaz Sharif's tenure, and during General Musharraf's era, the project was handed over

the poor nation's money.

Speaking at the ceremony, Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif welcomed everyone to Punjab, stating that this is not just a canal, but a path to the prosperity of Balochistan through Punjab. She mentioned that this project was initiated during Nawaz Sharif's tenure and completed during his time as well. Chief Minister of Balochistan,

Sardar Sarfraz Bugti, said that the project was approved in 2002, but it became a dead project. After Nawaz Sharif came to power, its completion was achieved, and the region experienced a period of prosperity. In 2022, the area was devastated by floods, and people from our regions had to migrate. Once again, at our request, this dream has now been realized.

Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Energy, Musadik Malik, Chairman WAPDA, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Sajjad Ghani also highlighted the Kachi Canal restoration project.

# supporters marching towards Islamabad

#### 😂 Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad administration blocked roads leading to the federal capital to halt Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters who are scheduled to march towards the city on Sunday for the "restoration" of democracy and their party founder's release.

government is "The committed to upholding the law and will fully comply with the Islamabad High Court's ruling," Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi told reporters in Islamabad on Friday.

Incarcerated former has asked his supporters to of the Belarusian president.

**PM constitutes** 

resolve issues between

committee to

PMLN & PPP

November 24 for democracy and judiciary. But Defence Minister Khawaja Asif believes the protest is akin to "insurrection" as the former ruling party allegedly wants to usurp the federal capital.

march towards Islamabad on

The PTI founder has set four demands for ending protests while his wife has stated that the date would only change if Khan is out of jail.

Khan's PTI encountered significant setback on Thursday when the Islamabad High Court ruled that no protests or rallies violating a recent law on public gatherings would be permitted over prime minister Imran Khan the weekend due to the visit

# **Internet likely to** be suspended in Islamabad, Punjab during PTI protest

#### 😂 Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Mobile and internet services are likely to remain suspended in and Punjab, amid Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf

to

the

firewalls activated to slow various parts of Pakistan, down internet speeds and particularly in Islamabad impact social media apps. The authorities may also

(PTI) protest on November 24. According sources, suspension may affect some districts in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Islam- block internet and mobile abad

within Paki-Sources Telecommunicastan

tion Authority (PTA) have claimed that mobile internet

services will be suspended from November 22, with

services in specific locations, depending on the situation, sources added.

# Motorway to remain closed for repair ahead of PTI Islamabad protest

#### 😂 Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Motorway will remain closed from six points for repair until further notice, according to a notification issued by the authorities.

As per the notification, the Motorway will be closed from Pindi Bhattian to Multan, Peshawar to Islamabad and Lahore to Islamabad starting tonight at 8 pm, Motorway Police announced.

The notification stated that the Motorway will be closed for maintenance and repair work.

Earlier today, the government of November 24. Punjab imposed section 144 across the province ahead of PTI protest in Islamabad on November 24.

As per details, the Punjab Home Department has banned public 24 protest call.



gatherings and rallies for three days. According to the notification, issued here today, section 144 will be in effect from Saturday, November 23 to Monday, November 25.

It is to be noted that incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan has given a call for countrywide protests on

In a separate development, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) presented 'conditions' to hold negotiations to withdraw its November

The PTI demanded immediate relief for party founder Imran Khan, the sources said. "In exchange for relief to its founder, the PTI is ready to call off the protest," they added.

The party asked from the government to quash all 'fabricated' cases against Imran Khan and his immediate release. "If legal proceedings delay his release, Imran Khan should be transferred to Peshawar Jail," one of the conditions set by PTI read.

The party also demanded an immediate release of other leaders imprisoned in various jails. Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur said that negotiations on the November 24 protest will only be commenced after the release of PTI founder Imran Khan. ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday constituted a committee to ensure cooperation in political and other matters, and to resolve the issues between Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

腾 City Desk

The members of the committee include Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema.

Other members include Minister of State for Overseas Pakistanis and Human

Development Resource Engineer Amir Muqam, Prime Minister's Advisor Rana Sanaullah, Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan, Senior Minister of Punjab Marriyum Aurangzeb, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Jaffer Khan Mandokhel, and Bashir Ahmed Memon.

According to a press release issued by the PM Office, the prime minister has tasked the committee with the responsibility of political cooperation and resolving issues after detailed consultations with the Pakistan Peoples Party.

The committee will engage in discussions with the members designated by the Pakistan Peoples Party to determine the future course of action.





Saturday, November 23, 2024

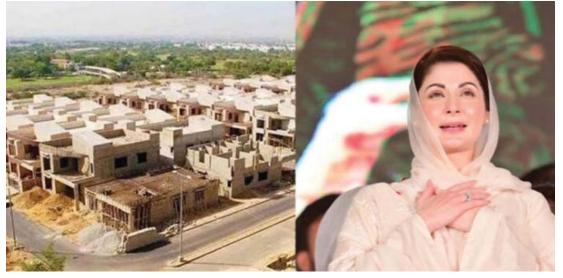
# CM Maryam Nawaz orders urgent completion of Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme

#### 🐞 Bureau Report

LAHORE: "Speed up the completion of 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme," Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned while chairing a special meeting to review progress of 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme'. She added,"Apni Chhat Apna Ghar is a dream of every common man, we will definitely materialise it."

Madam Chief Minister said,"Payment of 1st installment of loan to 927 applicants under 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme' in Punjab has been completed." She was briefed,"More than 800 houses under the scheme have entered the final stage of their completion." She directed the related authorities to complete the payment of the 2nd loan instalment to the beneficiaries as soon as possible.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was apprised,"Data of 50,000 applicants was transferred to Akhuwat for verification. Verification of 38,000 applicants has been completed, while 20,900 applicants have submitted 600,000, whereas more than 3.25



the required documents, out of which lakh applications have been received approval to present furniture and 8,424 applicants have successfully completed the required papers." The updated Madam Chief Minister."The number of registered users on 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar' portal has exceeded

via portal to construct houses under the scheme." They briefed further,"The target of building 47,000 houses by June 2025 and 100,000 houses by next December will be completed."

other goods as gifts to the owners of the first 05 houses completed under the scheme. She also gave in-principle approval to launch a 3-Marla plot scheme in Punjab, which will be started Madam Chief Minister gave by giving 666 plots in Chishtian.

# Protest

KARACHI: People chant slogans during a protest to condemn the brutal killings in Parachinar, Kurram, in the Provincial Capital.



# EPI Big Catch-Up campaign progress reviewed in Dadu: Deputy Commissioner 腾 🛛 Azad Baloch

DADU: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Dadu, Mukhtiar Ali Abro, at the Camp Office, DC House Dadu, to review the progress report of the ongoing EPI Big Catch-Up campaign. During the meeting, which focuses on providing immunization against 12 major diseases to children under five years, NSTOP Officer Deedar Hassan Khaskheli briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the campaign's progress.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the performance of the teams and commended their efforts.

On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Mukhtiar Ali Abro conveyed a message to the public, stating that health department teams are reaching cities, neighborhoods, and villages to administer free immunization to protect children from fatal diseases. He urged citizens to cooperate with the teams. He also requested parents to support the visiting teams in their neighborhoods and villages

Mr, Abro said, parents could get their children immunized at the nearest EPI center. The Deputy Commissioner directed parents and the health department's concerned staff to work together to ensure the campaign's success, making the district free from diseases

The meeting was attended by DHO Dadu, Syed Imdad Ali Shah, Dr. Javeed Ahmed, Dr. Junaid Ahmed, Dr. Rafiu, Dr. Abdul Jabbar Bahar and others

Huge Financial Loss to AJK Public Property Highlights Urgent Need for Insurance

#### 😂 Bureau Report

MIRPUR: An accident on November 21, 2024, in Kotli, a district of Mirpur Division in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K), resulted in significant damage to public property.

The District Magistrate of Kotli reported that the fire destroyed a police prison van, a Rescue 1122 pickup truck, a parked motorbike.

and a vehicle belonging to an NGO. In addition to this incident, numerous state-owned vehicles have been damaged in previous road accidents and similar events, causing a cumulative financial burden.

These recurring incidents have reignited critical discussions about the need for insurance of "public property" to mitigate such financial losses. Experts emphasize that the lack of adequate insurance coverage for state-owned

property leaves local governments ill-prepared for unforeseen events, compounding the strain on limited public resources. Addressing this issue is imperative, as it concerns the welfare of the public at large.

Global frameworks, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), advocate for public asset insurance as a cornerstone of disaster risk reduction and financial resilience. Such measures align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), which emphasize protecting critical infrastructure and ensuring sustainability. Despite clear statutory requirements of the Insurance Ordinance, 2000, and the AJK Insurance Act, 2007, mandating the insurance of public property, compliance has remained inconsistent. This negligence continues to expose public assets to unnecessary risks, underscoring the urgency of action in this regard.



# Govt leaves no stone unturned in ensuring timely provision of passports to citizens: RPO

#### 😂 🛛 Rafiullah Mandokhel

ZHOB: Assistant Director Regional Passport Office (RPO) Zhob Yousuf Rasheed has said that a passport is an important travel document, which is provided to Pakistani citizens by the Directorate General of Immigrationthe Ministry of Interior. The Zhob regional passport office in Zhob is delivering its services in a very efficient manner. Efforts are underway to ensure timely provision of passports to citizens.

talking to this scribe here on Friday.



The Regional Passport Officer in different parts of the country, He expressed these views while Yousuf Rasheed, who worked on the including the federal capital Islamkey positions at the passport office abad, further said that as per the obtaining a passport," he added.

instructions and policy of the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports (DGI&P), special arrangements have been made for the citizens, especially senior citizens and women, and obtaining a passport has been made easiest, providing a smooth and hassle-free environment to the applicants.

"In order to address concerns and resolve issues promptly, the government has introduced another category, 'Fast Track', in addition to 'Urgent', for the citizens traveling abroad in emergencies. The decision has been made

# Coastal communities in crisis, Sujawal fishermen narrate their plight

#### 😂 🛛 Kamran Khamiso Khowaja

SUJAWAL: The fishing communities along the coastline of Sujawal, Thatta, and Badin districts are facing numerous challenges, despite claims of development in the region. Fishermen from various villages in Taluka Jati, Sujawal, expressed frustration over the indifferent attitude of government authorities and civil society towards their plight.

They pointed out that substantial aid and funding for fishermen emphasized that these efforts alone communities are being received by government departments and NGOs, but none of these organizations have taken concrete steps to improve the lives of fisher folk.

The coastal areas of Sujawal and Thatta have suffered significantly

the 1999 cvclone, 2003 heavy rains, and 2010 flash floods. The region continues to bear the harsh consequences of climate change, with no meaningful rehabilitation efforts by the government.

While acknowledging the efforts of the Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum and itsfounder, the late Sved Muhammad Ali Shah, in raising awareness among fishermen, the coastal inhabitants are insufficient to bring about meaningful change for the marginalized community.

Wali Muhammad Temro, a local activist, said that several lakes of fresh water had been destroyed in the wake of persistent natural disasters, mainly

due to natural disasters, including heavy rains and water scarcity that led to shrinking livelihood opportunities for the fishermen.

The famous natural lakes of the past - Chaubhati, Til, Chann Bhelo, Karr, Kalkaan Channi and many others-vanished in the sea and today there is no sign of their existence"; He said and added that the coastal areas posses a large number of expert fisherwomen who spent majority of their time fishing in high seas.

Pir Muhammasd Malah believed that overfishing and destruction of fish species had been a long standing challenge for fishermen during the past two decades.

Nawaz Sheikh, a senior columnist and researcher, said that water scarcity in the Indus River and sea intrusion

compelled thousands of fishermen families in Keti Bunder, Jati Shah Bunder and Kharochan to abandon their ancestral job of fishing and resort to some other work to make ends meet.

Haji Zahid Ishaque Somro a social activist and writer deplored the scheme of six canals and called it a devastating Plan for the fisher folk of Sindh. He further said that the scheme of 6 canals would exacerbate water shortage in the coastal region.

Noor Muhammad Themore, Ghani Malah and Ibrahim Dandal said that the ecology of the coastal areas was also at stake and the government as well as civil society should take measures for the preservation and rehabilitation of coastal ecology.

In Attock, protest rally condemns 'barbaric' attack on Parachinar passengers



#### 👺 🛛 Syed Raza Haider Naqvi

ATTOCK: In a heinous act of terrorism, passengers traveling from Parachinar to Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram Agency were brutally attacked by terrorists. This tragic incident resulted in the martyrdom of 42 individuals, including women and innocent children, and left 25 others injured. This act of barbarity and savagery has written a new chapter in the history of cruelty. The peaceful protests of a peace-loving nation should not be mistaken for weakness.

These views were expressed during a protest rally organized by Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen, the Shia Ulema Council, and Tehreeke-Nafaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria. The rally took place after Friday prayers, beginning at Jamia Masjid Sadat in Kamalpur Syedan, Attock Cantt, and concluded at Kacheri Chowk, Attock.

On the occasion Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Member of Punjab Assembly Syed Ejaz Hussain Bukhari Advocate, Maulana Niaz Hussain, Maulana Imran Naqi, Asad Abbas Alvi, Niaz Bukhari, Cantonment Board Member Syed Mehdi Naqvi, Syed Mustajab Naqvi, Syed Waqar Naqvi, Agha Zafar Zafri, Maulana Niaz Amin Madbari, and Maulana Zafar Zafri were also present.

Participants of the rally carried placards condemning the targeting of innocent passengers in Parachinar. At Kacheri Chowk, speakers including Maulana Niaz Bukhari, Maulana Imran Naqi, Asad Abbas Alvi, Waqar Naqvi, and Maulana Zafar Zafri addressed the participants.

The speakers strongly condemned the tragic incident in Parachinar and expressed discontent with the government for delaying the news of the martyrs' tragedy, which was only broadcast on electronic and print media a day later. They emphasized that the teachings of the Imams prohibit shedding the blood of any innocent person, regardless of their religion or sect. However, the lack of accountability has emboldened terrorists

They further stated that mere words of patience and traditional condolences cannot heal the wounds inflicted by this tragedy. Federal and provincial governments must take concrete action.

The speakers also expressed their grief, stating that every conscientious individual is shedding tears of blood over the Parachinar tragedy.

They criticized the authorities for consistently shelving investigations into such atrocities. The speakers reaffirmed that the lesson of martyrdom learned from Karbala is part of their heritage.

Finally, they called upon their allied political party to conduct a thorough investigation into the Parachinar incident and bring the truth to light immediately.



# The Spokesman 3



Islamabad 30º – 38º Clear

## SERVICES

Namaz T	imings
Fajr	5:20 am
Zohr	
Asr	3:23 pm
Maghrib	
Isha	6:28 pm
EMERGENCY	

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

## **ENOUIRY**

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

## HOSPITALS

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

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

PML-N-Rawalpindi condemns terrorism: Tahseen Fawad



😂 Rawalpindi

Pakistan Muslim League-N Rawalpindi City Senior Vice President and President of National Peace Committee for Interfaith Harmony, Rawalpindi District Begum Tahseen Fawad said that we strongly condemn terrorism in our beloved homeland, Terrorists are enemies of the country and nation, who have no connection with humanity, Pakistan and Islam. In her address, Pakistan

# **ISSI hosts Roundtable on 'Pakistan-U.S. Relations' with CSIS delegation**

## 腾 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a Roundtable Discussion on "Pakistan-U. S. Relations," with delegation from Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), comprising Senior Vice President Daniel Runde and Senior Associate Ambassador Robin Raphel. The event was attended by practitioners, academics, think-tank experts, and researchers. In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood emphasized the significance of CSIS as a renowned U.S. think-tank, particularly in shaping the discourse and influencing U.S. policy. He noted that the timing of the visit was crucial, as it coincided with the conclusion of the U.S. Presidential and Congressional elections and the time of Cabinet formation before the new Administration takes office in January 2025.

With global attention focussed on what Trump 2.0 would mean for America and the rest of the world, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood dilated on the historically cyclical pattern of Pakistan-U.S. relations alternating between engagement and estrangement. He emphasized the need for long-term sustainability and stability, including through efforts to broaden the relationship's scope that would benefit both nations. He also highlighted the vital importance of economic relations with the U.S. for Pakistan, suggesting that besides the traditional areas of bilateral trade and investment attention should be focused on new areas of cooperation such as energy, IT, and climate change.

Participants also identified various areas for enhanced bilateral collaboration — including trade, IT, education, energy cooperation, agriculture, water management, health, and climate change. The dialogue reaffirmed Pakistan's

commitment to pursuing multi-dimen- accorded to a stable and cooperative relasional foreign policy, with due importance tionship with the U.S.



Chairman, BoG, ISSI, closed the round- nirs to the guest speakers.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, table by presenting the Institute's souve-

# Welcome

ISLAMABAD: A view of the National flags of the Pakistan and Belarus hanging on the poles along the Constitution Avenue ahead of 3 days visit of President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko to Pakistan from 25-27 November.



A four-day national training workshop on 'Art of Parenting' concluded

## Bakhtawari family pay visit to Quaid's Mausoleum



腾 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari, member of the Board of Governors of the Ideology of Pakistan Institute, Zahid Bakhtawari, health advisor to the Punjab government, and Abid Bakhtawari, director of the D. Watson Group, along with their families, paid a visit to the Quaid's Mausoleum in Karachi. They prayed for the elevation of the soul of Quaid-e-Azam and for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan. During the visit to the mausoleum, the Pakistan Air Force contingent stationed there presented them with a salute, which further enhanced the grandeur of this memorable moment. On this occasion, the Bakhtawari family praised the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam and reaffirmed their commitment to conveying his message to the younger generation. Zafar Bakhtawari, Zahid Bakhtawari, and Abid Bakhtawari's father, Ghulam Nabi Bakhtawari, was a gold medalist of the Pakistan Movement. He received this gold medal from the Pakistan Movement Workers and the Ideology of Pakistan Trust. Speaking during the visit to the mausoleum, Zafar Bakhtawari stated that Quaid-e-Azam's vision is still a source of guidance for us and that we must work for Pakistan's development in the light of his principles and ideologies. He said that the nation must understand and practice the power of unity, faith, and discipline. "Quaid-e-Azam's dream of a free, self-governing, and prosperous Pakistan remains a great source of guidance for us. We must serve our country by following his ideologies and principles so that we can turn his dream into reality." He further stated that the secret to Pakistan's development lies in the underlying principles of faith, unity, and discipline, which should reside in the hearts of every Pakistani. Zahid Bakhtawari and Abid Bakhtawari also paid tribute to the personality and services of the Quaid. Zahid Bakhtawari said, "It was the guidance of the Quaid that led us to freedom, and thanks to his vision, we obtained our country. Today, we must walk the paths shown by this great leader to propel Pakistan further along the path of development."

Muslim League-N Rawalpindi City Senior Vice President and President of National Peace Committee for Interfaith Harmony, Rawalpindi District Ms. Tahseen Fawad said that the entire nation is united against the eradication of terrorism, which stands by our brave security forces. She said that terrorists will never be allowed to sabotage the country's development and peace. The enemy wants to achieve its goals by dividing Muslims into different units, The people of country will have to create unity and consensus in their ranks. Ms. Tahseen Fawad further said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz stands like a leaden wall against enemy elements. The party's top leadership and the Pakistani armed forces will continue the fight until terrorism is eradicated.

## 😂 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The comprehensively articulated and concerted efforts of character-building of kids initiated from the platform of Allama Iqbal Open University will soon transform Pakistani society into a peaceful abode for the countrymen, said Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, while addressing the closing ceremony of the four-day workshop on "The Art of Parenting" at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). He said that nations with a passion and zeal for progress among their youth are destined for success.

Rana Mashhood congratulated AIOU's Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, for organizing the workshop which aimed to prevent children from falling into wrongdoings and to guide them toward a virtuous life. He siad that the master trainers of the workshop represent the vision of Pakistan for which Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah struggled, Allama Iqbal envisioned, and the elders of the nation sacrificed.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Planning and Development, as the guest of honor. She remarked that



development does not come from wealth but from raising children to become responsible citizens.

During the event, a signing ceremony was also held between AIOU and the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) to collaborate on efforts to promote peace in the country. On behalf of the university, the agreement was signed by the Director of the Department of International Affairs, Dr. Zahid Majeed, while NACTA was represented by its Director General, Dr. Khalid Chauhan.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Khalid Chauhan highlighted their focus on human development. He mentioned Wajiha Akram, addressed the ceremony that creating awareness among the new generation to counter extremist ideolo-

gies and mindsets faces challenges like globalization and social media.

Senior Professor of AIOU's Faculty of Science, Dr. Irshad Ahmed Arshad, stated that AIOU has always been at the forefront of advancing the educational landscape. He shared that the master trainers of this workshop have been equipped with essential skills to train children effectively.

Dr. Muhammad Athar Hussain noted that the workshop comprised a total of 24 sessions, with six sessions conducted daily. A total of 75 master trainers were trained, who will now work within the community to promote harmony, brotherhood, and love.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, certificates were distributed among the master trainers of the workshop.

# PHOs, PYCA, PIPS lead high-level parliamentary roundtable on industrial trans fats

#### 腾 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A high-level Parliamentary Roundtable on "Industrially Produced Trans-Fatty Acids (iTFAs), Partially Hydrogenated Oils (PHOs), and Human Health" was held at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). The event, organized collaboratively by Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), Center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), and PIPS under the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign, brought together parliamentarians, health experts, civil society representatives, and regulatory authorities to discuss urgent measures for protecting public health through robust regu-

lation of iTFAs and a legislative ban on the production and distribution of PHOs.

The session commenced with welcome remarks from Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka, Executive Director of PIPS, who emphasized the institute's commitment to bridging civil society and parliamentarians for meaningful discourse.

PYCA's Executive Director Ms. Areebah Shahid set the agenda, highlighting the alarming health risks associated with industrial trans fats and the critical need for regulatory and legislative action.

Mr. Munawar Hussain, In-country Coordinator for the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI), who

presented international best practices. "63 countries have already adopted the best practice policy to curb iTFAs in food supply through regulatory or legislative measures. Pakistan remains in WHO's less restrictive list, which means some progress has been made but still need to ensure significant measures to eliminate iTFAs from all foods.

At the end of the first session, Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro, Member of the National Assembly, acknowledged the issue and pledged her support.

The second session shifted focus to strengthening Pakistan's regulatory framework. Civil society leaders, including Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Executive Director of the Center

for Peace and Development Initiatives, highlighted the need for strategic partnerships. Dr. Saba Amjad, CEO of Heartfile, pointed out the disparities in industrial practices. "Many industries already have the technology to produce trans fat-free foods and they are producing them for export. However, the items they sell inside Pakistan are laden with industrial trans fats," she stated.

Dr. Noor Hassan Kakar, Director Technical at the Balochistan Food Authority, Mr. Ashraf Palari, Director, PSQCA, Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan, Member of the National Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Science and Technology, Dr. Zulfiqar Bhatti, MNA, also spoke

## 10Pearls launches Pakistan's first AI-enhanced virtual internship



#### 腾 City Desk

ISLAMABAD:10Pearls has launched 10Pearls, Shine, Pakistan's first fully remote, AI-powered internship program for 8 weeks with a multi-tiered curriculum encompassing both technical and soft skills.

10Pearls' unique internship offers students the chance to learn in-demand technical and leadership skills from anywhere within the country, preparing them with a strong foundation for a future career in technology. Students are assigned dedicated technical mentors who guide them through hands-on projects based on their chosen domain.

The virtual edition received an overwhelming response, with over 10,000 students registering. Through a rigorous selection process, 100 top-tier students were chosen across two dynamic cohorts, empowering them to grow and excel in the tech industry. Drawing participants from top universities, including LUMS, IBA, and FAST, brings together Pakistan's brightest minds. It is a fantastic opportunity for students to learn and grow their professional network, form communities and build lasting connections that will help them throughout their careers. 10Pearls Shine

"My experience with 10Pearls Shine has been truly amazing! The mentorship I received and the collaborative environment made this internship truly stand out. I have learned so much, formed valuable connections, and gained a deeper understanding of how the tech industry operates." - Izma Khan, Software Development Intern.

The 10Pearls Shine program goes beyond the mastery of just technical skills. Students attend weekly sessions teaching them critical soft skills including time management, teamwork, critical-thinking, and more, preparing them not just to be software experts but also effective leaders.

# he Spokesman

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		(jaffrani@adpluse.pk	
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		(afrazalishah@gmail.com)	
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:	0		
		hore@gmail.com	

# Draft deal at U.N. climate talks calls for rich nations to give \$250 billion by 2035

new draft deal delivered to fatigued negotiators in Baku Friday — the final day for the United Nations climate talks that have been under way for the past two weeks - proposes rich countries commit \$250 billion a year to help vulnerable nations cope with the warming planet and to accelerate the global switch to renewable energy, according to the U.N.

The new draft outcome text, which will surely push this round of talks into the weekend, called for the overall climate financing goal to reach "at least \$1.3 trillion by 2035", but left out specifics grants, loans, or from the private sector – on how these funds will be raised

Civil society climate and environment advocates were quick to react to this latest draft, according to a statement issued at UN Headquarters in New York

"I can say it is disappointing to [at] the very least", said Namrata Chowdhary from the 350.org, an international environmental organization addressing the climate crisis.

"It is a slap. It is insult. It is shocking that we are at this state now. The rich countries are basically gambling with the lives of people in the developing nations and small islands," she said.

Lidy Nacpil from Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development also expressed her disappointment. She also pointed out, that "climate finance should not come in the form of loans because this is adding to the debt burden".

"One of the issues that is preventing the Global South from undertaking urgent climate actions and from also providing our people with essential services that we need is the debt burden," she told UN News.

Jacobo Ocharan of Climate Action Network International said: "We urge all developing countries to have the courage in the negotiations to keep pushing, because this deal is terrible. We keep pushing on the idea that no deal is better than a bad deal."

Negotiating teams at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, pictured here during a break in the talks, are working to reach agreement on a new climate financing deal.

COP29, formally the 29th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has been dubbed, the 'climate finance COP' because parties are expected to establish a new global climate finance target.

This target, or new collective quantified goal (NCQG), is seen as one of the summit's main deliverables. It will replace the existing \$100 billion goal that is due to expire in 2025.

Climate experts have pegged the new annual funding go

# **Reforms and innovations create** a solid foundation for sustainable development of agriculture

t is difficult to imagine economic development in any country without a strong focus on agriculture. The well-being of citizens in every nation is directly linked to the progress of its agricultural sector. By advancing this sector, countries ensure the production of essential and health-beneficial products for their population and foster the development in Treatment", have of processing systems. Moreover, agriculture creates additional job opportunities, particularly in rural areas.

In Uzbekistan, significant attention is being paid to the development of agriculture under the leadership of the scientific fields today, President. The sector benefits from the integration of advanced international practices, science, and innovative technologies.

For instance, the Presidential Decree on October 23, 2019, approved the "Strategy for the Development of Agriculture in the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030" which outlined nine key priority areas for agricultural development.

Due to consistent reforms in the agricultural sector, 200,000-250,000 hectares of open fields designated for grain cultivation were sown using modern resource-saving seeders. Additionally, 50,000-60,000 hectares were leveled using laser technology.

Recognizing this potential, the agricultural sector has placed special emphasis on cultivating medicinal plants, ensuring their preservation, promoting rational use of natural resources, establishing cultivated plantations, and processing raw materials. These efforts have led to significant achievements in these areas.

20, 2022, "On Measures to Effectively Utilize the Raw Material Base of Medicinal Plants, Support Processing, and side Resolution No. 251 "On Measures

to Organize Cultivation, Processing, and Wider Use of Medicinal Plants Analysi become pivotal frameworks driving progress in this field. Biotechnology is one

with

of the fastest-growing Ibrohim Abdurakhmonov Uzbekistan's

progress in this area closely tied to the Genomics and Bioinformatics Center under the Academy of Sciences. Presidential Resolution issued on November 25, 2020, "On Comprehensive Measures to Develop Biotechnologies and Improve the System for Ensuring Biological Safety of the Country," marked a new era in the sector. The introduction of CRISPR technology enabled precise genome editing in plants, leading to the creation of biotechnological crops with improved traits. This innovation has allowed the development of new crop varieties that are safe for human health and the environment. For example, in cotton cultivation, imported cotton varieties such as India's Nech-6 and Nech-51, resistant to bollworm, and China's XinLuZao-52 and XinLuZao-78, resistant to bollworm and herbicides, are being integrated into 13

local varieties. Field trials for these enhanced varieties will begin on a large scale in 2025.

I would like to clarify that, based on the

genetic purity of these imported varieties: XinLuZao-52 at 82%, XinLuZao-78 at 88%, and Chjuntay-2 at 89%. These Create an Additional Value Chain", along- levels exceed the 80% threshold considered optimal for high varietal quality.

By 2025, using geneknockout and marker-assisted selection technologies, Uzbekistan aims to expand the cultivation of local biotechnological crop varieties resistant to drought, salinity, and wilt. For the specific soil and climate conditions of Karakalpakstan, new varieties-

**Editorial/Opinion** 

Matonat-1 and Matonat-2, resistant to drought, salinity, and cold-were developed based on the Eskimo gene. Similarly, the Fostua gene was used to create the Bardosh variety for Bukhara's conditions, resistant to wilt.

In 2025, 4.5 tons of seeds from these varieties will be prepared for planting on 200 hectares. By 2026, seed production will increase to 90 tons for cultivation on 4.000 hectares

Other notable developments include the Porloq-4 and Porloq-7 varieties, which are resistant to salinity, highyielding, and produce long fibers, developed using the Phytochrome A1 gene. In these varieties will be cultivated across 100.000 hectares.

Additionally, early-maturing, highyielding varieties Genbio-7 and Genbio-8, developed using the HY5 and PhyB genes, will undergo state testing in 2025. Primary seed production will be

The Presidential Decree dated May results of molecular-genetic analyses the organized on 10 hectares in the northern regions of the country.

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Ensuring food security, creating a favorable agribusiness environment, enhancing value chains, attracting investments, and developing rural areas remain top priorities.

To achieve these goals, the Ministry of Agriculture collaborates with international organizations, including the International Development Association, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Asian Development Bank, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. These partnerships have resulted in agricultural investment projects totaling \$2.062 billion.

Between 2016 and 2023, these projects financed 2.671 initiatives worth \$1.045 billion, creating over 50,978 new jobs.

To advance agricultural education and innovation, the National Center for Knowledge and Innovation in Agriculture, along with 13 regional Agro-Service Centers, was established under Presidential Decree and Resolution, dated February 3, 2021.

Today, Agro-Service Centers offer over 100 services in 17 areas through public enterprises and 18 additional modern services through the private sector.

From 2021 to 2023, these centers, 2025, 4.2 thousand tons of seeds from in collaboration with researchers from the ministry's scientific institutions, conducted more than 3,400 seminars and training sessions. Over 74,000 agricultural specialists participated, significantly enhancing their expertise.

Author is Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan



between \$1 trillion and \$1.3 trillion, which would assist vulnerable nations to deal with loss and damage from climate change and to adapt to that change, including building out their own clean-energy systems.

Last week, in a move to support a new funding target, multilateral development banks announced a significant boost in climate finance for low- and middle- income countries. This will reach \$120 billion a year by 2030 with another \$65 billion mobilized from the private sector, with a natural projection that will increase these values for 2035.

Courtesy by China Daily

# Beijing set to tap AI potential, reduce risks

#### Jin Ding

he ongoing 2024 World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province, themed "Embracing a People-Centered and AI-for-Good Digital Future – Building a Community with a Shared Future in Cyberspace", highlights the importance of artificial intelligence in today's world. With its rapid development, AI has emerged as both a promise and a challenge, pushing the boundaries of high-tech potential while raising profound ethical and social questions.

At the heart of this year's conference, which began on Tuesday and will conclude on Friday, is the notion of "People-Centered and AI-for-Good" - a call for using AI to serve humankind's best interests and fulfill social responsibilities. China realized this fact early, and issued the "Governance Principles for the New Generation Artificial Intelligence – Developing Responsible Artificial Intelligence" in 2019, which emphasizes AI's role in advancing human welfare and safeguarding against risks. The subsequent release of the "Ethical Norms for the New Generation of Artificial Intelligence "by China in 2021 further highlighted the necessity of balancing technological innovation with ethical considerations in the development of AI.

To address these risks, government measures must align with the rapid pace of technological development, which can be ensured by adopting an agile approach to regulation anticipating potential risks while avoiding overregulation that could stifle innovation.

To begin with, by strengthening the social security system, particularly unemployment benefits, the authorities can help mitigate the impact of technology-induced disruptions in meet the evolving demands of the AI-driven the job market. And by organizing training economy, China should focus on interdiscipliprograms for workers, the authorities can help workers fulfill the requirements for the new job opportunities created by AI technology.

security becomes paramount. In such a situation, it is necessary to establish unified evaluation systems and technical standards that guide AI's application, ensuring safety, promoting innovation and fostering healthy development.

China has set out to expand its AI capability in fields such as the digital economy and industrial automation. Accordingly, the Chinese government issued the "Guiding Opinions on Accelerating Scenario Innovation and Promoting High-quality Economic Development with High-level Application of Artificial Intelligence" in 2022, which highlights the importance of AI-driven innovation in various industries

However, China faces some challenges because of the different levels of digital infrastructure across industries. While sectors such as finance have robust data systems, manufacturing lags behind. Thus, integrating data resources across industries is crucial for accelerating China's digital transformation.

As China progresses on its AI journey, it has to shift its development path from automation and information technology to intelligent systems. To support this, it needs to build a solid data foundation and promote data sharing.

In today's world of fierce global competition, China must continue to improve its theoretical and technical foundations in AI. While China boasts a large AI talent pool and has taken big strides in AI education, particularly the release of the "Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan" in 2017, it still faces a shortage of high-end AI professionals.

Therefore, it should take measures to expedite the development of domestic talents in AI. as well as attract more top-tier international talents. To develop high-end AI talents and nary education and industry-academia collaboration.

AI's potential to address global challenges,

As large AI models gain traction, the issue of particularly in areas such as climate change and public health, is becoming increasingly evident. In fact, AI is already playing a critical role in solving serious global problems, from developing precision medicines to advancing R&D efforts in environmental protection worldwide.

However, while advancing AI development, it is equally important to ensure robust global governance. Countries should work together to mitigate potential risks and ensure AI technologies are developed and deployed responsibly for the benefit of all. Effective communication and coordination are essential to advancing a global governance framework, setting global standards and ensuring that AI develops in a healthy way. As a major player in the global AI landscape, China has consistently advocated for the inclusion of AI governance under the UN framework.

The development of AI across countries is not uniform, as a result, developed countries dominate AI technology, creating an "AI divide". In response, China has adopted an inclusive approach to global AI governance. At the 78th session of the UN General Assembly in 2023, China introduced a resolution to enhance global cooperation on AI capacity building, in a bid to help developing countries boost their AI capability, promote development for all and narrow the "AI divide".

As AI continues to reshape the world, its trajectory will depend on how we choose to seize the opportunities it offers and navigate its pitfalls. So, while embracing AI's potential, we must remain vigilant and not shirk our responsibility. The development of AI should be aimed at creating a future where AI is aligned with human values, ethical principles and the spirit of global cooperation. Only by doing so can we ensure AI becomes a force for good. (Courtesy China Daily)

The author is the Director of the Policy and Strategy Research Center, Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China.

# **Empowering poor to alleviate** pervasive menace of poverty

#### **M Atif Ismail**

crop and price this time. His last year's bitter down to a worrisome level inflicting losses and divorced women. on him, was still haunting him.

their ends, but often the market forces exploit them leaving no clue for rescue. Trapped in cruel clutches of market forces, hoarders season wait for a panacea to their hardships.

"Decades after decades, the same phenomenon goes on. Every year we borrow inputs losses due to lesser prices of our commodities," he stated.

Then there is Livestock Card, an initiative to facilitate those rearing cattle at small scale and help them out in accessing interest-free loans for animal feed, micronutrients and mineral mixtures, critical for health and productivity of livestock.

"Livestock Card is another initiative of the government for farmers' empowerment and poverty alleviation," remarked Deputy Director Livestock Department, Dr. Jamshaid Akhtar. "It is specially designed for small and poor to flourish their livestock business and earn respectable living."

higher prices in the market. Such an empow- poverty alleviation efforts.

erment is crucial to improving economic resilience of communities," he stated.

Through various initiatives like Kissan ith wrinkles on his face Livestock Baithaks and school-focused and worries for suste- awareness programs, the department nance in mind, Abdul educates farmers on best practices in animal Hakeem was tilling a husbandry. Artificial insemination, provided patch of land preparing at affordable rates, has improved the genetic it for sowing wheat with hopes to have better quality of livestock, contributing to higher productivity and profitability. The departexperience, when wheat prices had fallen ment also provides free livestock to widows

Prime Minister's Youth Program is another Abdul Hakeem is one of the millions poor remarkable initiative wherein millions of farmers in the country who toil hard to meet unemployed youth, both male and female are extended financial assistance to start businesses and earn respectable living.

"This program is working successfully and exploiters, he and millions others every as Rs 186 billion had been disbursed so far among 790,000 entrepreneurs," informed Youth Program Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan. "It offers economic opportunifrom commission agents at grain market, toil ties to youth, both male and female. Overall, hard across the year but unfortunately suffer it is Rs 300 billion program. Earlier, only 13 percent female entrepreneurs got loans but now we hope to raise this figure to 33 percent."

> Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) also helps millions of poor families with financial assistance in 14 different schemes with its extensive outreach supporting millions of people.

> "This program help millions of families to sustain who often struggle against fluctuating income and mitigate effects of poverty," said social activist Naeem Iqbal.

With this focus on poor families in Punjab, the provincial government should also ensure transparency and sustenance of "With this facility, livestock farmers can these programs once they are executed, so ensure their animals grow healthy and fetch they prove to be real contributors towards

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The Spokesman 5 Special Report on

Saturday, November 23, 2024

# 54th National Day of The Sultanate of Oman

# Sultanate of Oman marks fifty-fourth glorious National Day with milestone accomplishments

#### 👺 Spokesman Report

n the eighteenth of November of each year, the Sultanate of Oman celebrates its National Day, which is the fifty-fourth glorious National Day this year and marking milestone accomplishments in different areas.

The citizens of Oman and various state institutions have rendered an indispensable contribution to the continuous achievements in the path of the comprehensive developmentduring the renewed renaissance of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, who has outlined a wise and sound visionthat leads to progress and prosperity in all fields.

His Majesty's directives to all state institutions to continue improving the missions entrusted to them and to develop appropriate conditions to upgrade performance at all levels have contributed positively over the past five years toachieving success in various targets of Oman Vision 2040.

The government of His Majesty the Sultan has managed to improve the state's economic and financial performance andreduce debt and increase rating for the Sultanate of the gross domestic product; as Oman to "BBB-" from "BB+"



improvement in the credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman by credit rating agencies, as Standard & Poor's raised its second credit

Index after being ranked 149th in the 2022 ranking.

In the education sector, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) achieved a remarkable progress in the 2025 World University

to its ranking in the 2022 index. Meanwhile, the volume of foreign direct investments (FDI) in the Sultanate of Oman until the end of the fourth quarter of 2023 amounted to RO 25.05 billion, an increase of 21.6 percent compared to the same

Regarding the government investments, Oman Investment Authority (OIA) is exerting sincere efforts to make the Sultanate of Oman an attractive investment destination and achieve sustainable economic development. The Authority's assets increased to RO 19.2 billion compared to about RO 17.9 billion at the end of 2022. It contributed to achieving profits exceeding RO 1.7 billion, and supporting the state's general budget with an amount of RO iaries before their due date in

economy. The private sector has embarked on enhancing efforts to elevate the national economy through exploring the opportunities offered by incentive initiatives, such as the National Program for Private Sector Development and Foreign Trade "Nazdaher" and financial incentive and sustainability initiatives, along with enhancing partnership with the government sector. The private sector is also

the incubator environment for national capital investment, as it relies primarily on individual initiatives, whether in the form of personal companies or jointstock companies, in addition to hosting innovative ideas and transforming them into projects that benefit society through entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises(SMEs). The sector is also the main compo-800 million, and repaid RO 300 nent for attracting foreign investmillion of loans from its subsid- ment, whether by providing effec-

tute 38 percent, while the total area of existing and new industrial cities reached 163,176,459 square meters.

The volume of cumulative investment in Sohar Free Zone, Salalah Free Zone and Khazaen Economic City amounted to RO 1.33 billion, covering several sectors, most notably the pharmaceuticals, food, petrochemicals, plastics, logistics, renewable energy sectors and others.

As far as the ports sector is concerned, the ports of Sohar, Salalah and Duqm, which enjoy a globally integrated infrastructure, continue to boost on various global shipping lines. During the first half of 2024, these ports maintained their operational volumes, handling about 1.8 million containers with a general cargo volume of up to 13 million tons. This figure reflects the ports' effective contribution to supporting the national economy reach international markets with a high competitive capacity.

The dry dock in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm(-SEZAD), which is classified as the second largest dry dock for ship repair and maintenance in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Region), was able to implement 106 projects from about 70 countries around the world during the first half of 2024, thanks to its strategic location close to global shipping lines. represents a vivid example of In the tourism sector, the Sultanate of Oman has achieved remarkable results in recent cultural, literary, theatrical years, as the number of tourists increased by 36.7 percent

to nearly 4 million tourists in programmes. The moveaims 2023 compared to 2022. The number of visitors coming to the ment in highlighting Oman's Sultanate of Oman by the end of the first half of 2024amounted to about 2 million, an increase of 3.2 percent. Meanwhile, the buildings, namely the National number of hotel establishments Theatre, the National Library stands at 895, including 34,378 and the National Records and

hotel rooms.

cities, of whom Omanis consti- various facilities and services.

The progress made by the Sultanate of Oman in many global indicators reflects the determination of the country, as a government and people, to achieve its future aspirations to be among the advanced countries

Among these indicators is the progress made by Oman in the media index for the second year in a row, ranking 40th globally after advancing 6 ranks in the Global Soft Power Index issued by the British Brand Finance Agency for 2024, compared to the 46th place in 2023.

It also advanced in other their operational efficiencies to sub-indices, such as advancing 10 become major berthing stations ranks in the Sustainable Future Index and 5 ranks in the Positive Impact Index.

The Sultanate of Oman also achieved qualitative progress in the Global Environmental Performance Index for 2024, advancing 99 places from the previous ranking (where it was ranked 149th globally), to occupy and enabling Omani exports to the 50th place globally in 2024 ranking, which was announced by the Yale Center for Environmental Policy and Law at Yale University in the United States.

The Royal vision of His Majesty seeks to uplift the human thought by furnishing the appropriate environment for establishing qualitative cultural and intellectual institutions. Laying the foundation stone of Oman Cultural Complex at the Airport Heights in Muscat Governorate this approach. Oman Cultural Complex seeks to promote and research activities through the enhancement of relevant to expand the scope of engagecultural heritage and exploring the country's accomplishments. The complex includes three main Archives Authority (NRAA).



RO 8.106 billion, up by RO 183 the Sultanate of Oman from a million compared to RO 7.923 billion registered over the same period in 2023. The state's general budget until August 2024 achieved a surplus of about RO 447 million, while the public debt portfolio declined by the end of June 2024 to RO 14.4 billion, compared to RO 20.8 billion in 2021.

end of August 2024 amounted to Moody's revised its outlook for place, advancing 92 places from stable to a positive, confirming the credit rating at "Ba1".

its previous classification

period in 2022, which amounted to RO 20.59 billion.

The Sultanate of Oman also launched this year (2024) the

These ratings affirm that the Sultanate of Oman is a safe investment environment, as it returned to this rating category after a decline of nearly 7 years (since 2017) due to the repercussions of the crises resulting from the slupm in global oil prices and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, the Sultanate of

The Sultanate of Oman also 2023.

advanced 10 ranks in the Global Innovation Index issued by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), to obtain the 69th place globally out of 132 countries included in the index; as Oman achieved the highest performance in: (human capital, research, and infrastructure). Oman also advanced 9 ranks in innovation outputs and

The OIA invests in 13 global funds, such as the Platinum Investment Fund and the Global Infrastructure Fund, in addition to direct investments in global companies, such as the American "Our Next Energy" Company and

> the Australian "Hysata". One of the most important strategic projects that were inaugurated at the beginning of this year (2024) is the DuqmRefinery and Petrochemical Industries Project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

The refinery is the largest joint investment project between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait, integrated between the Omani OQ Group and Kuwait Petroleum International Company, with a capital exceeding RO 3.5 billion.

The Sultanate of Oman has witnessed the implementation of many projects in the field of renewable energy, most notably Manah Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 1,000 megawatts located in A'Dakhiliyah Governorate, IbriSolar Power Project with a production capacity of 500 megawatts located in A'Dhahirah Governorate, Barka Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 500 megawatts located in South Al Batinah Governorate, the Amin Solar Power Plant Project with a production capacity of 100 megawatts located in Dhofar Governorate, Sohar Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 100 megawatts in North Al Batinah Governorate and Dhofar Wind Farm with a production capacity of 50 megawatts located in Dhofar Governorate.

The Sultanate of Oman is pressing ahead with boosting public and private sectors partnership, as the private sector is the key driver of the economic development and GDP growth in various sectors. The private sector also contributes remarkably to the economic diversification efforts, as it is a peer to the public sector in social development through the contribution of its institutions to education, health and social investment.

Oman Vision 2040 has placed the private sector in a position to lead a competitive national economy linked to the global



tive partnerships in qualitative projects or by providing the continues its focus on the requirements for these projects through local content of products and services.

The total volume of added investment in all industrial cities affiliated to the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) during the first half of 2024 exceeded RO 177 million, bringing the total volume of investment in all these cities, including Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM) and Al Mazunah Free Zone, to more than RO 7.6 billion.

Meanwhile, the number of localized investment contracts reached 2,310. As many as 55,242 employees work in invest- units distributed over 19 inte- Council and the businessmen ment projects in all industrial grated neighborhoods with community in the Governorate.

The Sultanate of Oman comprehensive and balanced development of all governorates through the construction citizens all over the Sultanate of of sustainable cities within the priorities of Oman Vision 2040. This approach is done by channeling investments towards constructing smart cities and developing governorates while projects. applying the principle of administrative and economic decentral-

ization. Sultan Haitham City project represents the first smart and sustainable project as an integrated city with an area of includes about 20,000 housing

On the domestic front, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik continues his Royal meetthe-people tours to engage with Oman and listen to their visions and proposals about measures to promote the development of their respective governorates and upgrade economic and service

In continuation of this Royal approach, His Majesty the Sultan held a meeting at the Royal Camp in Saih Al Mahasin in the Wilayat of Khasab, Musandam Governorate, with sheikhs and dignitaries of Musandam, some 14,800,000 square meters. It members of the Council of Oman and members of the Municipal





social protection system by unifying and merging pension funds, and restructuring the schemes.

Oman succeeded in reducing the ratio of public debt to GDP from 62.3 percent in 2021 to 35 percent in mid-2024 and achieving a budget surplus for consecutive years, recording 2.7 percent and 2.2 percent in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Oman has also advanced in many international indicators, as it rose 39 ranks in the 2024 Index of Economic Freedom issued by the Heritage Foundation to obtain the 56th place globally after being ranked 95th globally in 2023. In the Entrepreneurship Index, it came in the 11th place globally, advancing 27 places from its ranking in 2022/2023. It also came in the 50th place globally in labour productivity compared

came among the top 20 countries globally in 5 sub-indicators, including: second place globally in the percentage of government spending per student, in addition to the 16th place globally in the availability of information and communication technologies, and the 19th place globally in doing business, as it jumped 93 ranks in the growth rate of



# The Spokesman

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

Pakistan: PSX 1	Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close		
97,798.23	97,328.39		
Day's High	Day's Low		
99,623.03	97,471.11		
Index Value	Change		
34,190,274,257	+469.84		
Percentage	Time		
+0.48%	22 Nov, 2024 5:00 pm		
Europe: FTSE 100 Index			
Index Value	Change		
8,262.08	+112.81		
Percentage	Time		
+1.38%	22 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT		
+1.30%	GMT		
	GMT ndustrial Average		
USA: Dow Jones I	ndustrial Average		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value	ndustrial Average Change		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51	ndustrial Average Change +426.16		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51 Percentage +0.97%	ndustrial Average Change +426.16 Time 22 Nov, 4:20 pm		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51 Percentage +0.97%	ndustrial Average Change +426.16 Time 22 Nov, 4:20 pm GMT-5		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51 Percentage +0.97% Asia Pacific: Nikk	ndustrial Average Change +426.16 Time 22 Nov, 4:20 pm GMT-5 ei Stocks Average		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51 Percentage +0.97% Asia Pacific: Nikk Index Value	ndustrial Average Change +426.16 Time 22 Nov, 4:20 pm GMT-5 ei Stocks Average Change		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value 44,296.51 Percentage +0.97% Asia Pacific: Nikk Index Value 38,283.85	ndustrial Average Change +426.16 Time 22 Nov, 4:20 pm GMT-5 ei Stocks Average Change +257.68		

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	180.25	182.50
Bahrain Dinar	731.05	739.05
Canadian Dollar	198.60	201.00
China Yuan	38.58	38.98
Danish Krone	39.58	39.98
Euro	288.60	291.35
Hong Kong Dollar	35.37	35.72
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.80	1.86
Kuwaiti Dinar	891.20	900.70
Malaysian Ringgit	62.5	63.10
NewZealand \$	163.14	165.14
Norwegians Krone	24.78	25.08
Omani Riyal	714.75	723.25
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	346.75	350.25

# Jam Kamal Khan Reviews Quarterly Trade Figures, stresses execution of export-led growth strategy

#### 😂 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan (JK) chaired a high-level meeting to review Pakistan's quarterly trade figures, where he was briefed on the latest trends in international trade and strategies being devised to bolster exports.

During the meeting, Commerce officials provided a comprehensive overview of trade performance with key trading partners, highlighting emerging export destinations and newly introduced export items.

The briefing also covered practical suggestions to enhance market access and address technical barriers to trade, ensuring Pakistani products reach a broader global audience.

The impact of external factors, such as global economic fluctuations and geopolitical uncertainties, was also discussed. Strategies to mitigate these challenges and sustain export growth were presented for consideration.



Lauding the efforts of Commerce officers, Jam Kamal emphasized the central role of the Ministry of Commerce in advancing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision of an export-led growth strategy.

Saturday, November 23, 2024

He stated, "The success of our economy depends on a strong export base. This demands serious commitment and collaborative efforts from all stakeholders, including provinces and relevant departments."

Jam reiterated the importance of executing the export-led growth strategy with seriousness, urging all sectors to work cohesively to unlock Pakistan's full trade potential. "We must act decisively to enhance our market share globally and ensure our exports become the driving force of economic development," he concluded.

The meeting underscored the need for a unified approach to overcoming trade barriers and achieving sustainable economic growth through exports.

## Difficulties

ISLAMABAD: Worker busy in closing a busy station with tent at Faizabad in the Federal Capital. Islamabad authorities have announced strict security plans for November 24 due to a planned PTI protest at D-Chowk. All entry and exit points to the city will be sealed, and transport services will remain shut.



#### Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# S. M. Tanveer condemns Parachinar and Quetta incidents

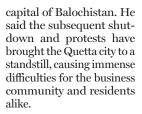
#### 😂 Commerce Desk

Economy/Commerce

LAHORE: S. М. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief UBG-BMPP, has strongly condemned the heinous attack on passenger vehicles traveling from Parachinar to Peshawar, resulting in precious loss of lives and injuries.

He said that these incidents are a stark reminder of the deteriorating security situation and the unfriendly business environment in Pakistan.

Patron-in-Chief UBG has also expressed deep concerns over the kidnapping of an 11-year-old student in the provincial alike.



# **State Bank of** Pakistan issue coin



## Shell Pakistan celebrates young Pakistani entrepreneurs at the 11th Tameer Awards



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Recently acquired by Wafi Energy, Shell Pakistan-one of the country's longest-standing multinational corporations-hosted the grand finale of the 11th Tameer Awards 2024. The event celebrated and honored enthusiastic and aspiring entrepreneurs of Pakistan.

The 11th edition of the Tameer Awards attracted over 400 applications, with 30 finalists selected across six categories. The event brought together a distinguished jury panel, comprising business leaders, industry professionals, and academic experts, who played a key role in evaluating the candidates. Following in-depth pitches to the respective jury members, the winners and runners-up in each category were chosen for their innovation and excellence.

The Chief Executive & Managing Director of Shell Pakistan Limited, Waqar Siddiqui, stated: "Each year, we continue to be inspired by the exceptional talent and creativity displayed by these young entrepreneurs. We take immense pride in supporting their journeys through our Tameer program. It is uplifting to witness the wealth of talent emerging within our country. We are confident that these bright minds will drive innovation, progress, and prosperity, paving the way for a brighter tomorrow for all."

# Dr. Sidhu meets Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar

#### 🐞 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ishaq Dar stressed that a robust competition framework is vital for economic growth, fostering innovation, and attracting both domestic and foreign investment. In a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Dr. Kabir Sidhu, Chairman of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), briefed him on initiatives undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of the Commission in enforcing competition laws. These efforts focus on identifying cartels, market abuse and manipulation and the abuse of dominant position.

Mr. Ishaq Dar commended CCP's proactive approach in resolving long outstanding cases in the courts. Dar called on the Commission to intensify efforts against cartels and price manipulation, which harm consumers and distort markets. He assured CCP of the government's

continued support in ensuring transparency and fairness.

Dr. Sidhu apprised the Deputy Prime Minister of the establishment of a monitor market trends and swiftly iden-

tify anti-competitive behaviours such as price manipulation, cartel formation, and other unfair practices. Since its inception last year, the unit has identified over 150 Market Intelligence Unit, designed to cases using advanced data analysis and media monitoring tools.

# New Study Reveals Solar Surge Costing Over PKR 200 Billion Impact on Grid-Dependent Consumers

#### 🐞 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A new report, "The Distributed Divide -How Solar Expansion Affects Non-Adopting Consumers and Utility Economics" by Arzachel, reveals that non-solar consumers have borne a staggering burden of PKR 200 billion in FY 2023-24 due to the rapid expansion of solar energy adoption. This transition has caused an estimated tariff increase of PKR 2 per kWh for grid-dependent consumers, underscoring the financial burden and inequities stemming from the insufficiently managed expansion of solar adoption through



behind-the-meter systems and al PKR 131 billion in costs annufinancial burden on non-solar consumers is projected to escalate further. For the current fiscal year, a 5% reduction in grid tion is expected to shift addition- adoption, the report calls for

net metering. Without immedi- ally to non-solar consumers, ate regulatory intervention, the doubling to additional PKR 261 billion if grid demand reduces by 10%, according to the study.

To address these pressing challenges brought by the demand driven by solar integra- rapid and underregulated solar

immediate regulatory reforms and targeted policies to ensure equitable cost distribution and grid stability. The report recommends transitioning from net metering to net billing or Feed-in Tariff (FiT) systems on lower rates and system marginal costs, introducing fixed grid access fees to reflect actual service costs, and establishing an ancillary services market to enhance grid stability. It also advocates revising the Distribution Code to manage bi-directional power flow and ensure energy equity through fair cost allocation, balancing renewable energy benefits with grid

sustainability.

# on Baba Guru Nanak **Birth Anniversary**



#### 😂 🛛 Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: the important occasion of the 555th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the federal government is issuing a commemorative coin of Rs 55 denomination, which has the following metal composition, shape and

features The state of Pakistan Banking Services Corpois the heir to diverse reli- ration from November 22, gious identities. Baba Guru 2024.

Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of the Sikh tradition, is one of the greatest figures born in the land that is now part of Pakistan. Sikhism is a global religion with millions of followers worldwide, and its holiest sites are located in Pakistan.

This coin is being issued through exchange counters of all field offices of SBP

## Zong 4G Unveils Pakistan's **First Locally Developed** Large Language Model

#### 😂 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, a leader in digital innovation has developed Pakistan's first locally created Large Language Model (LLM), a breakthrough in the nation's telecom sector. As the only telecom operator in Pakistan to have developed an advanced AI-driven model in-house, Zong is set to transform digital interactions and elevate customer service standards, cementing its position as the technological menting latest technololeader in the industry.

Zong's proprietary LLM is meticulously designed for the unique linguistic, cultural, and contextual nuances of Pakistani users, Technologies at Zong 4G.

offering an AI-driven solution tailored specifically for the local market. This landmark initiative is part of Zong's ongoing commitment to usher in world-class digital experiences, responding to the growing demand for AI-powered solutions and empowering Pakistani customers with technology-driven interactions that are faster, more intuitive, and highly personalized. "Zong is leading the technology innovation by localizing and implegies like AI to serve its 50 million subscribers and setting benchmarks for the industry," said Ali Waqas, Executive Director, Digital



# **Sports** Saturday, November 23, 2024

# The Spokesman

# Noor Zaman bags Int'l Squash **Championship title**

#### 😂 Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: World No 82 Noor Zaman grabbed the Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship title here at the Mushaf Squash Complex on Friday.

He defeated his country fellow World No 85 Nasir Iqbal with a game score of 11-8, 12-10 and 11-9 in the final. The match lasted for 27 minutes.

Pakistan Squash Federation in collaboration with Serena Hotels, has organized the Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship. Apart from nine Pakistanis, 15 world ranking players from Egypt, England, Hong



# PION

Malaysia and Netherland also participated in the championship.

The final of championship was followed by the closing ceremony. Air Marshal Shakil Ghazanfar Deputy

Kong-China, Ireland, Kuwait, the ceremony as Chief Guest and PSF Adnan Asad, Chief Operating presented trophies and souvenirs to the players.

Senior Vice President PSF, Amjad Ali Gill, Joint Secretary Ministry of IPC, Chief of Air Staff (Personnel) graced squash Legend Qamar Zaman, VP

Officer Serena Hotels Peter Martin along with number of players, offi-Air Marshal Kazim Hammad cials and squash lovers attended the ceremony.

😂 Photo by Mudassar Raja

# Lahore Whites, Peshawar, Sialkot qualify for triangular stage of Quaid-e-Azam Trophy

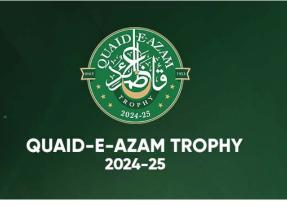
#### 😂 Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Lahore Whites, Peshawar and Sialkot have qualified for the triangular stage of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 2024-25, after the completion of the five rounds and 45 matches of the 18-team first-class tournament.

Lahore Whites, Peshawar and Sialkot have qualified from Group A, B and C, respectively for the triangular stage.

The single-league triangular stage of the Trophy is set to begin on November 25 with Peshawar and Sialkot taking on each other followed by Lahore Whites facing Peshawar from December 1 at the Abbottabad Cricket Stadium.

The third and last fixture of the triangular stage will be played between Lahore Whites and Sialkot from December 27 to 30, while the final is set to be staged from January 2 to 6 2025. The venue for the last triangular fixture and the final will be announced in due course.



on day four against Rawalpindi to win by only 26 runs at the Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi.

Requiring 241 runs to win the game and qualify for next stage, Rawalpindi began their day from overnight score of 19-2 and were bundled out for 214 in 64.3 overs as Umar Amin's 129-ball Peshawar qualified for the triangular 65-run effort went in vain. He partnered stage on the back of heroic bowling effort with Taimur Khan  $(42, 70b, 5x4s, 1\times 6)$ 

to take Rawalpindi from 97-5 to 172-6 before they slipped to 196-9. Peshawar's Maaz Sadaqat and Niaz Khan picked up three wickets each in six and 13.3 overs, respectively. Skipper Sajid Khan snapped two scalps.

Sialkot, who topped the Group C, beat Karachi Blues by eight wickets at chased the 99-run target in 18.5 overs. overs.

Earlier, Sialkot wrapped up the Karachi Blues innings for 224 after they bagan from overnight score of 220-9. Test fast bowler Mohammad Ali completed his ninth first-class five-fer taking his tally of match wickets to nine.

Elsewhere, Faisalabad beat Islamabad by 247 runs at National Ground Islamabad. Faisalabad took only 2.5 overs to snap the remaining three Islamabad wickets, who had resumed from overnight score of 136-7, bundling them out for 148 in 40.5 overs. Faisalabad's Asad Raza and Shehzad Gul picked up four wickets each taking their match tally to eight and seven wickets, respectively. At Diamond Cricket Ground, Abbottabad beat Hyderabad by 249 runs. Hyderabad was bundled out for 95 in 27.4 overs chasing 345 as Aftab Ahmed picked 5-34 in 6.4 overs. Bahawalpur romped to a 198-run win over Karachi Whites who were dismissed for a mere 102 in pursuit of 301 runs. Bahawalpur's Mirpur Cricket Stadium, Mirpur. Sialkot Mehran Sanwal snapped 5-22 in 6.3

# Faisalabad defeat Islamabad by 247 runs in Quaid-e-Azam Trophy

## 腾 🛛 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad defeated Islamabad by 247 runs in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy match. On the last day of the match played at the National Cricket Ground, Islamabad's last 3 wickets fell in just 15 minutes. Only young opener Muhammad Ali Taj resisted and scored 53 runs. Shahzad Gul and Asad Raza dismissed 4 players each. Earlier, Owais Zafar scored 145 runs and Muhammad Kashif scored 98 runs for Faisalabad. After losing their first 2 matches, Faisalabad achieved consecutive victories in the last 3 matches.

## Zunair Ali hits ton in Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

#### 😂 Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament at four different venues in the city. The highlights of the days play were all-round Performance

by Zunair Ali Khan first he Scored 109 and then took 2 wickets. The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Asso-

ciation Karachi with the collaboration of Master Oil Lubricant. Scores in Brief:

Pak Korangi beat Colony Gymkhana by 4 Wickets at Asghar Ali Shah Stadium. Colony Gymkhana 200 all out in 36.5 overs. Muhammad Maaz 94 9x4 1x6, Ammar Ali 21, Abdul Wasay 20. Talib Ali 2/35, Tariq Murad 2/36.

Pak Korangi 206/6 in 35 overs. Nabeel Wahid 62 6x4 2x6 not out, Afsar Nawaz 49, Waseem Ahmed 31. Abdul Basit 2/30, Ammar Ali 2/57

# Trophy of 4th T20 Blind Cricket World Cup unveiled ceremony hold

#### 腾 🛛 Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Trophy of 4th T20 Blind Cricket World Cup unveiled ceremony Punjab's Provincial Minister Faisal Ayyub Khokhar was the Chief Guest.

The trophy unveiling ceremony for the Fourth T20 Blind Cricket World Cup was held at Alhamra Hall No 1 on Friday.

The event was attended by players and officials from South Africa, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and hosts Pakistan, alongside notable dignitaries including Punjab's Provincial Minister for Sports Malik Faisal Avub Khokhar, World Blind Cricket Council President Syed Sultan Shah, Punjab Secretary for Sports Muzaffar Khan Sial, Director General Punjab Sports Khizar Afzaal, PCB Senior General Manager Junaid Zia, Pakistan's first blind judge Yousaf Saleem.

The attendees were shown a documentary on the World Cup, and cultural dances representing the four provinces, Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan were performed, which delighted international players, who also joined in the dancing. A special highlight was a performance by Adriana Galani, a blind singer from Austria, who captivated the audience with her rendition of national songs.

Punjab Sports Minister Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar welcomed all partic-



ipating teams. "Hosting the Fourth T20 Blind Cricket World Cup is a great honour for Pakistan. Sports unite nations and eliminate hate, and this event will project a peaceful and positive image of Pakistan globally. I hope our national blind cricket team will present the nation with the World Cup victory." He commended PBCC Chairman Syed Sultan Shah and the organising team for their efforts in successfully hosting the event.

PBCC Chairman Syed Sultan Shah

highlighted the transformative impact of cricket on the lives of the blind community, emphasizing Pakistan's standing as a leading team in blind cricket globally. He also criticized the Indian Ministry of External Affairs for denying permission to the Indian blind cricket team to participate in the World Cup under the pretext of security concerns, labeling it a clear example of hostility towards sports.

The PBCC chairman assured that Punjab's government had made foolproof security arrangements for all

participating teams and expressed hope that the visiting teams would enjoy playing cricket in Pakistan and the hospitality of Pakistani people as well.

The ceremony concluded with team captains unveiling the trophy alongside the Punjab Sports Minister and PBCC Chairman. Additionally, Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to Saleem Akbar Qureshi and Tariq Mahmood for their significant contributions to promoting blind cricket in Pakistan.

In the 2nd Match Rehbar Sports beat Mehmood Khan Cricket Club by 168 runs at Pak Star Ground. Rehbar Sports 288 allout in 40 overs. Zunair Ali Khan 109 9x4 1x6, Najeebullah 51 6x4, Ayan Yar Khan 34, Rana Abdul Rafay 25, Syed Imam 22. Muhammad Waqas (mf) 3/63, Abid Ullah 2/20, Arshad Ali 2/32.

Mehmood Khan CC 120 all out in 22.1 overs. Liaquat Khan 32. Najeeb ullah 2/16, Zunair Ali Khan 2/35.

In the 3rd Match Nazimabad Gymkhana beat Dacca Sports by 5 Wickets at Student Ground. Dacca Sports 119 all out in 21.4 overs. Jawed Ali 30, Musa Khan 29. Abdul Rehman 3/5, Jawwad Zamir 3/32.

Nazimabad Gymkhana 120/5 in 23.2 overs. Hassan Ali 44, Latif Junejo 30. Abdul Wadood 2/36, Zafar Khan 2/39.

In the fourth Match Tariq Memorial Cricket Club (TMC) beat Axis Cricket Club by 77 runs at Abbasi Gymkhana Ground. Tariq Memorial CC (TMC) 180 all out in 28.2 overs. Adil Iqbal 52 8x4, Ahmed Malik 29. Muhammad Salman 4/29, Mohsin Raza 3/21, Khawaja Ahmed Mustqm 2/30.

Axis CC 103 all out in 23 overs. Mohsin Raza 29. Israr ul Haq 3/19, Daniyal 3/31.

## Division level Khelta Punjab Games from 25th

## 😂 Sports Desk

LAHORE: The division level competitions of the Khelta Punjab Games will be organized in all divisions of the province from Nov 25 to Dec 4.

This information was shared by DG Sports Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry while presiding over a meeting at National Hockey Stadium on Friday.

Director Admin Dr M Kaleem and Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar participated in the meeting in person while all the divisional and district sports officers participated through video link.

# University Sports Olympiad 2024 concludes with celebration of talent and hope

#### 😂 Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Liaquat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad resonated with cheers, laughter and the spirit of sportsmanship as the curtains fell on the University Sports Olympiad 2024 on Friday.

Organized by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC). the three-day extravaganza brought together over 3,000 student-athletes from universities nationwide. They showcased their talent in different disciplines including badminton, table tennis, hockey, volleyball, athletics, judo, swimming, handball, weightlifting and wrestling.

colourful spectacle, featuring vibrant performances, music and an awards distribution segment.

Chairman PMYP, Rana Mashhood Ahmad emphasized the government's commitment to nurture talent. "This Olympiad has shown us the immense potential of Pakistan's youth. We are dedicated to providing them with platforms to excel and shine on the global stage," he told APP. Highlighting the long-term

vision of the programme, he said, "It is aimed at developing a robust sports ecosystem that not only identifies talent at the grassroots level but also supports it through training, mentorship and international exposure."

"These young athletes are the ambassadors of Pakistan's resil-The closing ceremony was a ience and brilliance. I hope they

will take the lessons they've learnt here and apply them in every Olympiad was more than just aspect of life.

'Together, we will build a future where Pakistan's flag flies high in every arena," he added. Former hockey great Olym-

pian Khawaja Muhammad Junaid, who is the focal person for sports for PMYP said, "This Olympiad has been a gamechanger for our student-athletes. We have witnessed remarkable talent and these young players are the future stars of Pakistan." He underlined the importance of sports in shaping well-

rounded individuals. "Sports instill discipline, unity and a fighting spirit. These are the values we need to build a prosperous and cohesive Pakistan," he added.

For many participants, the

a competition; it was a journey of personal growth and camaraderie. They shared stories of their practice sessions, nailbiting contests and the joy of representing their universities.

"I have never imagined meeting students from so many different backgrounds and provinces," said Muhammad Muzammil of University of Central Punjab, who earned the title of the fastest man of the Olympiad.

"The competitions were tough like any big event. This spectacle has brought us closer as a nation," he said.

"Sports brought us together, but it's the shared moments outside the games that I'll cherish



Rehman of Women University Lahore, who claimed gold medals in long jump, triple jump and 400m hurdle race.

Hazrat Umer of Abdul Wali Khan University, who emerged victorious in 400m race expressed hope for more oppor-

"This experience has ignited a fire in me to pursue sports at a professional level," he said.

"I've been training really hard for the event. Winning a gold here is a dream come true. It's not

proving to ourselves that we can

highest levels." As the athletes bid farewell to Islamabad, they carried with them not just medals and certificates but a profound sense of belonging and inspiration.

achieve great things," pole vault

gold-winner Rabia Hussain from

Lahore College for Women said.

in our potential and prepare us

for greater challenges ahead," she

Hamad Khaliq from Univer-

sity of Central Punjab, who

clinched gold in men's triple

jump expressed his gratitude:

"We are thankful to the organ-

izers for this fantastic step. It will

help promote sports in Pakistan.

It gives us hope that our hard

work will eventually lead us to

represent the country at the

maintained.

"Events like this help us believe

the most," remarked Amtul tunities like this in the future.

just about competing; it's about



# The Spokesman

# Group photo

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gillani along with Mr. Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, Senator from Balochistan visited National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) at NDMA Headquarters on Friday.



# **Azam Nazir Tarar calls on UK Parliamentary Under-**Secretary Hamish Falconer

#### 腾 City Desk

Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law, Justice, and Human E. Hamish Falconer MP, the UK Parliamentary Under-Sec-East, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, representing the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation in human rights, justice reforms, and addressing climate change challenges.

reforms and the implementa- of alleged violations. tion of international conventions.

He highlighted the critical role of independent commis-ISLAMABAD: Senator Azam sions, such as the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) and the National Rights, held a meeting with H. Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), in safeguarding human rights and retary of State for the Middle advancing gender equality across Pakistan.

The Minister discussed steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to prevent the misuse of laws, including the Blasphemy Law, and to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, Articles 20-36 of the Constitution of Pakistan. The Minister including minorities. He referenced the recently developed detailed government initi-During the meeting, Senator Standard Operating Proce- atives, such as investigating tutional amendment that Azam Nazeer Tarar outlined dures (SOPs) aimed at ensuring incidents of violence against recognizes the right to a clean, Pakistan's progress in human justice and curbing exploitation. minorities and fostering inter-healthy, and sustainable envirights, particularly emphasizing These SOPs emphasize forensic the National Action Plan on investigations, credible witness lighted the establishment of right. He reiterated Pakistan's Human Rights, which provides protection mechanisms, and the National Commission for commitment to combating a robust framework for policy ensuring impartiality in cases Minorities (NCM), a statu- climate change by integrating Furthermore, the meeting minority rights and ensure its governance framework and addressed the effective protec-



tion of minority rights under building.

On climate change, the Minister briefed the UK delegation about the recent constifaith harmony. He also high- ronment as a fundamental

climate commitments. The Minister underlined the disproportionate impact of climate change on developing countries like Pakistan and stressed the need for international cooperation to address the shared challenge effectively. H. E. Hamish Falconer commended Pakistan's proactive measures to improve

human rights and justice systems and welcomed the constitutional recognition of climate action as a fundamental right. He assured the UK's continued support in advancing these priorities, particularly through technical assistance and collaborative programs aimed at achieving global human rights and envi-

# Sweden envoy calls on DPM Dar



#### 腾 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan, Alexandra Berg von Linde Friday called on the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and discussed matters of mutual interests.

welcomed the Ambassador and conveyed best wishes on her assignment.

He expressed appreciation for the positive trajectory in bilateral relations between Sweden and Pakistan. He stressed on the importance of enhanced collaboration in trade, investment, education, and people-

In the meeting, the deputy PM to-people exchanges.

# Commodore Ateeq ur Rehman promoted to rank of Rear Admiral



腾 Khurram Jaffrani

KARACHI: Commodore Ateeq ur Rehman Abid has been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral with immediate effect.

Rear Admiral Ateeq ur Rehman Abid got commission in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1995. Pakistan Fleet and Assistant Chief of Pakistan's cuisine

The Flag Officer is a graduate of at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

a press release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pakistan Navy).

The Flag Officer has completed various professional courses from national and international institutes. He has done International Security and Strategic Leadership Studies Course from UK, Naval Staff Course from USA, Pakistan Navy Staff

Course from PN War College Lahore and National Security and War Course from National Defence University, Islamabad. Pakistan's cuisine

The Admiral has an illustrious career covering vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments. His major command appointments include Commanding Officer PNS MUJAHID, Commanding Officer PNS TARIQ, Commander 18th Destroyer Squadron, Captain Training at Headquarters FOST, Director Operations at HQ PMSA, Chief Staff Officer to Commander Naval Staff (Developmental Plans)

Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi, In recognition of his meritorious

tory body working to promote environmental protection into their participation in nation- ensuring adherence to global

ronmental goals. The meeting concluded with both parties reaffirming their shared commitment to fostering mutual cooperation for a more inclusive and equitable society.

also include children and

women whereas six others also

Earlier, at least seven people

The incident occurred in

the lower Kurram district

of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

however, the police are making

efforts for a ceasefire between

In a separate development,

the security forces gunned

down seven khawarij during

an intelligence-based oper-

ation (IBO) conducted in

Kurram district of Khyber-Pa-

khtunkhwa, the Inter-Services

Public Relations (ISPR) said. The military's media wing

in a statement said that the

killed terrorists were actively

dead in a firing incident over a

land dispute in Lower Kurram

sustained injuries

the two groups.

district.

# Death toll in Kurram vehicle firing incident reaches 45

#### B Monitoring Desk

KURRAM: The death toll in Lower Kurram attack reached 45, where a passenger van came under firing in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa merged district, ARY News reported.

As per details, the incident occurred in Lower Kurram yesterday where vehicles coming to and from Peshawar and Kurram came under fire resulting in the death of 38 on the spot and several injured in critical condition initially.

The spokesperson of DPO Kurram stated that the Deputy Commissioner and DPO have reached the spot of incident. The SHO Yar Muhammad said the injured were rushed to a nearby hospital.

Sources said that over 37 injured are currently under treatment in several hospitals of the district whereas the dead bodies have been moved to Parachinar for funeral.



Moreover, the Toori tribe has announced a three-day mourning in the honour of clashes erupted between The Deputy Commisyesterday attack's martyrs.

Last month, at least 11 district of Khyber Pakhpeople lost their lives after tunkhwa

two tribes in Upper Kurram sioner said that the 11 dead

involved in numerous attacks against security forces and innocent civilians.

It added that five khwarij were also injured in the IBO.

# Bushra Bibi's non-bailable arrest warrants issued in $\pounds$ 190m case

#### 腾 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court in Rawalpindi issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi in £190 million case.

As per details, the case was heard by accountability court judge Nasir Javed Rana, and issued Bushra Bibi's non-bailable arrest warrants.

Former prime minister Imran Khan was also presented before the court in £190 million case. ments.

It is important to mention here that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has already granted bail to PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the £190 million National Crime Agency (NCA) settlement reference.

A two-member bench, comprising IHC CJ Aamer Farooq and Justice

Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, reserved to participate in the much-hyped Nov the verdict after the completion of argu-24 protest dubbed as 'final or do-or-die' against the government.

In its short order, the IHC ordered She claimed that propaganda began the authorities to release the PTI against them following their visit to founder against the surety bond of Madinah in Saudi Arabia and the subsequent calls. The PTI founder's wife went on to

In a separate development yesterday, add the calls were followed by her char-Bushra Bibi issued a video message regarding the party's Nov 24 protest acter assassination and Khan being call, urging PTI workers and supporters called a 'Jewish agent.'

Rs1 million.

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

Naval War College, USA, and Royal service, the Admiral was awarded College of Defence Studies, UK, said Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military).

# Bushra Bibi's statement taken out of context, says **Imran Khan**

#### 🐞 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: "Bushra Bibi's statement was deliberately taken out of context to draw our brotherly country KSA into a needless controversy," Khan was quoted as saying in a statement on his X account. "She didn't mention Saudi Arabia at all."

His clarification comes a day calls from former army chief General

(retd) General Qamar Javed Baiwa. The former first lady alleged that Bajwa was informed about attempts to dismantle the system of Sharia, raising concerns about Khan's advocacy for Islamic law.

The former army chief denied the ex-first lady's claims in conversation with journalist Mohammad Malick. Bajwa stated that no such calls were after Bibi in a video message on received upon "Khan's return from Thursday alleged that after Khan Saudi Arabia". He said that Bibi "is visited Medina barefoot as the mistaken and that he did not receive prime minister, he began receiving any communications" regarding the matter.

# **Bullish trend continues** at PSX as benchmark index closes at 97,798.23 points

#### 😂 Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock nies, which has fostered a favorable Exchange (PSX) experienced a environment for investors. significant surge on Friday, with the benchmark KSE-100 index closing at exchange reserves and speculation 97,798.23 points after gaining 469.84 points.

It climbed by over 2,000 points during the intraday, reaching an intraday high of 99,000 points.

This marks a continuation of the market's recordbreaking performance.

and increased liquidity from mutual robust performance.

funds, banks, and insurance compa-

Analysts note that rising foreign regarding government economic



The recent upswing is attributed reforms and privatization efforts to a positive macroeconomic outlook have also contributed to the market's