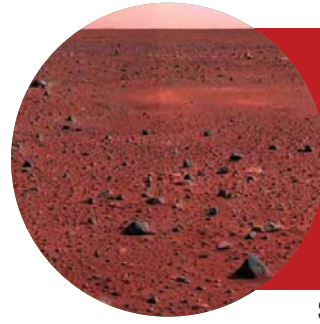


## Can't allow protest, sit-in or rally in light of IHC's order, minister tells PTI chairman

As the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) gears up for the November 24 "do-or-die" protest in the federal capital, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has informed the party chairman, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan that no gathering, sit-in or protest can be allowed in the city in the light of Islamabad High Court's (IHC) order.



## Water may have existed on Mars for longer than previously thought

Scientists have discovered the oldest evidence of flowing hot water on Earth's neighbouring planet Mars, indicating that the planet may have supported life ages ago. The said evidence was delivered to Earth and sealed within the Martian meteorite NWA7034, which was found in 2011 in the Sahara Desert. Due to its black, highly polished, and shiny appearance, the rock is also known as "Black Beauty".

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## Capital's safety

ISLAMABAD: A view of Deserted Jinnah Avenue as road closed with shipping containers ahead of PTI protest, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Over 400 PTI supporters arrested as twin cities sealed off

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: More than 400 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf protesters were arrested on Saturday as the police launched a crackdown on them before the Islamabad protest which is scheduled for Sunday (today). The federal capital administration has banned public gatherings given the security situation. But the decision was taken after incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan gave the protest date.

Sources within the police stated that at least 300 PTI activists, including both men

and women, were apprehended during the crackdown in Islamabad. They claimed that weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the arrested individuals.

The detained activists have been transferred to various police stations. Separately over 100 PTI supporters were arrested in Rawalpindi. The detainees have been transferred to different stations. The Rawalpindi police conducted a flag march to demonstrate their presence.

In a separate incident, police raided the home of Basima Chaudhry, the niece of former

PTI president Pervez Elahi, in Mandi Bahauddin.

Basima claimed that plainclothes officers entered her home at 2:30am, violating the sanctity of her residence. She claimed that the police harassed her staff and vandalised her belongings during the raid.

She condemned the Punjab government, stating that it has become "blind to political revenge." The PTI lawmaker described the recent actions against her and other PTI members as "tantamount to terrorism" and called on institutions to take notice.

Basima emphasised her

commitment to serving Pakistan, having renounced her US citizenship, and demanded clarity on what their alleged mistakes are and why they are being punished.

Moreover, authorities have dismantled parts of the main Murree Road in the scenic Galiyat region of Abbottabad. Officials reported that heavy machinery was used to block the road in the Baryani area, halting the movement of both tourists and local residents.

Reports indicate that a large number of citizens have flocked to the Rawalpindi Railway Station, resulting in a doubling of passenger traffic. Many indi-

viduals were unable to purchase tickets due to the overwhelming crowd.

Despite the availability of shuttle trains, thousands of passengers have been unable to reach their destinations and have set up makeshift camps at the station. Railway officials have assured that efforts are under way to transport passengers to their destinations.

The closure of major roads and containers placed throughout Islamabad and Rawalpindi has drastically affected normal life in the region, with dozens of locations in the twin cities obstructed.

## Three terrorists killed in two separate KP operations: ISPR

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Three terrorists belonging to Fitnal Khwarj were killed in two separate engagements with security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's cities on November 21-22, the military's media wing said.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations said that two terrorists were killed in an intelligence based operation in the general area of Bara, Khyber district.

They were identified as Haqyar Afridi, alias Khyberay, and Gulla Jan.

In another incident, security forces picked up a movement of a group of terrorists, who were trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, in the South Waziristan district. One terrorist was killed while three others got injured.

"Pakistan has consistently been asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border," the ISPR



statement said and added that the interim Afghan government was expected to fulfil its obligations and "deny the use of Afghan soil by Khwarj for perpetrating acts of terrorism against Pakistan."

The statement said: "Security forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to secure its border and eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country."

Pakistan has seen an increase in militancy since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021, with the Pakistani chapter of the movement carrying out attacks mostly targeting security forces.

## President, PM laud security forces for successful operations against Khawarij

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday paid tribute to the security forces for conducting successful operations near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in South Waziristan and district Khyber.

The president and the prime minister, in separate statements, lauded the security forces for killing two Khawarij in Khyber, one in South Waziristan and arresting three others.

President Zardari expressed his resolve to thwart any attempt of the terrorists to



disrupt peace and security in Pakistan, reaffirming the commitment to continue operations until elimination of the menace of terrorism.

PM Shehbaz said the entire nation stood with the brave soldiers of the security forces in war against terrorism.

He said the government was committed to eliminate terrorism and Khawarij from the country.

## Mohsin Naqvi visits Police Lines ahead of high-profile Belarus delegation visit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Police Lines early Saturday morning to boost the morale of Islamabad's police force as the city prepares for the arrival of a high-profile delegation from Belarus.

Addressing the officers, the minister commended the dedication of the Islamabad Police to maintaining law and order.

He stressed the importance of heightened security measures



ahead of the Belarus delegation's visit on November 24, followed by

the Belarusian President's visit on November 25.

"We must ensure the safety of Islamabad at all costs," Naqvi said, urging the force to work as a cohesive team to secure the federal capital. He issued a stern warning against anyone attempting to disrupt peace, stating, "This time, anyone taking the law into their hands will not walk away."

The minister emphasized officer safety, instructing the police to wear helmets and protective gear during duty and adhere to

all precautionary measures. "Your lives are precious to us," he told the officers, pledging full support to the force.

Naqvi assured that no efforts would be spared to uphold law and order, vowing that the federal capital's peace and security remain non-negotiable.

Senior officials, including the Inspector General of Islamabad Police, the Chief Commissioner, and the DIG, were present during the minister's address, alongside a large contingent of police officers.

## Interior ministry to assess WiFi service suspension based on 'conditions'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The suspension of Wi-Fi services would be determined based on conditions, with restrictions only being imposed in areas where security concerns exist, according to an interior ministry spokesperson.

In other regions, the spokesperson added that internet and mobile services would continue

to operate as usual, ensuring that citizens have access to these essential services.

Such measures come at a time when the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf prepares for a protest march towards Islamabad on Sunday.

Incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan has asked his supporters to march towards Islamabad on 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. 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.

Earlier in the day, sources said that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has decided to shut down internet service ahead of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf protest march in Islamabad on

Sunday (today).

The interior ministry has sent a letter to the PTA regarding the suspension of mobile phone and internet services.

Mobile phone services would remain operational, but internet and Wi-Fi services would be disabled, they said and added the decision to restrict mobile signals would be made based on the situation.

## NACTA issues alert over possible terrorist attack during PTI protest



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) has issued an alert regarding the potential threat of terrorist activities by the Fitna-al-Khawarij group during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protest scheduled for November 24.

According to the details, NACTA has advised provin-

cial governments to implement the strictest security measures, warning that the Khawarij may attempt to carry out terrorist attacks during PTI's protest.

The intelligence report issued by NACTA also suggested the possibility of Khawarij militants entering Pakistan from Afghanistan, and there are concerns that they may target major cities with terrorist activities.



# A large march against the construction of canals on Indus River and religious extremism

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A large march was held in Hyderabad against the construction of canals on the Indus River and religious extremism. Leaders and activists from various political, social, and nationalist organizations participated in the event. The protesters argued that constructing new canals on the Indus River would further deplete Sindh's water resources, adversely affecting human lives and aquatic life.

During the march, strong protests were also raised against religious extremism, which was described as a threat to Sindh's peace and culture of tolerance. During the march held in Hyderabad, the leaders, Sindhu Nawaz Ganghro, Niaz Kalani, Bakhsal Thalo, Samar Jatoti, Marvi Awan, Irfana Mallah, Amar Sindhu, Punhal Sario,

Iqbal Mallah and others in their speeches, expressed a clear stance on the construction of canals on the Indus River and religious extremism.

They stated that constructing new canals would reduce the flow of water in the Indus River, resulting in barren agricultural lands, water shortages, and negative impacts on fisheries. They emphasized that water is life and that any encroachment on it would not be tolerated. They demanded that the federal government consult the people of Sindh and ensure a fair distribution of water. Speaking on extremism, leaders like Junior Jannan Chan and others warned that promoting religious extremism in Sindh's peaceful and Sufi-oriented society could jeopardize social harmony. They declared religious tolerance to be an integral part of Sindh's historical and cultural



heritage. They said that Sindh's clergy is not so extreme or narrow-minded as to incite violence, but attempts are being made to settle external extremists in Sindh to destroy its culture of tolerance. They called for the enforcement of strict laws against extremism and measures to curb its growth. During the march, the leaders raised fervent slogans and announced their determination to continue their struggle for resources and rights.

## Severe water crisis in Jamshoro – DC calls meeting on Monday

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A severe water crisis has emerged in Jamshoro city, situated on the banks of the Indus River. The Deputy Commissioner has taken notice and called a meeting on Monday. Residents of areas like Bismillah Colony, Phatak, and others in Jamshoro have complained that water has not been supplied to their colonies for a long time. They expressed confusion over the shortage of water during the winter season.

The residents alleged that it seems the administration is deliberately creating the water crisis to boost the tanker mafia's business, which is unfair to the citizens. They have demanded the Deputy Commissioner of Jamshoro and other authorities to investigate the water crisis and ensure water supply to them.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Jamshoro, Riaz Wasan, has taken notice of the issue and called a meeting of all stakeholders. He stated that the water shortage in the city should be resolved to address the residents' concerns.

## Protest Against Boulevard Mall Management over alleged fraud

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Investors of Hyderabad's renowned Boulevard Mall protested against the mall management over alleged embezzlement and non-payment of rents. Led by Rashid Panhwar, Murtaza Sial, and others, the protest took place outside the mall, where demonstrators staged a sit-in and chanted slogans demanding justice.

Protesters claimed they had invested millions to purchase shops in Boulevard Mall but are not receiving the promised rental income. They accused the mall owner, Humayun Barkat, and others of deceiving them with grand promises, only to later fail in delivering on their commitments.

The protesters further revealed that their purchased shops have not been registered in their names, leaving them in a precarious situation.

The aggrieved parties called upon the authorities to take immediate notice of the alleged fraud and ensure justice by holding the Boulevard Mall management accountable.

## People's condolences death of former PM's cousin

Bureau Report

DHIRKOT: A huge crowd of people condoled the death of President Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan on the death of his cousin. Yesterday, at Mujahid Manzil, various political, social, religious, academic and literary figures, besides relatives and friends,



expressed their condolences on the death of his young brother Sardar Taimur Abbasi and prayed for the elevation of the deceased. The condolence messages expressed their condolences to all the bereaved including the President Muslim Conference and offered Fateha for the departed soul. The Qul Dua of the late Sardar Taimur Abbasi was held today at in Ghaziabad, in which workers from all over Azad Kashmir, including Muslim Conference workers, were Condolence meeting of members of District Council Bagh on the death of Taimur Abbasi, cousin of President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan. The meeting was attended by members of District Council Bagh Raja Mubarak Ali, Nasreen Akhtar Raja, Malik Aman, Salim Abbasi, Shaukat Afzal and member ward councilors. The participants of the meeting expressed deep sorrow and grief over the death of Sardar Taimur Abbasi and prayed for the elevation of the deceased's rank. They said that the death of Taimur Abbasi is a great tragedy.

## Sardar Attique strongly condemns inhumane incident in Parachinar

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/DHIRKOT: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan strongly condemned the inhumane incident in Parachinar and said that the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should take action against those responsible. A conspiracy is being hatched to spread the fire of sectarianism in the country. He urged that Strict security arrangements should be made on the routes leading to Parachinar. The President of

the Muslim Conference expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families and said that the attack on unarmed passengers is a very cowardly and inhumane act. The nation's morale cannot be dampened by the cowardly actions of the saboteurs. He said that the Pakistani nation has made immense sacrifices in the war against terrorism. The President of the Muslim Conference said that the role of the Pakistani Army in establishing peace and harmony in the country is commendable. The entire Kashmiri nation stands by the Pakistan Army.



## Desolation

RAWALPINDI: A view of deserted Pirwadhai Bus Terminal due to all bus stations closed in twin cities ahead of PTI protest in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# NPGP aims at assisting the poverty-hit rural communities in graduating out of poverty on a sustainable basis

Rafiullah Mandokhel

ZHOB: The Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Security (PASS) Division with the financial support of the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) under the National Poverty Graduation Program (NPGP), distributed among over five thousand assets to Benazir Income

Support Program (BISP) beneficiaries in Zhob district alone—a densely populated and poverty-hit district of Balochistan. It is aimed at eradicating poverty and financially supporting the marginalized communities. Thousands of beneficiaries were also trained in the business sector and were provided with interest-free loans.

Meanwhile, the district's social and public circles have lauded the program and its theme, terming it beneficial

for the communities living below the poverty line as the program has made significant strides in improving the livelihoods of rural communities through asset distribution and other development initiatives.

"BRSP has been implementing NPGP with the financial support of IFAD and the government of Pakistan since 2020 on various poverty-alleviation initiatives to improve the livelihoods of those living in extreme

poverty in Balochistan, including Zhob district. The program is designed to catalyze change at the grassroots to uplift the poorest households from poverty and set them on a course of economic and social prosperity through a tried and tested poverty graduation approach comprising elements of social mobilization, livelihoods development, and financial inclusion," says Saboor Khan, an official at BRSP.

# Faisalabad Chamber to continue its efforts to address industry, trade despite difficult circumstances

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Despite the difficult circumstances, the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will continue its efforts to resolve issues related to industry and trade. This was said by Faisalabad Chamber President Rehan Naseem Bharara while addressing a delegation of Faisalabad Dyes and Chemical Merchants Association. He said that his doors are open to everyone and he, along with his team, will make every effort to resolve legitimate issues at the federal, provincial and district levels. He said that due to the circumstances, many issues may not be resolved, but he will work with the relevant associations to not

only raise these issues from the relevant platform but also follow up on them at all levels. He urged the association officials to present their short but comprehensive demands in writing so that focused efforts can be made to resolve them. He said that each association should hold a meeting in the chamber at least after two months so that we get an opportunity to understand each other's problems and work together to resolve them. He said that this will strengthen mutual contacts and will also encourage new members. He said that the members of Faisalabad Dyes and Chemical Merchants Association who have not yet taken membership of the chamber should also be encouraged to become official members

of the chamber so that their problems can be resolved easily. He said that before the federal budget, we should finalize our common and agreed demands so that meaningful negotiations can be held on them. Earlier, the association's president Mirza Muhammad Aslam congratulated the newly elected office bearers of the chamber and said that his association has given many presidents to the Faisalabad Chamber who have demonstrated their best abilities to solve the collective problems of the business community. He said that the members of his association who have not yet taken membership of the chamber will take membership very soon. Shahid Mumtaz Bajwa, vice president of the Faisalabad



Chamber, said that all members of the Chemical and Dyes Association should also obtain membership of the chamber. Finally, the newly elected chamber officials were presented with bouquets and garlands, while Jawad Shafiq thanked all the members.



Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 5:20 am  
Zohr ..... 11:54 am  
Asr ..... 3:23 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:01 pm  
Isha ..... 6:28 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service  
E-7, F-10 & F-11 ..... 9204654  
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 ..... 9203883  
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..... 9266316  
Wapda Islamabad ..... 9217579-80

**Thatta Health Scandal: MERF employees accused of theft**

**Kamran Khamiso Khowaja**

THATTA: A scandal has surfaced in Thatta, where a stock of medicine worth 20 million rupees has gone missing from the warehouse of MERF-Medical Emergency Resilience Foundation, an NGO managing health facilities in the district. Eight health facilities, including Civil Hospital Makli, were handed over to MERF in 2015 as part of a public-private initiative. Malik Adam, Regional Program Manager of MERF, accused four employees of involvement in the pilferage and misappropriation of medicine stock. The accused employees have been suspended, and a preliminary inquiry report has been sent to the provincial health department, recommending stern legal action. The scandal came to light due to persistent drug shortages at Civil Hospital Makli and other health facilities. Civil society members have criticized the suspension of low-ranked employees, calling it a ploy to protect the real culprits. They are demanding a thor

# Key steps taken in Balochistan for Anti-Rape Act Implementation and Crisis Cell Establishment

QUETTA: The Legal Aid Society (LAS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Government of Balochistan, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), hosted a pivotal consultation to strengthen the implementation of the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act, 2021, and establish Anti-Rape Crisis Cells (ARCCs) in Balochistan. This event underscored the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration, uniting government officials, legal experts, and key stakeholders to address challenges and develop survivor-centric strategies. The event commenced with remarks by Sadia Atta, Program Coordinator for UNFPA, "All of you present here, it is through your contributions and input that a proper action plan will be developed, which will help UNFPA and the Department of Health Balochistan move forward," she said, highlighting the importance of collective effort.

Raja Naeem Akbar, Federal Secretary of Law and Justice, emphasised, "Coordination between the federal and provincial governments is essential, and we are committed to doing whatever is necessary to strengthen it." J. R. Sultan, Section Officer from the Ministry of Law and Justice, led the session on requirements under the law and reflected, "A more victim-centric, suspect-focused and context-led approach will ensure desired result under the Anti-Rape Act, 2021." Further support came from Mujeeb Ur Rehman Panezai, Secretary of the Health Department, who reaffirmed, "The Health Department is committed to bridging the gaps in support systems for survivors and ensuring they receive the care and assistance they need." Hamza Shafiqat, Commissioner of Quetta Division, advocated for robust legal foundations, "While it is often believed



that the implementation of laws is lacking, we must also recognise the need to strengthen the very foundation of these laws. I strongly support the establishment of ARCCs in Balochistan and remain committed to ensuring their effective creation and operation."

committed to ensuring their effective creation and operation." Dr. Summiya Syed-Tariq, Police Surgeon Karachi and member of the Special Committee on Anti-Rape, emphasised, "Creating a sustainable and contextual multi-sectoral model is essential, and this begins with leveraging the resources we already have. Maliha Zia, Associate Director at LAS, highlighted the importance of a survivor-first approach in addressing sexual violence, "A survivor-first approach ensures that every step of the process, from reporting to recovery, is built around the dignity, safety, and well-being of survivors." This event marks a significant step in institutionalising justice and support mechanisms for survivors of sexual violence, contributing to national efforts to create an equitable and survivor-centric justice system while empowering marginalised communities.

## Closing the roads

ISLAMABAD: Workers place shipping containers to close at Jinnah Avenue ahead of PTI protest, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## ISSI and PIPS sign MoU on Mutual collaboration

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) have signed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for mutual collaboration. This partnership aims to enhance collaborative efforts in providing credible research-based analysis to key decision-makers and policymakers in Pakistan.

The MoU was signed by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI and Mr. Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka, Executive Director, PIPS. The ceremony was attended by senior representatives from the two Institutes.

The collaboration envisaged under this MoU is expected to facilitate knowledge-sharing and joint research initiatives that will help empower policymakers



with informed insights on critical national issues. The two institutions also aim to more deeply engage the Next Generation (NextGen) by fostering youth-inclusive dialogue and amplifying their voices in the policy process.

The signing of the MoU further enhances ISSI's outreach to national

counterparts, particularly research institutions with niche areas of specialisation. In recent weeks, ISSI has also concluded MoUs with the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) and the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS).

## Karachi Arts Council stages thought provoking drama "Yeh Nahi Bataunga"



**City Desk**

KARACHI: 21-day Awami Theatre Festival, organized by the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, is in full swing. On the 15th day of the festival, the play "Yeh Nahi Bataunga" was staged, written by Zakir Mastana and directed by Parvez Siddiqui. The talented cast included Parvez Siddiqui, Zakir Mastana, Saleem Sheikh, Shahni Azim, Mehak Noor, Shanze Varda, Sapna Ghazal, Akram Sono, Tariq Guddu, Shahbaz Sanam, Talha Bhojani, and Junaid Memon. The play tells the story of a family patriarch who spends his entire life working abroad, ensuring his family's every need is met. However, when he faces a severe health crisis—alleging kidney failure—he finds himself abandoned by his loved ones.

Despite his relentless efforts to support his family over the years, they coldly suggest he manage with his deteriorating health. Unbeknownst to them, the patriarch had orchestrated this scenario with the help of a doctor to test the loyalty and compassion of his family. When the truth emerges, family members are left ashamed and seek forgiveness.

The play delivers a powerful message about human selfishness and highlights the sacrifices made by family heads to keep households running. It also underscores the unfortunate reality of how, in times of adversity, even close relationships can falter. The audience lauded the thought-provoking storyline and stellar performances, further cementing the festival's success.

## Scicon 2024 concludes with Thrilling Competitions and Unparalleled Innovation

**City Desk**

KARACHI: The much-anticipated concluding ceremony of Scicon 2024 is set to take place tomorrow, marking the end of a successful and eventful journey of science, creativity, and collaboration.

This year's Scicon witnessed participation of around 350 students from over 20 schools and colleges, bringing together some of the brightest young minds from across the region. Students competed in a diverse range of modules, including Craftopia, Arcane Nexus, Molecular Synergy, and Scibotron, showcasing their talent, innovation, and passion for science and its interdisciplinary applications.

As of today, the competition has reached an exciting climax, with teams from Beaconhouse Jubilee Campus and Defence Campus leading the scoreboard.

Their exceptional performance in modules like Newton's Flex and Biz-Ignition has set them apart as frontrunners in the race for the Scicon 5.0 Championship title.

# A revolutionary approach to Cancer, and the role of Art in Healing; A series of talks by Dr. Azra Raza at LUMS

**City Desk**

LAHORE: "No one is winning the war on cancer." These sobering words from Dr. Azra Raza, a globally renowned oncologist, author, and professor at Columbia University, echoed across a captivated audience at LUMS, where she held a series of thought-provoking talks from November 20-22.

Quoting literary greats like Mirza Ghalib, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, and Emily Dickinson, Dr. Raza seamlessly wove together science, poetry, and the resilience of the human spirit in her talks. She challenged conventional thinking,

urging a shift from reactive care to proactive prevention. Despite billions of dollars spent on cancer research, she noted that treatment today still follows the approach of slash, poison, and burn.

In a joint session with Dr. Stavroula Kousteni, Professor of Biophysics at Columbia University, Dr. Raza called for a revolutionary, patient-centric approach that begins with detecting the disease at the first cell, the point where wellness begins to transition into illness.

Dr. Raza's philosophy recognizes the interconnectedness of empathy, art, and science. Over the course of

several talks she explored larger existential crises, including climate change, through the timeless wisdom of poetry, stating "Not only is poetry possible in this age, it is precisely what we need to provide the helium for our sagging spirits".

These sessions were hosted by key LUMS initiatives: the Gurmani Centre for Languages and Literature, the Two Cultures Initiative, and the Ferozsons Initiative for Research Excellence. They were moderated by LUMS faculty, including Drs. Basit Bilal Koshul, Ali Usman Qasmi, Shaper Mirza, and Fatima Fayyaz.



Dr. Raza's talks at LUMS drew a wide audience both in-person and via livestream - with venues packed with academics, business leaders, renowned writers, and prominent figures from across Lahore.



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# Punjabi Lingual and Cultural Ties of Faiz's Poetry

**Ihsan ur Rehman Danish**

**F**aizki Shaeri Main Punjab Rang" is a detailed academic exploration by Dr Asghar Ali Baloch into the life, work, and thematic essence of the renowned Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, with a specific focus on the Punjabi influence that permeates Faiz's poetry. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, a literary giant of the 20th century, is widely celebrated for his revolutionary poetry, often linked to themes of social justice, human rights, and political activism. However, what is less discussed is how his roots in Punjab, his native land, influenced his poetic voice and philosophical stance.

Dr Asghar Ali Baloch's work serves as an insightful critical analysis, blending literary criticism with sociocultural history to bring forth the nuanced relationship between Faiz's poetic expression and his Punjabi heritage.

Faiz's references to the folk traditions of Punjab, especially the Sufi mysticism prevalent in the region, are carefully examined. His poetic persona embodies the spirit of Punjab, with a sense of defiance against colonial powers and later the injustices of post-partition Pakistan. This section highlights the confluence of traditional Punjabi metaphors, symbols, and Faiz's nuanced political philosophy.

Faiz wrote primarily in Urdu, but his linguistic foundation in Punjabi contributed immensely to his poetic texture.

Dr Baloch evaluates the intricate use of Punjabi idioms, vocabulary, and cultural references in Faiz's Urdu poetry. For instance, the influence of Punjabi folk songs and local legends—many of which are laden with themes of resistance and yearning—resonates in Faiz's revolutionary tone. The poet's use of language is seen as a tool for unifying the rural and urban experiences of Punjab with the larger political movements he supported.

The partition of India and the subsequent migration of millions of people deeply impacted Faiz, whose family was directly affected by the upheaval. Dr Baloch investigates how Faiz's experiences of loss, displacement, and trauma during this period were informed by the complex cultural identity of Punjab. These experiences enriched Faiz's poetry, bringing forth a profound sense of longing and social empathy. Baloch emphasizes how Faiz's poetic expression mirrors the collective grief of Punjab during and after partition.

This section delves into the revolutionary elements of Faiz's poetry, which often reflects the struggles of the working class, the oppressed, and the marginalized. Dr Baloch suggests that Faiz's call for social justice and political liberation is rooted in the agrarian struggles of Punjab. Punjab, historically an agricultural heartland, was a site of great labor unrest and peasant movements. The poet's deep connection to the land and its people allowed him to articulate a vision that resonated with the marginalized and the

disenfranchised, thus uniting the personal with the political in his work.

Dr Baloch's study does not confine itself to the regional impact of Punjab on Faiz but extends to his role as a global poet. Drawing on Faiz's internationalist perspective, the author analyzes how Punjab's rich cultural traditions, despite Faiz's global reach, remained integral to his identity. Faiz's universalism, combined with his firm rooting in Punjab's history of resistance and cultural vibrancy, gave his work a unique resonance in global political and literary circles.

One of the standout features of this book is Dr Baloch's ability to connect literary analysis with sociocultural history. The thematic focus on Faiz's poetry in relation to Punjab reveals much about the poet's inner world, his relationship to his homeland, and the larger political struggle that shaped his worldview. The key themes explored are:

**Revolution and Resistance:** Faiz's work is consistently driven by a desire for social justice and change. His poetry is often a call to action, emphasizing solidarity among the oppressed. Dr Baloch contextualizes this revolutionary sentiment within the framework of Punjab's agrarian uprisings and peasant movements.

**The Role of Language and Tradition:** Faiz's use of language, particularly his employment of Punjabi idioms, expressions, and folklore, is skillfully explored. Dr Baloch traces how these linguistic elements helped Faiz craft a poetic style that spoke to both the educated elite and

the rural masses.

Love and Longing: Faiz's poetry, while deeply political, also contains an undercurrent of longing and love. This theme is analyzed through the lens of Punjabi Sufi poetry, where the personal and the collective often intertwine.

**Sufism and Mysticism:** Dr Baloch argues that Faiz's poetry draws heavily on the mystical traditions of Punjab, particularly Sufism. Themes of union, separation, and spiritual quest permeate his work, reflecting the influence of Punjabi mystics like Bulleh Shah.

"Faiz ki Shaeri Main Punjab Rang" is an indispensable work for anyone looking to understand Faiz Ahmed Faiz not just as a poet of revolution but as a poet whose roots in Punjab gave his work a distinctive flavor. Dr Asghar Ali Baloch's academic rigor, paired with a deep understanding of Faiz's personal and cultural history, allows the reader to engage with Faiz's poetry on a much deeper level.

This book is a valuable resource for scholars of Urdu literature, literary critics, and anyone interested in understanding the intersection of culture, language, and politics in the poetic world of Faiz Ahmed Faiz. Dr Baloch succeeds in demonstrating how the cultural ethos of Punjab is intricately woven into the fabric of Faiz's poetry, making it both a local and a universal voice of resistance, love, and human dignity.

*Author is a lecturer in Urdu at the Government Graduate College, Jaranwala.*

## UNHCR launches \$10 billion appeal to address global refugee crisis in 2025

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) has launched a \$10 billion appeal for 2025 to meet critical needs and implement sustainable solutions for millions of refugees, displaced persons and stateless people worldwide.

Announced earlier this week, the agency's Global Appeal comes amid escalating humanitarian crises, as conflict, persecution and the growing impacts of climate change continue to force millions from their homes.

"We live in an era of relentless emergencies. Of crises without end," High Commissioner Filippo Grandi said, emphasizing the scale of the challenges in a foreword accompanying the appeal.

He highlighted recent and ongoing conflicts in Sudan, Ukraine and Lebanon, which have driven massive displacement, while also noting the protracted nature of many refugee situations, including those involving displaced populations from Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Fully funded, the appeal aims to support more than 139 million refugees and other vulnerable groups in some 136 countries and territories.

The appeal focuses on three primary areas: emergency response, inclusion, and long-term solutions.

UNHCR remains committed to its frontline role in emergencies, providing life-saving aid to displaced individuals, Mr. Grandi said, adding: "When conflict breaks out, UNHCR is among the first to respond."

The appeal also goes beyond immediate assistance, calling for sustainable approaches that integrate displaced individuals into local and national systems.

UNHCR aims to work with governments, civil society and development actors to promote inclusion in education, healthcare, and employment.

Of the 139.3 million targeted beneficiaries, 34 million (24 per cent) are refugees, 68 million (48 per cent) internally displaced, 12 million are returnees, and about 4.5 million are stateless people under the agency's mandate.

Around \$2.1 is required for UNHCR programmes in Middle East and North Africa, \$1.2 billion in Europe, \$957 million in Asia and the Pacific, and \$815 million in the Americas.

Across the African continent, \$2.1 billion is needed in East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, \$1.2 billion in West and Central Africa and \$451 million in Southern Africa.

UNHCR said it anticipates that the Asia-Pacific region in 2025 could face increased displacement due to conflict, persecution, climate change impacts and yet more disasters. It projects a rise in the complexity and scale of emergencies, compounded by diminishing donor support, which threatens to fall short of escalating needs.

In response, UNHCR said it will focus on fulfilling the pledges from the Global Refugee Forum, including more than 60 commitments from States to strengthen protections and find solutions for Afghan refugees and stateless Rohingya populations.

Afghanistan remains the top country of origin for the region's displaced, where over nine million forcibly displaced are located. Neighbouring nations Iran and Pakistan bear the brunt, sheltering 3.9 million and 2.4 million Afghan refugees respectively.



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

## Promoting healthy diet to combat malnutrition

**Hussna Khattak**

**W**ith birds chirping in canopy trees signaling the dawn of a new morning at village Dheri Mian Ishaq on River Kabul, the sunrays cast a warm glow on the mud house of Azhar Khan, a determined fruit and vegetable seller.

Taking control of the family business in 2020 in a difficult financial situation after the tragic death of his father due to cardiac arrest, Azhar, 35 started selling organic products at Chamakan market in Peshawar.

He daily brings fruits and vegetables to this market from hometown in Nowshera district on a rickshaw, toiling hard like many others to defeat poverty.

Braving all odds in his early days of business, Azhar was now all smiles after seeing people's overwhelming response to organic fresh fruits and vegetables, useful in combating malnutrition especially in children and lactating mothers.

Khan sells a variety of organic fruits and vegetables including guava, grapes, apples, peaches, ladyfinger and ridged gourd to cater to rising consumers' demand for quality nutritious food and balanced diet.

"As winter approaches, the demand for organic produce surges," he said. "Sometimes I had to visit Chamkani twice to get more fresh fruits and vegetables."

Thousands of the families in the province are now inclined to use pesticides and chemicals free organic food for better health.

"Balanced diet has a critical role for better health," remarked Dr. Riaz Khan, a child specialist at the Government Hospital Pabbi Nowshera. "Balanced diet helps in combating malnutrition, particularly among children, lactating mothers and elderly citizens."

He said healthy dietary practices must start from infancy with breastfeeding infants and then in early childhood to raise a healthy generation.

Declaring malnutrition as a silent killer, Dr Riaz said it poses a significant threat to children's health and cognitive development besides affecting their physical growth.

"We rank second in the region with 40% of children affected by this tendency due to socio-economic imbalances, poverty and lack of excess to quality medical treatment," he claimed.

Scores of children especially in less developed districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including merged tribal districts, Tank, Battagram, Kohistan and Chitral do not meet essential micronutrient needs due to high rate of poverty.

"Studies indicate that the majority of children face calcium, iron, zinc and vitamin A deficiency," Dr Riaz stated, also mentioning that about 50% of children suffer from vitamin C and iron deficiency.

"Iron deficiency affects nearly half of children under five and leads to developmental delays and increased chances of pneumonia and other fatal ailments due to weaker immunity," he informed.

As per National Health Survey of Pakistan report, one in three children are malnourished, with nearly 40 percent facing stunting and low weight at birth and five years of age. The root causes of malnutrition are stated to be repeated use of unbalanced diets, vivacious poverty and limited access to healthcare and food insecurity. Pakistan's cuisine

Darya Khan, Provincial Coordinator at Nutrition International, Peshawar said the Government was encouraging organic farming to address the challenge of malnutrition especially in children and pregnant mothers.

He noted that people who consume inorganic foods regularly are more susceptible to various health issues. "Promoting home-based agriculture can significantly improve the nutrition level of the Pakistani populace."

The longevity of life and health of communities in remote areas, such as Hunza and Swat, illustrated the benefits of organic and balanced diets.

The cultural shift toward organic food culti-

vation is gaining traction in urban centers like Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi as organic farming has experienced an annual growth rate of 15% in Pakistan over the past decade.

The phenomenon of malnutrition also has its economic effects with Dr. Naeem Khattak, former Chairman of the Economics Department, Peshawar University reveals that Pakistan suffered approximately three billion dollar annual losses due to micronutrient deficiencies. "Stunting in children and pregnant mothers increased in KP due to the increasing poverty rate after 2022 floods that affected agriculture and livestock immensely."

He called for urgent intervention like promoting sustainable agricultural practices, enhancing women's access to education and income, and strengthening healthcare systems besides financial support to poor families during pregnancies for better mother-child health. Pakistan's cuisine

Meanwhile, Dr. Ihtesham Ali, advisor to Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Health, highlighted the government initiatives to promote balanced diet and combat malnutrition.

Under the Ehsas Nashonoma program, he said financial support is provided to poor families, with special focus on girls and lactating mothers. "Rs2500 per month for newborn girls and Rs2000 for newborn boys are provided to poor parents for two years and health records are maintained by beneficiaries to monitor growth and health of children under two years."

The CM aide said promotion of healthy diets and sustainable agriculture farming practices was imperative to defeat stunting. "By prioritizing nutrition and investing in food, education and healthcare, we can achieve the common goal of a healthy generation."

Therefore, it is a shared responsibility of the whole nation to collectively fight out this menace affecting the health of our younger generation and exerting extra burden on our kitty.

## The Tragedy of Kurram, Dirty Politics, and the Suffering Masses

**W**hat crime had that six-month-old infant committed to deserve death in Parachinar? That child, who had barely begun to experience life, fell victim to a war imposed in the name of sectarianism. An innocent life, who had not even fully embraced the warmth of its mother's arms, was drenched in blood. Imagine the torment of the mother whose baby took its last breaths, writhing in her arms.

In this heartbreaking tragedy, 40 innocent people were brutally killed—human lives sacrificed in the name of hatred and sectarianism. The massacre in Parachinar, like countless others in our history, marks another black stain on the nation's conscience.

**Divide, Rule, and Govern**  
 Since the partition, Pakistan has remained trapped in the politics of division. Ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian differences have been exploited to sow discord among its people. The tragedy of Parachinar reflects a broader, persistent strategy of dividing the populace to consolidate power.

From Parachinar to Balochistan, from KP to Punjab, and from Karachi to the rural heartlands of Sindh, the flames of extremism and terrorism rage on. Religious intolerance and ethnic violence have repeatedly consumed innocent lives, leaving the nation torn and scarred.

**Dirty Politics and the Quest for Power**  
 For decades, Pakistan's political parties have prioritized their own interests over the nation's welfare. Short-term policies and superficial measures have only prolonged the issues rather than resolving them. Sectarianism, extremism, and hatred have been cultivated, and now their roots run too deep to be easily eradicated.

**Sindh: A Beacon of Unity and Resilience**

Sindh, the land that played a pivotal role in the creation of Pakistan, remains a stronghold of tolerance and unity. Unlike other provinces struggling with violent extremism, Sindh has been at the forefront of peaceful resistance against such forces. Yet, it faces its own share of conspiracies—from manipulated census figures aimed at reducing the representation of native Sindhis to the exploitation of its resources.

**The Way Forward**

Pakistan's political and military leadership must break free from traditional rhetoric and engage in meaningful action. Superficial policies must be replaced with genuine efforts to address the root causes of extremism. Justice, equality, and mutual respect must be the pillars of governance.

Punjab, as the largest province, bears a special responsibility to foster harmony and cooperation with smaller provinces rather than asserting dominance. The state must abandon policies of marginalization and suppression, as they only fuel resentment and division.

Sindh, which built the foundations of this nation, will continue to play its role in preserving it—but not at the cost of its own survival. The people of Sindh will safeguard their water rights, their resources, and their identity.

It's time for the leadership to recognize that dividing nations or imposing hatred under the guise of religion comes at an unbearable cost. Together, we must build a nation free of extremism, where every citizen, regardless of their beliefs or identity, is treated with dignity.

"It takes two hands to clap; unity and collective action are the only paths to saving this nation."



Sattar Sarohi



# President of Uzbekistan: It is essential for every home and every enterprise to contribute to the preservation of nature

**Spokesman Report**

TASHKENT: On November 23, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev planted a tree in a new garden created as part of the "Yashil Makon" (Green Space) nationwide project.

Ecology has become the most pressing problem in Uzbekistan. Air and water pollution, land degradation, desertification, and global warming damage the natural balance and human health. In the country, we realized the consequences of this problem in advance and began to take measures to protect the environment.

The "Yashil Makon" nationwide project, launched three years ago on the initiative of the Head of state, has become a real people's movement. The tradition of planting trees every spring and autumn is being revived.

The President sets a personal example in this. He planted seedlings in New Tashkent, Sergeli, and Chilanar districts in previous years. This year, a green belt was laid in Bektemir district of the capital along the Tashkent Ring Road.

One hundred hectares of land have been allocated for this purpose, and 100,000 tree and shrub seedlings will be planted in two years. Three artificial reservoirs and 12 wells have been created for their irrigation.



As is known, the "Yashil Makon" project aims to increase the level of greening of cities to 30 percent, in particular by creating green belts around them. This area along the ring road will become part of the Tashkent green belt. Another notable feature is that a natural forest ecosystem will be created here.

President talked to representatives of the public and foreign diplomats and expressed gratitude for their contribution to this noble initiative.

"This tradition is deeply rooted in our people. We call nature "mother", we treat the land and water with respect. Today, against the backdrop of urgent environmental problems, this

truth is becoming especially obvious. That is why the "Yashil Makon" project was initiated, and next year has been declared the Year of Environmental Protection and Green Economy. These initiatives must be widely disseminated and deeply rooted, especially among young people. Every family and every enterprise should make its contribution to the preservation of nature", Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized.

The event was watched by the public of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the regions via video link. Trees were also planted there. This autumn season, within the framework of the "Yashil Makon" project, 80 million seedlings



of trees and shrubs are planned to be planted.

In spring, 138 million seedlings were planted. Ministries and hokimiyats created 257 parks. Trees are also being planted around large industrial enterprises and landfills, and green belts are

being created.

Almost 10,000 residents and entrepreneurs have been allocated land adjacent to roads, railways, rivers, and canals for planting trees based on a lease agreement. The phased planting of 215 projects recognized as winners within

the framework of the "My Garden" project has begun.

In total, 646 million tree and shrub seedlings have been planted throughout the country over the past three years. In the Aral Sea region, the area of green spaces has exceeded 2 million hectares.

## Pakistan-Origin Royal Malaysian Air Chief Visits Hometown Haripur



**Zakir Hussain Tanoli**

HARIPUR HAZARAP: General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF), paid a heartfelt visit to his ancestral village, Beer, in District Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on Friday. District Police Officer (DPO) Haripur, Farhan Khan, confirmed the visit, stating that General Asghar Khan spent two hours in his ancestral village. During his visit, he offered Fatiha at the graves of his ancestors, including his grandfather Malik Qalandar, grandmother, and uncle Malik Yaqub. He



also visited family homes and met with relatives who still reside in the area. General Asghar Khan, born on December 26, 1965, in Selangor, Malaysia, has ancestral roots in the Tanawal region, specifically the village of Beer. He is the grandson of the late Malik Qalandar and the son of Goher Aman, both of whom belonged to this village. The

visit held deep sentimental value for the General as he sought to reconnect with his roots and honor his family's legacy. General Asghar Khan's trip to Pakistan coincided with his participation in the IDEAS 2024 Defense Exhibition in Karachi. On his personal request, the Government of Pakistan made special arrangements for his visit to Beer. The

General's arrival in his ancestral village was conducted with full official protocol. He traveled by helicopter, with the Pakistan Army and local police ensuring heightened security measures. The arrangements were made to ensure the smooth execution of the visit, reflecting the high regard in which the General is held.



## Community leader Basharat Umar and Rochdale Councillor Faisal Rana hosted

**Spokesman Report**

ROCHDALE: Former principal Chaudhry Abdul Shakoor, who came from Pakistan, was a special guest. The issues of the Pakistani community living in the diaspora were discussed. Rochdale Council Leader Neil Emont welcomed Councillor Faisal Rana's friends and friends to come together. Councillor Professor Iftikhar Ahmed said that there was a positive discussion with colleagues at the dinner. Councillor Wazir Shah said that the facility given to make obtaining a Nadra card possible at the doorstep has been removed and now its radius has been increased to thirty miles, which is an excess. We demand from the Government of Pakistan that it be restored as before. Former Mayor Councillor Asim Rashid said that the issues faced by the local level and the government of Pakistan were discussed together. The host was Councillor Faisal Rana, Deputy Leader of Rochdale Councillor Ali Adalat, Councillor Muhammad Arshad-Councillor Aftab Hussain and community leader Chaudhry Aitzaz Asim said that the government of Pakistan has stopped the holding of NADRA surgeries in different cities, due to which the Pakistani community is facing severe difficulties. The government of Pakistan will have to change its decision.

The decision of the government of Pakistan to make it difficult for the community in the UK to obtain NADRA cards is causing serious concern among the Pakistani and Kashmiri communities.

## Trump nominates Brooke Rollins as agriculture secretary

WASHINGTON: US President-elect Donald Trump has announced Brooke Rollins as his pick for agriculture secretary. Rollins, who currently serves as president and CEO of the America First Policy Institute, is expected to bring her policy expertise to the role.

"As our next Secretary of Agriculture, Brooke will spearhead the effort to protect American Farmers, who are truly the backbone of our Country," Trump said in a statement.

If confirmed by the Senate, Rollins would lead a 100,000-person agency with offices in every county in the country, whose remit includes farm and nutrition programs, forestry, home and farm lending, food safety, rural development, agricultural research, trade and more. It had a budget of \$437.2 billion in 2024.

The nominee's agenda would carry implications for American diets and wallets, both urban and rural. Department of Agriculture officials and staff negotiate trade deals, guide dietary recommendations, inspect meat, fight wildfires and support rural broadband, among other activities.

"Brooke's commitment to support the American Farmer, defense of American Food Self-Sufficiency, and the restoration of Agriculture-dependent American Small Towns is second to none," Trump said in the statement.

## Global Insights at 1st International and 2nd National Pakistan Occupational Therapy Conference

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: "There has been a remarkable 278% increase in occupational therapists in the Asia-Pacific region. However, these numbers remain disproportionately low when compared to the global population. We must take collective action to address this gap and improve accessibility worldwide", said Samantha Shann, President of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT).

She shared these insights during her address as the Chief Guest at the 1st International and 2nd National "Pakistan Occupational Therapy Conference", held at Ziauddin University.

The conference aimed to promote national and international collaboration among occupational therapy practi-

tioners, researchers, and educators, creating a platform to share best practices and innovative approaches in the field. The conference sought to foster interdisciplinary partnerships that enhance service delivery and improve patient outcomes while engaging participants in meaningful discussions on current challenges and future directions in occupational therapy.

Highlighting the significance of collaborative leadership, Samantha Shann remarked, "Occupational therapy demands teamwork and strategic efforts at both national and international levels. This field is vital for rehabilitation as it improves patients' conditions and quality of life and prevents the worsening of their health. By fostering global collaboration, we can ensure that occupational therapy services are more

accessible and transformative for communities worldwide."

Sharing her challenges about the journey in her dignitary address, Shahida Zakir, President of the Pakistan Occupational Therapy Association (POTA), said, "As occupational therapists, we have traversed a long and arduous journey. Today's first international conference was once a dream, there was a time when we had only hope, not resources. This conference stands as a testament to resilience, a dream birthed from sheer hope, now realized against all odds, symbolizing how far we have come by transforming scarcity into opportunity and ambition into achievement".

While addressing the audience, Prof. Dr. Sumaira Imran Farooqi, Dean, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences at Ziauddin University, expressed her pride

in the university for hosting the first international conference on occupational therapy. Reflecting on the challenges of advancing the field, she emphasized, "We need to improve the curriculum while acknowledging the difficulty of completing such comprehensive degrees within a four-year timeframe." She further highlighted the unique obstacles faced by occupational therapy in Pakistan, where the lack of local evidence leads to a reliance on international cases.

While addressing the conference as guest speaker Dr. Hassan Izzeddin Sarsak, Head of the Program and Associate Professor of the Occupational Therapy Program at Batterjee Medical College, Saudi Arabia, highlighted the importance of a patient-first approach, stating that "Over 1 billion people across the globe live



with disabilities, representing 15% of the total population.

On this occasion, Nighat Tahir, General Secretary of POTA, emphasized that the theme of the conference, "Building Collaboration," serves as a vital pathway to enhancing the advocacy of the profession, ultimately contrib-

uting to healthcare services and promoting the health and well-being of the community.

Earlier in her welcome address, Neelum Zehra, Vice President of POTA, and Principal of Ziauddin College of Occupational Therapy, said that it is truly an honor and privilege for us to host this signifi-

cant conference. We are delighted to have international experts and speakers among us, sharing their invaluable expertise and knowledge.

During the conference, abstracts were presented to the audience, focusing on topics such as the role of mental health in occupational therapy, oral pediatrics, and interprofessional collaboration, further enriching the academic experience of the event. Later, poster presentations were also held, adding another layer of engagement to the conference.

The event was organized in collaboration with the Pakistan Occupational Therapy Association (POTA), the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT), Sensory Care by SAM the OT, and the Pakistan Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (PSRD).



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

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
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
44,296.51	+426.16
Percentage	Time
+0.97%	22 Nov, 4:20 pm GMT-5
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,283.85	+257.68
Percentage	Time
+0.68%	22 Nov, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
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
New Zealand \$	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
US Dollar	277.30	278.80

# BOI to take KP govt on board: federal minister's directive

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has directed that the problems being faced in the Special Economic Zones across the country should be resolved on priority basis. He added that especially in the industrial zones of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the pending issues for the past years should be resolved immediately. He further directed the Peshawar Electricity Authorities to make the grid connection of the industrial zone functional within three days while the Governor State Bank have to appoint a Focal Person for investors so that the outstanding issues can be resolved. Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan said that we are all sitting here to resolve the complexities and concerns being faced by investors, especially the provision of electricity to them should be materialized as soon as possible.

The high-level meeting was briefed on the features of the Economic Zone Policy, tax holidays and import duty exemptions, among other issues to which Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that the Prime Minister is aware of all these issues and that there should



be no negligence in the future by rectifying the mistakes of the past. The Governor of the State Bank, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Directors of CRBC, Federal Secretary Privatization Board and concerned senior officers

presented the meeting with details on the Special Economic Zones related to NEPRA, the provincial Government, the Board of Investment and other departments and said that these issues were pending for the last five

years which are now being dealt with expeditiously in the light of special instructions of Federal Minister for Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan and this meeting will be breakthrough in this regard.

## Life is difficult

ISLAMABAD: A view of closed Sunday Weekly Bazaar at Sector H-9 due to road closed with shipping containers ahead of PTI protest, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Dairy and Cattle Farmers Association delegation meets Pakistani HC in Singapore

**Commerce Desk**

SINGAPORE: A delegation of the Dairy and Cattle Farmers Association (DCFA) Pakistan, led by Chief Organizer Shahbaz Rasool Warraich, met with the Pakistani High Commissioner in Singapore Rabia Shafiq to discuss avenues for collaboration in the dairy industry. The delegation included Raja Zahid Sarfraz, President North Punjab DCFA, and Qaiser Mehmood, CEO of the Asia Pacific Business Alliance.

The meeting focused on exploring opportunities for Pakistani farmers, including the potential export of top quality dairy products to Singapore and the adoption of cutting-edge technological advancements available in Singapore's dairy sector.

The Pakistani High Commissioner Rabia Shafiq assured the delegation of full support in facilitating trade and fostering collaboration. "Pakistan's agricultural sector, particularly dairy, holds tremendous potential. We are committed to supporting initiatives that promote exports and strengthen ties between Pakistan and Singapore," said the High Commissioner.

The Asia Pacific Business Alliance, headquartered in Singapore, will play a pivotal



role in bridging the gap between Pakistani farmers and the Singaporean market. CEO Qaiser Mehmood remarked, "This collaboration can revolutionize the dairy sector in Pakistan, bringing global standards and innovation to our farmers while tapping into lucrative international markets."

Shahbaz Rasool Warraich, Chief Organizer of DCFA Pakistan, emphasized the

importance of the partnership. "We are excited to explore new frontiers for our farmers. Leveraging Singapore's advanced dairy technologies will help us modernize the sector and achieve our export potential."

The DCFA delegation's visit signals a promising step toward international collaboration, offering a significant boost to Pakistan's dairy industry.

# Globevend, Mehran Commercial Enterprises reach strategic partnership at AAPEX



**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: During the three-day AAPEX Show at Las Vegas USA, a significant agreement was reached between Mr. Farukh, President of Globevend, and Mashood Khan, Director of Exports at Mehran Commercial Enterprises. Under this agreement, Globevend has secured exclusive rights to market and sell auto parts in the USA on behalf of Mehran Commercial Enterprises.

As part of this strategic partnership, an initial order includes 5,000 car wireless chargers for trucks and 50,000 sun visors for off-road vehicles, setting a strong foundation for future collaboration. This agreement represents a valuable step in enhancing trade between the two countries and exploring new opportunities in the North American automotive market. Both companies are committed to delivering high-quality products and driving growth within the industry.

# Shalamar Hospital deserves policy exemptions: LCCI

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Mian Abuzar has urged the government to ensure policy exemptions for Shalamar Hospital so that the management can enhance public welfare services.

He was speaking at the Board of Directors meeting of Shalamar Hospital which was chaired by its Chairman Shahid Hussain and also attended by Syed Babar Ali, Abrar A. Mumtaz, Muhammad Munir Chaudhry, Altaf M. Saleem and Omar Saeed, here on Saturday.

The board discussed Shalamar Hospital's current services, future development plans and the significant challenges confronting the healthcare sector. A major focus of the meeting was the financial burdens placed on the hospital due to policy

impositions.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad lauded Shalamar Hospital for its exemplary role in providing quality medical services to the community, particularly to underprivileged segments of society. He emphasized the need for the government and relevant authorities to waive the commercialization fee imposed on Shalamar Hospital stating that institutions dedicated to public welfare should not be treated as

Mian Abuzar Shad suggested that collaboration between the Lahore Chamber, healthcare stakeholders and the government could lead to pragmatic solutions that alleviate financial hurdles for institutions like Shalamar.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous resolution to advocate for the exemption of Shalamar Hospital from commercialization fee.

# Harmony OS: Huawei wants 100,000 apps on Android rival within a year

**Reuters**

Huawei said on Saturday it is targeting 100,000 applications for its Harmony OS operating system in coming months as it seeks widespread help to achieve self-reliance.

The tech giant has more than 15,000 applications based on Harmony that can meet consumers' basic needs, but the ecosystem requires more personalised and boutique apps, Huawei Chairman Xu

Zhijun told a conference on Saturday. "Based on our analysis, for the Harmony ecosystem to be mature in meeting consumer needs, 100,000 apps is the milestone, and that is the key objective over the next six to 12 months," Xu said in a speech posted on the WeChat messaging app.

The ambitious app target highlights the urgency in developing home-grown technologies as China faces elevated tensions with the US in areas ranging from trade to technology as President-elect Donald Trump threatens to be tougher on China.

Huawei launched Harmony OS, its operating system, five years ago after U. S. sanctions cut off support for Google's Android. The Shenzhen-based company, which sells products ranging from smartphones to laptops, later developed an open-source version of the Harmony system.

Due to the U. S. sanctions, "Huawei has been forced to accelerate developing its own operating system," Xu said. Although much progress has been made, "for any operation system, no matter how advanced it is, it would be of no value if no one uses it."

Xu expressed hope that developers could work hard to enrich app offerings and called on government agencies, state companies and social organisations to use Harmony as their operating system at work.

He asked consumers to be tolerant of the system's immaturity, saying,

"The more people use it, the more quickly it will become mature."

Huawei unveiled Harmony in August 2019, three months after Washington placed it under trade restrictions over alleged security concerns. Huawei denies its equipment poses a risk.

"No way back leads to victory," Xu said. "Huawei will unwaveringly invest in developing the Harmony ecosystem, and strive to make the impossible possible."

## ICCI and FTO Host Awareness Session on Taxpayers' Rights

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), in collaboration with the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO), organized an awareness session highlighting taxpayers' rights and the pivotal role of the FTO in providing relief to aggrieved taxpayers.

Muhammad Nazim Saleem, Advisor Sales Tax at the FTO, delivered an insightful presentation, shedding light on the tax system and the FTO's commitment to safeguarding taxpayers against harassment and unwarranted litigation. He underscored the FTO's Outreach Campaign, designed to enhance public awareness about its role in delivering prompt and cost-free justice.

The FTO has made remarkable progress in resolving complaints, adjudicating 8,128 cases filed by taxpayers against the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in 2023. Furthermore, the President of Pakistan upheld 96.01% of the FTO's decisions in appeals filed by the FBR, demonstrating the institution's efficacy and credibility.

ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi emphasized the need to foster a conducive environment for the business community. Praising the FTO's exemplary performance, he suggested its inclusion in the formulation of tax policies to prevent anti-taxpayer measures. He also called for leveraging electronic media, which is mandated to allocate 10% of its airtime to public welfare initiatives, to amplify awareness about the FTO's objectives and complaint resolution mechanisms.

The session also featured valuable input from Asad Hussain Ghalib, President of the Islamabad Tax Bar Association, who shared insights into streamlining processes for taxpayers. The event was moderated by ICCI member Naeem Siddiqui and attended by ICCI Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, along with Executive Members Naveed Akhtar Satti, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Zulqurnain Abbasi, Chaudhry M. Waseem, Chaudhry Irfan, and other prominent stakeholders.



# Rizwan stresses importance of Zimbabwe ODIs for Champions Trophy preparations

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan on Saturday stressed that the ODI series against Zimbabwe will serve as a key preparation for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

Pakistan and Zimbabwe will lock horns in a three-match ODI series followed by as many T20Is at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo from 24 November to 5 December.

This will be Pakistan's second ODI series this month after they beat Australia 2-1 earlier in November in their own backyard.

Former fast bowler and member of the National Men's Selection Committee, Aaqib Javed has been appointed the interim white-ball head coach of the Pakistan team until the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 at home.

The ODI series against Zimbabwe will be his first assignment after he joined the team on Friday.

Pakistan's ODI squad, led by Mohammad Rizwan, reached



Zimbabwe on Wednesday and had three extensive practice sessions in the lead-up to the ODI series.

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"The ODI series against Zimbabwe is equally important for us as we aim to test out our bench strength and plan towards the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025 at home," said Rizwan.

"With the help of the Almighty, we aim to keep the winning momentum from our last ODI series going.

"With the trio of our main players resting up after the Australia series, it will be exciting to see other players putting their hands up and helping

the team at various times during the 50-over contests.

"Having played against the home team various times, we do expect them to put up challenges for us during the three ODIs but crucially this series will also test out temperament in terms of backing up a historic win in Australia."

In the 15-member squad Arafat Minhas, Babar Azam, Naseem Shah and Shaheen Shah Afridi have been replaced with the uncapped duo of Abrar Ahmed and Ahmed Daniyal along with pacer Shahnawaz Dahani and Tayyab Tahir.

Pakistan and Zimbabwe last faced each other in the 50-over format in November 2020 in Rawalpindi where Pakistan beat the visitors 2-1. Pakistan, on their last visit to Zimbabwe, white-washed the Chevrons in a five-match ODI series in July 2018.

Pakistan ODI squad: Mohammad Rizwan (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Amir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Ahmed Daniyal, Faisal Akram, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah, Kamran Ghulam,

Mohammad Hasnain, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Salman Ali Agha (vice-captain), Shahnawaz Dahani, Saim Ayub, and Tayyab Tahir

Zimbabwe ODI squad: Craig Ervine (captain), Brian Bennett, Blessing Muzarabani, Brandon Mavuta, Clive Madande, Dion Myers, Faraz Akram, Joylord Gumbie, Richard Ngarava, Sean Williams, Sikandar Raza, Tadiwanashe Marumani, Tashinga Musekiwa, Tinotenda Maposa and Trevor Gwandu.

Schedule of Pakistan-Zimbabwe white-ball series

24 Nov - 1st ODI vs Zimbabwe (12:30 PM)

26 Nov - 2nd ODI vs Zimbabwe (12:30 PM)

28 Nov - 3rd ODI vs Zimbabwe (12:30 PM)

1 Dec - 1st T20I vs Zimbabwe (04:00 PM)

3 Dec - 2nd T20I vs Zimbabwe (04:00 PM)

5 Dec - 3rd T20I vs Zimbabwe (04:00 PM)

## Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, Shaheen Afridi to miss Champions T20 Cup

Sports Desk

LAHORE:

Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, and Shaheen Afridi are set to miss the upcoming Champions T20 Cup, scheduled in Rawalpindi, as they were not named in any squad.



Earlier today, the five mentors unveiled their provisional squads for the Champions T20 Cup. However, Babar, Rizwan, and Shaheen were notable absentees from the players' list.

This five-team tournament is set to take place from December 7 to December 25. Unfortunately, it will coincide with Pakistan's tour of South Africa, scheduled from December 10 to 22.

Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi, will be fulfilling their national duties and will, therefore, miss the Champions T20 Cup.

While the national selection committee is still in the process of finalizing the squad for the tour of South Africa, it's expected that Rizwan, as the white-ball captain, along with his fellow senior players Babar and Shaheen, will secure their spots in the lineup.

Provisional Squads of Champions T20 Cup

ABL Stallions (mentor Shoaib Malik): Abdul Faseeh, Abdul Safi Abdullah, Azam Khan, Hussain Talat, Mohammad Amir Khan, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Mohsin, Maaz Sadaqat, Mehran Mumtaz, Nasir Nawaz, Shoaib Malik, Tahir Hussain, Ubaid Shah, Yasir Khan and Zaman Khan

Engro Dolphins (mentor Sarfaraz Ahmed): Asif Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Ihsanullah, Khubaib Khalil, Kashif Ali, Mirza Tahir Baig, Muhammad Akhlaq, Muhammad Ghazi Ghori, Salman Afridi, Salman Irshad, Shayan Sheikh and Umar Amin

Lake City Panthers (mentor Saqlain Mushtaq): Abdul Wahid Bangalzai, Ali Raza, Amad Butt, Danish Aziz, Haider Ali, Hasan Ali, Irfanullah Shah, Mohammad Umar, Mohammad Zeeshan, Mubasir Khan, Rehan Afridi, Rizwan Mehmood, Saad Baig, Sharjeel Khan, Umar Siddiq and Usama Mir

Nurpur Lions (mentor Waqar Younis): Aamer Yamin, Arif Yaqoob, Hasan Nawaz, Humain Shah, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Basit, Mohammad Faiq, Mohammad Junaid, Mohammad Siraj, Mohammad Taha, Musa Khan, Rohail Nazir, Sajjad Ali Hashmi and Shahab Khan

UMT Markhors (mentor Misbah-ul-Haq): Abdul Samad, Akif Javed, Ali Shafique, Ali Shan, Ali Usman, Bilawal Bhatti, Bismillah Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay, Mohammad Faizan, Mohammad Imran Jr, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rameez Jr, Mohammad Sarwar Afridi, Muhammad Imran Randhawa, Muhammad Shehzad, Niaz Khan, Nisar Ahmed, Saad Masood and Zahid Mehmood

## Big money as Saudi Arabia makes foray into cricket with IPL auction

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Saudi Arabia hosts this year's Indian Premier League player auction in a partnership between a money-spinning cricket tournament expanding its global reach and a kingdom using sports to improve its image.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has backed extravagant sports investments — set to culminate in Saudi Arabia hosting the football World Cup in 2034 — to diversify its oil-rich economy.

The two-day auction beginning Sunday in Jeddah is the first cricketing event of this stature to be hosted in Saudi Arabia, a country with an under-served fanbase for the sport among millions of South Asian migrant workers.

Saudi Cricket Federation chairman Prince Saud bin Mishal said that staging the auction reflected the kingdom's "commitment to developing the sport and showcasing its position as a global destination for sporting events".

Saudi Arabia's big spending on sporting events had helped "to promote the narrative of a changing kingdom", Rice University's Kristian Coates Ulrichsen told AFP.

"To the extent that there is now a buzz associated with Saudi Arabia in football and in boxing, the spending has succeeded in changing the subject," he added.

Saudi Arabia has in recent years recruited top footballers including Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar into its league while hosting world championship boxing, Formula One racing, tennis and golf.

Visit Saudi, the state tourism arm and state-owned energy giant Saudi Aramco have both been IPL sponsors.

Cricket already has a fanbase in the kingdom among expatriate workers.

Non-Saudi nationals account for more than 13 million of Saudi Arabia's 32.2m people, over 40 per cent of whom hail from cricket-mad Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, according to the 2022 census.

The kingdom's cricket federation is also trying to boost the sport's popularity among Saudis and has launched a programme to introduce it in schools.

"There is a general perception that it's a street game," Kabir Khan, the federation's head coach, told English-language daily Arab News in August.

"We need to change that perception."

# Marcus Stoinis, David Wiese lead Deccan Gladiators to victory over Team Abu Dhabi

Sports Desk

ABU DHABI: Marcus Stoinis and David Wiese exhibited an impressive display of power-hitting, leading the Deccan Gladiators to victory over Team Abu Dhabi in a high-scoring Abu Dhabi T10 League 2024 match here on Saturday.

Team Abu Dhabi fell seven runs short of the massive 135-run target as they were restricted to 128-6 in their allocated ten overs.

They needed 14 runs off the last over, however, Ibrar Ahmad ensured the victory for Deccan Gladiators, giving away only seven runs

Skipper Phil Salt gave them a good start with a quick-fire 24 off nine balls and took the team's total to 45 inside four overs. However, they lost three wickets in quick succession and were soon reduced to 76-4 in 6.1 overs.

Jonny Bairstow and Kadeem Alleyne then smashed 41 runs from 13 balls for the fifth wicket to take the total to 117 before



Richard Gleeson removed the former. Bairstow top-scored with 47 off 20, which featured five boundaries and three sixes.

Alleyne remained unbeaten on 24 off 12 but failed to take his team across the

line.

Gleeson led the Gladiators' bowling attack with figures of 3-20, whereas Maheesh Theekshana grabbed two wickets.

Earlier, Gladiators posted 134-5 while batting first despite losing four quick wickets inside six overs with 53 runs on the board.

However, Marcus Stoinis held on to one end and played a blistering innings of 42 runs from 16 balls, laced with three boundaries and four sixes.

Stoinis fell prey to Noor Ahmad and was replaced by David Wiese, who displayed similar power-hitting abilities, scoring an unbeaten 42 off 12 balls. Wiese's knock included four sixes and four boundaries.

Noor Ahmad took two wickets for Team Abu Dhabi, while Adam Milne, Mark Adair, and Rumman Raees managed one each.

It's worth noting that Deccan Gladiators are comfortably sitting at the top of the Abu Dhabi T10 League points table, having won all three of their games. Meanwhile, Team Abu Dhabi have won out of three matches so far and are sitting in the third spot.

# Johnson Charles powers Northern Warriors to second win in Abu Dhabi T10 League

Sports Desk

ABU DHABI: Johnson Charles carried on his brilliant form and smashed another unbeaten half-century to power Northern Warriors to a thumping victory over Chennai Braves in the Abu Dhabi T10 League 2024 here on Saturday.

Chasing a target of 100, Charles played an unbeaten 52-run knock off 23 balls to help his side achieve the total in 8.3 overs.

He came out to bat in the first over after captain Colin Munro was dismissed for a golden duck. The West Indian batter carried the confidence from his unbeaten 23-ball 54 against the Delhi Bulls and continued from there.

Charles, along with Brandon King (25) stitched a 54-run stand for the second wicket before the latter was dismissed by Akila Dananjaya.

After the fall of King, Johnson



Charles continued his onslaught and steered his side to victory, hitting five fours and four sixes in the process. Meanwhile, Azmatullah Omarzai added a valuable 13 runs from four balls with

two sixes.

For Chennai Braves, all three wickets were taken by Sri Lanka players — Nuwan Thushara, Thisara Perera and Dananjaya.

Earlier, Chennai Braves after being invited to bat managed to post 99-5, courtesy of a solid third wicket stand between Chris Lynn and Bhanuka Rajapaksa.

Braves lost their first two wickets for only 17 runs before Lynn and Rajapaksa smashed 64 runs from 33 balls for the third wicket to push the team's total to 81.

Trent Boult broke the partnership as he castle Rajapaksa, who top-scored with 41 off 21 balls, laced with five boundaries and two sixes. Lynn remained unbeaten on 39, which conceded 25 balls and included five boundaries.

Boult, Saqib Mahmood and Fareed Ahmad grabbed one wicket each for Northern Braves.

It's worth noting that it was Chennai Braves' second loss in as many games during the Abu Dhabi T10 League 2024, while Northern Braves are unbeaten after two games.

# PCB unveil schedule of Champions T20 Cup

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday announced the schedule of the upcoming Champions T20 Cup, set to be played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium from 7 to 25 December.

Five teams — ABL Stallions, Engro Dolphins, Lake City Panthers, Nurpur Lions, and UMT Markhors — will compete for the prestigious title.

This marks the second event in the Champions Cup series, following the resounding success of the 50-over tournament held in Faisalabad in September.

In that event, the Lake City Panthers had triumphed over the UMT Markhors in a closely contested final. Cricket fans had turned out in droves at the Iqbal Stadium to witness the 14-match extravaganza, showcasing some of

the country's finest talent.

To build on this momentum, the PCB has strategically scheduled the Champions T20 Cup at the centrally located Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, featuring 22 matches over 19 days, including six double-headers and eight single-headers.

Double-header matches will begin at 11 am and 3.30 pm, while single-header games are set for 12 pm.

A new cut-throat format has been introduced to enhance the competition's intensity. The table-topper after the double-league stage will advance directly to the final, while the second and third-placed teams will face off in a Qualifier on 23 December at 3.30 pm.

The final is scheduled for 25 December at 3.30 pm.

The tournament schedule, designed in consultation with



team mentors, takes into account both spectator engagement and weather considerations. It also allows fans to follow Pakistan's men's cricket team during their T20I and ODI series in South Africa from 10 to 22 December.

Each side is guaranteed eight matches, giving them ample

opportunities to fine-tune their strategies and combinations.

The tournament format will also serve as a platform for emerging talent to showcase their skills, offering selectors valuable insights into players who could be groomed for the national team.

Furthermore, standout

performers may attract the attention of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchises as they prepare for the 2025 season and beyond.

To ensure all domestic players have the opportunity to compete in the much-awaited Champions T20 Cup, the PCB has rescheduled the final round matches of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy.

The last triangular stage fixture between Lahore Whites and Sialkot will now be played from 27-31 December, with the five-day final to follow from 2-6 January. Venues for these matches will be announced in due course.

The Champions T20 Cup will kick off on 7 December with an exciting double-header: ABL Stallions vs Lake City Panthers, followed by Nurpur Lions vs UMT Markhors.

First round matches will take place from 7 to 13 December, while the second round will run

from 15 to 21 December.

To ensure optimal preparation, the PCB will support the five team mentors in assembling their squads in Rawalpindi from 28 November.

Practice sessions will be held at the Diamond Cricket Ground, KRL Stadium, and National Ground, and warm-up matches will also be scheduled during this period.

**Schedule of Champions T20 Cup**

Sat, 7 Dec: ABL Stallions v Lake City Panthers (11am); Nurpur Lions v UMT Markhors (3.30pm)

Sun, 8 Dec: Lake City Panthers v Engro Dolphins (12pm)

Mon, 9 Dec: ABL Stallions v Nurpur Lions (12pm)

Tues, 10 Dec: Engro Dolphins v UMT Markhors (12pm)

Wed, 11 Dec: Nurpur Lions v Lake City Panthers (12pm)

Thurs, 12 Dec: ABL Stallions v UMT Markhors (11am);

Engro Dolphins v Nurpur Lions (3.30pm)

Fri, 13 Dec: Lake City Panthers v UMT Markhors (11am); ABL Stallions v Engro Dolphins (3.30pm)

Sun, 15 Dec: ABL Stallions v Lake City Panthers (11am); Nurpur Lions v UMT Markhors (3.30pm)

Mon, 16 Dec: Lake City Panthers v Engro Dolphins (12pm)

Tues, 17 Dec: ABL Stallions v Nurpur Lions (12pm)

Wed, 18 Dec: Engro Dolphins v UMT Markhors (12pm)

Thurs, 19 Dec: Nurpur Lions v Lake City Panthers (12pm)

Fri, 20 Dec: ABL Stallions v UMT Markhors (11am); Engro Dolphins v Nurpur Lions (3.30pm)

Sat, 21 Dec: Lake City Panthers v UMT Markhors (11am); ABL Stallions v Engro Dolphins (3.30pm)

Mon, 23 Dec: Qualifier (Second ranked side v third ranked side) (3.30pm)

Wed, 25 Dec: FINAL (3.30pm)



## Passengers face severe problems

LAHORE: Passengers crowd to board a train at Lahore railway station going to their home towns, passengers travelling on train due to bus stations closed in Lahore ahead of PTI protest.



Photo: Online

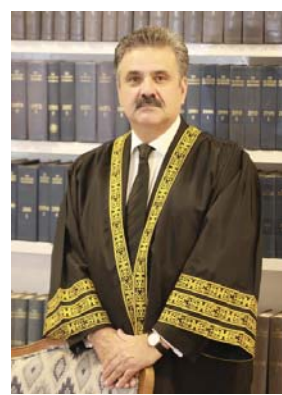
# Chief Justice Afridi announces major judicial reforms in KPK

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move towards judicial reforms, the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, presided over a meeting at the Peshawar Branch Registry of the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 22nd November 2024. The meeting decided to set up a sub-committee for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province which shall visit for different prisons and submit package of draft reforms. The meeting was attended by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim, Chief Justice of the Peshawar High Court; Mr. Justice Ijaz Anwar Khan, Administrative/Monitoring Judge for Prisons-Peshawar High Court; Mr. Justice Qalandar Ali Khan (Retd.), Former Judge of the

Peshawar High Court; Mr. Shah Faisal Utmankhel, Advocate General, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Mr. Muhammad Abid Majeed, ACS, Home and Tribal Affairs Department; Mr. Akhtar Hayat Khan, Inspector General Police; Mr. Muhammad Usman, Inspector General Prisons, Registrar of the Supreme Court of Pakistan; Registrar of the Peshawar High Court; and Ms. Riffat Inam Butt, Secretary of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP), Ms. Ayesha Bano, social worker and activist, along with members representing Government and Opposition including Mr. Amjad Ali, Mr. Fazal Shakoor Khan, and Mr. Ahmad Karim Kundi.

The participants offered feteiha for deceased passengers of Kurram who had



fallen victims to the brutal act. The Hon'ble Chief Justice lauded the role of Peshawar High Court in releasing 1289 prisoners involved in petty crime. He also praised the role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police in bravely repulsing the terrorist attacks and defending the citizens. He also emphasized on the importance of

upgrading forensic science facilities in the province to support efficient and evidence-based criminal investigations.

The Sub-Committee, will comprise of Mr. Justice Ijaz Anwar Khan (Convener), Hon'ble Mr. Justice Qalandar Ali Khan (Retd.) (Member), Ms. Ayesha Bano (Coordinator), Mr. Fazal Shakoor Khan (Member), Mr. Ahmad Karim Kundi (Member), Mr. Amjad Ali (Member), and representatives of the IG Prisons and LJCP. The sub-committee will give recommendations on the issues of Under Trials Prisoners enhancing rehabilitative programs within prisons, including vocational training, mental health support, and educational initiatives, to prepare inmates for reintegration into society. These inputs

will contribute significantly to the formulation of a National Jail Reform Policy, ensuring that the policy reflects the feedback and priorities of all provinces.

Regular interaction of stakeholders and leadership of Hon'ble Chief Justice underscores the importance of said reforms as key focus area of the Supreme Court aimed at addressing longstanding inefficiencies in the correctional system. The National Jail Reform Policy aspires to establish a transparent, equitable, and rehabilitative framework that aligns with constitutional obligations and international standards. This collaborative effort, represents a transformative step toward creating a more effective and humane criminal justice system in Pakistan.

## Firing near KP government's helicopter in strife-torn Parachinar

### Correspondent

PARACHINAR: A firing incident occurred near the helicopter carrying members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government delegation in Parachinar on Saturday.

No damage or injuries were reported in the incident which the Kohat deputy commissioner described as a "routine".

According to sources, the delegation, led by Provincial Law Minister Advocate Aftab Alam, was in Parachinar to attend a jirga held to address local issues. The chief secretary and other senior officials



attended the jirga.

The deputy commissioner explained that the firing was not directed at the helicopter and was a routine happening in the area. "There is no indication that the helicopter was a

target," he said.

The delegation's visit to Kurram was part of efforts to improve district's law and order situation.

On the instructions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister

Ali Amin Gandapur, the delegation travelled from Peshawar to engage with local stakeholders.

More than 50 people were killed and several others injured when gunmen on Thursday opened fire on a number of passenger vehicles in Lower Kurram.

According to the Kurram DPO, a convoy of vehicles coming from Peshawar to Parachinar came under fire in the Ucheat area. Automatic weapons were used by the gunmen, he added.

According to foreign media, over 50 people, including three women, died on the spot.

Several injured were taken to nearby hospitals where the condition of many had been described as serious.

A vociferous protest ensued in the area which led to further clash. Many casualties took place in the clash.

Police and rescue teams reached the spot, sealed the area and launched a search for the attackers.

But KP Law Minister Aftab Alam refuted such reports as "unverified" and added that no such incident occurred. In a statement, he said that the government delegation "is completely safe."

## Tarar rules out any negotiation rumours with PTI

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, on Saturday stated categorically that no negotiations are being held at any level with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Addressing a news conference, Tarar said that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, following Islamabad High Court (IHC) orders, contacted PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar to convey that protests or sit-ins in the federal capital were illegal.

Tarar warned that those participating in violent protests would be arrested and held accountable for any damage, as the government would not tolerate actions jeopardizing public safety. The minister said protests are illegal and disrupting public life will have conse-



quences, stressing the government's commitment to law and order.

He said that PTI aims to create divi-

sions between friendly countries. It's baffling that a protest is called on the same day a friendly country seeks to

enhance cooperation with Pakistan, he maintained.

He stated that PTI and the country's enemies share the same goal of hindering economic progress. He mentioned that Belarus is Pakistan's close ally, and preparations have been finalized to welcome the president of Belarus in Islamabad.

He noted that similar protests and sit-ins occurred during the 2014 visit of the Chinese president and the SCO summit.

He said Belarus and Pakistan are planning to jointly manufacture tractors. "While the administration prepares to welcome Belarusian guests, it is also ensuring citizen security. Can the system function effectively under such conditions?", he questioned.

He warned that officers involved in political activities will face strict action.

## Bus terminals, guesthouses and hostels closed in Islamabad

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Two days before the PTI protest, the police on the direction of the capital administration on Friday ordered the closure of bus terminals and hostels of private and public sector educational institutions in Islamabad from Saturday.

However, guesthouses in different parts of the city were closed on Friday.

In another development, the government decided to suspend the metro bus service in the limits of the federal capital on Saturday. However, the service will continue operating in Rawalpindi. On Nov 24, the metro service will remain suspended in both the cities.

Officers of the capital administration and police told that under verbal directives of the authorities, all bus terminals, guesthouses and hostels were being closed from Saturday.

All hostels inside and outside universities are being closed. In this regard, police contingents under supervision of magistrates and assistant commissioners reached male hostels early on Friday and asked the



inmates to vacate them immediately. Officials' team also reached female hostels and asked them to leave the vicinity before noon under the orders of the district magistrate.

Metro service to remain suspended in capital today; police direct closure of catering services with a warning against serving PTI leaders and workers

All the students were asked to leave for their native towns and remain there till November 27.

Moreover, all bus terminals at Karachi Company, Faizabad, Chungi No 26 were also being shut down under the directives of the secretary Islamabad Transport Authority.

## Patient dies in ambulance after 'entry denied' at Jhelum bridge

### Makhdoom Hussain

SARAI ALAMGIR: In an unfortunate incident, a patient died in an ambulance after being denied entry at the Jhelum Bridge.

As per details, the patient was being transported to the DHQ Hospital in Jhelum for emergency treatment.

According to footage surfaced online, the ambulance was stopped at the Jhelum Bridge, and despite repeated requests, the authorities refused to allow it to pass.

Later, the patient's family members were forced to carry the body on foot after the ambulance was denied entry repeatedly.

The GT road is completely blocked in both directions from Muridke to Jhelum, as well as at



the Chenab River Bridge in Gujrat, where containers have been placed on both sides.

Earlier: A wedding procession travelling from Sialkot to Lahore was stopped on the motorway, prompting the groom to appeal to the media and authorities for a clear path to ensure timely arrival. The groom expressed concern that the bride's family in Lahore is anxiously awaiting the procession.

## NADRA showcases biometric solutions at IDEAS 2024

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) introduced its advanced biometric innovations during its maiden appearance at the IDEAS 2024 in Karachi.

During the exhibition, the NADRA displayed featured 'state-of-the-art' biometrics registration and verification devices, which have been locally assembled through joint development efforts of NADRA Technologies Limited and National Radio and Telecom Corporation a press statement issued here read.

The authority added that these devices include locally assembled all-in-one handheld biometric tablet, mobile enrollment kits,



self-enrollment kiosks and a contactless iris camera.

"These devices have been designed to support modern national ID systems, enhance border control mechanisms, and streamline public service delivery, with a focus on usability, security, durability and affordability."

According to NADRA, the devices attracted immense interest from both international and domestic delegates.

## CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directs to completely control dog bite cases in Punjab

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif chairs a special meeting for a detailed briefing on law & order, public and administrative affairs of Multan division. She was briefed by the authorities concerned on Clean Punjab Campaign in the division, on which she appreciated Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Multan for their stellar performance in successfully implementing the project.

Madam Chief Minister was apprised by the authorities concerned, "Outsourcing of sanitation arrangements in 14 tehsils of Multan division has been completed, whereas process is underway in 6 remaining tehsils." She directed Deputy Commissioner and other relevant officers to visit villages to



check sanitation arrangements.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was briefed by RPO about law & order situation in Multan division, and directed him to take effective steps to suppress malicious elements and protect lives and properties of the people. She was briefed by the relevant officers, "Unlike past, there is a clear decrease in dengue cases in Multan." She was also apprised, "A fine of Rs. 4.4 million was imposed for different violations during anti-smog campaign in Multan." They updated Madam Chief Minister, "229 brick kilns have been demolished for not following anti-smog SOPs."