



**'Warm and cordial' meeting with Saudi Crown Prince**

The bilateral relationship was discussed as Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had a "warm and cordial" meeting with Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud on the sidelines of the One Water Summit held here.



**China's Xi vows to deepen infrastructure cooperation with Nepal**

President Xi Jinping on Tuesday told Nepali PM Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli that China will offer more support to develop the country's infrastructure, Chinese state media reported. The leader of the Himalayan republic was in Beijing on Tuesday to meet Chinese leaders, including Xi and Premier Li Qiang, seeking to expand infrastructure cooperation after breaking with the longstanding tradition of new leaders making their first official visit to India.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## One-Water Summit

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the family photo of the One-Water Summit being held in Riyadh on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

# PM Shehbaz urges global action to tackle water scarcity at Riyadh summit

**Muhammad Adeel**

RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has urged the global community to take action to safeguard water resources.

Speaking at the 'One Water Summit' in Riyadh, Shehbaz Sharif emphasised that water scarcity is the world's biggest challenge and requires urgent measures.

He highlighted the need to preserve water resources, stating that water shortages are exacerbating drought conditions.

He also mentioned the devastation caused by the 2022 floods in Pakistan.

The prime minister praised Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for his Vision 2030 initiative and other climate-related efforts.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reached Saudi Arabia on a two-day visit to participate in the 'One Water Summit'.

Upon arriving at Riyadh's Royal Airport Terminal, the prime minister was warmly welcomed by Prince Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman bin Abdul

lazz, the Deputy Governor of Riyadh, along with Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and other senior diplomatic officials.

The delegation accompanying the prime minister includes Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi.

"Just landed in Riyadh to join Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and other global leaders at the One Water Summit, a crucial event to discuss collective strategies for addressing water security challenges," the premier

wrote on his official X handle.

"Together, we aim to accelerate efforts to combat desertification, tackle water pollution, and promote local, regional, and global action. Let's unite in our pursuit of water sustainability!" he added.

During the visit, PM Shehbaz will participate in the "One Planet Summit for Water," which is a collaborative event organised by Saudi Arabia, France, Kazakhstan, and the World Bank.

The summit aims to promote a coordinated international

approach to water resource management.

The prime minister will also address a roundtable conference, focusing on measures to improve water quality and create livelihoods.

Sources indicated that Shehbaz Sharif will meet Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, where discussions will include the evolving regional situation and other significant matters.

The prime minister is also expected to meet UN Secretary-General António Guterres and other global leaders.

## Armed forces capable of foiling every threat to country: Gen Asim



**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir has said that with the support of the nation, the armed forces will foil every conspiracy against the country.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) statement on Tuesday, the army chief stated this during a visit to Narowal and Sialkot to watch troops training. The Gujranwala corps commander and the Training IG welcomed Gen Asim and briefed him on the objectives of the exercise.

Gen Asim said that the

armed forces are fully capable of safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of "motherland against every threat."

The ISPR said that the army chief spent the whole day with soldiers and appreciated the quality of training, professional preparedness and "high morale of the soldiers."

The exercise featured integrated fire and manoeuvre operations by various elements, including armour, infantry, mechanised infantry, artillery, air defence, army aviation and anti-tank guided missile units, added the ISPR.

## Cybercrime Amendment Bill proposes five-year imprisonment for spreading fake news

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The government has prepared the initial draft of the Cybercrime Amendment Bill, which proposes strict penalties for spreading fake news.

Under the proposed bill, individuals found guilty of distributing false information could face up to five years in prison or a fine of up to Rs1 million.

According to sources, the draft also calls for the establishment of a Digital Rights Protection Authority.

This authority will have the power to block or remove content from social media platforms and can issue orders to law-enforcement agencies or individuals to remove harmful material.

The authority will also be empowered to remove content that promotes hatred against the state or its institutions.

In addition, the amendment includes provisions to remove content related to threats, false accusations, and pornography.

Those who deliberately spread false information, incite fear, or spread suspicion will face up to five years in prison or a fine of up to Rs1 million.

The authority will be headed by a chairman and include six members. Decisions made by the authority could be challenged in a tribunal.

## South Korea President Yoon declares martial law

**Reuters**

SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Tuesday declared martial law in an unannounced late night address broadcast live on YTN television, claiming he would eradicate "shameless pro-North Korean anti-state forces".

He did not cite any specific threat from the nuclear-armed North, however, instead focusing on his domestic political opponents.

The surprise move sent shockwaves through the country, which had a series of authoritarian leaders early in its history but has been considered democratic since the 1980s. The Korean won was down sharply against the U. S. dollar.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Yoon said he had no choice but to resort to such a measure in order to safeguard free and constitutional order, saying opposition parties have taken hostage of the parliamentary process to throw the country into a crisis.

"I declare martial law to protect the free Republic of Korea from the threat of North Korean communist forces, to eradicate the despicable pro-North Korean anti-state forces that are plundering the freedom and happiness of our people, and to protect the free constitutional

order," Yoon said.

He did not say in the address what specific measures will be taken. Yonhap news agency reported that the entrance to the parliament building was blocked.

"Tanks, armored personnel carriers, and soldiers with guns and knives will rule the country," Lee Jae-myung, leader of the opposition Democratic Party, which has the majority in parliament, said in a livestream online. "The economy of the Republic of Korea will collapse irretrievably. My fellow citizens, please come to the National Assembly."

Yoon cited a motion by the country's opposition Democratic Party, which has a majority in parliament, this week to impeach some of the country's top prosecutors and its rejection of a government budget proposal.

South Korea's ministers on Monday protested the move by opposition DP last week to slash more than 4 trillion won from the government's budget proposal. Yoon said that action undermines the essential functioning of government administration.



## PTI creating false narrative of firing on protesters: Tarar

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday slammed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) over creating a 'false' narrative of firing at protesters.

In a televised address, Tarar challenged the Imran Khan-founded party to provide evidence of law enforcement agencies' firing at the PTI protesters during the November 26 protest.

According to Attaullah Tarar, the former ruling party was attempting to hoodwink the masses through 'fake narrative' and 'lies.'

The Information Minister reiterated the government's claim that the law enforcement agencies did not fire on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf protesters in Islamabad.

"There is not a single video in which law enforcement agencies can be seen directly firing on protesters. They [PTI protesters] have all kinds of videos but there is no video evidence of [direct firing] as this never happened", he added.

Attaullah Tarar mentioned a viral video in which a man was running away, claiming that he was hit by a gunshot.

Analysing the viral video, the information minister said that there was no wound or bullet mark on the man's hand when the bandage was opened.

## Finance Ministry denies reports of 'hiccups' in IMF program

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The IMF program is proceeding smoothly, with no disruptions, as the Government of Pakistan remains fully committed to meeting all the conditionalities and ensuring the successful completion of the 37-month program in close coordination with the IMF staff.

The Ministry of Finance reaffirmed that the Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, has consistently emphasized upon the government's continued commitment to macroeconomic reforms.

In a recent briefing to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance, the Minister reiterated that adhering to the IMF program is critical



for achieving lasting macroeconomic stability.

Any speculation regarding "hiccups" in the program's implementation is based on one's subjective interpretations and lacks credible evidence.

The government remains focused on maintaining economic stability and fulfilling all obligations under the IMF program with diligence and transparency, aiming to lay the foundation for stronger, sustainable, and inclusive growth.

# Sindh CM discusses provincial projects stuck up in Planning Commission for clearance

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah in his meeting with Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal discussed the pending construction of Coastal Highway and 20 other projects pending in the Planning Commission for want of approval/authorisation.

It was decided that the Coastal Highway would be made an economic Corridor as it happens to be connected with all the highways leading to Ket

Bandar, Karachi and upcountry.

The meeting was held at CM House and was attended by Minister P&D and Energy Syed Nasir Shah.

Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal told the CM that he and P&D Minister Nasir Shah had started the second phase of Coastal Highway by levelling the land at the site today (Tuesday).

Ahsan Iqbal stated that the Makran Coastal Highway was built around 25 years ago, but it has not become an Economic Corridor. He emphasised that road sector projects should

not only serve as sources of public transport but should also evolve into economic zones. At this, the Chief Minister mentioned that the Coastal Highway being constructed by the Sindh and federal government has significant potential for economic activities.

The Chief Minister added that the coastal highway would provide clear access for goods transport to Karachi and the rest of the country, as it connects with the National Highway and the Motorway.

Minister P&D Nasir Shah briefed the chief minister on the under-construction coastal highway.

Coastal Highway: The Sindh Coastal Highway, which spans a total length of 279 kilometres, begins at N5 in Gharo, District Thatta, and extends to Ali Bunder, District Badin. The project was initiated by the Sindh government in 2007 as part of the Annual Development Programme (ADP). Due to financial constraints, the project will be completed in phases.

## Specialties

ISLAMABAD: A Special Child take part in an Art Competition at National Special Education Centre for Hearing Impaired Children H-9/4, on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Lecture on "18th-Century Literary Gatherings in India"

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The Department of International Relations at the University of Sindh organized a thought-provoking lecture on the topic "18th-Century Literary Gatherings in India. Contributions to Islamic Modernity." Renowned scholar Professor Emeritus Jamal Malik from the University of Erfurt, Germany, highlighted the similarities between 18th-century European literary salons and Indian literary gatherings during the Mughal era in his lecture.

Professor Malik elaborated that the literary gatherings of that era offered a unique blend of ethics, self-critique, and artistic expression. Renowned poets and Sufi figures, such as Naqshbandi Sufi Khwaja Mir Dard and his father Nasir Andaleeb, played a pivotal role in nurturing this literary culture. Their gatherings and literary genres, like "mushairas" (poetry recitals) and shahr ashob (urban lament poetry), reflected a fusion of modernity and



Chairperson of the Department of International Relations, Professor Dr. Ishrat Afshan Abbasi, emphasized the importance of such lectures

in gaining a fresh perspective on Islam and its traditional values. She thanked Professor Jamal Malik for his insightful lecture and visit to the University of Sindh.

The lecture concluded with a Q&A session, providing participants with an opportunity to delve deeper into the historical and cultural dimensions of Islamic modernity.

# A reception ceremony hold in honor of the world-renowned poetess Rehana Qamar

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The reception ceremony organized by Bazm-e-Wafay-e-Qalam and Press Club Toba Tek Singh in honor of Rehana Qamar was presided over by renowned poet Mr. Dr. Manzar Phulori (Presidential Award-winning poet). While the hostess of the evening was Ms. Rehana Qamar. The special guests were Tahir Mahmood Tahir (President of Bazm-e-Nada-e-Qalam International), Gulfam Naqvi, Nargis Rehmat, Fakhr Chaudhry (Superintendent of Bazm-e-Wafay-e-Qalam), Mian Saeed Hassan (Chairman of Press Club Toba Tek Singh), Mian Saifdar Hussain Saifi (Chairman of Executive Committee Press Club Toba Tek Singh). The reception ceremony was conducted by Atir Al-Fihani, President of Bazm-e-Wafay-e-Qalam.

The guests of honor at the reception ceremony and poetry recitation were Dr. Tayyaba Arbab, Shukri Najafi and Nadeem Akmal Shaz.

The reception ceremony, decorated in honor of Rehana Qamar, began with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Qari Muhammad Ahmed Faiz Goldarvi and Naat-e-Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH) was presented by Muhammad Saeed Saleem Sultani. The President of the reception ceremony, Mr. Dr. Manzar Phulori, said in his presidential address that the daughter of Toba Tek Singh, Rehana Qamar, does not need any introduction due to her unique style. Despite living in America, she is an ambassador of Eastern traditions. Wherever Urdu is spoken and understood around the world, there is a large number of people who read and listen to it. Ms.

Rehana Qamar has experimented in every genre, but Ghazal is her favorite genre. She is the driving force behind the development of Urdu literature in the United States and the Pakistani social circles of the state of California. More than 10 books by Rehana Qamar have been published in Mansa Shahood and have gained recognition.

Local poets including Siddique Parkeef, Rehab Sajid, Ayesha Afaf, Qamar Saleem, Akram Khokhar, Jamil Ehsaas, Munir Sakin, Dr. Adnan Asli, Saleem Sakhi, Tahir Rafique, Abdul Majeed Kanwal, Samina Kokab and others presented their poems in the reception ceremony and received a lot of applause from the audience. Rehana Qamar was specially attended by Khurshid Ansari (President Women's Wing), Rana Zulfiqar Ali (President Press Club), Dr. Imtiaz Adil (General

Secretary) and other office bearers and members from the Press Club Toba Tek Singh. In the reception ceremony, prominent personalities from across the city, including Dr. Abrar Bashir (Director Imdad Bashir Hospital), Wasim Akram Grewal (Principal Superior University Campus Toba Tek Singh), Sajjad Bhatti (Riphah International College), Dr. Mudassar, Syed Zeeshan Shah (Pir Mahal), senior journalists Muhammad Asif Nadeem, Sajid Majeed, Zahid Majeed, Mian Muhammad Akram, Chaudhry Yasin (Country Head Spectrum International University College Malaysia) and others, specially participated and gave a warm welcome to the participants. Finally, thanks were expressed to CEO Shagun Marriage Hall Dr. Abdul Rauf and prayers were also offered for his long life and good health.

## AJK Central Traders Association announced wheel jam strike on Dec 5 2024

Abdul Majeed Tahir

Muzaffarabad: Azad Kashmir Central Traders Association met here yesterday reaffirmed its complete wheel jam strike on Dec 5 2024 until fulfilled their all demands.

A joint declaration issued by All Joint Action Committee senior leader Mr Shaukat Nawaz Mir during a hurriedly called press conference.

Today's meeting strongly condemns the attempt by the Azad Kashmir government to suppress the voice of the people under the black law.

All Traders Association itself is an important part of the youth of its daughter. Therefore, Jammu and Kashmir Public Action Committee on Dec 5 strike call fully supports and supports the indefinite period of call against the law for the sake of the city.

Today's meeting reiterates its struggle for the provision of cheap electricity and easy delivery of food, achieved through the eternal struggle of Shiraz and Imad Choan, and would continue till the complete implementation of the six or remaining Charter of Demands of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Action Committee.

## ICMA Pakistan Announced its New office, Bearers



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Pakistan (ICMA Pakistan) has announced its new office bearers. This decision was taken at the 416th National Council meeting. Among the newly elected office bearers, Ghulam Mustafa Qazi has been elected as President, Muhammad Yasin as Vice President, Azeem Hussain Siddiqui as Secretary and Abdul Qayyum as Treasurer. Ghulam Mustafa Qazi, the newly elected President, is a renowned management consultant who has played a significant role in the field of cost and management accountancy. Muhammad Yasin, the newly elected Vice President, has been the former Chairman of the Lahore Branch Council and was also the former Treasurer of ICMA Pakistan. Abdul Qayyum, the newly elected Treasurer, has extensive experience in the field of financial management in the public sector and is currently serving as the Chief Financial Officer of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam Project. He has also played a key role in the Lahore and Multan branch councils of ICMA Pakistan. This team of professionals is committed to further developing the field of accounting and management and contributing to the economic development of the country and the region. Under his leadership, ICMA Pakistan will continue its strategy to shape the future of the accounting and finance profession and play a significant role in the country's development. On this occasion, ICMA Multan Branch Council Chairman Muhammad Sajjad Ahir and other officials congratulated the newly elected office bearers and termed this decision as welcome.

## "Hyderabad's Cultural Transformation: A Tribute to Sindhi Heritage"

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: In a significant move to promote Sindhi culture, Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad, Zain-ul-Abideen Memon, has initiated a district-wide beautification project. Launched in mid-November, this initiative aims to restore the city's aesthetic appeal by incorporating elements that reflect Sindh's rich cultural heritage.



According to a press release, the project includes several key features:

### Ajrak-Themed Flyovers:

Flyovers painted with designs inspired by Sindh's iconic Ajrak, symbolizing culture through urban infrastructure.

### Sindhi Cap-Inspired Public Seating:

Seating areas designed to resemble the traditional Sindhi cap, celebrating Sindhi identity and pride.

### Heritage Monuments:

The establishment of monuments that showcase Sindh's history and legacy, fostering cultural awareness and appreciation.

### Tree Plantations and Cleanliness Drives:

Green initiatives to create a cleaner and greener environment for Hyderabad's residents.

### Celebrating Sindhi Culture:

Events and activities to honor and promote Sindh's rich cultural heritage.

Deputy Commissioner Memon stated that this initiative is a remarkable way to highlight the city's cultural identity and instill a sense of pride in the community. By incorporating traditional Sindhi elements into urban infrastructure and promoting cleanliness and greenery, the project aims to transform Hyderabad into a cleaner, greener, and more beautiful place to live.

## One million youth to be trained in IT under Bano Qabil project: Hafiz Naeem

ISLAMABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman Tuesday said that one million youth will be provided free IT training in the next few years under the 'Bano Qabil project' of Alkhidmat Foundation.

He said that new Bano Qabil Centers will also be established in Rawalpindi, following Karachi and Lahore.

He was speaking at the Youth Empowerment Session organized by Alkhidmat Foundation on the occasion of International Volunteer Day at Pak-China Center.

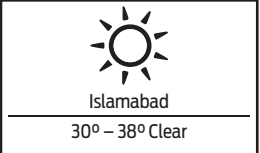
He congratulated Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan for serving in almost eight major sectors and continuing its mission through projects like earthquake and flood relief, healthcare, education and training of orphans, housing, scholarships, and the Bano Qabil program.

He praised Alkhidmat Foundation's efforts in providing thousands of orphaned and destitute children with free education, training, and housing, particularly through its premier educational institutions like Aghosh, which cater to the educational needs of underprivileged children.

Vice Ameer Mian Muhammad Aslam, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Punjab North Dr. Tariq Saleem, and Alkhidmat Foundation President Dr. Rizwan were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Hafiz Naeem emphasized on provision of employment and development opportunities to the youth in the IT sector.

He called for ensuring uninterrupted internet facility to the citizens and said that there must be ethical guidelines for the use of technology. He said that the Constitution obliges the state to provide free and quality education to all citizens.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 5:28 am  
Zohr ..... 11:58 am  
Asr ..... 3:21 pm  
Maghrib ..... 4:59 pm  
Isha ..... 6:27 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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

# Pakistan Disabled Foundation and Serena Hotels mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels, in collaboration with the Pakistan Disabled Foundation, organized a thought-provoking event to commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The event held at Islamabad Serena Hotel, brought together experts, policymakers, academics, and advocates to discuss the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in Pakistan and explore pathways for greater inclusion and accessibility.

The distinguished panel of speakers included, Abdul Wahab Shahid, Manager Monitoring, IGNITE, Imtiaz Ali, Senior Deputy Chief Manager, State Bank of Pakistan, Shahid Memon, President, Pakistan Disabled Foundation, Tahir Naeem, Representative of the Inter-Islamic Network on Information Technology (IINIT) and Planning and Development at COMSATS University Islamabad, Dr. Humera Aziz, Chairperson, Special Education Department, Karachi University, Dr. Shagufta Iqbal, Retired Principal, Postgraduate College Balochistan and PhD Supervisor, Lincoln University Malaysia, Professor Dr. M.

Mukhtar, Vice Chancellor, National Skills University Islamabad, Dr. Shehzad Khalid from Bahria University. The speakers shed light on the need to advance the efforts for accessibility for persons with disabilities and to bring about change in policy level.

Ms. Shahida Rehmani, Parliamentary Secretary and Guest of Honor, delivered a keynote address, underscoring the importance of raising awareness and fostering an inclusive society. She remarked, "Observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is essential to addressing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities and ensuring they are empowered to live with dignity and opportunity."

The event also highlighted Serena Hotels' commitment to inclusivity through its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as improving accessibility at its properties and creating employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

As the event concluded, participants reaffirmed their dedication to building a more inclusive Pakistan, where individuals with disabilities are empowered to lead independent and fulfilling lives.



## Groundbreaking Ceremony of CBD High Q Tower Marks a Bold Step for Urban Future

**City Desk**

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBD-DA), also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), marked a significant milestone in modern urbanization with the groundbreaking ceremony of its first mixed-use commercial high-rise tower, the CBD High Q Tower. Set to be constructed on an 8.89-kanal plot within the CBD Punjab Business Bay, the tower will soar to a height of 415 feet, symbolizing a new era of sustainable urban development and architectural excellence.

The ceremony was graced by the presence of prominent officials, including CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin, Executive Director Technical Riaz Hussain, Executive Director Legal Barrister Bilal Afzal Khokhar, Director Business Development Ali Waqar Shah, Director Marketing Waseem Siddiq, Director Architecture and Planning Sameer Aftab Sial, and Director Project Management Asif Iqbal.

Speaking on the occasion, CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin highlighted the significance of this monumental project, stating "The CBD High Q Tower is a testament to our vision of redefining urban spaces and establishing Lahore as a hub of sustainable and innovative infrastructure. This project reflects our commitment to driving economic growth and creating opportunities for businesses, investors, and residents alike. It is a milestone in our journey to build a modern, vibrant urban ecosystem."

## UAE National Day

ISLAMABAD: A view of Pakistan Monument decorated with colorful light in connection with United Arab Emirates (UAE) 53rd National Day, in the Federal Capital.

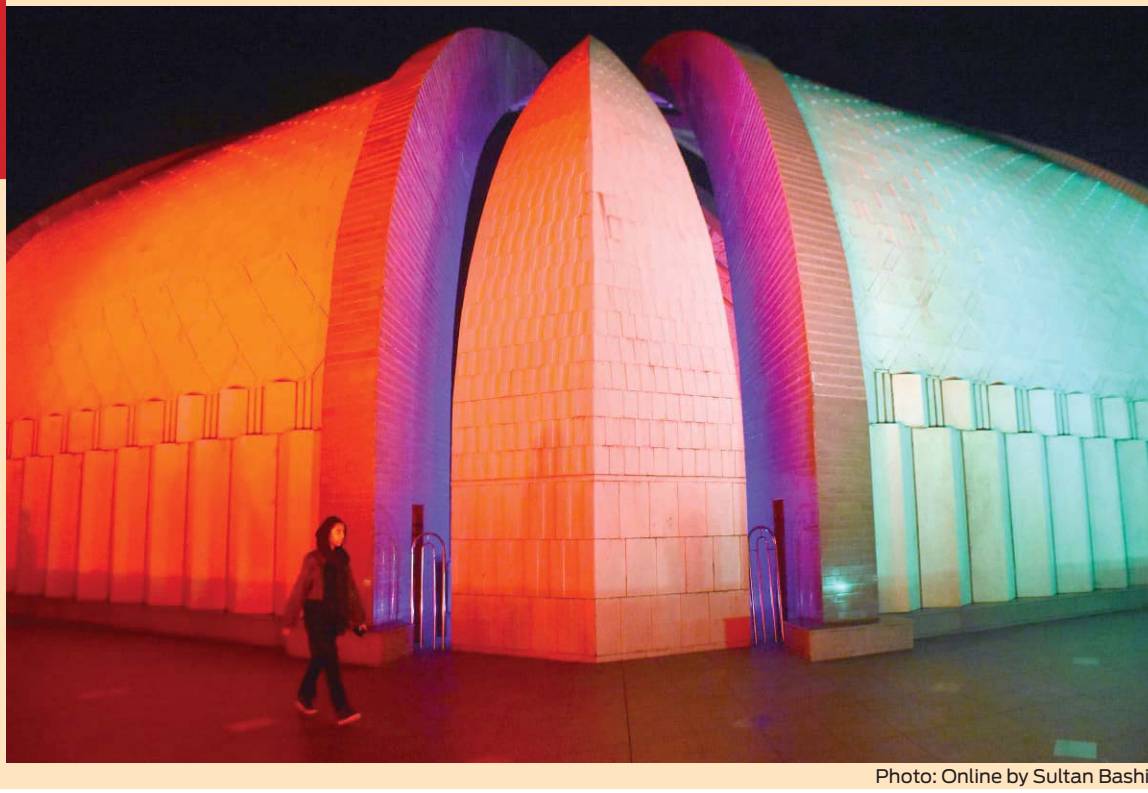


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## SSDO highlights need to end gender-based violence on Orange Day

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Orange Day, the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) organized a special event at its office as part of the ongoing 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The event aimed to highlight the critical need for collective action to eliminate violence against women and girls, which remains a significant global challenge.

Speaking at the event, the Executive Director of the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), Syed Kausar Abbas stated that violence against women is a global concern that transcends borders and cultures. Speaking on the occasion, he said that such violence not only violates fundamental human rights but also hinders societal progress and economic development.

"Violence against women is not just a private or domestic issue, it is a structural and systemic problem that impacts



the development and prosperity of entire communities" he said.

Syed Kausar Abbas said that Orange Day should serve as a reminder to all segments of society to take collective action to eliminate behaviors and attitudes that perpetuate violence against women in homes, workplaces and public spaces.

Reflecting on the broader impact of gender equality, Syed Kausar Abbas added, "A peaceful and prosperous society can only emerge when women and men are afforded equal rights, opportunities and protections. Gender equality is not merely a symbol of justice but the cornerstone of a stable and thriving nation."

The SSDO also appealed to civil society, government institutions, and media organizations to join hands in creating a safe and respectful environment for women.

He concluded by calling on every citizen to contribute to this cause, stating, "We must pledge to act today, not tomorrow to eliminate violence against women and ensure their dignity, safety and respect. Together, we can build a future free of fear for all."

The SSDO reiterated its commitment to advocating for women's rights and supporting initiatives aimed at ending gender-based violence across Pakistan.

## PRCS Marks International Day of Persons with Disabilities

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) joins the global community in observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, celebrated under the theme, "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future."

In his message on this occasion, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari emphasized the importance of fostering inclusivity and empowering individuals with disabilities to take on leadership roles. He stated "At PRCS, we believe that no one should be left behind. Persons with disabilities are integral to our society, and their voices, leadership, and contributions are essential to building a sustainable and inclusive future. Guided by the principle of 'Nothing About Us Without Us,' PRCS is committed to creating opportunities and removing barriers so they can lead their lives with dignity and purpose."

Chairman Laghari also reiterated PRCS's commitment to helping communities without boundaries or bias, stating that the Society will continue its mission of serving every segment of the population with compassion and care.

On this occasion, PRCS calls upon all stakeholders, including government institutions, civil society, and the private sector, to join hands in amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities and ensuring their full inclusion in all aspects of life.

## AIOU Provides Free Education to Persons with Disabilities: Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: "Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is making every possible effort to bring prosperity and convenience to the lives of persons with disabilities. To help them lead dignified and successful lives, the university offers free education from matriculation to PhD level," said the Vice-Chancellor of AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, in his statement on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Dr. Nasir further stated that the university has also established an "E-Learning Accessibility Center" in its library specifically for visually impaired students. This state-of-the-art center is equipped with specialized computers, headphones, and advanced software, enabling students with disabilities to easily access HEC's digital library, e-books, research articles, journals, and theses.

It is a matter of pride that AIOU is the only public-sector university in the country providing free education to persons with disabilities up to the postgraduate level. Additionally, various scholarships are available for students with disabilities, supported by a dedicated fund allocated in the university's annual budget.

## Two-Day International Conference concluded in NUML

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Modern Languages successfully concluded its two-day international conference titled "Prioritizing Economic Agenda in Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards United States, China, and the EU." The conference brought together leading scholars, policymakers, and researchers to deliberate on enhancing Pakistan's economic diplomacy in an evolving global landscape.

The final session of the conference focused on prioritizing the economic agenda in Pakistan-EU relations. Prof. Dr. M. Riaz Shad, Jean Monnet Chair and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, NUML, opened the session by

highlighting the critical importance of upgrading economic ties with the EU. Dr. Abiha Zahra, Assistant Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Governance and Global Studies, Information Technology University, Lahore, discussed the challenges in strengthening Pakistan-EU economic relations. Dr. Najimdeen Bakare, Professor at the Centre for International Peace and Stability, NUST, identified opportunities for advancing the economic agenda, while M. Taimur Fahad Khan, Research Associate at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), presented key policy lessons for enhancing economic cooperation. The session concluded with a Q&A segment, engaging participants in

meaningful dialogue. Director General NUML, Brigadier Shahzad Munir, delivered the vote of thanks, commending the organizers for addressing critical issues. He emphasized the importance of shifting focus to geo-economics and redefining economic diplomacy while recognizing global economic dynamics. Brig. Munir urged participants to embrace knowledge sharing, foster national pride, and work collectively for Pakistan's growth and prosperity.

The conference provided actionable insights and fostered discussions on redefining Pakistan's foreign policy with a strong economic focus, positioning Pakistan as a competitive player in the global economy.



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## Life is beautiful!

**L**ife is beautiful and precious. It has no alternative and is bestowed only once. It has three stages: childhood, adulthood and old age. Every stage of life is amazing but challenging. Problem-free life does not exist anywhere. Poverty, riches, failure, success, animosity and friendship are the inevitable parts of life. It is up to human beings as to how they deal with their lives.

Life is not spent in vacuum, rather it needs community and society to develop well. Life is rich in opportunities. It teaches humans that big achievements come by the virtue of small efforts and consistency. Life is heterogeneous. Accepting differences, welcoming varieties and agreeing to disagree is called life.

Life is the distance between birth and death; it requires confidence, self-discipline and time-management to navigate the distance smoothly. Accepting challenges and changing them into opportunities make life remarkable. Dwelling in the past hinders progress. Letting go of past pains is the first right step towards bright future. Virginia Woolf says: "When pain is over, the remembrance of it often becomes a pleasure". Future is the place where happiness exists. Past shapes present, and present decides future. Present is specified for actions. Your future is what you are doing now. You are what you do, not what you think. Dreams do not work, unless you act. Keep your dreams alive. Eleanor Roosevelt says: "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Ignore what people think about you, and concentrate on what you think about your life.

Realize age-wise responsibilities. Take

full responsibility for your life and stop blaming others and circumstances for your problems. You are the only person who can build or destroy your life. Be the all-weather friend of yourself. Talk to yourself about your plans, actions and results. Celebrate small achievements and congratulate yourself. Testing circumstances catch no friends. Identity fair-weather friends, and kick them out of your life. Don't be miser in appreciating those who have contributions in your success. Don't be an ungrateful person in life.

Surround yourself with positive, wise and successful people. Believe in yourself. Avoid expectations because they bring disappointment and spoil relations. Make your life worthy by making friends with fruitful people. Let people know that you have no time for waste gossips. Reading books is more fruitful than meeting purposeless individuals. Give your family enough time, it needs you the most. Keep yourself away from sycophants, misers and pessimists. Neither have blind faith in someone, nor do judge a book by its cover. Don't be a yes-man. You must have the courage to say No, it saves your energy and overcomes your problems. Saying No enables you to focus well on your own responsibilities.

Life is time, and time is your valuable asset. Don't procrastinate; it is the thief of time. Lost-time can't be compensated. Value time. The more time you waste, the greater it will cost you. Enhance your knowledge, improve your writing tech-

niques and develop communication skills. Life is not the name of anonymity. Introduce yourself by sharing your unique ideas and make people feel that you also exist. Make sure that you are important. Go where you are valued, and speak where your words matter. Let none make fun of you as you are second to none.

Don't get addicted to social media. Use it wisely. Its unwise use may expose you. Life is so short. Enlarge it by serving humanity selflessly. Write articles and author books. At least, you must have one book in legacy. Life is the name of balance. Love nature, literature, music, art, dance and traveling; they keep balance between the two extremes of science and religion. Use science, but let not be used by it. Like religion for yourself, but don't impose it on others.

Don't let grass grow under your feet. Come out of your compartment. Take calculated risks. Don't be afraid of failures. Paulo Coelho says: "The secret of life is to fall seven times and to get up eight times." Slow and steady wins the race. Slow progress is better than no progress. Be technical. Your salary alone cannot meet your expenses. Become a good earner. Become boss. A boss is more independent than an employee.

Life needs a sincere and loving partner. "It is better to wait long than to marry wrong". Happy marriage makes life comfortable and peaceful. Neither are you superior, nor is your wife inferior. "You belong to Mars and she belongs to Venice". Mutual understanding, compromise, tolerance and forgiveness are the

secrets of a successful married life. You must have children, but not beyond the replacement level. Having kids makes you responsible, and playing with them makes you normal. Bless society with educated, skilled and moderate population.

Life has great expectations from you. Make life a blessing for yourself and fellow-beings. Be kind to your neighbors. Love children, respect elders, pay homage to teachers, honor women, accept minorities, and help disable persons. Say no to hunting, trawling, deforestation and Corban emissions. Take care of your health. Take exercise regularly, play games, drink clean water, eat nutrient-rich food, and have enough sleep. Invest in your appearance. Keep your skin fresh, get a good haircut, and dress well.

Beware of political vultures, religious fanatics, economic exploiters, and social transgressors. Promote democracy, appreciate justice and support limitations. Whatever may be the circumstances, don't lose senses and always remain polite. There will be no compromise on character. Losing character is losing everything. Think, rethink, but don't overthink. Be a quick but just decision maker. Contemplate less and act more. Avoid yourself comparing to others and stop trying to please everyone. Set clear your goals, prioritize your tasks and define your own version of success.

You born only once, and die forever. Life is very beautiful. It is beautiful beyond our imagination. Enjoy it.

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Analysis

Fazel Tanha Gharshin

## Pakistan, KSA agree for qualitative change in bilateral trade, investment ties

**P**akistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday agreed that it was now necessary for the two countries to bring about a qualitative change in their economic, trade and investment relationship.

The bilateral relationship was discussed as Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had a "warm and cordial" meeting with Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud on the sidelines of the One Water Summit held here.

The Crown Prince spoke of his great pleasure at meeting the Prime Minister Shehbaz for the fifth time over past six months. He said that this was the evidence of the genuine love and affection that connect the peoples of the two countries.

The Crown Prince stressed that it was important to ensure that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enhance meaningful cooperation that will bring about economic growth and prosperity in Pakistan.

Both leaders expressed satisfaction at the pace of progress of the implementation of the MOUs and agreements signed between the two countries regarding investment in Pakistan.

The Prime Minister thanked the Crown Prince for his most genuine affection for the people of Pakistan.

He reiterated his invitation to the Crown Prince to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience. The Crown Prince responded that he was looking forward to his visit to Pakistan.

Later in a post on his X time-line, the prime minister referring to his meeting with the Crown Prince, thanked him for his personal interest and support in building closer Saudi Arabia-Pakistan ties for the benefit of the two nations.

"Had the pleasure and honor of meeting my brother HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of the One Water Summit in Riyadh. We reaffirmed our strong brotherly ties and discussed ways to further enhance our cooperation in trade and investment. Frequent high level exchanges are paving the way for mutually beneficial economic cooperation between our two countries," he added.



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

## Impact of diet & nutrition on osteoporosis: preventive and supportive strategies

Naveed Ul Haq

**A**mong global healthcare concerns, osteoporosis emerges as one of the most widespread, yet often overlooked, conditions, especially in aging populations. This silent ailment, marked by the progressive weakening of bones, carries significant implications, including an increased likelihood of fractures, restricted mobility and a decline in overall quality of life.

Osteoporosis is a condition that develops over time, often without symptoms until a fracture occurs. It primarily affects bones in the hip, spine and wrist with fractures in these areas posing severe health risks, especially among the elderly. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that over 200 million people worldwide suffer from osteoporosis, making it a critical public health concern. In Pakistan, approximately 9.9 million individuals currently live with this condition, 7.2 million of whom are women. Projections suggest this figure will rise to 11.3 million by 2025 and to a staggering 12.9 million by 2050. Buy vitamins and supplements.

Common dietary sources of calcium include:

- Dairy products: Milk, cheese, yogurt
- Leafy greens: Spinach, kale
- Nuts and seeds: Almonds, sesame seeds
- Fortified foods: Plant-based milks, cereals
- Vitamin D is found in:
- Fatty fish: Salmon, mackerel
- Fortified dairy and plant-based milks
- Eggs
- Sunlight exposure

Beyond calcium and vitamin D, other nutrients like magnesium, protein and vitamin K also contribute to bone health. Magne-

sium helps with calcium metabolism, while vitamin K plays a role in bone mineralization. Research shows that diets rich in these nutrients can significantly reduce the risk of fractures and maintain bone density.

Osteoporosis in Pakistan: A closer look  
 A 2018 study on bone health among Pakistani women revealed alarming deficiencies in key nutrients essential for maintaining bone density. These deficiencies, coupled with a sedentary lifestyle and high prevalence of smoking, exacerbate osteoporosis risks. Women, particularly those in rural areas, are disproportionately affected due to limited access to nutrient-rich foods and healthcare.

The projected rise in osteoporosis cases to nearly 13 million by 2050 in Pakistan underscores the urgent need for preventive measures. Dietary calcium deficiency, a significant contributor to this epidemic, is often attributed to the unavailability of calcium-rich foods and lack of public awareness. This deficiency not only weakens bones but also affects cardiovascular health, pregnancy outcomes, and muscle function.

"Addressing calcium deficiency requires creative solutions," says Asim Javed. "Our initiatives focus on introducing calcium-fortified foods and empowering individuals to make healthier choices."

Role of Punjab Food Authority  
 Recognising the severity of osteoporosis, the Punjab Food Authority has undertaken multiple initiatives to raise awareness about its prevention through diet and nutrition. PFA's Nutrition Section organises community seminars, nutrition camps and social media campaigns to educate the public about incorporating nutrient-rich foods into their diets.

By promoting calcium-fortified foods and regulating food quality, PFA aims to combat nutritional deficiencies that contribute to

osteoporosis. These efforts align with Pakistan's broader National Action Plan on Non-Communicable Diseases, which seeks to reduce the prevalence of chronic illnesses, including osteoporosis, through education and preventive measures. "Nutrition is the foundation of a healthy life," remarks Asim Javed. "Our mission is to ensure that every individual, regardless of socioeconomic status, has access to the knowledge and resources needed to make informed dietary choices."

Osteoporosis prevention demands a comprehensive approach involving healthcare providers, policymakers and communities. Public health campaigns promoting calcium and vitamin D intake, school programmes teaching children about healthy eating and workplace wellness initiatives are all critical components of a national strategy.

The Punjab Food Authority's focus on nutritional literacy is a step in the right direction. By leveraging social media to reach younger audiences and organising community workshops, the PFA ensures that its message reaches all segments of society.

As Pakistan grapples with the growing burden of osteoporosis, need for preventive measures is more urgent than ever. Dietary choices, supplemented by public health initiatives, hold the key to reducing the prevalence of this disease and improving the overall quality of life for millions.

"Every meal is an opportunity to strengthen our bones and secure our health," concludes Asim Javed. "Let's build a future where osteoporosis is no longer a silent threat."

Through continued dedication to nutritional education and public health campaigns, Pakistan can create a healthier, more resilient population, safeguarding future generations against the debilitating effects of osteoporosis.

## Women empowerment: An imperative to sustainable development - I

Tooba Khan

**I**n an era of gender diversity where the culture of inclusivity emerges as a trend for sustainable development, women's representation in leadership positions and raising a breed of well-educated and trained women folk has become crucial for nations.

As women participation in policy making and execution, is now a global known fact, creating more and more education and leadership opportunities for female segment in countries like Pakistan where half of population comprises women, is an enormous challenge.

Better gender balance in business leadership is also inextricably linked with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under United Nations (SDG 5); attainment of gender equality, is impossible without women's sizable representation at the top.

- Advertisement -  
 By ignoring their vibrant participation, the nations' not only lack revered values of justice, harmony and tolerance but also overall development and a sense of security against intolerant behaviors of male dominating societies.

"Women representation in different walks of life including economy, policymaking and management is important to ensure gender equality," remarked Fouzia Khan Bhattani, an educationist from Quaid-i-Azam University. "Traditionally in societies like ours, policies about women are formulated by men. The question is; how such policies formulated without representation of women, can be fruitful as women know more about their issues."

She said women can bring different perspec-

tives and viewpoints in decision-making ensuring innovative and better solutions for communities. "Their integration in decision making and policies for their welfare and economic independence, can address multiple societal problems."

In this context she quoted the example of domestic violence where the women are subjected to a coercive living only because of their economic dependence on male family members.

"When they are solely dependent on male members and are not financially self-sufficient, they are obviously on a weaker side," Fouzia Khan said. "Having women in leadership positions can provide them opportunity to contribute in nation building and breaking the shackles of stereotype thinking about their position and abilities in families and society as a whole."

She said it is commonly observed that in many cases women executives deliver much better than the male hierarchy. "But, for elevating them to this pinnacle, we need a realistic thinking about women, provide them better education, training and employment facilities."

As women comprise half of our population, keeping them away from education, training and better executive opportunities means that we are making half of our population non-productive and irrelevant to national progress.

Female doctors, teachers, jurists, executives and even preachers can have better understanding of feminine issue and their redressal and pave way for building a society offering equal and congenial living for our half of population.

To be continued

# ‘Pak-Turkiye trade ties set for major boost: Jam Kamal Khan, Turkish Envoy chart new path’

**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Irfan Neziroglu met to discuss avenues for enhancing trade and economic ties between the two countries.

The meeting underscored the historical, cultural, and strategic ties between Pakistan and Turkiye while emphasizing the need to unlock the true trade potential of the relationship.

The leadership of both nations envision increasing trade and to enhance bilateral opportunities.

He highlighted the operationali-

zation of the “Trade in Goods Agreement” in May 2023, which granted tariff concessions on Pakistani and Turkish products.

Ambassador Neziroglu proposed that Pakistan send a delegation, to Turkiye in January 2025 to discuss actionable plans ahead of a high-level state meeting scheduled in Islamabad.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan emphasized the importance of creating a business-friendly environment to empower the private sector.

“The era has changed; our focus must be on facilitating the private sector to lead trade growth,” he remarked, adding that matchmaking

initiatives for business-to-business (B2B) engagements would play a vital role in enhancing economic collaboration.

He also referenced his meeting with the Turkish counterpart

Dr Omer Bolat, in Karachi, where he floated the idea of matchmaking among the business community. Both sides agreed to explore opportunities for joint ventures.

The minister also mentioned the Joint Task Force on Textiles, initiated after discussions during the COMCEC Ministerial Meeting in 2023, as a mechanism to rationalize tariffs and strengthen the textile value chain.



Ambassador Neziroglu and Minister Khan agreed on the importance of government-to-government (G2G) and business-to-business (B2B) engagements.

Concluding the meeting, both sides expressed optimism about the future of Pak-Turkiye relations and committed to taking pragmatic steps to achieve their shared economic goals.

The proposed delegation to Turkiye in January is expected to lay the groundwork for significant advancements in bilateral trade and investment.

# ISSI’s 2-day Islamabad Conclave on “Pakistan and the Evolving Global Order” begins Inaugural Plenary

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The 4th edition of ISSI’s Islamabad Conclave, with thematic focus on “Pakistan and the Evolving Global Order,” commenced today. Former Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani was the chief guest at the inaugural session.

In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted ISSI’s position as a premier think-tank dedicated to informed research and policy advocacy on foreign policy as well as regional and global issues. He also highlighted the Institute’s achievements in the arena of multi-stakeholder dialogue, narrative-building, and regional and international outreach.

He added that Pakistan also places greater premium on UN-centered multilateralism, as opposed to creation of smaller cliques or exclusive groupings. Equally, Pakistan favours such reform of the multilateral institutions that would make them more democratic, transparent, and accountable; not one that further fortifies the existing bastions of privilege, exclusivity, and immunity from reasonable scrutiny. As an elected member of the UN Security Council for the term



2025-26, Pakistan is poised to make its rightful contribution to the issues of peace and security on the global agenda, he concluded.

Chief Guest Former Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, in his address, lauded ISSI for transforming the Islamabad Conclave into a vital platform for policy dialogue and its contribution to research and outreach. On the Conclave’s theme, he outlined the challenges posed by major-power contestation, the escalating climate crisis, the ongoing genocide in Gaza

and its tragic humanitarian consequences. He emphasized Pakistan’s power potential, strategic relevance, nuclear capability and the opportunity offered by its upcoming membership of the United Nations Security Council. Ambassador Jilani outlined four major priorities for Pakistan: unshakable commitment to international law and UN Charter; avoiding bloc politics, building a peaceful neighbourhood, and advocating for a fair and equitable global order. Going forward, he said that for Pakistan, the task is

clearly cut out.

The inaugural session concluded with Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman ISSI’s Board of Governors, presenting a memento to Ambassador Jilani. The two-day conclave features interactive discussions, expert analyses, and policy recommendations on Pakistan’s geopolitical, economic, and environmental challenges and opportunities in the 21st-century global order. The Track 1.5 forum is being attended by practitioners, scholars, academics, experts, and University students.

## Martin Luther English Club Bids Farewell to Ambassador Dr. Ahmed Ali Sirohey

**City Desk**

KARACHI: The Martin Luther English Club hosted a grand farewell ceremony in honor of Dr. Ahmed Ali Sirohey, Pakistan’s outgoing Ambassador, at the prestigious Radisson Blu Hotel in Niamey.

The event was attended by a large number of graduate students and club members who paid heartfelt tributes to Dr. Sirohey for his selfless services and unwavering support. In his inspiring address, the ambassador shared his life experiences, emphasizing perseverance, courage, and fearlessness as the keys to success.

The ceremony featured poetry, songs, and emotional speeches by students and club members, all expressing their admiration for Dr. Sirohey’s remarkable contributions. The event concluded with warm wishes for his future endeavors.

This farewell ceremony by the Martin Luther English Club highlighted the deep bonds of friendship and appreciation between the ambassador and the club’s members.



# Devcom-Pakistan opens ‘Raja Changez Sultan Himalayan Odyssey Award Painting Exhibition’

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Devcom-Pakistan, as part of the 14th Pakistan Mountain Festival, organized the “Raja Changez Sultan Himalayan Odyssey Award” painting exhibition at the National Art Gallery on Tuesday. The exhibition celebrated the theme of Mountain Heritage, showcasing the breathtaking beauty, cultural richness, and environmental significance of Pakistan’s mountains.

Raja Changez Sultan was the chief guest who presented the award to the winning artist Beenish Azam. Pakistan

National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Director General Mohammad Ayub Jamali was the guest of honour. He distributed certificates among the participating artists.

A total of 32 artists from across Pakistan participated in the exhibition, presenting a diverse array of works that captured the essence of the Himalayas, Karakoram, and Hindu Kush mountain ranges. The event paid homage to Raja Changez Sultan, a legendary artist and poet renowned for his lifelong dedication to documenting the mystique and grandeur of mountain landscapes through his art

and literary works. The participating artists included Agha Shahid, Akmal Hameed, Ambreen Anjum, Areej Batool, Asma Shahid, Attiqah Malik, Beenish Azam, Dr. Farrukh Seir, Fadhil Yousafzai, Fatima Afzal, Fatima Ejaz, Fauzia Khan, Hadia Khanam, Hatice Omar, Kanwal Nafees, Kiran Mughal, Maryam Mustafa Mazhary, Niala Abrar, Saba Hameed, Saffia Mughes, Saima Aamir, Saleha Faisal, Shafqat Mehmood, Shahnaz Akram, Shehla Moazzam, Sidrah Iqbal, Silvat Hijazi and Tasnima Sajid.

Speaking on the occasion, Munir Ahmed, Executive Director of

Devcom-Pakistan and Founder of the “Raja Changez Sultan Himalayan Odyssey Award,” highlighted the deep cultural and ecological significance of mountains and their unique place in Pakistan’s heritage.

“Our mountains are the cradle of our rivers, the lungs of our environment, and the heart of our cultural diversity. Through this award and exhibition, we aim to create a nexus between art and environmental conservation, reminding us all of our responsibility to preserve the beauty and heritage of these majestic landscapes,” Munir Ahmed remarked. He also paid tribute



to Raja Changez Sultan, whose artistic vision and dedication to documenting the mountains of Pakistan continue to inspire and guide generations.

The exhibition was also a tribute to Raja Changez Sultan, whose Himalayan Odyssey series has become a timeless celebration of mountain

landscapes. His dedication continues to inspire generations of artists and environmentalists alike. The exhibition is part of the ongoing activities of the 14th Pakistan Mountain Festival, which will continue to celebrate mountain ecosystems and their importance through diverse events.

# OICCI Leads the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Transformative Solutions for an Inclusive Future

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: On the occasion of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) hosted its 2nd Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Conference 2024, at the OICCI Building in Karachi. The event convened a diverse group of CEOs, HR heads, business leaders, and policy-makers for impactful discussions advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the workforce.

Themed “Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive, Sustainable Future” the event highlighted the imperative for businesses to adopt accessible and inclusive workplace practices. In his opening remarks, OICCI Managing Committee member Ahmed Khan Bozai, emphasized the



importance of addressing systemic barriers that hinder PWD inclusion. He stated, “True inclusion goes beyond breaking barriers – it’s about building a workplace culture that values the strengths of every individual. When businesses embrace diversity, they not

only unlock innovation but also create environments where everyone feels they truly belong and can contribute meaningfully.”

The conference focused on four key areas for fostering inclusion: addressing barriers to PWD employment,

improving HR policies and recruitment practices, enhancing accessible workplace infrastructure, and strengthening national policies through public-private partnerships. These key areas provided a roadmap for businesses to overcome challenges and implement sustainable

strategies for inclusion. OICCI Secretary General M Abdul Aleem highlighted the need for meaningful change, stating, “Inclusion isn’t just a goal—it’s an ongoing commitment to creating workplaces where people of all abilities are given the opportunity to thrive and contribute.”

The event also featured a dynamic panel discussion with leading experts, including Madiha Siddiqui, Head of Empowerment Programs at NOWPDP, Khalid Zaman Khan, SEVP and Group Head of HR, Learning and Organizational Development at Meezan Bank Limited, and Rizwan Dalia, CPO at K-Electric, Shabana Kousar, DG of SPDPA and Ali Tareen, Founder of Khaas Foodz Kitchen. Moderated by Rabia Khattak, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Jazz, the panel explored actionable strategies to address gaps

in HR, infrastructure, and policy and emphasized the importance of collaboration between private corporations, advocacy groups, and the public sector in driving long-term progress in inclusion efforts.

In her closing remarks, OICCI Managing Committee member Farheen Salman Amir, delivered an inspiring call to action. “It is our collective responsibility to create workplaces where everyone, without bias towards physical ability, can thrive. By aligning our corporate practices with national policies, we can foster accessibility and equity for all,” she stated. In line with this, OICCI pledged to work towards the government’s target of 2% PWD employment in the corporate sector and to document and share best practices that can serve as a guide for other organizations.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
104,559.07	103,274.94
Day's High	Day's Low
104,680.88	102,825.59
Index Value	Change
36,237,909,240	+1284.13
Percentage	Time
+1.24%	3 Dec, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,359.41	+46.52
Percentage	Time
+0.56%	3 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
44,665.82	-116.18
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	3 Dec, 12:16 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,248.86	+735.84
Percentage	Time
+1.91%	3 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	180	182.25
Bahrain Dinar	733.60	741.60
Canadian Dollar	198.20	200.60
China Yuan	37.97	38.37
Danish Krone	39.01	39.41
Euro	288.85	291.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.36	35.71
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.92
Kuwaiti Dinar	894.95	904.45
Malaysian Ringgit	61.93	62.53
New Zealand \$	162.27	164.27
Norwegians Krone	24.88	25.18
Omani Riyal	718.00	726.50
Qatari Riyal	75.65	76.35
Saudi Riyal	73.55	74.10
Singapore Dollar	207	209.00
Swedish Korona	25.2	25.50
Swiss Franc	312.72	315.52
Thai Bhat	7.95	8.10
U.A.E Dirham	75.25	75.90
UK Pound Sterling	348.35	351.85
US Dollar	277.4	278.90

# Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali decorated with South Korean Presidential Award for Agricultural Innovation

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: In a significant recognition of his contributions to the fields of Agricultural science, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), has been awarded the Presidential Award by the South Korean government. The prestigious ceremony took place in Seoul, where Korean Prime Minister, H. E Han Duck-soo presented the award to Dr. Ali, underscoring the importance of his work in advancing scientific knowledge and technological innovation in agriculture. Dr. Ali stands out as the only scientist among the recipient to receive this distinguished recognition, making him the sole recipient in the field of science and technology. Dr. Ali's achievement is particularly noteworthy, as he stands out as the only Pakistani scientist to receive this accolade in a highly competitive international context.

A reception was also held by PARC to commemorate the prestigious award. Agricultural scientists from across the country



participated in the ceremony. The speakers from scientific community congratulated and commended Dr. Ali for achieving this honor

on behalf of the institution and the nation as a whole. In his address, Chairman PARC expressed gratitude to the government of the

Republic of Korea for this recognition as well as for its continuous support of Pakistan's agriculture sector. He also acknowledged the contributions of the scientists and researchers of PARC in achieving this honor. Dr. Ali also emphasized at elevating research standards to bring the council at par with the international research institutions.

Dr. Ali, as Chairman, PARC has done tremendous efforts in high-tech scientific infrastructure development like establishment of Pakistan's 1st speed breeding facility at NARC, country's first aeroponic facility for disease free indigenous potato seed production, hi-tech farm machinery institute, and so many other diverse research initiatives including CRISPR-Cas, innovative animal breeding techniques, DNA recombinant vaccine development and identification of novel genes for economically important traits. Remarkably, Dr Ali has also been recently awarded with Sitara-e-Imtiaz (S. I) by the government of Pakistan in recognition of his countless contributions in the field of agricultural science.

## Group photo

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal in a group photo at PSX Karachi during Gong Ceremony on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## S&P Global Pakistan launches ElevateHER

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: S&P Global Pakistan announced the launch of ElevateHER, a transformative three-year program, designed to enable 1,000 women and girls in Pakistan to achieve employability through freelancing, entrepreneurship, and job placements.

To further strengthen the impact of ElevateHER, the US-Pakistan Women's Council (USPWC) has joined as a key partner. This partnership amplifies the program's outreach and facil-

itates the creation of meaningful opportunities for women, contributing to a more equitable and dynamic economic landscape.

"ElevateHER is a pledge to empower women by equipping them with the tools and guidance they need to thrive in today's competitive workforce," said Mujeeb Zahur, Managing Director, S&P Global Pakistan. "Through mentorship, skill-building, and collaboration with community partners, we are committed to creating pathways for sustainable success."

## All Sindh-Based Chambers of Commerce Gather at FPCCI



**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, Head Office, Federation House, Karachi, to propose practical solutions to Sindh's infrastructure, law & order and ease of doing business-related issues. FPCCI speaks for the entire Sindh - be it cities large or small, towns, industrial states or its highways. We want development and uplift across the board, he added.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh apprised that Presidents of all Sindh-based chambers of commerce gathered in FPCCI Head Office, Federation House, Karachi, to propose practical solutions to Sindh's infrastructure, law & order and ease of doing business-related issues. FPCCI speaks for the entire Sindh - be it cities large or small, towns, industrial states or its highways. We want development and uplift across the board, he added.

concerns that Hyderabad - Sukkur Motorway has been delayed multiple times; and, the delay continues to hamper the economic, industrial and commercial development of these two important cities of Sindh. He questioned what is stopping the governments - federal or provincial - to not letting Sindh benefit from the completion of the project? Mr. S. M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief, UBG, maintained

that the vibrant, dynamic and enterprising CCIs - Chambers of Commerce & Industry - are leading from the front to promote industrialization, economic development and employment generation in the Sindh province. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, raised the issue of Nawabshah Airport as the airport itself is ready; but, for some unknown reasons, it has not yet been operationalized by the Sindh government.

## Team Pakistan Set to Shine at APICTA 2024 in Brunei

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Sajjad Mustafa Syed, Chairman of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), has said that Team Pakistan is all set to make its mark at the prestigious Asia Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA) Awards 2024 - taking place in Brunei from 4th December. With over 20 innovative projects representing the country, this year's participation underscores Pakistan's growing footprint and commercial success in the global IT industry. In fact, it is the largest-ever contingent to participate in APICTA from Pakistan, he added.

P@SHA Chief elaborated that 16 member economies in APICTA include Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Macao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Sajjad Syed, Chairman P@SHA, explained that the APICTA Awards serve as a global stage for our innovators to showcase their brilliance and creativity. Pakistan's consistent achievements at APICTA reflect the immense potential of our IT sector. We are proud to lead the country's delegation and continue to advocate for greater visibility and

opportunities for Pakistan's tech industry on the global stage. We are confident that our participants will bring honor to the country once again, he added.

Muhammad Umair Nizam, Senior Vice Chairman of P@SHA and Nadeem Malik, Secretary General P@SHA, informed that four Pakistanis have been honored to be jury members of these IT awards of international significance: Muhammad Zohaib Khan, immediate-past Chairman P@SHA, is an APICTA 2024 Judge & Executive Committee member; Dr. Shoab Ahmed Khan is an APICTA 2024 Judge & member ExCom; Badar Khushnood, former Chairmen P@SHA and Dr. Usman Akram, are also on the esteemed panel of judges for APICTA. It is an achievement of Pakistan that leaders from our own IT industry are representing the green flag on such a credible international platform, he added.

P@SHA is the sole Pakistani entity globally accredited and recognized by leading industry organizations; including WITSA (World Information Technology and Services Alliance); ASOCIO (Asian Oceanic Computing Industry Organization) and APICTA (Asia-Pacific ICT Alliance).

## Justice Dr. S. M. Anwer Honored with Cambridge Lifetime Achievement Award 2024

**Commerce Desk**

DUBAI: The historic inaugural presentation of the Cambridge Lifetime Achievement Award 2024 saw the prestigious Banking Leadership Award conferred upon Justice Dr. Syed Mohammad Anwer of Pakistan's Federal Shariat Court recently. This recognition honors his pivotal contributions to Islamic finance, particularly his instrumen-

tal role in the landmark decision to integrate a Riba-free economic framework into Pakistan's constitution. This monumental shift underscores his lifelong dedication to upholding and promoting Islamic financial principles, which aim to establish an equitable and just financial system in alignment with Shariah law. The award highlights not only his profound influence on shaping Paki-

stan's financial policies but also his enduring commitment to advancing the global discourse on Islamic economics.

Addressing the gathering during the ceremony, Justice Dr. Mohammad Anwer expressed heartfelt gratitude for the honor, acknowledging the collective efforts that have paved the way for the realization of these transformative reforms.



His recognition stands as a testament to his unwavering efforts and profound impact on the Islamic financial landscape.

## Wasl Investment Finance Acquires Awwal Modaraba Management Company

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Wasl Investment Finance, a leading Non-Bank Finance Company (NBFC) specializing in mobility finance, has acquired Awwal Modaraba Management Company from Pak-Brunei Investment Company. Awwal manages First Prudential Modaraba, one of Pakistan's pioneering modarabas.

This acquisition supports Wasl's strategy to provide innovative financial solutions and promote sustainable development, particularly in the electric mobility sector.

"We're excited to transform First Prudential Modaraba into a key player in Pakistan's move towards sustainable transportation," said Faraz Zaidi, CEO of Wasl Investment Finance. "This acquisition reflects our commitment to innovation and overcoming financial barriers to electric mobility."

"Wasl has always stressed the need to create a positive financial impact as well as improve overall experience for borrowers. The acquisition of Awwal enables us more than ever to achieve this," added Saif Tariq, Chief Investment Officer at Wasl.

## NADRA participates in TRUSTECH 2024 exhibition Paris

PARIS: The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) delegation is representing Pakistan at the TRUSTECH 2024 exhibition led by its Chairman, Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar that opened here on Tuesday and would continue till December 5.

Ambassador to France, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad visited NADRA's pavilion at TRUSTECH and interacted with the Chairman and delegation. Chairman NADRA briefed on the various technological innovations being undertaken by the organization - all aimed towards greater technological self-reliance, operational efficiency, improved service and maximum coverage.

# Pakistan wins 4th T20 Blind Cricket World Cup

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Pakistan Blind Cricket Team defeated Bangladesh to become the fourth World T20 Blind Cricket Champion. In the final, they defeated Bangladesh by 10 wickets after a one-sided match. The Pakistani team has won the T20 Blind Cricket World Cup title for the first time, remaining undefeated throughout the World Cup. In the final played at the Multan Cricket Stadium, Bangladesh won the toss and batted first, setting Pakistan a target of 140 to win. Bangladesh scored 139 runs for the loss of 7 wickets in 20 overs. For Bangladesh,

Arif Hussain scored 54 off 52 balls and Mohammad Salman scored 31 runs off 35 balls. Pakistan's Babar Ali dismissed 2 players for 24 runs in 4 overs. In reply, Pakistan completed the desired target in 10.2 overs without any loss.

Pakistan captain Nisar Ali scored 72 and Mohammad Safdar scored 47. On the occasion of the prize distribution ceremony, World Blind Cricket Council President Syed Sultan Shah along with WBCC Director Global Development Raymond Moxley presented Pakistan captain Nisar Ali with the winning trophy and a prize check of Rs. 1 million. Bangladesh captain Arifullah received



the runner-up trophy and a check of Rs. 5 million. Nisar Ali was declared the Man of the Match in the final and Bangladesh's Arif Hossain was declared the Emerging Player. Azmat Hossain of Bangladesh

was declared the Best Player in the B1 category in the T20 Blind Cricket World Cup, Naimatullah of Pakistan in the B2 category and Damat Sundarban in the B3 category.

## President felicitates Pakistan Blind Cricket team on winning T20 World Cup



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday congratulated the Pakistan Blind Cricket team on winning the fourth Blind T20 World Cup by defeating Bangladesh by 10 wickets.

Lauding the players for showing a fabulous game, the president congratulated the team for clinching the World Cup on the day when the world was observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

He said the PWDs had the potential to achieve excellence in sports and by winning the World Cup, the Pakistan Blind Cricket team brought fame to the country. President Zardari emphasised increased inclusion of the PWDs in all sectors including sports and providing them opportunities and resources to thrive.

He congratulated the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council for successfully holding the tournament and expressed his good wishes for the bright future of the Pakistan Blind Cricket team

# Pakistani Blind Cricket Team's achievement of becoming world champions remarkable: Mayor Karachi

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, said that the Pakistani Blind Cricket Team's achievement of becoming world champions for the first time is a remarkable feat.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Mayor Karachi said that by winning the final against Bangladesh by 10 wickets, Pakistani Blind Cricket Team has proven itself as the global champion.

He congratulated the Pakistani team that won the Blind T20 Cricket World Cup and the entire nation for this extraordinary performance.

Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, mentioned that during the global event held in Pakistan, the players of the Pakistani Blind Team displayed exceptional performance in all matches. Pakistan's cuisine



If the defending champions, the Indian team, had also come to Pakistan, the Pakistani players, due to their performance, would have been capable of defeating them as well, he said.

The Pakistani Blind Team eventually snatched the title from the former champions, India, in the fourth edition of the Blind Cricket World Cup, he said.

He is confident that the Pakistani Blind Cricket Team will continue to perform well and maintain its dominance in the world of cricket.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab added that in previous World Cup events, the Pakistani team had shown good performances but had failed to win the title in the final stages.

Now, Pakistan's dream has been fulfilled and he salutes the hard work and dedication of the players and the team management of the Pakistani Blind Cricket Team, he said.

## Chairman PCB congratulates Pakistan Blind Cricket Team on T20 World Cup victory

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Chairman, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Mohsin Naqvi extended heartfelt congratulations to the Pakistan Blind Cricket Team on their remarkable triumph in the T20 World Cup final in Multan on Tuesday.



In a congratulatory message to the players and management of the Blind Cricket Team, Chairman PCB lauded their stellar performances throughout the tournament, which helped in winning the title.

Commending the team's victory against Bangladesh in the final, he specifically praised the outstanding batting displays by Captain Nisar Ali and Muhammad Safdar, which led to Pakistan's glorious win.

"I also congratulate the management of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Team on this brilliant achievement," said Mr Naqvi. "The players exhibited immense dedication and teamwork in every match of the tournament. Their hard work and passion have been instrumental in earning this title for Pakistan."

The PCB Chairman expressed hope that the Blind Cricket Team would continue to perform with the same zeal and achieve even greater milestones in the future.

# Cheezious Honors Pakistan's Blind Cricket Champions with PKR 3 Million Reward

**Sports Desk**

PAKISTAN: Cheezious, a proud Pakistani brand and the official sponsor of the International Blind T20 Cricket World Cup, proudly congratulates Pakistan's National Blind Cricket Team on their historic triumph. Pakistan defeated Bangladesh by an incredible 10 wickets in the final at the Multan Cricket Stadium to clinch the T20 Blind Cricket World Cup title for the very first time.

In recognition of this monumental achievement, Cheezious has announced a reward of PKR 3 million for the team as a token of appreciation for their dedication, resilience, and exceptional performance.

Head of Marketing Cheezious Zohaib Hasan said "We are overjoyed by this groundbreaking victory that has brought immense pride to the nation. Cheezious is honored to have supported the Pakistan Blind Cricket Team throughout this journey. This win is a testament to the players' unwavering determination and the power of inclusivity in sports. Our announce-



ment of PKR 3 million is a humble gesture to celebrate their success and inspire future achievements."

The Pakistan Blind Cricket Team's historic victory is a source of national pride and a shining example of the

transformative power of sports. By partnering with this championship, Cheezious reaffirms its commitment to supporting initiatives that foster talent, promote inclusivity, and unite communities across Pakistan.

Cheezious extends its heartfelt congratulations to the players, coaches, and management team for this remarkable achievement and celebrates with the entire nation as Pakistan stands tall on the global stage.

## Faisal Sports Super Eight T20 Cricket League



**Sports Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Faisal Sports Super Eight T20 Cricket League Eleven Star Cricket Club qualified for the semi-finals by defeating New Pindi Gymkhana. In the match played on Tuesday, Eleven Star Cricket Club team batted first and scored 132 runs for the loss of four wickets. Usman Pasha scored 45 and Ehsanullah scored 20 runs. In reply, the entire New Pindi Gymkhana team was bowled out for only 63 runs. Eleven Star's Faisal Satti bowled brilliantly, taking 5 wickets for 8 runs and was declared the man of the match. The first semi-final of the championship will be played on Wednesday between Haideri Club and Eleven Star, while the second semi-final will be played between Victory Club and City Club. Tournament Chief Organizer Raja Ashfaq Abbasi thanked Rana Haidar for providing the best balls for the tournament. He said that everyone deserves congratulations for the way the entire tournament was organized.

## Pakistan vs Zimbabwe 2nd T-20 International Cricket Match

# Pakistan Cricket Team Won the Second T-20 Match Against Zimbabwe By 10 Wickets



**Asim Tanveer**

BULAWAYO/ ZIMBABWE: Pakistan Cricket Team Won the Second T-20 Match Against Zimbabwe By 10 Wickets.

Sufyan Muqem Made a Record. The Pakistani team won the second match of the three-match T-20 series by Ten wickets and took the series 2-0. In this match played in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe won the toss and decided to bat first against Pakistan. The home team was all out for 57 runs. They could play 12.2 overs.

Zimbabwe scored 37 runs in 4 overs without losing any wickets, but after that, the Pakistani bowlers made a brilliant comeback and dismissed the entire

Zimbabwe team in the next 20 runs. Spinner Sufyan Muqem showed the best bowling of his career and took 5 wickets for just 3 runs.

Apart from them, Abbas Afridi took two wickets while Haris Rauf, Salman Ali Agha and Abrar Ahmed took one wicket each. Zimbabwe openers Brian Bennett scored 21 and Tadiionashe Maromani scored 16 runs, while no other player could reach double figures and three players were out for ducks.

Pakistan's opening batsmen achieved the target of 58 runs in the sixth over without losing a wicket.

In the second T20I of the three-match series against Pakistan,

Zimbabwe were bowled out for 57 runs in 12.4 overs.

Brian Bennett's 21 off 14 balls and Tadiionashe Maromani's 16 off 14 balls gave Zimbabwe a decent start. Zimbabwe added 37 runs in 4.3 overs. Here was the drama. Abbas Afridi claimed Maromani, the rest of the team simply held their own against left-arm wrist-spinner Sufyan Muqem, whose 2.4-0-3-5 is now the best bowler for Pakistan in men's T20Is.

It took Zimbabwe 40 minutes to lose their 10 wickets. Apart from the openers, Clive Madande (9) was the only other Zimbabwe batsman to score more than three runs as he reached his lowest total in the format. His lowest was 82 against Sri Lanka at the Premadasa Stadium earlier this year.



Zimbabwe lost their 10 wickets for 20 runs, the worst 10-wicket haul in a full-member men's T20I. Muqem's figures of 3.4-0-4-5 set a new record for the best

bowling performance by a Pakistani in T-20 Internationals, surpassing Umar Gul's impressive 3-0-6-5 against New Zealand in 2009 at The Oval London.

## Meeting

MASHHAD: Deputy Prime Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar holds meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi on the sidelines of ECO, Council of Ministers meeting in Iran on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

## Finance Minister directed swift action on cartels, offers full support to CCP

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, has directed the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) to expedite its inquiries and investigations into cartelization and collusion practices. The Minister assured CCP of government's complete support and resolve to discipline markets, promote best practices and foster competition.

The Federal Minister visited the CCP head office today to receive a comprehensive briefing on the Commission's performance. Chairman CCP, Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, briefed the Minister on ongoing inquiries, provided details of significant cases pending in courts, and outlined recent



initiatives to strengthen the CCP. The briefing was attended by CCP members Mr. Saeed Nawaz, Mr. Salman Amin and, Mr. Abdul Rashid Sheikh, along with senior management.

Dr. Sidhu apprised the Minister that there was a backlog of 567 cases involving

penalties worth PKR 74 billion. Over the past year, the Commission has made significant progress by recovering PKR 100 million in penalties and resolving 73 cases in courts.

He also provided details of the number of pending cases, with around 200 in the Supreme

Court, 179 in the Competition Appellate Tribunal, and 146 in various high courts.

A key development was the establishment of the Market Intelligence Unit (MIU), which has already identified over 150 instances of anti-competitive practices by using advanced

data collection and analysis techniques. Dr. Kabir also highlighted CCP's research reports on market competitiveness in sectors such as insurance, aviation, road construction, and power. The Minister commended the reports, urging government departments to leverage CCP's findings to drive sectoral reforms.

Senator Aurangzeb also assured Dr. Kabir Sidhu of his support in requesting the Chief Justice of Pakistan to help expedite the resolution of competition-related cases.

"The performance of the Competition Commission has been commendable, but there is always room for improvement. The goal is to make CCP more effective in its mission to curb market abuse and ensure fair competition," the Finance Minister concluded.

## OSC welcomes Federal Minister Mr. Ahsan Iqbal with a Gong ceremony

## Khurram Jaffrani

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) held a Gong Ceremony to formally welcome Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives-Government of Pakistan.

The gong was struck by the Federal Minister to open the trading day amidst the presence of Chairperson PSX, Dr. Shamsah Akhtar; MD & CEO PSX, Mr. Farrukh H. Sabzwari, PSX Board Members, PSX Management, Senior Bankers, members of capital market fraternity, key stakeholders and distinguished guests.



Dr. Shamsah Akhtar, Chairperson Pakistan Stock Exchange welcoming the distinguished guests said, "Ahsan Iqbal has been a

voice for developing countries at the United Nations," praised the federal minister's contributions to global and national economic progress.

She noted that the Pakistan Stock Exchange remains one of the best-performing markets in the region and the world, driven by strong economic indicators and policies.

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal as the Chief Guest at the ceremony, acknowledged the significant role of the capital market in Pakistan's economic growth.

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal addressed the gathering, congratulating the Board & Management of PSX on behalf of Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Shahbaz Sharif and shared his thoughts on the achievement: "Crossing the 100,000 mark in the 100-Index showcases Pakistan's potential to

the world. The federal government remains committed to supporting initiatives that strengthen the capital market and contributes to sustainable economic development."

Speaking at the occasion, MD/CEO PSX, Mr. Farrukh H Sabzwari, stated, "It is an honor to welcome Mr. Ahsan Iqbal (Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives) to the Pakistan Stock Exchange as we celebrate this achievement. KSE-100 Index surpassing 100,000 points underscores the collective efforts of market participants & stakeholders, reflecting the trust of investors in Pakistan's economy.

### Minister reviews progress of development projects in GB

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engr Amir Muqam on Tuesday reviewed the progress of development projects in GB and to resolve their problems on priority basis.

The meeting held on the special instructions of the prime minister and was attended by Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan, Chairman WAPDA Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani, GB Ministers and other senior officials, said a press release.

Decisions were taken on important issues in the meeting and a comprehensive strategy was formulated to ensure timely completion of various development projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.

## Pakistan and Russia positively assess expansion of bilateral connectivity

## Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: Minister for Energy of Pakistan Sardar Awais Khan Legahri and Russian Minister for Transport Mr. Roman Starovoyt in a meeting here today positively assessed the prospects of expanding bilateral connectivity which would not only benefit Pakistan and Russia but the whole region.

Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmed Kgan Leghari is visiting Moscow to co-chair the 9th session of Pakistan-Russia IGC.

Sardar Awais Leghari appreciated the growing level of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia

The two sides took stock of all bilateral cooperation projects in the transport sector including road, rail and air.

Minister Leghari invited Minister Starovoyt to visit Pakistan. Both sides agreed to continue contacts and enhance cooperation.



## Pakistan, Iran agree to deepen bilateral cooperation in all spheres

## Spokesman Report

MASHHAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday held a bilateral meeting with Iranian counterpart Abbas Aragchi wherein both countries agreed to deepen bilateral cooperation in all spheres.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) being held here.

During the meeting, they

exchanged views on areas of mutual interest and the latest regional and global developments.

The deputy prime minister arrived here on Monday to attend the moot where he would reiterate Pakistan's commitment to the ECO Charter and highlight the potential of greater connectivity in the ECO region, through the development of road and rail networks; liberalization of visa regimes and simplification of border procedures; and to attain sustainable growth and enhance the geo-economic potential of the ECO region.

## Pakistan's High Commissioner meets BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia



## Spokesman Report

DHAKA: High Commissioner of Pakistan to Bangladesh, Syed Ahmed Maroof, accompanied by Mrs. Maroof, paid a courtesy call on the Chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Begum Khaleda Zia, at her Gulshan resi-

dence this evening. During the meeting, the High Commissioner inquired about Begum Khaleda Zia's well-being and wished her speedy recovery and good health.

The discussion also touched on matters of mutual interest, including bilateral relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

## UK's Norse Atlantic UK to operate nonstop flights from London to Islamabad

## Ch Tabraiz Aura

LONDON: A UK Schedule Airlines NORSE ATLANTIC UK has submitted a formal application to the Civil Aviation and Aviation Ministry of Pakistan in order to operate nonstop flights as a joint venture and with the collaboration of HB Int'l Airlines (HBIA)



Pakistan.

The Norse Atlantic UK to operate initially weekly 04 flights to Islamabad from London Gatwick, Birmingham and Manchester. The nonstop flights to commence with effect from early next year, 2025.

The Airline's fleet consists of state

of art B787-9 Dreamliner Aircrafts.

All aircrafts are configured in two classes i.e Premium Economy (W) & Economy Class(Y).

This would be a sigh of relief for Pak British community who wanted / demanding for nonstop flights from above UK and Pakistan airports for the last so many years."

## Chinese envoy meets Bilawal Bhutto at Zardari House



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong met Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Zardari House in Islamabad on Tuesday afternoon.

Chairman Bilawal and Ambassador Jiang Zaidong discussed enhancing bilateral relations, social and cultural cooperation, and matters of mutual interest.

Former Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar also attended the meeting.