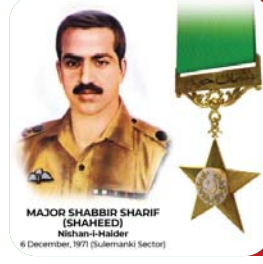




Justice Mansoor wants full court to hear constitutional amendment pleas

Supreme Court (SC) senior puisne judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, has written to Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, requesting that a full court be constituted to hear the pleas against the 26th constitutional amendment.



53rd martyrdom anniversary of Major Shabbir Sharif Shaheed

The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Service Chiefs, and the Armed Forces of Pakistan solemnly commemorate the 53rd martyrdom anniversary of Major Shabbir Sharif Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider, a paragon of valor and patriotism. During the 1971 War, Major Shabbir Sharif, also a recipient of the Sitara-e-Jurat for his gallantry in the 1965 War, was tasked with securing a strategically critical high ground near the Sulemanki Headworks.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

84th Formation Commanders Conference

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), presided over two days 84th Formation Commanders Conference at GHQ, attended by Corps Commanders, Principal Staff Officers, and all Formation Commanders of Pakistan Army.



Photo: ISPR

General Asim Munir presides over two days 84th Formation Commanders Conference

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), presided over two days 84th Formation Commanders Conference at GHQ, attended by Corps Commanders, Principal Staff Officers, and all Formation Commanders of Pakistan Army. The forum began by offering Fateha and paying solemn tribute to the martyrs of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies, and citizens of Pakistan who sacrificed their lives for the nation's security and sovereignty, including those Law Enforcement Agencies personnel who embraced martyrdom during recent violent protests in Islamabad. The forum condemned ongoing human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and

reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering political, diplomatic, and moral support for the Kashmiri people. It also expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people, strongly condemning the atrocities in Gaza and supporting international legal measures to end military aggression. Participants were briefed on the prevailing security environment, both external and internal, and reviewed the Army's operational readiness to address evolving traditional and non-traditional threats. The forum conducted a comprehensive analysis of ongoing counterterrorism operations and resolved to continue neutralizing terrorists, their facilitators, and abettors working at the behest of hostile forces to destabilize Pakistan, with heightened focus on operations against terrorists

operating inside Balochistan including BLA Majed Brigade. Forum noted with concern the malicious propaganda done in the aftermath of the lawful deployment of the Army in the capital to secure key government buildings and provide safe & secure environment for the valued visiting delegations. This pre-planned coordinated and premeditated propaganda reflects continuity of a sinister design by certain political elements as an attempt to drive a wedge between the public & Armed Forces and institutions of Pakistan. This futile attempt, fueled and abetted by external players, will never be successful, InshAllah. Forum emphasized that it is imperative that Government should promulgate and implement stringent laws and regulations to check unfettered and unethical use of freedom of

expression to spew venom, lies and sow the seeds of polarization. Those spreading fake news for vested political / financial interests need to be identified and brought to justice. Forum resolved that Army remains committed to serving the nation & public and guard against all external and internal threats without any bias and political affiliation, and any attempt to pitch innocent people against each other and use of violence as an instrument for vested gains can never be tolerated. Unabated use of Afghan soil against Pakistan by terrorists especially belonging to Fitna Al Khwarizj was also noted with concern. Forum urged that it is in the interest of both neighboring Islamic countries to rather focus on mutually beneficial engagements and IAG needs to take visible measures to prevent use of its soil by the

terrorists. Forum reiterated resolve to continue supporting all socioeconomic & development efforts being undertaken in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan by Federal and Provincial Governments for well-being of the resilient people of these Provinces who continue to stand tall against scourge of terrorism. Highlighting Army's commitment to socioeconomic progress, the forum resolved to continue to support government efforts in fostering economic growth, cracking down on illegal spectrum and eradicating terror-crime nexus. Concluding the conference, the COAS emphasized the importance of professionalism, operational readiness, and the Army's unwavering dedication to ensuring Pakistan's security and stability, notwithstanding any odds and challenges.

PM directs Commerce Ministry to expedite measures for enhancing exports



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday appreciated the performance of the Ministry of Commerce for its prompt compliance for his instructions issued and directed to convene a meeting of the National Export Development Board next week to increase Pakistani exports. The prime minister made these remarks while chairing a review meeting on Commerce Ministry's performance, a PM office news release said. The prime minister directed to take immediate steps to create sustainable employment opportunities for the border districts of Balochistan and step up measures to further increase Pakistani rice exports to Malaysia. During Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim's recent visit to Pakistan, it was agreed to increase rice exports from Pakistan to Malaysia, he added.

The PM underscored that the existing special economic zones in Pakistan would be activated along with proper facilities of hotels, hospitals, business schools and other services to increase domestic exports. The prime minister directed to form a special cabinet committee to increase the production of wheat, cotton, sugarcane, rice, edible oil and other major crops. He added that the Cabinet Committee would submit recommendations based on expert opinions to increase production of major crops. During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed about measures to increase agricultural exports. He was briefed that two MoUs were signed with Russia for trade in agricultural commodities under barter trade. The PM was apprised that the Tajik government had expressed interest in cooperation with Pakistan in the textile sector. The meeting was attended by Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan, Economic Affairs Minister Ahmad Khan Cheema, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ahsan Afzal and officers of relevant institutions

Intelligence operations in South Waziristan, Lakki Marwat kill eight Khwarij

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On 05 December 2024, total of eight Khwarij were sent to hell in two separate operations conducted by the security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. An intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Sararogha, South Waziristan District on reported presence of Khwarij. During the conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij location as a result of which two Khwarij, including Kharji ring leader Khan Muhammad @ Khoryay, were killed, while two khwarij were apprehended. The killed khwarji Khan Muhammad @ Khoryay was involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area including target killing & extortion. He was highly wanted by the Law Enforcement Agencies and Government had fixed Head money of PKR 1 Million on him. Another intelligence-based operation was conducted in Lakki Marwat District and after an intense fire exchange, six Khwarij were successfully neutralised by the security forces. Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Kharji found in the area, as security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Jailed ex-PM Imran Khan among 100 people indicted in GHQ attack case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan and 99 other PTI leaders were indicted for their alleged role in the attack on the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi that occurred on May 9, 2023. Meanwhile, several senior party leaders, including former law minister Raja Basharat, were taken into custody outside the Adiala Jail. The unrest began following Khan's arrest from the premises of the Islamabad High Court on May 9, which sparked nationwide riots lasting over 24 hours. Violent protests resulted in the deaths of at least 10 individuals and left hundreds injured. At least 40 public buildings and military facilities, including the Lahore Corps Commander's House (Jinnah House), Askari Tower in Lahore, the GHQ in Rawalpindi, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Office in Faisalabad, FC Fort in Chakdara, Radio

Pakistan in Peshawar, the Toll Plaza at Swat Motorway, and the Mianwali Air Base were vandalised. In total, 62 incidents of violence were recorded, leading to an estimated loss of Rs2.5 billion to the country, with the military claiming that Rs1.98 billion of this loss was incurred by their forces. There are over 143 accused in the GHQ attack case registered at RA Bazar police station, including the PTI founder. In a hearing on Thursday, Khan was indicted alongside other prominent party figures, including former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, ex-law minister in Punjab Raja Basharat, and PTI leader Zartaj Gul Wazir.



President, PM pay tribute to security forces for successful operations against terrorists

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paid tribute to the security forces for killing eight Khwarij in two separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The president and the prime minister, in separate statements, lauded the security forces for conducting successful operations in district South Waziristan and district Lakki Marwat. President Zardari said the entire nation stood behind the brave security forces. He expressed the national resolve to uproot the menace of terrorism in the country. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that the "Security forces have always stood like a solid wall in front of the enemy to protect our beloved country". He also expressed the determination to eliminate all forms of terrorism from the country.

Bushra Bibi's arrest warrants issued in Toshakhana-II case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Special Judge (Central) Shahrukh Arjumand has issued bailable arrest warrants for Bushra Bibi, wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in Toshakhana-II case. As per details, the hearing proceeded in Adiala Jail however the former first lady did not appear before the court. At this, the court rejected the plea seeking exemption from personal appearance and issued her bailable arrest warrants in Toshakhana-II case. The development came after PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi's pleas seeking acquittal in the Toshakhana-II case were rejected on November 14. Special Central Judge Shah



Rukh Arjumand announced the reserved verdict and rejected the acquittal pleas of former prime minister and his wife. In a separate development, the FIA challenged Bushra Bibi's bail in the Toshakhana-II case in the Supreme Court. The FIA stated in its plea that bail was granted in Islamabad High Court judge's chamber and it violates Supreme Court guidelines. The FIA also claimed that Bushra Bibi was involved in the case along with her husband Imran Khan.

Jammu Kashmir strike against Presidential Ordinance escalates to 'extreme'

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: On the call of the Azad Kashmir Joint Public Action Committee, a historic complete wheel jam and peaceful shutter down took place on Wednesday. No untoward incident occurred till late evening. A large number of police and Rangers are still closely monitoring the situation.

The strike is being led by Shaukat Nawaz Mir, an active member of the Jammu Joint Action Committee and Chairman of the Anjuman Tajran Muzaffarabad. Stressing the importance of the strike, Shaukat Nawaz Mir said that this step has been taken to protect public rights and as a form of solidarity against controversial laws.

The Presidential Ordinance has been termed by the people and traders as against the constitution and public interests of Azad Kashmir. This ordinance is having a direct impact on public rights, interests of traders, and resources of Azad Kashmir, which has created severe anxiety among the local people.

Speaking to the media, Shaukat Nawaz Mir said "We will go to the extreme against this ordinance. This strike is just a beginning. If the government does not accept the public demands, the protest will be expanded further."

No detailed statement has been made by the Azad Kashmir government on this issue yet, but sources say that the government is considering the situation arising



regarding this ordinance.

The shutter-down and full-scale strike in Muzaffarabad on December 5 not only reflects the sentiments

of the people of Azad Kashmir, but this protest is being seen as a strong message against the growing public unrest and problems in the region.

Divisional Monitoring Committee approves M&R proposals for Sindh

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: In a pivotal move to bolster the infrastructure and development of Sindh, a meeting of the Divisional Monitoring Committee was convened today at the Shahbaz Building in Hyderabad. Meeting Chaired by Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad Bilal Ahmed Memon, the gathering brought together officials, including Deputy Commissioners from Districts of Sujawal, Dadu, Thatta, Tando Muhammad Khan, and Tando Allahyar, as well as Superintending Engineers from Provincial Highways and Works and Services Departments.

The meeting's primary agenda was to scrutinize and approve Maintenance and Repair (M&R) proposals for the current financial year 2024-25.

Commissioner Hyderabad Bilal Ahmed Memon emphasized the importance of submitting M&R projects with comprehensive justifications to ensure timely allocation of funds. This directive is poised to streamline the development process, fostering growth and prosperity across Sindh.

Ch Zulfiqar Ali Anjum visits Multan Police Service Center and FM Radio, emphasizes traffic management reforms

Special Correspondent



MULTAN: Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, Chairman of SM Group of Industries, Member of the National Export Development Board, and Member of the Board of Investment, visited the Police Service Center at Police Lines and Multan Police FM Radio.

CTO Multan, Sardar Mohrhan Khan, welcomed Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum and Mian Iftikhar.

During the visit to the Police Service Center and Multan Police FM 88.6 Radio, it was stated that all obstacles in obtaining driving licenses for citizens have been removed. Through FM radio, awareness about traffic laws and the traffic situation in Multan is being provided.

While speaking with citizens during the FM Radio visit, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali praised the work of Multan Traffic Police and shared his suggestions. He emphasized the need for an effective strategy and coordination among institutions to combat encroachments and wrong parking.

In this regard, CTO Multan mentioned that a special squad of City Traffic Police Multan has been formed to eliminate encroachments and wrong parking, particularly around hospitals. This squad, in collaboration with the Municipal Corporation and MDA Enforcement Team, takes legal action against violators, including shopkeepers and street vendors, and clears the roads. Additionally, actions against wrong parking on busy roads are ongoing with the use of lifters.

He further highlighted that the biggest issue in Multan is encroachments, wrong parking, and wrong driving on main roads. Positive results can be achieved through proper planning and strict enforcement of the law. Citizens are urged to adhere to traffic laws and always park their vehicles in designated parking areas.

Two Days International Conference concluded

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: The two-day international conference ongoing at Women University Multan concluded with the declaration that modern agricultural methods must be implemented and production must be increased to meet the global demand for food.



According to the spokesperson, a declaration was presented on the concluding day of the third international conference on sustainable development in agriculture, health and food security, attended by more than a hundred domestic and foreign agricultural experts, in which it was said that it is very important to increase production to meet the growing global demand for food. For this purpose, there is an urgent need to implement modern agricultural methods, improve crop yields, promote sustainable farming techniques, and invest in agricultural research and development. Ensure the right of every individual to access food. Despite recognizing the right to food, the world is facing more important challenges. A strategy should be formulated to guide our small farmers and farmers to achieve the right to food. By focusing on approaches that empower local communities, creating a food system that can help meet the needs of current and future generations to some extent.

The chief organizer Dr. Farah Deeba deserves congratulations. At the end, certificates and shields were distributed to all the participants. All the teachers and students were present on this occasion.

PPP AJK chief offers condolence to Sardar Attique



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/RAWALPINDI: PPP Azad Kashmir President Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin reached the house of President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan's young cousin Sardar Taimur Abbasi to offer his condolences. Yesterday, Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin went to his residence Mujahid Manzil Rawalpindi and expressed his condolences to President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan on the death of his cousin Sardar Taimur Abbasi and offered Fateha. President Pakistan Union of Journalists Afzal Butt was also present on the occasion.

President Pakistan PPP Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin expressed his condolences to President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan and prayed that Allah Almighty may grant the deceased a high place in Paradise and grant patience to the bereaved family. Meanwhile, Sardar Arshad Niazi, Zafar Iqbal Abbasi, Sardar Ilyas Abbasi, Faizan Abbasi and others conferred with President Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan on the death of his cousin, Sardar Taimur Ahmed Khan, at Mujahid Manzil, and special prayers were offered for the elevation of the deceased's rank.

Strike

MUZAFFARABAD: Activists of Awami Joint Action Committee shouting slogans during protest against a controversial presidential ordinance, in the city.



Photo: Online

Bazil Naqvi hosted a reception in honor of PPP leader Chaudhry Riaz

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi, hosted a reception yesterday in honor of former Senior Government Advisor and Central Leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Chaudhry Riaz. The event was graced by the special presence of the President of PPP (Gulf) Middle East, Mian Munir Hans. While addressing the gathering, Mian Munir Hans stated that the PPP has always stood for the public interest. He highlighted that the party, founded by Shaheed



Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with the slogan of "Roti, Kapra, aur Makan" (Food, Clothing, and Shelter), has proudly endured for 57 years. He praised

Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi for his unwavering loyalty to the PPP, even during challenging times, and lauded his concerns raised in the public inter-

est. Hans emphasized that followers of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto have always stood as an unbreakable wall against those attempting to usurp public rights, regardless of their power. He further commended PPP's political leader in Azad Kashmir, Chaudhry Riaz, as a seasoned politician who played a pivotal role in easing the verbal tensions between the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi. This reconciliation effort, including addressing the reservations of the steadfast PPP loyalists who visited Naqvi's residence, is credited entirely to Chaudhry Riaz's diplomatic efforts

Innovation and Tradition Unite: A Glimpse into Sindh's Fascinating History in Canada

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

Sindh Cultural Day has become a global symbol of love for Sindh's heritage, traditions, and culture. This annual event not only honors the rich legacy of the past but also paves the way for a brighter future by incorporating modern elements and engaging the younger generation.

Cultural Activities: A Blend of Tradition and Innovation:

This year's celebrations were marked by an impressive mix of cultural vibrancy and modern enthusiasm. The event organized by the Sindh Association of North America (SANA) in Edmonton, Canada, showcased the true essence of Sindh culture on an international stage.

From the soulful recitation of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's poetry to traditional music and dance performances, every activity reflected the spirit of Sindh. Young artists like Adeeba Mallah captivated the audience with their dynamic performances, while traditional Sindh cuisine and attire added an authentic touch to the festivities.

Incorporating Modernity in Culture:

A notable feature of this year's celebration was the seamless integration of modernity. The introduction of SANA's new executive committee and the presentation of traditional Ajraks

to esteemed guests highlighted the respect for Sindh's traditions. Furthermore, the use of technology to broadcast cultural activities globally demonstrated a forward-thinking approach to preserving and promoting Sindh culture.

Commitment to Education and Social Welfare:

The event also underscored a strong commitment to education and community welfare. A generous donation of laptops by Riaz Ahmed Chandio to deserving individuals stood out as a gesture of social responsibility, aligning the celebration with meaningful actions that inspire and uplift



Analysis

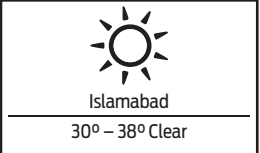
Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

the community.

Inspiring Hope for the Future: Sindh Cultural Day has successfully bridged the gap between past traditions and future aspirations. By involving younger generations and incorporating innovative ideas, the celebration conveyed a powerful message of cultural resilience and unity.

Conclusion:

Sindh Cultural Day 2024 was a remarkable blend of tradition, modernity, and enthusiasm. It not only paid tribute to the glorious past but also served as a beacon of hope for a united and culturally rich future. This celebration proved that Sindh culture, while deeply rooted in its heritage, has the adaptability to thrive in today's dynamic world.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings
 Fajr 5:29 am
 Zohr 11:58 am
 Asr 3:21 pm
 Maghrib 4:59 pm
 Isha 6:28 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
 Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
 MH 561116
 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
 Potohar Town 9209224
 Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

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

NRSP's Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative successfully concluded in Mardan

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Today, the Climate Change Project "Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI)" by NRSP successfully concluded in Mardan. A community showcasing event was organized as part of the initiative, attended by senior management of NRSP, British Council Pakistan Coordinator Muhammad Ahmed, Dr. Shams Ali Baig from Abdul Wali Khan University, Muhammad Shakir, Head of the Forest Department, and Noor-ul-Amin, Head of the Elementary Education Foundation Mardan. They highly appreciated the successful social action projects (Youth-Led Actions) by the youth and distributed awards. NRSP is actively working across Pakistan to combat climate change and is committed to continuing its mission in collaboration with young leaders.

Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad Honors 'Champions of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad on Thursday hosted a grand event to honor the individuals who have been on forefront to foster the friendship and brotherhood between the two nations by highlighting true image of Ethiopia in Pakistan especially its economic potential, rich heritage, diverse culture and multi-faceted tourism.

Addressing the "Champions of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity" ceremony, H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, expressed his profound gratitude and appreciation to the distinguished guests, recognizing their critical contributions to strengthening bilateral relations.

"Today is one of the happiest days of my life in Pakistan," said Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker, adding "This gathering celebrates the champions of the Ethio-Pakistan fraternity and highlights the lasting connection between our great nations."

Ambassador Dr. Jemal emphasized the significant role media plays in shaping public perceptions and advancing public

diplomacy. "In this modern era, the power of media cannot be underestimated. It is a vital instrument for disseminating accurate information and fostering understanding between nations. Through proper engagement and the seamless provision of authentic narratives, we can highlight the rich histories, cultures, and values of Ethiopia and Pakistan."

Highlighting the potential of Pakistan, the Ambassador praised the country's breathtaking landscapes, diverse heritage, and economic promise. He also addressed the challenges of misinformation faced by both nations, citing the impact of global narratives that often misrepresent Ethiopia.

Ambassador Dr. Jemal commended Pakistan's media for its efforts in combating misinformation and promoting truth in the digital age. "Together, we can shape a positive global perception of our countries by sharing authentic stories and showcasing our traditions," he said.

Reflecting on the growing bilateral engagement, the Ambassador highlighted the strategic initiatives taken by both nations, including Pakistan's Look



Africa policy and Ethiopia's Enter and Operate in Africa through Ethiopia policy. These initiatives aim to enhance trade, cultural exchange, and collaboration, making Ethiopia a gateway for Pakistan's

engagement with Africa—a continent brimming with opportunities.

Notable achievements under this partnership include the successful launch of Ethiopian Airlines flights from Karachi,

which have received overwhelming support from Pakistani travelers, and the exchange of delegations in key sectors such as business, trade, health, education, and technology.

Christmas Rally

ISLAMABAD: Christens community participating in a rally ahead of Christmas celebrations at Jinnah Avenue, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

14th Pakistan Mountain Festival

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As part of the 14th Pakistan Mountain Festival, Devcom-Pakistan, in collaboration with Alliance Française Islamabad, hosted the screening of three best films from the internationally acclaimed Inka Fest (Peru) on Thursday. The event celebrated the beauty, resilience, and challenges of mountain ecosystems while fostering global cultural connections. The film screening aimed to highlight the signifi-

cance of mountain ecosystems, the lives of mountain communities, and the spirit of adventure, while drawing attention to the urgent need for their conservation. The screening attracted a diverse audience, including students, environmentalists, adventurers, and art enthusiasts. It was a moment of reflection and dialogue on the intricate connections between culture, climate change, and mountain conservation.

Directed by Michael Safley, Slow Water is a poignant docu-

mentary that delves into the intricate relationship between nature and indigenous innovation. Set in the majestic highlands of Peru, the film highlights how local communities ingeniously manage glacial meltwater to sustain wetlands and livestock amidst the looming threats of climate change.

Directed by Guillaume Broust, Chronoception is a mesmerizing visual adventure that takes viewers deep into the uncharted Kokshaal-Too

mountain range of the Tian Shan region, straddling the Kyrgyzstan-China border.

Munir Ahmed, Executive Director of Devcom-Pakistan and Founder of the Pakistan Mountain Festival, underscored the role of films in raising awareness about mountain ecosystems and the challenges they face.

Muhammad Ali Bhatti, Director of Alliance Française Islamabad, highlighted the importance of cultural exchange in events like this.

Spotify Wrapped 2024 Unveils Pakistan's Top Artists



City Desk

KARACHI: As 2024 draws to a close, the wait is finally over for music lovers nationwide—Spotify has unveiled Your Spotify Wrapped 2024, showcasing the sounds that defined the year both globally and in Pakistan. This year's Wrapped data celebrates the artists, songs, and trends that made 2024 a record-breaking, culture-shaping, and fandom-inspiring year in music.

This year marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's music scene as Talha Anjum emerges as the most-streamed local artist of 2024, dethroning Atif Aslam, who dominated the top spot for three consecutive years. Spotify Wrapped 2024 highlights the evolving diversity of the country's music landscape, which has seen an impressive 54% increase in local music consumption over the past year. Joining Talha Anjum on top are rising sensation Umair in second place and the legendary Atif Aslam in third. The timeless "Shahenshah-e-Qawwali" Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and the dynamic Talhah Yunus are the top five local artists in Pakistan. Other notable mentions among the most-streamed local artists include Abdul Hannan, AUR, Hasan Raheem, and Maanu, showcasing the vibrant talent in Pakistan's music industry.

PANAH's struggle to stop the explosion of atomic bomb of non-communicable diseases

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is witnessing a significant un epidemiological shift, with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) now accounting for over 60% of deaths annually, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). This alarming trend was the focal point of a national dialogue organized by the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination. The event, held at the Ministry's office, was chaired by Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Health, and attended by health professionals, ministry officials, civil society organizations, and media representatives.

The dialogue concluded with a unanimous call for immediate implementation of Front-of-Pack Warning Labels and other policy measures to safeguard public health and reduce the prevalence of NCDs in Pakistan.

Charting the Course of Pakistan's Sports

Pakistan's sports experts call for urgent action to boost national sports

Abdul Waheed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a roundtable discussion emphasized the urgent need for a comprehensive national sports policy that involves all relevant stakeholders. They highlighted the critical role of sports in promoting national unity and combating extremism. However, concerns were raised about the lack of a strong grassroots structure to foster sports development in Pakistan. Neglect by policymakers, flawed strategies, and insufficient facilities for athletes were cited as major obstacles. The absence of coordination between key stakeholders, along with government officials' reluctance to engage with those who manage and monitor sports at all levels.

The roundtable, titled "Charting the Course of Pakistan's Sports: Achievements and Challenges," was organized by the renowned think tank Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) in collaboration with the Institute of Regional Studies

(IRS) and the Department of Arts and Media at Foundation University. The event was held at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS).

The chief guest, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, was joined by notable figures from Pakistan's sports community, including legendary hockey player and former captain Shehbaz Ahmed Senior, Olympian Shahnaz Sheikh, Olympian Sadaf Siddiqui, former squash champion Qamar Zaman, tennis star Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, Associate Secretary General of the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) Rizwan ul Haq Razi, renowned sports journalist Abdul Mohi Shah, Managing Director of PICSS Abdullah Khan, Senior Research Fellow at IRS Dr Rizwan Naseer, Head of Foundation University Arts and Media Studies Dr. Hina Shahid, President of Alpine Club of Pakistan Abu Zafar Sadiq, Joint Secretary of the Pakistan Basketball Federation Ouj-e-Zahoor, Dean of



the Department of Social Sciences at Sarhad University Dr. Abdul Waheed Mughal, National Athlete Yasir Sultan, Rugby Coach Romail Ashraf, Chairman of the Private Schools Association Almas Ayub Saber, and other distinguished guests.

Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan emphasized the vital role sports play

in fostering unity and harmony among people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. "Sports provide a platform for bringing individuals together, promoting teamwork, cooperation, and mutual respect, which are essential for national cohesion," he stated. He also reaffirmed the government's commitment, under Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif, to creating opportunities for young athletes to excel on international platforms.

The speakers called for increased collaboration between policymakers, sports organizations, and private stakeholders to strengthen Pakistan's sports infrastructure. They highlighted the need for better facilities

for athletes and greater investment in grassroots initiatives to identify and nurture emerging talent.

The event concluded with a commitment to advancing collaborative efforts and ensuring sports play a central role in the development of Pakistan, both domestically and on the global stage.

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

Silent Superpower of 21st Century: Pakistan's Economic Revolution And Educational Renewal

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

In the 21st century, as the world navigates through rapid technological advancements and globalization, Pakistan has emerged as an unexpected silent superpower. The richest country in the world is famous for its hospitality, making significant strides in economic development and educational renewal. Transformative journey of Pakistan, shedding light on its economic revolution and educational resurgence that has positioned the country as a potential powerhouse in the global arena. Pakistan, once plagued by economic instability and challenges, has witnessed a remarkable turnaround in recent years. The country's economic revolution is attributed to a combination of strategic policies, investments and reforms.

Alongside its economic revolution, Pakistan has also embarked on a journey of educational renewal aiming to improve access to quality education for its citizens. Pakistan has long faced challenges in its education system, including issues of access, quality and equity. In recent years there has been a strong push towards educational renewal in the country. This renewed focus on education at a crucial time when Pakistan is experiencing rapid economic growth and development. Pakistan aims to equip its citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute effectively to the economy and society.

One of the key initiatives in Pakistan's educational renewal journey is the Prime Minister Laptop Scheme. The aim of (PMLS) is to attach its youth towards modern knowledge about significant reforms in the education sector such as development, teacher training and educational infrastructure. This policy shift emphasizes the importance of enhancing the quality of education, promoting skill development and ensuring inclusivity in the education system.

Pakistan's strength is to create a more robust and responsive education system that meets the needs of the 21st century. In policy reforms Pakistan has been investing in improving its educational infrastructure. The government has allocated a significant portion of its budget to the education sector with a focus on building new schools, upgrading existing facilities and improving the quality of education in the country. Pakistan is laying the foundation for a brighter future for its citizens and the nation as a whole.

Education is often the cornerstone of development, as it equips individuals with the knowledge and skills to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. Pakistan has been actively investing in its educational and economic growth to provide quality education and its products. Pakistan focuses on building new schools and upgrading existing institutions for its population.

The government of Pakistan is fully

committed to reforms in the educational sector by significant allocation of funds. World Bank report (2020), the government of Pakistan allocated 2.4% of its GDP to education demonstrating a clear prioritization of this crucial sector. This investment is crucial for building new schools, upgrading facilities and ensuring that all children have access to quality education.

Investing in education infrastructure is a strategic move that helps to collect significant benefits for Pakistan. In the education sector, constructing new schools especially in underserved areas increases access to education for children who previously had limited or no opportunities. This expansion of education is crucial for promoting inclusivity in all the segments of society and access to learning resources. Moreover, upgrading existing educational institutions is essential for enhancing the quality of education. Pakistan can improve and upgrade the learning experience for students that enables it to attract talented educators to contribute to the global knowledge economy.

Pakistan stands at a critical juncture where improving and upgrading the learning experience for students is essential for attracting talented educators. In an era characterized by rapid globalization and technological advancement, the educational landscape must evolve to meet contemporary demands. Incorporating innovative teaching methodologies, enhancing

curricula, and leveraging technology, Pakistan can create an engaging learning environment that not only nurtures student potential but also draws skilled educators from around the globe.

The integration of modern pedagogical approaches, such as project-based learning and collaborative techniques, can significantly enhance student engagement. Furthermore, investing in digital infrastructure will facilitate access to online resources and global knowledge networks. This transformation is pivotal in cultivating a culture of continuous learning among students, thereby preparing them to contribute effectively to the global knowledge economy.

Moreover, fostering partnerships with international educational institutions can provide Pakistani educators with exposure to best practices in teaching and curriculum development. These improvements in education, Pakistan can significantly contribute to the global knowledge economy while empowering its youth with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Such collaborations will not only elevate local standards but also position Pakistan as an attractive destination for knowledgeable professionals seeking impactful careers in education.

Writer is Post-Doctorate (Peace Education), International Islamic University Islamabad-Pakistan

At UN, Pakistan calls for ending Israel's aggression in Gaza

Highlighting the 'apocalyptic' humanitarian conditions in Gaza, Pakistan has underscored the urgent need to put an end to Israel's genocidal war in besieged enclaves and for steps to alleviate civilians' suffering, as the UN General Assembly resumed its Special Session on the situation in Palestine.

Speaking in the 193-member Assembly, Ambassador Munir Akram voiced Pakistan's "deep dismay" over the U. S. veto on UN Security Council resolution, sponsored by its 10 elected members, that called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, saying, "There is no rationale that can justify blocking a decision designed to stop the slaughter of helpless Palestinians."

"The General Assembly must now exercise its responsibility, in accordance with the Charter, to demand an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza and the implementation of the several resolutions adopted on this conflict by the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as the adjudication by the International Court of Justice," the Pakistani envoy emphasized.

Other delegates also opposed the use of the veto in the situation in the Gaza Strip and urged a depoliticization of events in the region.

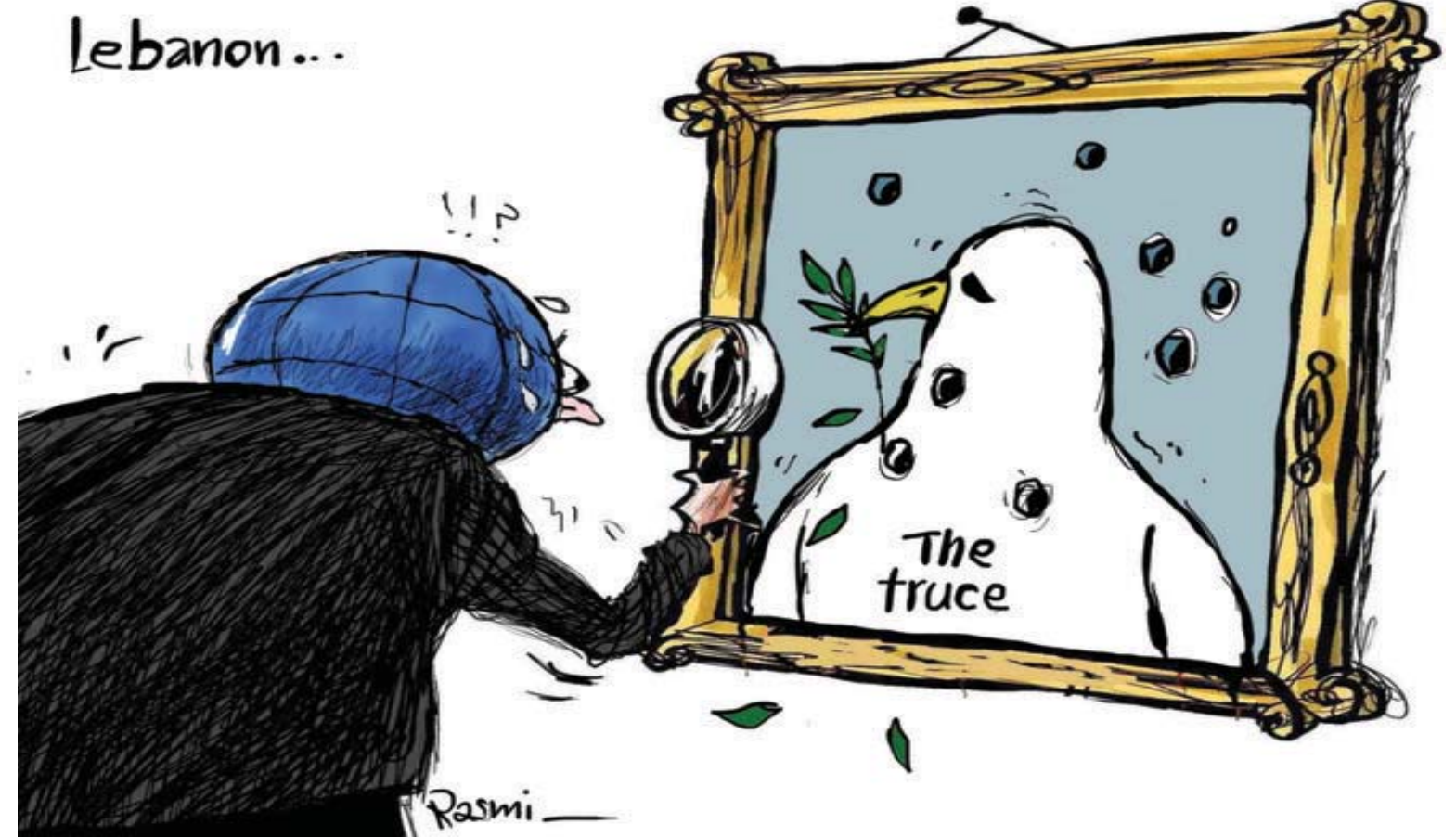
Regretting that for over a year people have endured 'a relentless cycle of death, destruction and displacement', the General Assembly President, Philemon Yang of Cameroon, who opened the debate, said: 'The horror in Gaza must end'.

In his remarks, Ambassador Akram said, "For over 400 days, the world has witnessed the indiscriminate slaughter of the Palestinian population of Gaza," pointing out that forty-four thousand, mostly women and children, have been killed, while over one hundred thousand injured.

Pakistan, he said, welcomes the ceasefire in Lebanon, "But the slaughter continues in Gaza - as do strikes in Syria," warning that the danger of a wider war continues to loom large over the entire Middle East.

Backing UNWRA, the world body's agency for Palestinian refugees, Ambassador Akram condemned Israel's efforts to halt its operations, asserting that it is the only organization capable of assuring humanitarian assistance and relief to the people in Gaza, the West Bank and elsewhere.

Pointing out that Israel's war has demonstrated that aggression and genocide can be committed against some peoples with impunity; indeed, with the complicity of those who vocally uphold the 'rule of law' and human rights in almost every other geographical and political context, he said, "Such impunity has contributed to the on-going destruction of the foundations of the world order, which we created almost 80 years ago.



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

Challenge of Electricity Theft and Legal Diversion Tactics

There is an English idiom that "Throwing a spanner in the works." It has been observed that when electricity theft is caught and an FIR is registered, the accused often file petitions in courts against employees of the electricity distribution companies. They use allegations of bribery and previous personal grudges to challenge the company's employees. This method employed by electricity thieves does nothing but prolong the legal process.

When I inquired about the registration of an FIR from a senior SDO of MEPCO, the officer clarified that the FIR against electricity thieves is registered with all necessary evidence, and the consumer is issued a detection bill to recover the amount of damage caused to the treasury. This process is carried out under NEPRAs regulations. Despite video evidence and witness statements, electricity thieves do not admit their wrongdoing. As a result, it leads to the filing of a criminal case.

Electricity theft has long been a critical issue for utility companies like MEPCO and others, leading to significant financial losses and operational inefficiencies. Despite stringent measures and legal actions to combat this illegal activity, many perpetrators remain defiant. Instead of complying with the law, these individuals often resort to filing petitions in courts as a tactic to delay investigations and create distractions. This practice not only hampers the enforcement of anti-theft measures but also places an undue burden on the officers of electricity distribution companies.

When FIRs are lodged against electricity thieves, it initiates legal proceedings aimed at holding the culprits accountable. However, in

many cases, the accused misuse legal channels to influence investigations. By filing petitions in courts, they seek to stall progress, create counter-blasts, and redirect attention away from their unlawful activities. This deliberate misuse of the judicial system complicates the resolution process and undermines the efforts of authorities to address the issue effectively.

"Impact on Utility Officers and Operations" A direct consequence of these diversion tactics is the frequent summoning of MEPCO and other utility company officers to courts and police stations. While these officers are integral to ensuring the smooth operation of electricity distribution systems, their involvement in such cases disrupts their daily responsibilities. Instead of focusing on essential tasks such as monitoring electricity supply, addressing consumer grievances, and managing divisional-level operations, they are forced to spend time attending legal proceedings.

The misuse of the legal system by electricity thieves not only affects utility companies but also undermines the broader framework of law enforcement and justice. It sets a precedent where habitual thieves engaged in illegal activities exploit procedural loopholes to evade accountability. This weakens the deterrent effect of anti-theft laws and encourages others to follow suit, exacerbating the problem.

To address these challenges, a multi-faceted approach is required:

"Amendments to laws related to electricity theft should ensure that frivolous petitions aimed at delaying investigations are penalized."

1. Judicial Support: Courts should prioritize cases involving electricity theft and discourage

the misuse of legal provisions.

2. Dedicated Task Forces: Establishing specialized teams to handle electricity theft cases can minimize the involvement of utility officers in legal proceedings.

3. Public Awareness Campaigns: Educating the public about the consequences of electricity theft and promoting ethical practices can reduce incidents of theft.

4. Technological Solutions: Deployment of smart meters and advanced monitoring systems can help detect and prevent electricity theft more efficiently.

Electricity theft remains a significant challenge for utility companies, resulting in substantial financial losses and operational inefficiencies. While various external factors contribute to this issue, one cannot ignore the internal vulnerabilities within the electricity distribution system. It is a harsh reality that a small fraction of officials within the system are complicit in facilitating electricity theft, either for personal gain or under external pressure. However, it is equally important to clarify that the entire system should not be painted with the same brush.

It is highly condemnable when a consumer, instead of accepting responsibility for the crime of electricity theft, resorts to filing petitions in court or other forums. This tactic not only undermines the legal process but also delays justice, allowing the criminal to evade accountability. Instead of facing the consequences of their actions, these individuals try to manipulate the system by diverting attention from their illegal behavior. Such actions hinder the efforts of authorities and utility companies to effectively combat electricity theft, creating unnecessary obstacles in the pursuit of justice and fairness. It is essential that consumers understand the gravity of electricity theft and face the legal consequences rather than attempting to exploit legal loopholes.

DG ISPR's Remarkable Efforts in Uniting Different Segments of Society - II

Abdul Basit Alvi

This connectivity is expected to boost Pakistan's economy by fostering regional trade and attracting investments to Balochistan.

The province's strategic location also places it at the heart of regional geopolitics. Balochistan's proximity to the Middle East and vital oil shipping routes highlights its significance not only for Pakistan's national security but also for broader regional stability.

DG ISPR also visited Jamia Ashrafia Lahore, where he engaged with scholars, religious leaders, and students to address concerns and clear up misconceptions about the Pakistan Army. This direct engagement reflects the ongoing efforts to build trust and bridge gaps between the military and various segments of society. The session offered a valuable platform for open dialogue, where participants had the opportunity to ask questions directly to the DG ISPR, who responded with clarity, generosity, and well-reasoned insights. This exchange played a crucial role in dispelling long-held uncertainties and misconceptions, effectively countering unfounded narratives that had been circulated without proper research about the Pakistan Army. The participants expressed great satisfaction and encouragement from the DG ISPR's thoughtful responses. They reaffirmed their strong and unwavering support for the Pakistan Army, recognizing it as a

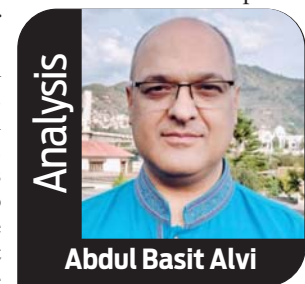
symbol of national pride and honor. The religious community, along with the broader nation, voiced their collective commitment to standing firmly with Pakistan's armed forces, both now and in the future. This meeting highlighted the strong unity between religious schools of thought and the Pakistan Army in safeguarding the nation's integrity and security. It underscored the importance of collective efforts to protect the country's core values and interests.

The spread of anti-military propaganda and misinformation has serious consequences for a nation's security, stability, and social cohesion. In Pakistan, as in many countries, the military plays a crucial role in national defense, maintaining law and order, managing disaster responses, and supporting national development. Therefore, any attempt to undermine the military through misleading or false narratives can destabilize the country and erode the trust necessary for effective governance.

DG ISPR has played a pivotal role in presenting a clear and accurate picture, countering misinformation, and addressing misconceptions. His efforts in engaging with the youth have been instrumental in reducing misperceptions and strengthening civil-military relations. The people and youth of Pakistan are united in confronting both internal and external challenges. Any malicious attempts to create divisions or foster animosity between the civilian population and the military will ultimately fail.



Zain-ul-Abideen Abid



Abdul Basit Alvi

Minister Ahsan Iqbal addresses Concluding Session of ISSI's 'Islamabad Conclave'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI)'s 2-day Islamabad Conclave, concluded with the wide-ranging address of Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives. During the session, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood presented the Key Takeaways from the 5 Working Sessions.

In his address, Chief Guest Minister Ahsan Iqbal underscored the significance of the theme of Islamabad Conclave, "Pakistan and the Evolving Global Order." He remarked that this theme resonates deeply with Pakistan's strategic aspirations, particularly as the world transitions from a unipolar to a multipolar order, driven by the rise of the Global South. He emphasized that the existing global system, established post-World War II, has become increasingly irrelevant, particularly its financial and multilateral structures, which fail to address the economic challenges of developing nations. He highlighted that Pakistan's geostrategic location at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, and the



Middle East offers unparalleled opportunities for regional trade, energy, and connectivity. He cited the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a key enabler in this transformation, having already delivered critical infrastructure projects, including 8,000 MW of energy and over 500 kilometres of highways. These developments position Pakistan as a pivotal hub for regional integration, trade, and economic collaboration.

Presenting the vote of thanks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI stated that the shifting world order, marked by the emergence of new power centers, presents complex challenges. In addition to traditional geopolitical shifts, the world is grappling with non-traditional issues such as climate change and terrorism, which undermine global stability. These challenges are compounded by the viola-

tion of fundamental values, further destabilizing international relations. Addressing these issues requires innovative solutions and a concerted effort to uphold core principles of global governance.

The Conclave was attended by participants belonging to diverse fields including the academia, civil society, think-tank community, policy practitioners, diplomatic corps, students, and the media.

Vice Chairman PRCS KP Calls on National Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Vice Chairman of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Branch, Mr. Farzand Wazir, met with the Honorable National Chairman of PRCS, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, at the National Headquarters in Islamabad.



During the meeting, Mr. Farzand Wazir provided a comprehensive briefing on the ongoing projects and initiatives being carried out by the KP Branch. He expressed his gratitude, highlighting that under the visionary leadership of Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, the National Headquarters has consistently prioritized humanitarian service. He acknowledged that the guidance and support from the National Headquarters have been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of various programs and initiatives in the region.

Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari reaffirmed the National Headquarters' commitment to empowering PRCS branches nationwide. He emphasized that the National Headquarters will continue to extend its steadfast support to the KP Branch, focusing on strengthening its operations and expanding the reach of its humanitarian programs.

As a token of appreciation, Chairman Laghari presented a commemorative shield to Vice Chairman Farzand Wazir, acknowledging his dedication and efforts towards the betterment of PRCS operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The meeting underscores PRCS's collective commitment to serving humanity and fostering collaboration across its network of branches, ensuring that no community is left behind in times of need.

Appreciation

ISLAMABAD: Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia to Pakistan Dr. Jemal Beker presenting award to senior Photo Journalist of Online International News Network Sultan Bashir, during the ceremony "Champions of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity" to foster the friendship and brotherhood between the two nations by highlighting the true image of Ethiopia in Pakistan, especially its economic potential, in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Senior Photo Journalist Ramzan Mughal receiving a certificate of appreciation from Ambassador of Ethiopia, Dr. Jemal Beker during the ceremony "Champions of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity" held on Thursday.



Photo: Online

Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) Working Session IV

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The fourth working session titled, "Transforming Regional Dynamics and Architecture: Pakistan's Posture" was hosted by the Center for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA).

The keynote speaker at the session was Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan's former Foreign Minister and currently the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly of Pakistan. Other speakers included Ms. Amina Khan, Director, CAMEA, Ambassador Asif Durrani, Pakistan's former Special Representative on Afghanistan, Mr. Kawa Hassan, Non-resident Fellow with Stimson's Middle East program, Mr. Haroon Sharif, former Minister and Chairman BOI, Michael Kugelman, Director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center in Washington, D. C. and Mr. Leo Wigger, Associate Partner, Candid Foundation,



Germany.

Ms. Amina Khan, in her welcome remarks stated that the regional strategic landscape has been fundamentally reshaped by 3 major factors: great power competition; events in neighbouring Afghanistan as well as regional connectivity in South and Central Asia.

In her Keynote address, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar said that the world is transforming and people are fighting for primacy for the rule of the world. The war in Gaza and its military and

diplomatic support has exposed the major powers, with Israel being let off with impunity.

Ambassador Asif Durrani, speaking on 'Sustainable Peace and Security in Post-Taliban Afghanistan' highlighted Afghanistan's fragile stability under the Taliban rule, marked by dire economic conditions and widespread poverty.

Kawa Hassan, while talking about 'Geopolitical Shifts in the Middle East', emphasized the transformative impact of recent events in the Middle

UK honors 10 years of support for Karandaaz with high-level visit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In her first visit to Pakistan, UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office's (FCDO) Director General for Humanitarian and Development, Melinda Bohannon, celebrates 10 years of the UK's £155 million investment in Karandaaz.

The programme supported over 1.1 million jobs, over 50% of which were for women, and generated over PKR 230 billion in additional income for businesses across the country.

In her 3-day visit, Bohannon met the Minister of Finance to discuss progress on Pakistan's IMF-supported



programme, and ongoing UK technical assistance to support the Government of Pakistan's economic reform priorities. She also met the Sub-Committee of the Anti-Rupe Act 2021, Chaired by the Secretary Law and Justice, to mark the milestone launch of Pakistan's

first National Sex Offender Register.

During her visit, she opened the British High Commission's final Chevening 'Climate Connects' debate. The debate brought together alumni from the UK's flagship scholarship programme, Chevening, to debate progress

made at COP29 on 'Just Transition'. It followed a debate in Karachi on green growth, and in Lahore on urbanisation.

Reflecting on her visit, the FCDO Director General Humanitarian and Development, Melinda Bohannon said:

"In Haripur, I met the most fantastic teachers helping children catch-up on their learning. And I met wonderful, and dedicated women who are delivering vital family planning services through our mobile outreach medical camps. We are providing support to these schools and clinics, but these inspirational individuals are at the heart of delivering change.

Pakistan Services Hosts Fifth Corporate Briefing Session, Highlighting Financial Growth and Strategic Initiatives

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Services Limited (PSL) held its fifth corporate briefing session on November 27, 2024, at Islamabad Marriott Hotel, in compliance with Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) directives. The session provided stakeholders with key insights into the company's financial performance, strategic initiatives, and operational achievements, reaffirming PSL's commitment to transparency and excellence. Muhammad Amir, Company Secretary, gave an overview of PSL's journey since its acquisition by Hashoo Group in

1985. He emphasized PSL's transformation into Pakistan's leading hospitality company, with a portfolio spanning five-star, four-star hotels, along with some exciting upcoming initiatives, catering to a diverse range of traveller preferences, combining luxury, value, and convenience.

He outlined PSL's ambitious brand strategy, emphasizing its focus on delivering tailored experiences. Pearl-Continental (PC) Hotels & Resorts define five-star luxury, whereas PC Legacy Hotels elevate four-star accommodations with affordability. He also announced PC Residences

as an upcoming project, offering premium serviced apartments to meet evolving market demands.

Project updates on PSL's ongoing construction of two five-star Pearl-Continental Hotels in Multan and Mirpur were also shared. Additionally, the forum was also updated on the launch of PC Legacy Skardu, which offers a tranquil retreat amid stunning landscapes; and Rumanza by Pearl-Continental, a luxury golf resort in Multan that features South Asia's largest golf course.

Tahir Mahmood, Chief Financial Officer, presented PSL's financial achievements, reporting

an impressive earnings per share (EPS) of PKR 13.08. This performance reflects the company's robust market position and sustained growth trajectory.

During the session, the management also shared PSL's success in expanding its culinary footprint with standalone restaurants. Key highlights included Sakura in DHA Karachi, celebrated for its authentic Japanese dining experience, and Dumpukht in DHA Lahore, renowned for its rich Mughlai cuisine.

The event was attended by senior management, key stakeholders, and board members,



including the Deputy Chairman & CEO, of Hashoo Group and Director of the Company, Murtaza

Hashwani; Chief Executive Officer, Hospitality Division, Bastien Blanc; Chief Financial Officer,

Tahir Mahmood; Company Secretary, Muhammad Amir; and Board Members, Shakir Abu Bakar, Haseeb Gardezi, Ayesha Khan, M. Ghazali Marghoob, Rohail Ajmal, Shahid Hussain, and Saleem Ahmed Ranjha.

These ventures exemplify PSL's strategy to enhance its hospitality offerings and cater to evolving guest preferences in urban markets with broader operational activities, including Pearl Tours & Travels (Pvt) Limited, which offers comprehensive travel planning, tour management, and transportation solutions, enhancing PSL's role in the tourism sector.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
108,238.96	105,104.33
Day's High	Day's Low
108,345.98	105,448.05
Index Value	Change
44,135,665,972	+3134.63
Percentage	Time
+2.98%	5 Dec, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,349.38	+13.57
Percentage	Time
-0.16%	5 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
44,854.95	-159.09
Percentage	Time
-0.35%	5 Dec, 12:41 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,395.60	+119.21
Percentage	Time
+0.30%	5 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	178.75	181.25
Bahrain Dinar	733.50	741.50
Canadian Dollar	198.10	200.50
China Yuan	37.99	38.39
Danish Krone	39.15	39.55
Euro	289.95	292.70
Hong Kong Dollar	35.45	35.8
Indian Rupee	3.18	3.27
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.92
Kuwaiti Dinar	894.95	904.45
Malaysian Ringgit	61.75	62.35
New Zealand \$	162.4	164.4
Norwegians Krone	24.93	25.23
Omani Riyal	717.90	726.40
Qatari Riyal	75.7	76.4
Saudi Riyal	73.65	74.20
Singapore Dollar	207.25	209.25
Swedish Korona	25.1	25.4
Swiss Franc	312.72	315.52
Thai Bhat	7.95	8.10
U.A.E Dirham	75.35	76.00
UK Pound Sterling	350.00	353.5
US Dollar	277.50	279.00

World Competition Day: CCP discusses progress and challenges in market integrity

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) hosted a Media Workshop, bringing together senior journalists from both print and electronic media to celebrate World Competition Day, observed annually on December 5th.

Dr. Kabir Sidhu, Chairman of CCP, emphasized the importance of fostering competition and creating a level playing field across various sectors of the economy. He highlighted the need to curb market abuse and manipulation, noting that healthy competition leads to more equitable wealth distribution. Dr. Sidhu explained that cartels exploit the market, concentrating wealth in the hands of a few.

He stressed that the CCP plays a crucial role in guiding government policies to steer the economy in the right direction. "The only sources of revenue are exports, taxes, and remittances. If businesses can't compete domestically, how can they compete interna-



tionally?" he said. He also noted that competition drives innovation and efficiency, leading to better services, products, and more exportable goods. CCP is focusing on reviewing the legal and regulatory frameworks in the energy and services sectors to remove entry barriers and protectionist policies.

Dr. Sidhu also referred to global examples from the UK and the US, where market developments took considerable time to unfold. "Similarly, Pakistan is at a developmental

stage, and it will take time and effort to fully implement effective competition policies," Dr. Sidhu remarked, adding that the Constitutional Bench could expedite the legal process.

He emphasized the need for collaboration between the media, government, and public in fulfilling the CCP's mandate against anti-competitive conduct. While acknowledging that Pakistan's competition landscape is evolving, he stressed that continued support from all stakeholders is crucial in

fostering a healthy competition regime.

The CCP officials provided a detailed briefing on ongoing inquiries and shared sample case studies from the sugar, automobile and cement sectors. They also highlighted encouraging updates on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) attracted through merger clearances and acknowledged the significant support extended by the Ministry of Law, Ministry of Finance, the Supreme and High Courts. Journalists raised pertinent questions regarding the CCP's challenges in enforcing Competition Law, particularly the persistent backlog of cases in higher courts. CCP officials provided comprehensive responses to the queries raised by the media representatives.

Mr. Shahzad Hissain (Director General), Mr. Noman Laiq (Director General), Mr. Ahmed Qadir (Director General), Dr. Ikram ul Haq (Director General), Ms. Ambreen Abassi (Senior Legal Advisor) and Hafiz Naem (Senior Legal Advisor) along with other CCP officials attended the workshop.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Alisher Tukhtaev, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan called on Federal Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Thursday.



Photo: PID

STZA and Tech7 Sign PKR 15 billion Zone Development Agreement

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark step towards transforming Pakistan's technology ecosystem, the Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA) and Tech7 (Private) Limited have signed a Zone Development Agreement valued at PKR 15 billion. This collaboration aligns with the Prime Minister's and SIFC's vision of driving economic growth through technological innovation and reflects a joint commitment to empowering youth, promoting investment, and positioning Pakistan as a global technology hub.

The signing ceremony was attended by key leaders from both organizations, including Mr. Azfar Manzoor, Chairman at STZA; Mr. Hamza Saeed, Chief Market Development Officer at STZA; Ms. Iqra Musaddaq, Chief Legal Officer at STZA; Mr. Inran Bhanbro, Director of Zone Developer Enablement at STZA; Mr. Yaseen Masood, Director at Tech7 (Pvt) Ltd and CEO J7 Group; Mr. Ameer Hussain, Director at Tech7 (Pvt) Ltd; Mr. Sohail Chochan, Director at Tech7 (Pvt) Ltd; Mr. Chaudhary Hanif, Director at Tech7 (Pvt) Ltd; Mr. Muhammad Umair, CFO at Tech7



(Pvt) Ltd and other distinguished members from both sides.

With the STZA Zone Developer license, Tech7 is poised to accelerate the growth of SMEs, multinational technology corporations and startups by providing access to cutting-edge technology infrastructure and a strategic location designed to attract top human capital.

Mr. Azfar Manzoor, Chairman at STZA stated "Tech7 Special Technology Zone is a reflection of STZA's mandate and the

private sector's bold vision for transforming Pakistan into a global innovation hub. This initiative has the potential to create high-tech jobs and drive Pakistan's emergence as a competitive player in the global knowledge economy."

Mr. Maqbool Hussain, CEO of Tech7 (Private) Limited, highlighted the significance of joining STZA's ecosystem, stating: "With the STZA license, we are poised to drive transformative change by building a collaborative and inclusive tech ecosystem.

MPCL and PARCO commend PIP for successful Pakistan Pavilion at ADIPEC 2024

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mari Petroleum Company Limited (MPCL) and Pak Arab Refinery Company Limited (PARCO) have expressed their appreciation to the Petroleum Institute of Pakistan (PIP) for its pivotal role in establishing the Pakistan Pavilion at ADIPEC 2024.

Faheem Haider, Managing Director/CEO of MPCL, stated: "We extend our sincere gratitude to the PIP for establishing the Pakistan Pavilion at ADIPEC.

This platform enables Pakistani companies to engage with leading global

players in the energy sector, which is particularly significant in light of the latest technological advancements in clean and green initiatives."

Irteza Ali Qureshi, Managing Director of PARCO, noted that attending ADIPEC was an invaluable experience, providing key insights into emerging technologies, industry trends, and sustainability practices.

"As a leading global energy event, it provided key insights into emerging technologies, industry trends, and sustainability practices," he added.

Pak-Qatar Asset Management Company reaches PKR 50 billion in AUM

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pak-Qatar Asset Management Company Limited (PQAMC)-Rated AM2 with stable outlook by PACRA, Pakistan's emerging dedicated Islamic Asset Management Company and part of Pak-Qatar Group, Pakistan's premier and pioneer Islamic financial services group. PQAMC proudly announce a remarkable achievement in Pakistan's Islamic financial sector, surpassing PKR 50 billion in Assets Under Management (AUM) within just two years of operations. This milestone establishes PQAMC as the truly emerging asset management company in the country, demonstrating exceptional growth and market penetration in Pakistan's competitive financial landscape.

"This extraordinary milestone reflects our commit-

ment to excellence and the trust our investors have placed in us," said Mr. Farhan Shaukat, Chief Executive Officer of PQAMC. "Reaching PKR 50 billion in AUM by the end of its second operational year is not just a number; it is a testament to our team's dedication, our strong investment strategies in Shariah-compliant financial solutions, and our promise to deliver superior value to our stakeholders while maintaining the highest standards of Shariah compliance."

The achievement reinforces PQAMC's position as a real emerging force in Pakistan's asset management industry, highlighting the company's operational excellence and strategic vision in building a diverse portfolio that resonates with both corporate/institutional and individual investors.

'IBA Karachi Successfully Hosted 25th Annual Population Research Conference

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: IBA Karachi proudly hosted a two-day 25th Annual Population Research Conference, focusing on the Pathways to Sustainable Development, which was organized in collaboration with Population Association of Pakistan (PAP) and the Population Research Centre (PRC) at the IBA School of Economics & Social Sciences. The partnership with the PAP highlights IBA's dedication to fostering Collaboration among Scholars, Policymakers, and Practitioners to address Pakistan's Evolving Demographic Challenges.

Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, delivered the Welcome Remarks at the Engaging Inaugural Session. Senator (R) Javed

Jabbar, Director, Social Policy and Development Centre, Karachi, delivered the keynote address. Dr. Nasra Shah, President Executive Council, PAP, highlighted the 25-Year Journey of the PAP Reflecting on the Organization's Contributions to Population Research.

The first panel, "Pakistan @ 2050," moderated by Dr. Asma Hyder, Dean, School of Economics & Social Sciences, focused on the country's future challenges, including Poverty, Urbanization, and Climate Change. Experts like Dr. Zeba Sathar, Senior Associate & Pakistan Country Director, Population Council; Dr. Heman Das Lohano, Professor of Economics, IBA, Karachi, and Dr. G. M. Arif, Former Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics & President Executive



Council, PAP, delved into Pakistan's demographic trajectory, examining how Rapid Urbanization—projected to see over half of the population living in cities by 2050—will impact the Nation's Social and Economic Land-

scape. With 40% of urban residents currently living in slums, the discussion emphasized the urgent need for policies to address the opportunities and risks posed by urban growth and climate change, particularly in relation to migration and demographic shifts.

The Spotlight Session, "Data for Development" brought together the heads of regional PRCs, including Dr. Khadija Malik Bari, Director, IBA-PRC, to discuss their ongoing initiatives, challenges, and opportunities in utilizing data for sustainable development. Dr. Bari highlighted key programs led by IBA-PRC, such as the Young Researchers Workshop Series, which engages emerging scholars to share research tools and methodologies with students, encouraging engagement and collaboration.

Jazz and Engro Connect Partner to Strengthen Pakistan's Digital Infrastructure

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, VEON's digital operator in Pakistan and the country's leading digital conglomerate, and Engro Connect, a subsidiary of Engro Corporation, have announced a strategic partnership to enhance the management and utilization of telecommunications infrastructure in Pakistan.

Under this agreement, Jazz's infrastructure assets, managed by its wholly owned subsidiary Deodar (Private) Limited ("Deodar"), will integrate with Engro Connect through a scheme of arrangement, in compliance with applicable laws and aligned with necessary regulatory processes. Jazz will continue to

lease Deodar's extensive infrastructure portfolio, ensuring uninterrupted nationwide mobile voice and data services under a long-term partnership agreement.

Aamir Ibrahim, CEO of Jazz, commented: "This partnership marks a significant milestone in our transformation into a fully digital ServiceCo; advancing VEON's strategic focus on an asset-light approach. By optimizing our infrastructure and collaborating with Engro Corp, a trusted leader in infrastructure management, we are reinforcing our commitment to driving Pakistan's digital transformation.

Abdul Samad Dawood, Director of Engro Corporation, said, "This deal reflects Engro's continued passion to address pressing issues through impactful infrastructure - in particular by enabling low-cost, high-quality connectivity, which is a cornerstone of progress.

This partnership reflects Jazz's unwavering commitment to accelerating Pakistan's digital journey, fostering innovation, and creating sustainable value for communities across the country.



Pakistan Cricket squads named for South Africa Tour

Pakistan to Play three T20Is, Three ODIs and two Tests from 10 December to 7 January in South Africa

Asim Tanveer

DURBAN/ SOUTH AFRICA: The Pakistan men's selection committee has announced the squads for the upcoming South Africa tour, scheduled from 10 December to 7 January. The tour comprises three T20Is, three ODIs and two Tests.

Babar Azam has been named in all three squads along with Mohammad Rizwan, Saim Ayub and Salman Ali Agha, while Naseem Shah has been selected for the Tests and ODIs. Shaheen Shah Afridi, who also missed the last two Tests against England, has been picked for the white-ball matches as part of his workload management so that he is in his best fitness and form for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

Also returning to the Test side is fast bowler Mohammad Abbas, who last played in Jamaica in August 2021. Abbas, who has taken 90 wickets in 25 Tests, had a stellar Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, claiming 31 wickets in five matches. Naseem Shah has also been named in the four-man pace attack

after missing the last two Tests against England. The 21-year-old, who has played 19 Tests since making his debut in November 2019, has taken four wickets to date for Lahore Whites against Peshawar in the ongoing Quaid-e-Azam Trophy match in Abbottabad.

Fast bowler Khurram Shahzad has also been named in the Test side after claiming 15 wickets for Pakistan Shaheens against Sri Lanka 'A' last month. Mir Hamza is the fourth fast bowler in the 15-man Test squad and is presently playing for Peshawar against Lahore Whites in Abbottabad.

However, off-spinner Sajid Khan has missed out on selection despite his 19 wickets against England. The selectors, after taking into consideration the Centurion and Newlands conditions as well as South Africa as the opposition, have opted for only one specialist spinner in Noman Ali, who took 20 wickets against England and has 67 wickets in 17 Tests.

Also earning the selectors nod for the first time in ODIs is Sufyan Moqim, the left-arm wrist spinner who has taken



eight wickets in two T20Is, including five wickets for three runs in the second T20I.

The T20I squad will depart for South Africa on Friday, 6 December, after Thursday's third T20I against Zimbabwe, while the ODI and Test players will depart for Johannesburg on 13 December. Pakistan men's red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie will also arrive in Johannesburg on 13 December to supervise the pre-Test series camp.

Pakistan squads for South Africa tour:

Tests: Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Babar Azam, Haseebullah (wk), Kamran Ghulam, Khuram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Naseem Shah, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub and Salman Ali Agha

ODIs: Mohammad Rizwan (captain & wk), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Hasnain, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Sufyan Moqim, Tayyab Tahir and Usman Khan (wk)

T20Is: Mohammad Rizwan (captain & wk), Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Jahandad Khan, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Hasnain, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Omair Bin Yousuf, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Sufyan Moqim, Tayyab Tahir and Usman Khan (wk)

Aqib Javed, member selection committee and interim white-ball head coach:

We have adopted a horses for courses policy to ensure all three squads are well-balanced and capable of performing strongly in South Africa. Leaving out Sajid Khan, despite his stellar performances against England, was an extremely tough and difficult decision. However, considering the pace-friendly conditions at Centurion and in Cape Town, we opted for Mohammad Abbas instead, who is an outstanding exponent of seam bowling. Shaheen Shah Afridi's exclusion from the Test squad is a strategic decision to ensure he remains physically and mentally fresh for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Similarly, Fakhar Zaman was not considered as he is yet to regain form and match fitness.

Our aim is to maintain consistency in ODI selections as part of our ICC Champions Trophy 2025 preparations, while also giving emerging talent opportunities in T20Is alongside experienced players. For Tests, we have focused on

assembling a squad that can adapt to challenging conditions and consistently compete at the highest level.

The Test series against South Africa will be highly competitive, but we are confident in our team's ability to secure a historic series win. Our focus in ODIs is to continue building momentum ahead of the Champions Trophy, while the T20I series provides a platform to blend experience with emerging talent.

The series will begin with the first T20I in Durban on 10 December, followed by the first ODI in Paarl on 17 December. The Test matches will be hosted at Centurion and in Cape Town on 26 December and 3 January, respectively.

Tour schedule:
10 Dec - First T20I, Durban
13 Dec - Second T20I, Centurion
14 Dec - Third T20I, Johannesburg
17 Dec - First ODI, Paarl
19 Dec - Second ODI, Cape Town
22 Dec - Third ODI, Johannesburg
26-30 Dec - First Test, Centurion
3-7 Jan - Second Test, Cape Town

Men's National Road Cycling Championship 2024

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Men's National Road Cycling Championship 2024, organized by the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), concluded successfully in Lahore from December 2 to December 4. The championship witnessed thrilling performances from top cyclists across the country, with eight teams, including Pakistan Army, Pakistan WAPDA, HEC, Pakistan Railways, and provincial teams, competing for glory.

On the first day, the 40KM Individual Time Trial (ITT) was held, where Muhammad Bilal from Pakistan Army showcased his exceptional skills, clinching 1st place with a time of 54:49. Abdul Wahid from Pakistan WAPDA secured the 2nd position with a time of 56:44, followed by Sabir, also from Pakistan WAPDA, who clocked 57:04 to secure 3rd place.

The second day featured the 70KM Team Time Trial (TTT), where Pakistan Army dominated once again, finishing in 1st place with a time of 1:32:33. Pakistan WAPDA followed closely with a time of 1:33:14, securing 2nd position, while Pakistan Railways claimed 3rd place with a time of 1:49:03.

On the final day, the 120KM Road Scratch Race delivered an exciting finish. Muhammad Bilal from Pakistan Army emerged victorious yet



again, finishing in 1st place with a time of 3:08:03. Izzat Ullah from Pakistan WAPDA claimed 2nd place with a time of 3:08:04, and Abdul Wahid from Pakistan WAPDA secured 3rd place, finishing in 3:09:24.

In the overall points tally, Pakistan Army was declared the Champion, accumulating a total of 79 points. Pakistan WAPDA secured the 2nd position with 67 points, while Pakistan Railways claimed the 3rd position with 18

points. Sindh followed in 4th place with 12 points.

The championship saw enthusiastic support from a large crowd during the opening and closing ceremonies. Fans applauded the athletes for their dedication and impressive performances throughout the event.

President of the Pakistan Cycling Federation, Idris Haider Khawaja, expressed his delight over the successful organization of the championship,

stating, "This event marks the return of all departments' participation, and it has been a remarkable success. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Muhammad Bilal from Pakistan Army for his outstanding performances and applaud Pakistan WAPDA for their commendable efforts."

PCF General Secretary Moazzam Khan Klair also appreciated the participating cyclists and emphasized the Federation's commitment to promoting cycling in Pakistan. "We are proud of all the athletes who competed. I encourage them to continue their hard work as we gear up for the Men's National Track Cycling Championship 2025 in the coming months. Let's aim to build a strong team for future competitions."

Mr. Klair also thanked the dedicated officials, including Waqar Ali, Talha Babar, Qasir Sadiq, Shahzada Butt, Nouman, Haider Ali, Shah Zaman, Zahid Gulfaan, and others, whose tireless efforts ensured the smooth execution of the championship.

The Federation extended special gratitude to DHA Lahore for providing essential arrangements and contributing to the championship's success.

The Men's National Road Cycling Championship 2024 has set the stage for further growth of cycling in Pakistan, fostering talent and inspiring young athletes nationwide.

Yasir Sultan Mayo Achieved Remarkable Success, Won the Gold Medal



Shahid Saeed Mirza

MULTAN: The 52nd National Athletics Championship was held at General Shafiq Stadium, Multan Cantt, in which Yasir Sultan Mayo achieved remarkable success in the competition and won the gold medal. Pakistan Mayo National Unity Council Pakistan organized a reception ceremony for Yasir Sultan Mayo to win the gold medal in the National Championship. Founder Chief Organizer Salim-ur-Rehman Mayo and Senior Vice Chairman Haji Nooruddin Mayo were the special guests on this occasion. After paying tribute to Yasir Sultan Mayo's success in the ceremony, Haji Nooruddin Mayo Salim-ur-Rehman Mayo, Chaudhry Arshad Sabir Mayo, Chaudhry Muhammad Aslam Khan Mayo, Patwari Master Deen Muhammad Chaudhry Muhammad Azam Khan Mayo, Ijaz Rehmat Mayo, Councillor Muhammad Afzal Mayo, performed the turban. On this occasion, Haji Nooruddin Mayo Salim-ur-Rehman Mayo, while speaking, said that the Prime Minister congratulated Yasir Sultan Mayo on his success in the Asian Championship. Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif announced a prize of Rs 5 million and encouraged and honored Yasir Sultan Mayo, which is commendable. He demanded that the Prime Minister immediately pay the prize money of Rs 5 million to Yasir Sultan Mayo and play a practical role in encouraging the players. He praised the efforts of the Prime Minister's Advisor Shabbir Usmani and Rana Mashhood and said that the Prime Minister should implement his announcement and ensure immediate payment of the money. The Central Vice President of the Mayo National Unity Council Pakistan organized a dinner in honor of Yasir Sultan Mayo.

Haris Rauf shortlisted for ICC Men's Player of the Month award

Pakistan right-arm pacer Haris Rauf has been named among the outstanding performers shortlisted for the ICC Men's Player of the Month awards for November 2024.

The right-arm bowler faces stiff competition from India's Jasprit Bumrah and South Africa's Marco Jansen, who delivered stellar performances that propelled their teams to historic victories in their respective matches. Rauf was pivotal in Pakistan's historic ODI series win in Australia — their first in 22 years.

The right-arm pacer capped off the series as the top wicket-taker with 10 scalps at an economy rate of just five. His outstanding bowling effort led Pakistan to a 2-1 series win.

His exceptional form continued in the subsequent T20I series, where he took five wickets, including a spectacular four-wicket haul in the second T20I.

Champions Trophy: Pakistan, India 'agree on neutral venue' formula for ICC tournaments

KARACHI: The long-standing dispute between India and Pakistan over the 2025 Champions Trophy is finally close to being resolved as both sides agreed to play their matches at neutral venues for ICC tournaments either hosted by Pakistan or India, sources and reports revealed on Thursday.

The Pakistan Cricket Board had suggested a "fusion formula" for hybrid model, in which India's matches in Pakistan-hosted ICC Champions Trophy would be shifted to a neutral venue. In return, Pakistan demanded the same arrangement for ICC events in India. After much discussion, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) report-



edly accepted the proposal. Talks reached a breakthrough on Thursday evening after a planned afternoon meeting was postponed due to the lack of a clear response from the BCCI.

By late night, sources said



that the BCCI had agreed in principle.

According to India's PTI news agency, the 2025 Champions Trophy will now be held in both Pakistan and the UAE, with India's matches taking place in Dubai.

The agreement will reportedly apply to all ICC events through 2027.

During this time, India is set to host the Women's ODI World Cup in October 2024 and the Men's T20 World Cup in 2026 alongside Sri Lanka. Pakistan had insisted on a reciprocal hybrid arrangement for these events in India.

Despite the progress, the PCB has stressed the need for written guarantees from the ICC. "The PCB wants assurance from the ICC, not the BCCI, that the hybrid model will be implemented without issues," a source close to the negotiations said. "Everything must be documented to avoid future complications." According to

the sources, the PCB wants this arrangement to be made part of the host agreement.

The PCB has also proposed organising a tri-series involving India and Pakistan at neutral venues in the future, with England and Australia among the suggested locations.

While there has been no formal response from the BCCI on this idea, it remains under consideration.

A final agreement is expected within the next 48 hours, as the ICC Board is scheduled to meet on December 7.

The arrangement will need formal approval and inclusion in host agreements to ensure it is binding on all ICC member boards.

41st Millat Tractors Governors Cup Golf Tournament 2024

Tahir Amin Malik.

LAHORE: The 41st Millat Tractors Governors Cup Golf Tournament 2024 presented by Millat Tractors Limited gets underway at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course from the 6th December (Friday) to 8th December 2024(Sunday) and on these three days the amateur golf champions will vie for glory and honors. This was stated by Shaukat Javed, Convenor Golf in a press conference attended by the distinguished sponsor Sikandar Mustafa Khan, Chairman, Millat Tractors, Ahsan Imran, CEO of Millat Equipment, Raza Saeed, Captain Golf of Gymkhana, Bela Azam, Lady Captain, Khawaja Pervaiz Saeed, Director Media of the Tournament and Imran Ayub, Coordinator, Millat Tractors. He also stated that for the facilitation of players, events for Senior amateurs, veterans and ladies were held and concluded on the early-

er two days.

Shaukat Javed elaborated that this Championship is now in its 41st occurrence and the association between Millat Tractors and Lahore Gymkhana has prospered and progressed and become engaging as well as congenial. As for the Golf Event itself, the championship has evolved into a prestigious national event of the golf calendar much sought after not only by national level golf playing amateurs but also by developing players who seek recognition as players of merit and expertise. A special feature of this golf championship is that the main trophy is on net score and provides a gleaming opportunity to middle handicappers to get recognized by acquiring this title. Over the years several players who achieved success in this Championship have elevated their playing status nationally.

Khawaja Pervaiz shared that the amateurs eligible to compete in this

championship should have a handicap of twelve and below and the format will be stroke play and competition will be over three days and 54 holes. It was also explained that prizes on offer are three gross and three net. And an outstanding feature of this championship is that the Governors Cup Title will go to the participant with the best net score.

Shaukat Javed affirmed that the Championship owes its continued existence to Chairman, Millat Tractors, Sikandar Mustafa Khan whose love for golf has left an impact on the yearly progress of this event. A personality of infinite decorum and grace, Sikandar Mustafa Khan is a successful entrepreneur and can be regarded as an icon of the world of tractors.

Sikandar Mustafa Khan was hopeful that quality golf will be witnessed during the flow of the championship. He assured that Millat Tractors is all for development of golf and will continue to



endorse and patronize this prestigious national golf event.

Playing Arena & The Players:

The Captain Golf of Gymkhana, Raza Saeed said that Lahore Gymkhana Golf

Course is one of the oldest golf courses in Pakistan tracing its origin to the 19th Century. It is an 18 holes championship course, with a par 72 spread over 85 acres. It is a tree lined course

demanding excellence and accuracy from start to finish.

The final round will take place on Sunday, 8th December 2024 at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course, followed by the prize distribution which will be held at Golf Course Lawns at 330 pm.

Notable amateurs competing are Jamal Nasir, Ahmed Ibrahim and Shamir Majid. Other prominent ones are Noman Ilyas, the number one ranked amateur of Pakistan. A few more are Brig Omer Ijaz, Ilyas Ahmed, Shahid Abbas and defending champion M. Shoaib.

Prominent ladies are Bushra Fatima, Suneya Osama, Ghazala Yasmin and Zahida Durrani.

Rules

This Championship will be governed by golf rules as approved by Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews as well as local rules.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding transformation/digitisation of FBR on Thursday.



Photo: Online

PM for strict measures to accelerate taxation, implement revenue collection strategy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to ensure effective and swift taxation and take strict measures to implement the strategy for revenue collection.

The prime minister, who chaired a review meeting on the country's economic situation and digitization of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), said that the FBR's digitization was a key component of the government's agenda of economic reforms,

according to a PM Office press release.

He appreciated the progress in the FBR's digitization and lauded the efforts of the finance minister, state minister for finance, FBR chairman and secretary of finance.

Expressing satisfaction over the increasing fiscal space, he said the efforts of the economic team were coming to fruition.

The prime minister directed to complete the important tasks related to the FBR's digitization by the end of this month.

He said that consequent to the crackdown against the

smuggled fuel and reduction in petrol and diesel prices, the sale of petroleum products had reached 1.58 million metric tons—the highest ever during the last 25 months.

Instructing strict measures to curb petrol smuggling, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that 15% increase in the year-on-year sale of petroleum products showed the revival of the energy market.

He told the participants of the meeting that the timely decision for the sugar export brought in \$500 million in remittance.

The meeting was told that

the digitization of FBR's value chain will be completed by March next year. The video analytics of the sugar industry has already been completed.

The prime minister called for early installation of the cement industry's video analytics system.

It was told that work on system design for digital invoices has been completed and a mobile phone application for the digital invoicing of small businesses would be ready by the end of this month.

The participants were told that a new board of Pakistan Revenue Automation Ltd

(PRAL) has been constituted and the organisation's hardware and data center is also being upgraded. Besides, a central assessment unit for faceless customs assessment at Karachi Airport will start functioning by this year end.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Cheema, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister of State for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Finance Minister Launches ESG Sustain Portal Developed by SECP

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, officially launched ESG Sustain, a centralized online sustainability portal developed by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan in Islamabad today.

The launch of ESG Sustain marks a significant milestone under SECP's ESG Roadmap aimed towards advancing sustainable practices across regulated sectors. The portal provides companies with a robust tool to report climate-related data, disclose sustainability progress and share



gender-disaggregated statistics, while also hosting a dedicated Knowledge Hub with resources from professional bodies and market leaders to support capacity building. With over 40 companies already on boarded

for contributing data, ESG Sustain is set to play a pivotal role in fostering data-driven decision-making, attracting sustainability-linked investments and paving the way for an ESG Index in future.

Addressing the participants, the Finance Minister commended SECP on launching ESG Sustain.

Ms. Vipunjit Ketnuti, Deputy Country Representative for UN Women, commended the launch of ESG Sustain for its potentially pivotal role in promoting sustainable development. "It is truly inspiring to see an increasing number of companies in Pakistan recognizing the critical importance of embedding ESG principles into their core business strategies for long-term success.

The Chairman SECP, Mr. Akif Saeed extended heartfelt gratitude to the Honorable Finance Minister, for his leadership and guidance and

the UN Women Pakistan for their unwavering support in development of ESG Sustain. Highlighting the urgency of aligning with global sustainability commitments, he said that "ESG Sustain stands as one of the few centralized sustainability portals globally, providing a vital platform to facilitate climate finance, advance gender reforms, and foster corporate accountability and enables the private sector to highlight their sustainability accomplishments on a global platform. While thanking the stakeholders, he said that launch of ESG Sustain marks a collective commitment to integrate sustainability and inclusivity into Pakistan's corporate and economic landscape.

South Korean ruling party opposes Yoon impeachment, defence minister quits

Reuters

SEOUL: South Korea's parliament introduced a motion on Thursday to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol over a botched attempt to impose martial law, while the defence minister blamed for advising the move and ordering troops to the parliament resigned.

Lawmakers from the opposition Democratic Party planned to put up a vote in parliament to impeach Yoon at around 7 pm (1000 GMT) on Saturday, a party spokesperson told reporters.

Yoon's ruling People Power Party is divided over the crisis but said it would oppose impeachment with two years left in Yoon's five-year term.

"The Yoon Suk Yeol regime's declaration of emergency martial law caused great confusion and fear among our people," Democratic Party lawmaker Kim Seung-won told a session of South Korea's National Assembly held in the early hours of Thursday.

The Democratic Party needs at least eight of the 108 ruling-party lawmakers

to back the bill for it to pass with a two-thirds majority of the 300-seat parliament.

Fighting for his political future, Yoon accepted the resignation of Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun on Thursday and nominated his ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Choi Byung-hyuk, as a replacement, Yoon's office said.

Kim had recommended Yoon declare martial law late on Tuesday, according to a senior military official and the filing to impeach Yoon by opposition members. Kim also ordered the deployment of troops to the parliament, Vice-Defence Minister Kim Seon-ho said, adding he was unaware of the martial law order until Yoon declared it.

"I have fundamentally opposed the mobilisation of military forces under martial law and have expressed negative opinions about it," he told a parlia-



ment hearing on Thursday, apologising and taking responsibility for failing to prevent it.

The declaration of martial law attempted to ban political activity and censor the media in Asia's fourth-largest economy and a key US ally. It sparked outrage in the streets and concern among its international allies.

Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Japan's "security situation may be fundamentally changed" in light of the instability in Seoul and North Korea's rising military assertiveness.

"What will happen to South Korea? There appears to be a great deal of domestic criticism and opposition," he told parliament on Thursday, adding that Yoon's efforts to improve relations with Tokyo "must never be undermined".

There has been no reaction yet from North Korea to the drama in the South. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Reuters on Wednesday the United States had not been made aware in advance of Yoon's declaration, while his deputy, Kurt Campbell, said Yoon had badly misjudged it.

Yoon had been embraced by leaders in the West as a partner in the US-led effort to unify democracies against growing authoritarianism in China, Russia and elsewhere.

But he caused unease among South Koreans by branding his critics as "communist totalitarian and anti-state forces". In November, he denied wrongdoing in response to influence-peddling allegations against him and his wife and he has taken a hard line against labour unions.

Deputy PM calls on Bilawal Bhutto



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar Thursday called on Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here. Pakistan's cuisine

During the meeting it was decided that both the PPP and government committees will meet to resolve the issues between the PPP and the government.

Former prime minister, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi and Chief Minister Balochistan, Sarfraz Bugti were also present on the occasion.

Earlier Governor KP, Faisal Karim Kundi apprised Chairman PPP of

the All Parties Conference held in Peshawar in which 16 political parties participated.

Kundi informed that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf boycotted the APC which was held for discussing peace in the province and the disputes between the KP province and the federal government regarding the resources of the province.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that this historic conference was an important initiative and assured the Governor that he is with him on the issue of the establishment of peace and the dispute over resources of KP with the federal government.

Meanwhile, the CM Balochistan also held a meeting with the Chairman PPP and apprised him of the law and order situation in the province.

Pakistan Navy Ship MOAWIN Visits Kenya and Establishes Free Medical Camp



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship MOAWIN visited Mombasa, Kenya, where it established a free medical camp. Earlier, upon arrival at the port of Mombasa, PNS MOAWIN was warmly welcomed by local authorities.

At medical camp, Pakistan Navy surgeons and medical specialists provided free medical consultations, treatments and medicines to patients. The medical camp was widely appreciated by local populace, who benefited from the high-quality medical care provided.

During the port visit, the Commanding Officer of PNS

MOAWIN met Commander Kenya Navy, Major General Paul Owuor Otieno, and other local government officials to discuss matters of mutual interest and explore avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation. The Commanding Officer conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, to the people of Kenya and expressed gratitude for the support extended by host Navy and local Pakistani community.

The visit of PNS MOAWIN to Kenya and establishment of medical camp serves as a testament to Pakistan Navy's commitment to fostering goodwill and providing essential medical services to communities in need.

Pakistan wants peace, stability in region: FO

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reaffirmed its desire for cooperative relations with all its neighbours, including India.

At her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan has consistently advocated constructive engagement and result oriented dialogue

to resolve all outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

She, however, said the political will to resolve disputes and differences through dialogue seems lacking on India's part.

She said Pakistan believes in peaceful co-existence, emphasizing it wants peace and stability in the region. She said Pakistan has been acting in a responsible manner notwithstanding the difficulties in bilateral relations.

She added the eastern neighbour should create conducive environment for advancement of peace and dialogue, and resolution of long-standing disputes.

The spokesperson voiced concerns over the continuing seizure of proper-

ties of Kashmiri people in Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

She said the Indian actions are part of an ongoing drive to confiscate Kashmiri lands and properties to harass and intimidate the Kashmiri people and punish them for their dissenting political views.

She urged the Indian authorities to end the ongoing campaign of seizing the properties and abide by its international obligations as an occupying

power.

Expressing deep concerns over latest developments in Syria, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said we believe that the ongoing situation will further destabilize the region and embolden terrorist groups.

She said it is critical to promote peace and security in Syria for regional stability. She called for international efforts to deescalate the situation and for upholding unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria.

