



Five dead after migrant boat with many Pakistanis capsizes off Greek island
 At least five migrants drowned after their wooden boat, carrying many Pakistanis, capsized off Greece's southern island of Gavdos, the coastguard said on Saturday, with witnesses saying many were still missing as search operations continued.



Indian airliner makes emergency landing in Karachi due to medical emergency
 An IndiGo Airlines flight en route to Jeddah was forced to make an emergency landing at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport after a passenger experienced a medical crisis. The Airbus A320, which had taken off from New Delhi, diverted to Karachi when a 55-year-old male passenger became critically ill as the aircraft entered Pakistani airspace.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Display of fireworks

ISLAMABAD: A view of fire work during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games at Jinnah Stadium, Pakistan Sports Complex, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

JUI-F chief Fazl 'stands firm' on madressah registration bill



City Desk
 Last week, President Asif Ali Zardari returned the bill to the federal government while raising objections. The JUI-F has warned the government of protest in Islamabad if their demands were not accepted. Fazl told his supporters on Sunday that his party was waiting for December 17 when the party leaders would meet Mufti Taqi Usmani to deliberate on the matter.
 The Societies Registration (Amendment) Act, 2024 extends the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and includes provisions for the registration of 'Deeni Madaris' under the relevant deputy commissioner office.

PM Shehbaz seeks joint session of parliament on 'Madrasa Bill'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif sent advice to President Asif Ali Zardari, requesting him to convene a joint session of the Parliament. According to the sources, the Prime Minister has proposed December 17 for the session, during which eight bills, including one on registering religious seminaries, are expected to be approved. Sources further informed that consultations between the government and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) are ongoing regarding the new bill on madrassah registration.



President Asif Ali Zardari had previously raised objections to the madrassah bill and returned it for reconsideration. Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC), Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, on the other hand, stated that no compromise is possible on the issue of madrassah registration. In a statement addressing the ongoing controversy, Ashrafi said the main disagreement revolves around ensuring that seminaries affiliated with the Ministry of Education are not subjected to adverse legislation. He highlighted that seminaries already conduct audits and maintain transparent financial records. "If anyone wishes to examine the accounts of madrassahs, why would they object?" Ashrafi asked, adding that no international power has the right to interfere in Pakistan's system, particularly its madrassah framework. He also clarified that seminaries have never faced issues in the past and do not face any currently. "Blame games and abusive language will not resolve the challenges faced by madrassahs," he concluded.

Judges appointment: JCP committee head Justice Mandokhail responds to Justice Shah's letter

City Desk
 ISLAMABAD: In response to Supreme Court judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah's letter on judges' appointment, the Judicial Commission of Pakistan's rule-making committee head has said that his suggestions have already been incorporated in the draft rules and agreed that judiciary members should be impartial. "It is important to mention here that incidentally, most of the suggestions/requirements highlighted by you in the letter have already been incorporated in the draft rules, which, I had personally shared with you prior to your letter under reply," Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail said in a letter on Saturday. On Friday, senior puisne judge of the SC Justice Shah called on the JCP to finalise "clear and transparent rules" for appointing judges to constitutional courts. In his detailed letter, he warned that any appointments without such a framework would be unconstitutional and could undermine the judiciary's independence.

PTI founder's speeches led to May 9 mayhem, says Rana Sanaullah

City Desk
 ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah has unleashed a scathing attack on the founder of PTI, claiming that his public speeches had caused economic chaos and the May 9 riots in the country. In an interview with a private news channel, Rana Sanaullah alleged that the founder of PTI's speeches did contain incendiary remarks that provoked violence and unrest in the country. He said his speeches at public gatherings were a clear indication of his negative role in perpetuating chaos and instability in Pakistan. He added that ultimately this chaos had resulted in widespread violence, vandalism and arson causing significant damage to government and military facilities. He recalled the events that transpired on May 9, adding that the military courts would deliver the verdict pertaining to the May 9 incident within one week. Rana Sanaullah vowed to hold founder PTI accountable for the May 9 riots, stating he will face prosecution under the Military Act if found guilty of vandalism. Sanaullah warned that he would face prosecution for allegedly using his speeches to manipulate people's minds and sparking unrest. Rana credited Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government for averting Pakistan's risk of default through swift economic interventions. The government's efforts focused on stabilizing the economy, managing external debt obligations, and securing vital loans from international partners, he added.

Tarar discusses strengthening of media coop with Turkish Presidency's Communications head

Spokesman Report
 ISTANBUL: Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Saturday met Turkish Presidency's Head of Communications, Fahrettin Altun and discussed important issues including strengthening cooperation in the media sector, promoting public diplomacy and eliminating Islamophobia. They also discussed measures to counter disinformation and misinformation, exchanged media delegations, and prepared joint productions. They also agreed to telecast Turkish dramas like Ertugrul Ghazi in Pakistan, including a joint broadcast of PTV and Turkish state TV "TRT." Pakistan's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Turkish Directorate of Communications also agreed to form a working group and appoint focal persons from both sides. The minister said that Pakistan and Turkiye have historical and fraternal relations and that there



are vast possibilities for cooperation in the field of media. Tarar said public relations would be more stable with enhanced media cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation and joint ventures in the field of entertainment and tourism were also discussed in the meeting. By preparing joint productions between Pakistan and Turkiye, the cultural exchanges between both countries will be enhanced, Attaullah Tarar said, adding, "We have to make the young generation aware of the historical relationship between Pakistan and Turkiye." Federal Information Minister invited Professor Fahrettin Altun to visit Pakistan. Professor Ultun expressed a
Continued on Page 5

Over a dozen PTI supporters re-arrested in Islamabad after ATC grants bail

Crime Reporter
 ISLAMABAD: As many as 81 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters were re-arrested from outside the judicial complex on Saturday after an anti-terrorism court granted them bail in connection with last month's D-Chowk protest. Footage from outside the jail showed Islamabad policemen manhandling the PTI supporters as they tried to leave with their families. Journalists covering the court story claimed that the policemen pushed them back outside the judicial complex. A heavy police presence was deployed in the area, and SHOs, including Ashfaq Warraich, threatened journalists, stating, "If you don't step back, I will have you arrested." PTI workers' lawyer Ansar Kiani informed the court about the re-arrest of discharged defendants, leading to protests from the families of the accused. The court discharged 54 defendants from the Khanna Police Station, 16 from the I-9 Police Station, and 11 from the Kohsar Police Station. The court remanded 48 defendants from Kohsar Police Station into police custody for two days.

Govt taking significant steps for education: Ahsan



Bureau Report
 NAROWAL: Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal has said that government is taking significant steps in the education sector. Addressing the Narowal Educational Conference 2024 in Narowal on Saturday, he said that education and research play a vital role in the progress of nations. He emphasized that national development requires a strong focus on education. He said that the University of Narowal is an important institution for promoting education and added that the government is providing employment opportunities to the youth by equipping them with education and skills. He stressed the need to eliminate hatred and said that today, more than ever, there is a need for unity among all of us. He regretted that the younger generation has been taught to turn differences into enmity, which is regrettable. He criticized the leadership of PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) as incompetent and accused them of ruining the country. He said that misinformation is spread through social media, posing a serious threat. He expressed regret that misinformation and fake news are being used to mislead the youth.

Punjab Health Minister, Secretary Health visit Children's Complex Hospital Multan

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique and Secretary Health Azmat Mahmood Khan visited Children's Hospital Multan.

Today, Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique and Secretary Health Azmat Mahmood Khan, along with their team, paid a surprise visit to Children's Hospital Multan. The Secretary, along with Dean Children's Complex Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti and MS Dr. Kamran Asif, visited Child Life Children's Emergency and reviewed the working of the doctors in detail.

The Secretary also inquired about the medical facilities and availability of medicines provided in the hospital from the relatives of the patients in the Children's Hospital Emergency. MS Dr. Kamran Asif, Prof. Dr. Sohail Arshad, Prof. Dr. Waqas Imran, Dr. Rana Zulfiqar, Mr. Nabil Administrator Child Life Emergency and Dr. Moaz Qureshi were also present on the occasion.

In the picture, Dean Children's Hospital Prof. Dr. Kashif Chishti, Health Minister Punjab Khawaja



Salman Rafique and Secretary Health Azmat Mahmood Khan are giving a briefing.

Christmas Celebrations

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry, and MNA Muhammad Hanif Abbasi graced the Christmas Celebrations at Muslim League House, Rawalpindi on Saturday.



Photo: PID

Annual Awards Ceremony at Faisalabad Law College: Honoring Achievements and Talent

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Law College hosted its annual awards ceremony with great enthusiasm, featuring the special presence of Justice Javed Iqbal from the Anti-Terrorism Court. The event celebrated the academic achievements of students, with medals awarded to top performers.

The atmosphere came alive with the students showcasing their talents. Some entertained the audience with soulful singing, while others brought smiles with their humorous speeches. On this occasion, Rida Sindhu was honored with the Best Academic Achievement Award, earning thunderous applause from the audience.

The event was graced by Prin-



Principal Major (Retired) Azhar Ghani, Chairman Advocate Supreme Court Mushtaq Khan, Director Advocate Aamir Yousaf, and Zil-e-Atif.

Chief Guest Justice Javed Iqbal lauded the students' performance, saying, "These young individuals are the future of our nation, and their confi-

dence and dedication are a source of pride for us."

Chairman Mushtaq Khan remarked, "We are not just producing lawyers but also focusing on their character-building to shape them into exemplary citizens."

Director Advocate Aamir Yousaf advised the students, "Mastery in the legal profession, combined with strong ethics, is the key to success."

Zil-e-Atif stated, "Fostering self-confidence and nurturing creativity in youth is our top priority."

The new batch of students was warmly welcomed, with senior students offering guidance and valuable advice to help them excel in the field of law.

The ceremony concluded on a high note, leaving the students inspired and motivated to strive harder for success.

Centenary Celebration of Government MC Boys High School, Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Centenary Celebration of Government MC Boys High School, Attock: A Blend of Past, Present, and Future Attock Islam places great emphasis on education, and this principle is evident in the rich legacy of Government MC Boys High School, Attock (formerly MC Middle School Campbellpur), a prominent institution in the Indian subcontinent. Over its glorious hundred-year history, this school has produced exceptional personalities who have left their mark nationally and internationally.

The centenary event of the school was held in its auditorium with great enthusiasm, attended by former students, dignitaries, teachers, students,

and various community members. Participants and Keynote speakers at the event included Pakistan's former ambassador to Malaysia, Lieutenant General (Retd) Tahir Mahmood Qazi, former Federal Minister Malik Amin Aslam, retired Assistant Commissioner Raja Zahid, and the current Headmaster, Muhammad Arif. Other notable speakers included Dr. Khalid Mehmood Khan, Professor Syed Atif Bukhari, Muhammad Saleem Shehzad, Haji Muhammad Akram Khan, and several other distinguished personalities. They highlighted the historical and academic significance of the school and praised the dedication of its teachers and administration. During the ceremony, students presented various

tableaus, skits, and performances, including a special historical sketch depicting the educational journey of the subcontinent and the school's centenary achievements. The sketch, guided by female teachers such as Madam Saadia, received widespread acclaim. The hard work and dedication of the staff, especially the female teachers, were lauded. The alumni of this prestigious institution include notable figures such as renowned poet Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi, former DG ISI Lieutenant General Javed Ashraf Qazi, former Governor of Sindh Lieutenant General Moinuddin Haider, and many other distinguished individuals. The students of the school have consistently excelled in academic and extracurricular activities. Awards

and Future Commitments Lieutenant General (Retd) Tahir Mahmood Qazi presented trophies to outstanding students and announced an annual award for high achievers. Headmaster Muhammad Arif also pledged to provide further opportunities and incentives for the students to excel. The event concluded with prayers and a lunch hosted by the school administration, making it a memorable occasion. This celebration was not only a tribute to the school's rich history but also a testament to its promising future. Government MC Boys High School, Attock, has proven to be an institution that continues to set educational benchmarks while producing invaluable assets for the country.

DDO Education Yawar Ali Khawaja visits Government Schools

Zafar Chishti



TOBA TEK SINGH: On the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the District Administration is continuously monitoring government schools to improve the quality of education in government schools. In this regard, Deputy District Officer

Education Tehsil Kamalia Yawar Ali Khawaja, made a detailed visit to GES Sheikh Burhan, GES 712 GB and GPS 739 GB. The Deputy District Officer Education Yawar Ali Khawaja made a detailed review of the school arrangements, attendance of teachers and staff, classrooms and available facilities, and meet the school management, teachers and students.

Discussed overall educational environment including availability of facilities, other administrative issues. He taught the students in the class and later listened to them, and evaluated the academic performance of the students. Deputy District Officer Education Yawar Ali Khawaja also guided the students regarding cleanliness, instilling passion for education, setting goals, dealing with adverse situations and respecting human rights.

Attock Police continue crackdown against drug peddlers, over 5 kilograms of hashish recovered

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Under the special directives of District Police Officer Attock, Dr. Sardar Ghias Gul Khan, Attock Police have continued their crackdown against drug peddlers. In the last 24 hours, 5 suspects were arrested, and over 5 kilograms of hashish were recovered. Details are as follows: Police Station Saddar Hassanabdal The team apprehended Abbas Hussain, son of Fida Hussain, resident of Pind Mehri Hassanabdal, and recovered 1,200 grams of hashish during a search.

Police Station Rango The team foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs by Mirza Sanaullah, son of Shafaqat Baig, resident of Shamsabad Hazro, and recovered 1,522 grams of hashish from his possession. Police Station City Hassanabdal: During checking, the team arrested Kamran Khan, son of Imran Khan, resident of Dhok Miskeen Hassanabdal, and Nadeem, son of Muhammad Saleem, resident of Mill Peeran Hassanabdal, recovering 1,200 grams of hashish each from them.

Police Station Injra The team arrested Muhammad Saqib, son of Gul Sherif, resident of Kunjur Tehsil Jand, and recovered 530 grams of hashish. Separate cases have been registered against the suspects, and they have been placed behind bars. These actions are part of a special campaign led by Attock Police under the guidance of Dr. Sardar Ghias Gul Khan to eliminate the menace of drugs from the district.

Main accused nephew arrested in murder of uncle in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: While inquiring into the case of nephew killing uncle in Islampura area of Ghulam Muhammadabad police station, a team was formed under the leadership of ASP Gulberg on the instructions of CPO Faisalabad Kamran Adil to arrest the accused.

ASP Gulberg along with his team carried out a major operation and arrested the main accused of the murder. A few hours ago, accused Sufyan and others had killed Shahzad with a fire marker in Ghulam Muhammadabad police station, for which case number 24/3096 under Sections 302, 34 of the IPC was registered.

On the instructions of CPO Faisalabad Kamran Adil, the police team led by ASP Gulberg took immediate action and arrested the main accused Sufyan in a few hours.

Meanwhile, the arrest of the remaining accused is being carried out. They will be arrested as soon as possible. Further investigation is underway with the arrested accused. The accused will be given the punishment as per the law.

Ceremony was held to distribute green tractors among successful farmers



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: A ceremony was held to distribute green tractors among the successful farmers through the lottery under Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractors Program. The event was Organized by Department of Agriculture (Extension) Toba Tek Singh at District Council Hall Toba Tek Singh.

Member National Assembly Chaudhry Junaid Anwaar, Member Provincial Assembly Amjad Ali Javid, Ayub Khan Gadhi and Deputy Commissioner Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Muhammad Naem Sindh distributed the keys of green tractors to the farmers who won the lottery. On this occasion, Deputy Director of Agriculture Department (Extension) Dr. Naushair Ali Khan, District Information Officer Shahbaz Ansari, Chief Officer District Council Mahar Anwar Sial Baig and other officers, representatives of tractor manufacturing companies, dealers and farmers were present. Speaking at the event, Member National Assembly Chaudhry Junaid Anwaar said that Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Program is a wonderful initiative of the Punjab Government. Agriculture sector plays an important role in stabilizing the country's economy.

Junaid Anwaar added that tractors are being given to all farmers in a transparent manner through merit draw.

The effects of the positive policies of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif are coming to the fore. Deputy Director of Agriculture Dr. Naushair Ali Khan said that 233 green tractors are being given in District Toba Tek Singh under Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Program. A subsidy of Rs 10 lakh per tractor has been given by the Punjab government.

Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:35 am
Zohr	12:02 pm
Asr	3:23 pm
Maghrib	5:01 pm
Isha	6:30 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
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
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Pakistan Peoples Party's Yasin condemns Indian Army raid on late Ali Gilani's house

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Peoples Party Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin has said that he strongly condemns the raid by the Indian army on the house of Syed Ali Gilani Shaheed.

For India, the name of the late Ali Gilani was a nightmare, but even after these martyrdoms, the house of the late Ali Gilani has also become a nightmare from which the freedom fighters see the light of freedom. Kashmiris can achieve freedom only by following the path of Ali Gilani.

He expressed these views while talking to journalists.

He said that the path to freedom is the path of Ali Gilani. He said that Ali Gilani's slogan was "We are Pakistanis, Pakistan is ours" and today he is present with Allah, but even today India is afraid of them and the raid on his house is also a sign of fear.

Capital University convocation over 1269 Graduates Awarded Degrees

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Convocation for Graduates of 2024 of Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) held at Convention Centre Islamabad where in 1269 graduates including BBA, MBA, BS, MS and PhD in the fields of Management Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Engineering Management, Project Management, Computer Science, Software Engineering, Bioinformatics, Biosciences, Biotechnology, Microbiology and Doctor in Pharmacy (PharmD) will be awarded degrees.

The chief guest was chairman security and exchange commission Aqif Saeed, whereas Executive Director Cust Prof Sohail Afzal presided over the ceremony. Prof. Dr. Mansoor Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of University in his inaugural speech, welcomed the graduating students for their presence in this memorable and happy occasion and declared this event as a significant milestone in their lives. He highlighted the contribution made by the University in the field of higher education.

Akif Saeed, while delivering his keynote address, said education plays a vital role in the economic development of the country. It raises the productivity and efficiency of individuals and

thus produces skilled manpower that is capable of leading the economy towards the path of sustainable economic development. Now, modern technology should be adopted by students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

In this Convocation 33 graduates awarded PhD degrees; including 16 in the field of Management Sciences, 8 in the field of Engineering, 4 in the field of Computing, 4 and 05 in the field of Biosciences.

PhD graduates who received PhD degrees includes; Maria Mashkooor, Wasim Nasir, Maria Mashkooor, Noshir Wan Khan, Anam Tariq, Haris Bin Khalid, Muhammad Hassaan, Syeda Nawazish Arooj, Ghazia Khoula Qureshi, Fizzah Khalid Butt, Aamna Batool, Syed Muhammad Hamza Abid Wasti, Ramsha Zakaria, Waseem Akhter, Mushtaq Ahmed, Rameeza Andleeb, Munibah Munir, and Umer Niaz in the field of Management Sciences; Muhammad Usman Tahir, Azmat Saeed, Ahmad Mahmood, Samana Batool and Samra Kanwal in the field of Electrical Engineering; Saheeb Ahmed Kiani and Shumaila Rasheed in the field of Mechanical Engineering; Muhammad Waqas Zaffar in the field of Water Resource Management; Najam Ul Hassan, Fakeeha Jafari, Humaira Liaquat and Bilal Ahmad in the field of Computer Science; Anam Tariq,



Sana Ilaahi, Shahid Hussain, Hina Ahsan and Amna Naheed Khan in the field of Biosciences and Bioinformatics. The 72 position holders' students

from different departments were awarded 32 Gold, 20 Silver, and 20 Bronze medals. The 'Jinnah Gold Medal' was awarded

to the best graduate of the Convocation Khadeeja Iqbal of BBA program, on her overall distinguished performance in curricular and extracurricular activities.

Performance

ISLAMABAD: Singer Nimra Mehra performing in musical concert during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games at Jinnah Stadium, Pakistan Sports Complex, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online By Sultan Bashir

Azad Kashmir Information Minister in Istanbul for Al-Aqsa Trustees Conference

Spokesman Report

ISTANBUL/MUZAFFARABAD: The Minister for Information of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Government, Pir Muhammad Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, has arrived in Istanbul to participate in the Second International Al-Aqsa Trustees Conference. Four hundred delegates from all over the world have been invited to this grand international conference. Azad Kashmir Information Minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah has the honor of representing Pakistan and Azad Kashmir in this conference.

Speaking on his arrival in Istanbul, Information Minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah said that the strongest bond between us and our Palestinian brothers is the bond of faith, which is the strongest and closest of all the bonds



in the world. Muslims around the world are one nation, like one body. If one part of the body suffers, the whole body feels

the pain. He said that we salute the determination and courage of the Palestinian people.

AJK Muslim Conference to celebrate 57th death anniversary of Rais-ul-Ahrar Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas

Bureau Report

RAWALPINDI: The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference has announced to celebrate the 57th death anniversary of Rais-ul-Ahrar Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas for three days. The three-day celebrations will begin from December 16, while the main event will be held at the mausoleum of Rais-ul-Ahrar Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas on December 18 at 10 am. Yesterday, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan regarding the arrangements at the mausoleum of the Quaid-e-Millat. Addressing the meeting, President and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that the 57th death anniversary of the great national leader of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Quaid-e-Millat Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, will be celebrated in a grand manner on December 18. The meeting decided to celebrate the death anniversary of Quaid-e-Millat Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas in a grand manner. In a three-day event, on December 16, floral wreaths will be placed on the graves of former presidents and secretaries general of the Muslim Conference buried in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan, as well as senior leaders, and Fateha will be offered for the departed soul.



On December 17, Quran recitation will be organized from 11 am to 1 pm at the shrine of Quaid-e-Millat Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas in Faizabad. On December 18, at 10 am, a decorated contingent of Azad Kashmir Police will give a salute, and then the public meeting will be addressed by national leaders of Azad Kashmir and Pakistan.

ACCA Pakistan is Providing High-Quality Education and is Equipping Students in Pakistan

Shahzad Anwar Amrohi

MULTAN: ACCA Pakistan Education Relationship Head Muhammad Shahid Khan has said that the profession of a teacher is a prophetic profession. We are fortunate to be associated with this profession. There is only one teacher who cuts stones into diamonds.

Engineers, doctors, pilots, IT and other fields are showing their talent and playing their role in the development and progress of the country. ACCA Pakistan also keeps providing information about modern research to teachers so that Pakistani students do not lag behind any developed country.

He expressed these views while addressing a reception held in honor of teachers of various educational institutions as a special guest yesterday. On this occasion, Head of Business Development Aamir Saleem said that ACCA Pakistan is providing high-quality education and is equipping students in Pakistan with high-quality education according to every new educational research. Executive Officer Business Relationship Muhammad Anas Farooq said that ACCA also has the honor of awarding a Pakistani woman a degree for the first time in the world

PANAH, Meri Pehchaan stage awareness rally on World Human Rights Day

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: In a powerful display of solidarity and advocacy, the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) and Meri Pehchaan Pakistan Welfare Organization organized an awareness rally in commemoration of World Human Rights Day. The event, which took place today, was aimed at raising public awareness about the importance of human rights and the urgent need to protect

the health and well-being of every individual, particularly in marginalized communities.

The rally, which began at Aisha Lasani School campus KRL road gathered a large number of participants, including volunteers, Doctors, Media person, activists, and community leaders. The participants carried placards and banners highlighting key human rights issues such as the right to health, the right to education, freedom of speech, and the right

to live free from discrimination and violence.

PANAH, a leading organization dedicated to heart health, emphasized the critical link between physical and mental well-being and human rights, urging the government to improve healthcare access for all, especially for individuals suffering from cardiovascular diseases. Meri Pehchaan Pakistan, with its focus on social welfare, joined hands with Panah to advocate for

social justice and the rights of the underprivileged and vulnerable segments of society.

Speaking at the event, [Miss Shahida Naved], a representative from Meri Pehchaan, stated, "World Human Rights Day serves as a reminder that health is not a privilege, but a fundamental human right. Our combined efforts aim to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, has access to healthcare and basic human dignity."



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China & USA: Pillars of Global Prosperity

In December 2024, the United States and China renewed their government-to-government Science and Technology Agreement (STA) with a five-year protocol, continuing a collaboration first established in 1979. Over the decades, the STA has yielded significant mutual benefits, with the U.S. leveraging China's biodiversity to advance agriculture, medicine, and environmental science, besides joining hands in climate science, renewable energy, AI, and quantum computing. For China, the STA facilitated modernization in biotechnology, aerospace, and telecommunications while enabling its researchers to gain expertise at U.S. institutions, fueling domestic advancements in agriculture, environmental policy, and clean energy.

The deep-rooted cooperation between the United States and China defies the prevalent perception of adversarial bilateral relations. In reality, their economies are so deeply intertwined and interdependent that further strengthening their economic, financial, trade, and investment ties seems inevitable.

However, significant roadblocks hinder this potential, including a persistent trade imbalance, tariffs, and mutual accusations of unfair practices. Intellectual property concerns, forced technology transfers, and restrictive regulations challenge U.S. businesses in China, while national security fears limit Chinese investments in sensitive U.S. sectors. Geopolitical tensions over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and human rights issues in Xinjiang and Hong Kong exacerbate mistrust.

In an ideal scenario, where the United States and China have resolved their longstanding differences, established a partnership that have prioritize global development, technological innovation, and

peace, diplomatic resolutions have address security issues in Taiwan and human rights concerns, while fair trade policies and the removal of investment barriers have created open markets and foster mutual trust, in such a scenario, the two nations could lead efforts to upgrade road, air, and port infrastructure worldwide, adding an estimated \$2 trillion in global trade capacity annually and boosting GDP growth by \$500 billion across developing regions.

This mutually beneficial collaboration could extend to defense and space research, yielding advancements in security, space exploration, and renewable energy technologies, with an estimated combined annual investment of \$300 billion generating global benefits.

This partnership will ensure peaceful and secure sea, air, and land routes, paving the way for sustained economic growth and global stability, estimated to contribute \$1 trillion annually to global economic activity.

For the citizens of both nations, this cooperation will bring significant dividends. Open markets and seamless trade, estimated to exceed \$2 trillion annually, will boost GDP growth by \$1 trillion combined and create millions of new jobs in sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, and technology.

Joint investments in clean energy, valued at \$500 billion over a decade, will make renewable technologies affordable and accessible, reducing energy costs for households and businesses by as much as 20%-30%.

Defense collaboration will reduce tensions, reallocating an estimated \$100 billion annually to critical sectors like

healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Increased cultural exchanges and educational opportunities, valued at \$30 billion annually through student and tourism contributions, will further strengthen mutual understanding and nurture global talent.

Globally, this partnership will drive transformative changes. Modernized infrastructure projects across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, worth an estimated \$1.5 trillion in investment, will unlock economic potential, reduce poverty, and foster regional development, adding \$500 billion annually to regional GDP.

Affordable renewable energy initiatives and global climate efforts will mitigate environmental risks, contributing \$200 billion annually in savings from reduced emissions and energy efficiency gains.

Collaborative trade and economic policies will stabilize markets, reduce volatility, and enhance global supply chains, contributing an estimated \$1 trillion annually to global economic efficiency.

Joint advancements in AI, quantum computing will add \$300 billion annually in global technological value, addressing challenges like climate change and resource optimization.

A U.S.-China partnership in space exploration would revolutionize scientific discovery, technological innovation, and global economic growth, benefiting both nations and the world. By pooling resources, expertise, and infrastructure, they could achieve ambitious goals like establishing lunar and Martian bases, advancing satellite technology, and pioneering space-based industries such as

asteroid mining and solar power. This collaboration would lower costs, accelerate breakthroughs in medicine, energy, and materials science, and create millions of high-tech jobs. Beyond the economic and scientific dividends, a united front in space exploration would inspire humanity, reduce geopolitical tensions, and foster global cooperation, marking a transformative era for civilization.

By reallocating resources currently spent on military competition, trade restrictions, and geopolitical conflicts, both nations could instead foster global peace and channel investments into projects that uplift not just their citizens but also billions of people around the world.

The logic for such cooperation is compelling. Continued rivalry drains resources, creates uncertainty, and destabilizes global markets, harming not only the two nations but also the international community.

In contrast, collaboration would unleash the peace dividend, reducing global tensions and ensuring stability. Investments in infrastructure, clean energy, and technology could catalyze growth across developing regions, lifting millions out of poverty and fostering resilience against global challenges like climate change.

Ultimately, the realization of this vision depends on the leadership of both nations understanding that mutual upliftment is not just desirable—it is essential for the well-being of their own citizens and for global progress. The path to cooperation may require hard compromises, but the rewards—a peaceful, prosperous, and unified world—are undeniably worth the effort.

Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC. He is currently living in Macomb, Detroit, Michigan



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Conference on challenges faced by the Syrian people

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan joined top diplomats from the US, Turkiye, the European Union and Arab nations in Jordan on Saturday for talks on Syria following the ousting of President Bashar Assad earlier this week.

Prince Faisal led the Kingdom's delegation at the meeting, held under the auspices of the Arab League, which focused on supporting a Syrian-led transitional political process to address the challenges faced by the Syrian people.

Discussions emphasized restoring Syria's national institutions, ensuring the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and supporting the aspirations of its citizens for a secure and dignified life.

The meeting also included prominent officials, such as Prince Musab bin Mohammed Al-Farhan and Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Nayef Al-Sudairy.

A final communique issued on Saturday after the meeting expressed firm support for the Syrian people and emphasized the need for a peaceful, inclusive, and Syrian-led political transition, guided by UN Resolution 2254.

This would include forming a transitional governing body, drafting a new constitution, and conducting UN-supervised elections, the statement said.

The ministers called for a cessation of military operations, protection of Syrian state institutions, and efforts to combat terrorism.

They stressed the importance of the delivery of humanitarian aid, enabling the voluntary return of refugees, national reconciliation, and transitional justice.

The meeting condemned Israeli violations in Syrian territories and reaffirmed the Golan Heights as occupied Syrian land.

The diplomats also pledged to support Syria's unity, sovereignty, and reconstruction, while coordinating with Arab and international partners to secure the Syrian people's aspirations for a stable and secure future, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

Outgoing US President Joe Biden's administration has begun engaging with the victorious militant groups including Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS), which led a lightning assault that ended in the capture of Damascus on Sunday.

Biden sent Secretary of State Antony Blinken to the region this week to seek support for principles that Washington hopes will guide Syria's political transition, such as respect for minorities.

Meanwhile Syria's northern neighbor Turkiye has for years supported Syrian opposition forces looking to oust Assad and is poised to play an influential role in Damascus.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said on Friday that his country's embassy in the Syrian capital would resume work on Saturday, after Turkiye's intelligence chief visited this week.

Syria's neighbor Jordan was hosting Saturday's gathering in Aqaba. Russia and Iran, who were Assad's key supporters, were not invited.



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

Syria's Turning Point: The Fall of Bashar al-Assad and the Path to Rebuilding

Ali Hasnain

The fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime has been a significant turning point in the history of Syria. Several factors contributed to the weakening of Assad's government, ultimately leading to its overthrow by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a group with minority support, in a surprisingly short period. The reasons behind this collapse, the role of international powers in Syria's proxy war, and the possible solutions for peace and stability in the region are worth examining in detail.

Assad's family has ruled Syria since 1971, when Hafez al-Assad, then a commander in the Syrian forces, overthrew the government and declared himself president. His rule, which lasted until 2000, was marked by authoritarianism and the use of force to suppress dissent. Upon his death, his son Bashar al-Assad took power, continuing the dictatorial policies of his father. However, the Arab Spring that erupted in 2010 brought new challenges to authoritarian regimes in the region, including Assad's. This wave of rebellion, aimed at achieving democracy, economic development, freedom, and regime change, succeeded in toppling dictators in countries like Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, Syria's neighbors.

This proxy war, however, was driven more by the strategic interests of these powers than by their stated goals. For Russia, Syria held immense strategic significance. The country hosts Russia's only naval base in the Mediterranean, located in Tartus, as well as an airbase, which are critical to maintaining its regional influence. Additionally, Syria became a battleground for energy politics. Russia opposed the Qatar-Turkey pipeline proposed in 2011, which was intended to transport gas to Europe, undermining Russia's dominance in the European gas trade. Instead, Russia

aimed to push its own pipeline through Syria and neighboring countries. To protect these interests, Russia not only provided extensive military support to Assad but also used its veto power in the UN Security Council 17 times to shield Assad from accountability for human rights abuses and the use of chemical weapons.

Iran's support for Assad was motivated by sectarian alignment and geopolitical strategy. The Assad regime was a key ally of Iran in its efforts to counterbalance Saudi influence in the region. Moreover, Iran's partnership with Hezbollah, a critical player in the conflict against Israel, further cemented its commitment to backing Assad. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia's support for the rebel groups stemmed from its Sunni affiliation and rivalry with Shia-majority Iran.

In 2017, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, led by Mohammad al-Julani, emerged as a major opponent of Assad. HTS, despite its controversial origins linked to al-Qaeda, received tacit backing from the United States and its allies, who saw it as a counterweight to Assad and his allies. However, the Trump administration's decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Syria in 2021 altered the dynamics of the conflict.

The prolonged conflict had exhausted Assad's forces and resources. The Russian government, already strained by its involvement in Ukraine, began to scale back its support, as did Iran, which faced mounting economic sanctions under the Trump administration. Iran's leadership shifted its focus to rebuilding relations with the West and navigating a more cautious foreign policy, leaving Assad increasingly isolated. These developments created an opening for HTS, which launched an offensive on the outskirts of Damascus, eventually capturing the capital.

After capturing Damascus, Mohammad al-Julani addressed the Syrian people, promising to establish democracy, freedom, and reforms in collaboration with the populace. However, the

situation was further complicated by the duplicity of external powers provides a rare opportunity to achieve peace in Syria. However, the challenges are significant, given the deep sectarian divisions, the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and the lack of trust among various factions. Immediate measures are necessary to stabilize the country. A ceasefire must be declared, and an interim government formed, representing all factions and communities in Syria. A new constitution should be drafted as soon as possible, ensuring inclusivity and fairness for all segments of society.

Transparent and fair elections under international supervision will be crucial in restoring legitimacy to governance in Syria. Additionally, the international community must provide humanitarian aid and assist in the reconstruction of the war-torn nation. Neighboring countries, too, have a role to play in fostering regional cooperation to address shared challenges such as terrorism, refugee crises, and economic instability.

In conclusion, the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime marks a new chapter in Syria's history. While the challenges ahead are daunting, they also present an opportunity to rebuild the nation on democratic principles and move towards lasting peace and prosperity. The collective efforts of Syrians, along with constructive international engagement, are essential for Syria to emerge from decades of conflict and rebuild a stable and united country.

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Economy: The sole determinant of postmodernism? - I

Syed Muhammad Ali Naqvi

The question of whether the economy is the sole determinant of post-modernism invites an exploration of its philosophical underpinnings, particularly the evolution from modernism, alongside insights from empiricism and pragmatism. This analysis will also consider contemporary political dynamics and future prospects, illustrating these themes with concrete examples and relevant poetry.

Modernism emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, marked by a belief in progress, reason, and the power of human innovation. Thinkers like René Descartes emphasized rationality, while figures like Immanuel Kant focused on autonomy and moral imperatives. Modernism celebrated grand narratives and objective truths, aligning closely with industrial capitalism. The rise of technology and industrialization fostered a sense of optimism about human potential and societal advancement.

In stark contrast, post-modernism arose in the mid-20th century as a reaction against the assumptions of modernism. It questions the validity of grand narratives and universal truths, positing that knowledge is socially constructed, fragmented, and contingent. Post-modernist philosophers, such as Jean-François, argued that the grand narratives of modernism failed to capture the complexity and diversity of human experience. This skepticism towards overarching ideologies reflects a broader cultural shift towards relativism and plurality.

To understand the relationship between economy and postmodernism, it is crucial to

integrate insights from empiricism and pragmatism. Empiricism, with roots in thinkers like John Locke and David Hume, emphasizes knowledge derived from sensory experience. In a post-modern context, this aligns with the idea that economic conditions are shaped by lived experiences rather than abstract theories. For instance, economic policies that may appear beneficial in theory can have varied impacts on different communities based on their unique contexts.

Pragmatism, notably articulated by William James and John Dewey, advocates for ideas based on their practical implications and adaptability to change. This philosophical approach underscores the importance of addressing real-world problems through flexible and innovative solutions. In this light, the economy becomes a crucial, but not exclusive, determinant of post-modernism. The interplay between economic conditions and societal narratives shapes the way individuals and groups perceive their realities.

In today's world, economic forces profoundly influence political structures and social realities. The rise of neo-liberalism—a market-oriented reform model—has reshaped societies, often leading to inequality and social fragmentation. Neo liberal policies prioritize deregulation, privatization, and free-market principles, which can exacerbate economic disparities. For example, in the United States, the economic disparity exacerbated by globalization and technological advancement has spurred populist movements. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 exemplified a backlash against established political norms, as many disillusioned voters turned to a candidate who promised to challenge the status quo.

To be continued

South Korean National Assembly impeaches President Yoon Suk Yeol

Reuters

The South Korean National Assembly voted on Saturday to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol. This decisive action has resulted in an immediate transfer of power to Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, marking a significant moment in South Korea's political landscape amid growing public discontent.

The impeachment was triggered by Yoon's controversial attempt to impose martial law earlier this month, which raised alarms about the potential erosion of democratic norms in the country.

Outside the National Assembly, the atmosphere was electric as hundreds of thousands of South Koreans gathered to await the outcome of the vote. Many were seen singing K-pop-style songs with ad-libbed lyrics calling for Yoon's departure, creating a vibrant scene of protest and celebration. When the

final verdict was announced, the crowd erupted into cheers and tears of relief, underscoring the emotional weight of the moment.

This impeachment marks a critical juncture for South Korea, thrusting the nation into a period of uncertainty and political turmoil. The Constitutional Court now faces the daunting task of reviewing the impeachment charges, a process that could extend up to six months.

Yoon will be officially removed from office, necessitating a new presidential election within 60 days. This protracted legal battle could further polarize the nation and complicate governance in the interim.

In total, 204 out of 300 lawmakers voted in favor of the impeachment motion, with 12 members from Yoon's own party joining the opposition to secure the necessary two-thirds majority. This shift illustrates a significant



fracturing within the ruling party and highlights the diminishing support for Yoon among lawmakers.

As Prime Minister Han Duck-soo steps in as interim president, he faces the monumental challenge of leading the country during this tumultuous

period. Han, a seasoned civil servant who has held various positions within the government, has pledged to seek stability in state affairs.

In a statement following the vote, he acknowledged the complexities ahead,

emphasizing the need to restore public confidence and navigate the political landscape with care.

The leadership vacuum created by Yoon's impeachment comes at a particularly critical time for South Korea, coinciding with a transition in U.S. presidential leadership. Analysts warn that this uncertainty could weaken South Korea's diplomatic position with Washington, especially as Donald Trump prepares to return to the White House. The potential for increased tensions surrounding trade and military agreements looms large, as Trump has previously threatened to seek higher tariffs and demanded that South Korea pay more for the presence of U.S. troops stationed on the Korean Peninsula.

The Constitutional Court, which serves a role similar to the U.S. Senate in impeachment proceedings, requires a minimum of six out of nine judges to vote in favor of removal. However,

the court currently has three vacancies, complicating the situation further. Notably, four of the six judges currently serving were appointed by Yoon himself, raising questions about the impartiality of the court's ruling. The parliamentary speaker assured that the vacancies would be filled promptly to ensure a full court is available to deliberate on the impeachment charges.

In a defiant statement issued after the impeachment vote, Yoon vowed to contest the charges and defend his presidency vigorously. "Although I am stopping for now, the journey I have walked with the people over the past two and a half years toward the future must never come to a halt," he declared. "I will never give up." His words reflect a commitment to continue his political struggle and a determination to regain his position, setting the stage for a tense and uncertain political future in South Korea.

Chairman PRCS Meets President Red Cross Society of China to Advance Humanitarian Collaboration

Spokesman Report

GUIYANG, CHINA: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari held a landmark meeting with Mr. He Wei, President of the Red Cross Society of China (RCS) and Vice President, Mr. Sun Shuopeng, on the sidelines of the International Seminar on Red Cross Resilient Communities in Guiyang, Guizhou Province on Friday. The meeting marked a significant milestone in the growing partnership between the two humanitarian organizations.

The discussions centered around strengthening collaboration to address shared human-

itarian challenges and building resilient communities in Pakistan and China. Chairman Laghari expressed gratitude for the steadfast support of the Red Cross Society of China in humanitarian initiatives, which have greatly benefited vulnerable communities in Pakistan. He underscored the longstanding and multifaceted friendship between the two nations, built on mutual respect and cooperation.

Highlighting PRCS's recent achievements, Chairman Laghari briefed President He Wei and Vice President Sun Shuopeng on the organization's comprehensive flood 2022 response and ongoing recovery

efforts for flood affected families. He also emphasized PRCS's focus on climate resilience, notably the establishment of a Climate Research Center at the PRCS National Headquarters to tackle the escalating impacts of climate change.

President He Wei commended PRCS for its impactful humanitarian work under Chairman Laghari's leadership, particularly its proactive disaster response and climate change initiatives. He reaffirmed RCS's commitment to supporting such endeavors and emphasized the importance of further collaboration between the two National Societies. "Pakistan's efforts in addressing climate challenges

are exemplary, and the Red Cross Society of China is keen to strengthen this partnership to achieve shared goals," he stated.

The meeting concluded with both organizations agreeing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the near future. The MoU aims to formalize collaboration on capacity building, volunteer network strengthening, joint projects on climate resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness in communities.

Chairman Laghari extended a warm invitation to President He Wei to visit Pakistan and PRCS National Headquarters in Islamabad, further cementing this historic partnership.



Mayor Karachi inaugurates Nestlé Pakistan & Port Qasim Authority Clean and Safe Drinking Water Facility

City Desk

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab inaugurated Nestlé Pakistan's first clean and safe drinking water facility in Karachi, that aims to cater to more than 10,000 people every day in the district of Bin Qasim Town.

Speaking on the occasion, Murtaza Wahab said "Access to clean and safe drinking water is a basic necessity, and I am touched that Nestlé has focused its community efforts for the people of Karachi. It is a remarkable contribution, and I am hopeful that people will truly benefit from this."

During the inauguration, Jason Avanceña, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé Pakistan said, "We are committed to Creating Shared Value throughout our value chain for communities and the inauguration of this ninth clean safe drinking water facility is a testament to our commitment to making a positive impact for families, communities and the planet, in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

Nestlé Pakistan has already developed and is currently managing nine clean and safe drinking water facilities around its manufacturing sites in Sheikhupura, Kabirwala, Khanewal, Islamabad and Karachi. With the inauguration of this



facility in Karachi in collaboration with Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and Port Qasim Authority, approximately 90,000 people will have access to clean and safe drinking water daily through these facilities.

Pakistan is making considerable progress in improving access to clean drinking water especially in Karachi. This facility will use ultrafiltration water treatment technology with capacity to supply up to 3,000 liters per hour of clean and safe drinking water. It will utilize a multi-stage filtration process, with monitoring

systems that guarantee consistent quality and a UV disinfection unit providing an extra layer of protection. The plant is also equipped with energy-efficient pumps and utilizes sustainable practices to minimize its environmental footprint.

Nestlé's efforts under its flagship Caring for Water-Pakistan initiative, are focused on three pillars: factories, communities, and agriculture. All its Clean and Safe Drinking Water Facilities across the country are having a positive effect on communities where it operates, in line with UN SDGs 6, 13 and 17.

Sindh Govt to Develop Economic Zones for Chinese Companies: Provincial Minister

City Desk

KARACHI: The Sindh government is working to develop two special economic zones in Karachi to facilitate Chinese investors in setting up various industries in collaboration with local businessmen. This was stated by Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Provincial Minister for Energy, Planning, and Development on Saturday.

Speaking as the chief guest on Saturday at the 10th Beauty, Fitness, and Consumer Health International Expo at Expo Centre Karachi, the provincial minister highlighted that multiple industries are being established in Karachi, the commercial hub of the country, mainly due to shifts in global trade policies for China.

Several countries plan to end direct imports from China, but Chinese products could still be indirectly imported via other countries, particularly from Pakistan, which will be the preferred destination for importers and exporters under the emerging trade opportunities.

Nasir Hussain Shah urged Pakistani businessmen to collaborate with their Chinese counterparts to



attract investment in various sectors and enhance exports under the "Made-in-Pakistan" brand.

He further stated that the Sindh government is actively working with different industrial zones in Karachi to develop their infrastructure in line with specific plans and requirements. These zones have been empowered with financial and administrative

autonomy to establish themselves sustainably, he said.

On the occasion, Executive Director of Ecommerce Gateway Muhammad Uzair Nizam remarked that the participation of foreign and local delegates and businessmen showcases Pakistan's positive image on the global stage, attracting traders, investors, and tourists to the country.

Mubashar Naqvi earns Doctorate for Unveiling Journalists' Resilience in COVID-19

City Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: Emphasizing the critical role of journalists during one of the most turbulent periods in modern history, Mubashar Naqvi, a distinguished writer and researcher, has successfully defended his doctoral thesis, "Effects of COVID-19 on Journalists' Performing Abilities & Their Counterstrategies during the Pandemic in Pakistan."

This pioneering study delves into the unique challenges faced by journalists in Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a nationwide survey of 382 journalists and Focus Group Discus-

sions (FGDs), the research identifies key issues, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of legal protections, and insufficient mental health support. It also highlights journalists' resilience, advocating for enhanced collaboration between media and government institutions and stronger safety mechanisms to prepare for future crises.

Supervised by Dr. Babar Hussain Shah, a prominent educationist and Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), the thesis was lauded for its originality, depth, and practical relevance. Adding to its prestige, a paper derived from this research

has been published in an international high-impact journal, underscoring its global scholarly contribution.

The defense session was graced by prominent academicians, including Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof. Dr. Saqib Riaz Chairman, Department of Mass Communication & Director ICT, Prof. Dr. Syed Amir Shah Director, Board of Advanced Studies and Research, external experts Prof. Dr. Zahid Yousaf Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Gujrat, and Prof. Dr. Syed Muddasar Hussain Shah Chairman, Department of Media Studies, University of Sargodha. Faculty members, including Dr.

Shahid Hussain, Dr. Asad Munir and other scholars, commended the research's relevance and significant practical applications.

Currently serving as the Public Relations Officer at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK), Dr. Mubashar Naqvi brings over 15 years of experience in journalism, academia, and strategic communication. His career includes prestigious fellowships at the Gaylor College of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma USA, and Hong Kong Baptist University. In 2021, he received the top National Agahi Award for his investigative story on governance issues in AJK.

Dr. Mubashar Naqvi actively



contributes investigative feature stories to leading national and international publications and is engaged in various capacity-building initiatives, including training sessions and workshops aimed at equipping youth with essential media literacy skills.

Expressing gratitude, Dr.

Naqvi acknowledged the unwavering support of his supervisor, Dr. Babar Hussain, chairman of the department, colleagues, and family.

He highlighted the pressing need to equip journalists with tools and support systems to

navigate crises effectively, reaffirming their role as essential pillars of democracy.

Dr. Naqvi's remarkable research offers invaluable insights into media resilience and governance transparency, setting a benchmark for future studies on journalism during crises.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,301.80	114,180.50
Day's High	Day's Low
115,172.44	112,609.25
Index Value	Change
44,316,484,562	+121.30
Percentage	Time
+0.11%	13 Dec, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,293.58	-18.77
Percentage	Time
-0.23%	13 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
43,916.09	+1.97
Percentage	Time
+0.0045%	13 Dec, 11:13 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,470.44	-378.70
Percentage	Time
-0.95%	13 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	178.75	181.00
Bahrain Dinar	734.65	742.65
Canadian Dollar	197.60	200.00
China Yuan	37.99	38.39
Danish Krone	39.15	39.55
Euro	289.85	292.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.45	35.8
Indian Rupee	3.18	3.27
Japanese Yen	1.84	1.90
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.86	906.36
Malaysian Ringgit	61.75	62.35
New Zealand \$	162.4	164.4
Norwegians Krone	24.93	25.23
Omani Riyal	719.04	727.54
Qatari Riyal	75.7	76.4
Saudi Riyal	73.70	74.25
Singapore Dollar	204.99	206.99
Swedish Korona	25.04	25.34
Swiss Franc	311.20	314.00
Thai Bhat	8	8.15
U.A.E Dirham	75.35	76.00
UK Pound Sterling	351.30	354.8

FPCCI demands Sindh to create Software Technology Park to boost exports

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has demanded that Karachi needs Software Technology Park (STP) to help create enabling environment for the export of IT and IT-enabled Services (ITeS). It is a longstanding demand of the city as it grapples with infrastructural challenges to materialize its potential in IT exports and attract investments into the industry on a large-scale, he added.

It is pertinent to note that Mr. Abu Bakar, CEO of Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), visited FPCCI Head Office in Karachi

to discuss facilitation of business, industry and trade community to invest in IT companies to boost country's exports.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh reiterated FPCCI's stance that Pakistan needs to diversify and expand its exports basket; and, IT is the industry which can deliver the results for the country in the shortest possible time as it has the most efficient turnaround time. Additionally, IT industry is the only industry in Pakistan with a potential to achieve exponential growth in its exports.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, apprised that FPCCI and Sindh Higher Education Commission (SHEC) have joined hands to

organize first-of-its kind technology start-ups showcase to generate investments for the viable start-ups; and, promote them on a national and international scale.

Mr. Aman Paracha, VP FPCCI, proposed that PSEB should come forward with a tangible plan to give awareness to traditional business groups of Pakistan to diversify into IT industry.

Mr. Zohaib Khan, former Chairman P@SHA and senior member FPCCI, proposed an alliance between IT-related central standing committees of FPCCI as well as business councils and PSEB. We need to have a joint working group of PSEB and FPCCI with objectives.

Mr. Abu Bakar, CEO of PSEB, agreed with FPCCI's principled demand to establish Software Technology Park in Karachi with subsidized services to tenant IT companies. We are working aggressively to establish a large STP in Karachi to match its enormous, young, skilled and motivated workforce, he added.

CEO PSEB highlighted that IT companies internationally are owned by big business and corporate groups a phenomenon amiss in Pakistan - as it enables rapid provision of funds and expansion of these companies. We need to bring in private-sector, domestic investment into the IT industry of Pakistan, he added.

Souvenir

KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, is presenting the commemorative shield to Mr. Abu Bakar, CEO of PSEB. Mian Zahid Hussain, Chairman FPCCI-PAB; Mr. Shabbir Mansha, former VP FPCCI; Mr. Zohaib Khan, former Chairman P@SHA; Mr. Khushnood Aftab, Convener IT, FPCCI; Mr. Umair Nizam, Deputy Convener IT, FPCCI and other prominent IT industry leaders, were also present in the consultative session.



Photo: Online

SAARC regional trade just 5% against 40% of NAFTA, 68% of EU

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said the intra-trade among SAARC countries continues to remain in the low range of just 5% of the total trade of the region while this trade in NAFTA region is over 40 percent, 68 percent in EU and 27 percent in ASEAN, laying emphasis on exploring the vast untapped trade potential in SAARC region.

This was stated by the speakers at a reception held in honour of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry's President Md. Jashim Uddin, organized by the SAARC CCI Vice President Mian Anjum Nisar here at a local hotel today.

The SAARC CCI delegation, led by its President Md. Jashim Uddin, is presently on visit to Pakistan from Bangladesh with a view to revitalize the apex trade body of the South Asia region. The meeting underscored the shared goals and mutual interests, paving the way for enhanced regional cooperation. The Bangladeshi delegation reaffirmed their commitment to advancing trade, cultural exchanges, and connectivity among the regional countries.

Addressing the meeting SCCI vice president Mian Anjum Nisar said that it is



imperative for all to draw lessons from the successes achieved by other regional agreements, and channel their experiences of regional identity and solidarity into our efforts to propel SAARC towards new heights. It is our responsibility to find innovative and sustainable solutions to these challenges, and to work together to create a brighter future for the people of our region, he opined. The priority

will be given to enhance collaboration on sectors with high growth potential such as information technology, manufacturing, energy, tourism, and agribusiness that derive tangible results, he added. South Asia is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. We have a lot of potential, but unfortunately, we are still lagging behind to seize all the opportunities, he said.

Pakistan, ADB sign \$330m loan to strengthen social protection systems

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Additional financing will support in achieving programme objectives of achieving inclusive growth, says ADB country

The Government of Pakistan signed a loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank worth \$330 million on Saturday to support the Integrated Social Protection Development Programme (ISPDP) additional financing loan, aimed at strengthening and expanding social protection systems in Pakistan.

The programme "builds on the ongoing ADB-funded programme for strengthening



and expanding social protection systems in Pakistan" through the Benazir Income Support Programme, said a news release. Economic Affairs Secretary Kazim Niaz and ADB Country Director Emma Fan from

respective sides signed the agreement. The secretary highlighted the importance of the additional financing from concessional lending for enhancing institutional capacity and improving

First outlet of 9F by Fahad Mustafa inaugurated in Islamabad



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The first outlet of 9F (Nine Figures) by Fahad Mustafa has been grandly inaugurated on the third floor of Centaurus Mall in Islamabad.

This outlet offers a wide variety of clothing for men, women, and children. It spans an expansive area of 1000 square yards.

The outlet was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Fahad Mustafa. Fahad Mustafa toured the outlet, exploring

the various collections of Nine Figures' clothing. A large crowd was present at the event, and Fahad Mustafa also took pictures with the public.

On this occasion, Group Chairman Anis Moten, Director Sohail Moten, and Director Hassan Moten expressed that this is a great brand, and in the future, it will be the number one brand in Pakistan. 9F by Fahad Mustafa has also launched an online service for its customers, allowing them to shop for their preferred items from the comfort of their homes.

Dolmen Mall opens its Biggest Mall in Lahore



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Dolmen Group; Pakistan's largest operator of shopping malls and the first company in South Asia to operate REITs is excited to announce the grand opening of its largest mall to date in Lahore. Located in the prestigious Defence Housing Authority (DHA) Phase 6, this state-of-the-art development is set to transform the retail landscape of the region and provide a world-class shopping experience for local and international visitors alike.

Set to become a shopping destination unlike any other in the country, Dolmen Mall Lahore has the biggest Gross Leasable Area (GLA), making it the largest mall in the country. The mall is designed to cater to a diverse range of shopping, dining, and entertainment needs, featuring three retail space levels with a variety of high-end international brands, local retailers, and first-time entrants to the Pakistani market.

The visually stunning food court and dining options is a first for Pakistan. The dining areas features a mix of high-end European style architecture to Pakistan's finest food streets, giving you the best of cosmopolitan experience. The mall offers a diverse range of culinary experience like none other in the country. The food court features first-time brands such as Heavenly Desserts and Mary Brown as well as Lahore's favorite Rina's kitchenette and Nisa Sultan amongst many others.

Dolmen Mall Lahore's prime location within DHA Phase 6, close to Lahore Airport and adjacent to DHA Phase IV, ensures easy access and seamless connectivity via the Lahore Ring Road.

PTA urges to reduce interest rate by 500 basis points

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Chairman, Pakistan Tanners Association, Mr. Hamid Arshad Zahur urged the SBP to reduce at least 500 Basis points on Interest Rate at the next monetary policy meeting on 16th December, 2024.

Mr. Hamid also appreciated the efforts of SBP for the reduction of Interest Rate during 2024 which now stands @ 15%. This has brought ease off the cost of finance for the industry in

general and the leather sector in particular. The utility cost for industries in Pakistan is significantly higher than our regional competitors, in addition, the taxation rates are very high for the export sector as well.

In this regard, a reduction of Interest cost by at least 500 Basis points is needed to reduce the financial burden on the leather sector in particular. This will eventually have to be brought down to under 10% in the first quarter of 2025.

FBR to implement Faceless Customs Assessment System at Karachi today

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Under the Transformation Plan, Federal Board of Revenue is going to implement Faceless Customs Assessment (FCA) System from 15th of December, 2024 at Karachi. FCA is one of the key components of the FBR Transformation Plan approved by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. All the import goods declarations field after 12.00 AM in the Appraisal Collectorate of Karachi shall be allocated to the Central Appraising Unit (CAU) for assessment which has been established at South Asia Pakistan Terminal Karachi in terms of CGO No.6 of 2024 issued by FBR a few days ago.

The introduction of FCA is expected to bring a significant change in the overall culture and working of the Customs department. It would facilitate trade by reducing the clearance time and would also increase efficiency and transparency in assessments.

After successful completion of the first phase at Karachi, the system would soon be rolled out at the upcountry ports and border stations and the appraisal function of Customs would be relocated

outside the Customs Collectorate. All the arrangements have been finalized for the housing of appraisers and principal appraisers in a sanitized environment and 55 officers have already been posted to the CAU.

For enhancing productivity and ensuring accountability of the customs appraising officers posted in CAU, an incentive-based performance management mechanism has been introduced in the system. This mechanism would reward the appraising officers who perform their duties with diligence and integrity.

The eligibility criteria and licensing regime of Customs Clearing Agents have also been revamped and a points scoring system is being introduced to make them responsible for the correct and quality declarations.

Under the point scoring system, the Customs Agents who give true and honest declarations of description, value and origin etc. shall score more points and their profile would improve. On the contrary, the Customs agents who fail to show improvements in the declarations, would lose points and eventually their licence may be cancelled.

Quaid-e-Azam Games kick off with colorful opening ceremony

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games began with a dazzling opening ceremony at the Jinnah Stadium, Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad on Saturday.

Advisor to the Prime Minister on Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), Rana Sanaullah, who was the chief guest declared the Games open.

Secretary IPC Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Director General Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Yasir Pirzada, representatives of sports federations and a large number of sport enthusiasts attended the ceremony.

The opening ceremony was a feast for the senses, with cultural performances showcasing the vibrant traditions of Pakistan's provinces, including Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Islamabad.

A synchronized parade of the athletes further set the tone of unity and sportsmanship for the games.

Speaking on the occasion, Rana Sanaullah declared youth as Pakistan's most valuable asset, vowing that they would never be held hostage by anarchists and rioters. He unveiled ambitious plans for revitalizing sports in Pakistan, including a world-class high-performance academy established at a cost of 2.6 billion rupees.

He said the athletes, who win medals at the Games would receive advanced training and world-class facilities under one roof. The academy, which features Pakistan's first biomechanics lab, is part of the government's broader plan to revive institutional sports, restore sports quotas for recruitment, and offer scholarships to talented athletes.

He highlighted the immense potential and passion of Pakistan's youth, stating that they could pave the way for national prosperity and development. He said that sports remained neglected in recent years, noting that the Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games were being held after a seven-year gap, despite the mandatory biennial schedule.

"Instead of teaching our youth to excel in sports, some forces



ISLAMABAD: Players of Sindh march past during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games.



ISLAMABAD: Players of Punjab march past during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games.



ISLAMABAD: Players of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa march past during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games.



ISLAMABAD: Players of Balochistan march past during opening ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter Provincial Games.

tried to lure them into destructive activities," he said, emphasizing the government's commitment to bringing the youth back to sports fields.

Rana Sanaullah also spoke about mismanagement in national sports federations, describing them as "parking lots for retired people." He stressed the need for transparent elections and effective governance to ensure that federa-

tions are led by individuals genuinely committed to promoting sports. "We have no personal agenda. Our only aim is to bring professionalism and transparency to the federations," he remarked, assuring government support in funding and organizational reforms.

Rana Sanaullah expressed the hope that Pakistan would achieve its rightful place on the global

sports stage. "With a population of 250 million, Pakistan should be excelling in events like the Olympics, World Games, and Commonwealth Games. To achieve this, sports federations must step up, and the government will provide all necessary support," he asserted.

The PSB, the event organizer, has brought together 2,000 male and female athletes to compete in 15 disciplines, including athletics,

football, hockey, boxing, swimming, and wrestling.

Director General PSB Yasir Pirzada on the occasion said that the event would spotlight Pakistan's sporting heritage and enhance the country's global image.

"These Games are not just a competition; they are a symbol of national harmony and a platform to inspire the next generation of

champions," said Pirzada.

He said, "All arrangements have been made to ensure these games are conducted in a befitting manner, upholding the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play."

The PSB has announced cash prizes worth Rs20 million, with individual gold medalists receiving Rs20,000, silver medalists Rs15,000, and bronze medalists Rs10,000. For team

events, each participant will earn Rs15,000 for gold, Rs10,000 for silver, and Rs7,500 for bronze. Additional trophies, medals, and certificates worth Rs 4 million will also recognize the athletes' achievements.

Athletes under the age of 22 are participating and the Games are governed by strict rules to ensure fairness. The weeklong event will conclude on December 19.

Pakistan vs South Africa T-20 Match Series in South Africa

Reza brilliant inning took out the Pakistani bowlers, first century and South Africa won the Second T-20 Match and won the series

Asim Tanveer

CENTURION/SOUTH AFRICA: Reza Brilliant Inning took out the Pakistani bowlers, first century, Proteas won the second match and won the series

Reza Hendricks, the South African player who made his T20 debut in 2014, has played 77 T20 International matches so far, with 87 being his highest score. He has never scored a century. Pakistan has also given him this honor against himself. In the second T20 International match played in Centurion, South Africa surpassed Pakistan's double century plus target and won the three-match series. Now the third match has become a formality.

Pakistan set South Africa a target of 207 runs to win. Saim Ayub's people deprived him of a century, Pakistan set a bigger target than a double century.

Saim Ayub became his own obstacle in the way of his century. Playing with

such speed, the batsman was confident that he would score the first century of his career, because there were 9 balls left, but Irfan Khan, who played with him in the last two overs, did not give him a chance and later when Abbas Afridi came. He also did not give him a chance. He did not get to play a single ball in the last over, while he was not out on 98 runs from the previous over. He played 57 balls. He hit five sixes and 11 fours. Apart from them, Babar Azam scored 31 runs. He played 20 balls. Mohammad Rizwan could score 11 runs today and Usman Khan failed with him today. He was a guest of three runs. Tayyab Tahir was dismissed for six runs. Irfan Khan batted brilliantly at the end and scored 30 runs off 16 balls to take Pakistan's total to 206 for five wickets.

Pakistan's cricket team was playing the second match of the three-match T20 International series against South Africa in Sanjereon. They were defeated



in the first match. Thus, it was necessary to win today's match to return to the series. The batsmen did their job to some extent. Pakistan's total reached 206 for five wickets in 20 overs. Pakistan won the toss of this match and

decided to bat first. Diane Gillem took two wickets for 21 runs. Apart from them, Ortini Bright took two wickets. 51 runs were scored.

In reply, when Reza Hendricks charged with the bat, then Haris Rauf also came under him and was so badly beaten that Al-Aman. Hafeez. Pakistan's cricket team suffered a humiliating defeat.

Hendricks was dismissed for 117 runs off 63 balls. Along with him, Dodd Dussin was not out on 66 runs.

South Africa won the match by 7 wickets after scoring 210 runs with 3 balls to spare.

Pakistan had taken two wickets for 28 runs, but the two of them made a partnership of 157 runs for the third wicket.

For Pakistan, Jahandad Khan took 2 wickets for 40 runs.

Haris Rauf was bowled out for 44 runs in 3 overs. Shaheen gave away 33 runs in 3.5 overs

Baseball Federation of Asia Executive Meeting Concludes Successfully in Matsuyama, Japan

Tahir Amin Malik

The Baseball Federation of Asia (BFA) recently held its highly anticipated Executive Meeting in Matsuyama, Japan. The gathering brought together top officials and experts from across Asia to discuss the future of baseball in the region and review plans for upcoming events.

Participants and Key Attendees
The meeting was attended by leading representatives of BFA, including:

President:
Mr. Jeffrey Koo Jr. (TPE)
Vice Presidents:
Mr. Chen Xu (CHN)
Mr. Masatake Yamanaka (JPN)
Mr. Syed Fakhar Ali Shah



(PAK)
Commission Members:
Ms. Hiroko Yamada (JPN)
Mr. Vutichai Udornkarnjananan (THA)
Observers and BFA Staff:
Mr. Soroush Taleghani (IRI)
Mr. Leslie Suntay (PHI)
Mr. Roger Kao (TPE)
Mr. Happy Wu (TPE)
Mr. Michael Chiang (TPE)
Mr. Richard Lin (TPE)

Mr. Chris Day (TPE)
Mr. Tim Tseng (TPE)
Ms. Yoyo Dai (TPE)
Representing Pakistan, Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, the Secretary General of Pakistan Federation Baseball (PFB) and Vice President of BFA, played a pivotal role in sharing Pakistan's progress and future goals for baseball development.
Highlights: Upcoming BFA

Events in 2025
BFA XVI West Asia Cup (WAC)
Location: Karaj, Iran
Dates: May 1-8, 2025
BFA XII U15 Asian Baseball Championship
Location: Tainan City, Taiwan
Timeline: End of August 2025
BFA XXXI Asian Baseball Championship
Location: Pingtan County, Fujian Province, China
BFA IV Women's Baseball Asian Cup
Location: Guali Town, Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province, China
Acknowledgment of Pakistan's Contributions
The Baseball Federation of Asia recognized the efforts of

the Pakistan Federation Baseball (PFB), led by Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, in promoting baseball and nurturing talent in Pakistan. The PFB's ongoing initiatives to develop the sport at both the grassroots and international levels were lauded during the meeting.

Conclusion
The BFA Executive Meeting served as a platform to strengthen ties among member countries, enhance regional collaboration, and ensure the successful execution of upcoming baseball events. The Federation remains committed to fostering growth, unity, and excellence in baseball throughout Asia

Ten-day KHA winter Hockey camp in collaboration with the Sindh Sports Department concluded



KARACHI: Olympian Iftikhar Syed, Olympian Wasim Feroze, Olympian Hanif Khan and Gulfrax Khan addressing the participants on the occasion of the concluding session of the KHA Winter Hockey Camp.

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The first phase of the ten-day Free winter Hockey camp held at the KHA Sports Complex has concluded. Sports Minister Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mehar and Secretary Sports Abdul Aleem Lashari have fully cooperated with the Karachi Hockey Association to organize the camp. More than 250 boys and girls aged 8 to 25 received extensive training in the camp that lasted from December 1 to 10. During the ten-day camp, international goalkeeper Abdul Ghafour, Khalid Junior, former international players Zahid Maqbool, Khalid Paracha and Junaid Khan, including Moin Alam, Irfan Tahir, Minhal Niazi, Arshad Siddiqui, Imtiaz-ul-Hasan, Sagheer Hussain, Osama assisted the boys while Batool Kazim, Kashmala Batool, Sameera Naseem, Kanwal Ijaz, Momal Sakina, Shazma, Iqra Aziz assisted the girls during the training. During the training, Chairman KHA Gulfrax Khan, Senior Vice Presidents Dr. S. Majid, Ijazuddin and Joint Secretary Javed Iqbal, Mohsin Ali Khan and Faisal Ismail performed the duties of camp coordinators. The highlight of the camp was the presence of former international and national players. The heroes of the world of hockey, Olympians Hanif Khan, Iftikhar Syed and Wasim Feroz, were to come to the field with the players and teach the players the basics of hockey during different sessions. At the closing session, Olympian Iftikhar Syed said that apart from the Karachi Hockey Association, no one is working for the revival of the national game, including the Hockey Federation. I am happy that despite the economic difficulties, the KHA has continued to serve the national game. During the winter camp, Olympian Hanif Khan was seen among the players on the ground as usual. Camp Commandant Hanif Khan taught the players participating in the camp the basics of hockey and thanked Sindh Sports Minister Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mehar and Sindh Sports Secretary Abdul Aleem Lashari for their full cooperation for the camp. On this occasion, Olympian Wasim Feroz paid great tribute to the efforts of the KHA. He said that our Olympians give examples of the old era of hockey while sitting at home. The old era will definitely return, but for this, we have to sit at home and do it. Olympians have to come to the ground and transfer their art to the young players. The second phase of the winter camp will be held from December 20 to 30 at the KHA Sports Complex in collaboration with the Sports Department.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Pakistan H.E. Yerzhan Kastafin called on Federal Minister for Privatisation, Board of Investment and communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Saturday.



Photo: PID

Kazakhstan Ambassador calls for trade corridors between Pakistan and Central Asian countries

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that trade corridors from Pakistan is the most important need of the hour for Central Asian countries while access to ports can also help in increasing bilateral trade. He expressed these views while

talking to Kazakhstan Ambassador Yerzhan Kastafin who called on him in Islamabad. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that in the current circumstances, Pakistani products are the best option for Central Asian countries.

He proposed that in order to raise the trade graph of industrial products display centers should be established for the foreign business community

where we can keep these products for sale under one roof. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan wants better and better road infrastructure to increase foreign investment.

He indicates that foreign investment is Pakistan's top priority which is must for improving the economy. Abdul Aleem Khan asserted common history, religion and civiliza-

tion between Kazakhstan and Pakistan can play a key role in promoting the relations between the two countries.

In his conversation, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Pakistan Yerzhan Kastafin had a detailed discussion with Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan regarding investment, commerce and trade corridors in Pakistan.

He said that excellent trade

and economic relations with Pakistan are also in the wider interest of Kazakhstan and there will be visible progress in this regard in the coming days. Expressing his heartfelt feelings H. E. Yerzhan Kastafin as pleasant and the meeting with Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan as positive and welcoming for bilateral relations.

SC's interim order on military trial for civilians may impact future decisions: PTI's Zafar

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: An interim order from the Supreme Court's constitutional bench that allowed conditionally military trial for 85 civilians who were still in custody for their alleged involvement in last year's May 9 riots may impact future decisions, PTI leader Ali Zafar said.

"I think constitutional bench should not have passed the interim order because our jurisprudence says that don't make such decisions which can impact the final decision," he said while appearing on Rubaroo which was aired on Aaj News on Saturday.

"Since the court has to decide whether the military trial can be conducted or not. So this interim order which allowed the military court to pronounce punishment can affect that," he added.

On Friday, a seven-judge bench

resumed hearing a case pertaining to the trial of more than 100 civilians for their alleged role in attacks on army installations during the riots that followed ex-premier Imran Khan's arrest on May 9, 2023.

The bench — comprising Justice Aminuddin, Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Musarrat Hilali, and Shahid Bilal Hassan — specified that the verdicts of the military courts would be subject to its final decision on the appeals against the Oct 23, 2023 ruling.

"Suspects who can be accorded concessions in their sentences, should be given so and released," Justice Aminuddin Khan, who is heading the constitutional bench, said.

Zafar, a lawyer himself, substantiated his argument by saying that the decision would affect the people who



would be punished by the military court if the SC overturned its interim order.

"It was better not to issue the interim. The court should have conducted day-to-day hearing, it would have taken three to four days to give final decision then it could have given final decision," he said.

The PTI leader mentioned a sentence from the order that for him was not clear. "I saw a sentence in the

order that this order is passed by agreement of parties. If yes, then you cannot blame court, and if not and you still passed the order, I think it was not appropriate."

PML-N Senator Zahid Khan, who was also on the show via video link, was of the view that the court's decision at least allowed the suspects to have their cases heard as they have been in jail for more than two years. He added that they would have a chance to appeal against the decision.

"I spoke to [jailed former prime minister] Imran Khan and he said that a wrong impression is being given that the PTI was requesting talks. He said, 'We have only opened the door for talks,'" Zafar said and called for "confidence-building measures" for dialogue.

He added that there were people on both sides of the table who say "such things" that affect the dialogue process.

Pakistani delegation optimistic about Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's release before January 20

City Desk

A Pakistani delegation has expressed optimism that the US government will release Dr. Aafia Siddiqui before January 20.

Directed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the delegation conducted a lengthy meeting with Dr. Siddiqui, who has been in US custody for over a decade.

The three-hour meeting took place at the US prison where Dr. Siddiqui is held, attended by Senators Bushra Anjum and Talha Mahmood, along with psychiatrist Dr. Iqbal Afridi.

During the discussion, Senator Bushra reported that Dr. Siddiqui shared her challenges but remains hopeful for justice.

The US Department of State Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel has stated that inquiries regarding Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's case should be directed to the Depart-



ment of Justice when Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif wrote a letter to the US President Joe Biden regarding Dr. Aafia's release.

Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, who obtained her PhD from Brandeis University, vanished in Pakistan in 2004 along with her three young children and was later discovered at a US military base in Bagram, Afghanistan, in 2008. She faced accusations of assaulting a US soldier during interrogation, which both she and her family deny. In 2010, she was sentenced to prison by a US court.

Khalid Maqbool for new thinking to rebuild Pakistan with tech use

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Saturday stressed the need for thinking in a new style to rebuild the country with the help of technology.

He said that the world had transformed from the industrial and science era to information technology and it would further suddenly take a sharp turn in the next 25 to 30 years leaving many countries behind, who did not adopt the latest changes and transform themselves.

Federal Secretary of Education and Professional Training Mohyuddin

Ahmed Wani said that the technology lab had been inaugurated. It was missing on the campus, which had been added to it.

Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed said that industry had played an important role in establishing NTU. He said, "I am proud that it has progressed."

Rector, National Textile University (NTU), Dr. Tanveer Hussain, earlier, welcomed the federal minister and delivered his welcome address.

MQM-Pakistan leaders Aminul Haq and Nasreen Jalil were also present on the occasion.

At least 68 journalist killed in 2024 worldwide, UNESCO reports



Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: For the second consecutive year, conflict zones have proven dangerous for journalists and media workers, with 2024 seeing at least 68 deaths in the line of duty, according to new data from the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

More than 60 per cent of these killings occurred in countries experiencing conflict — the highest percentage in over a decade, the Paris-based UN agency pointed out.

"Reliable information is vital in conflict situations to help affected populations and to enlighten the world," UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said in a statement.

"It is unacceptable that journalists pay with their lives for this work. I call on all States to step up and ensure the protection of media workers, in accordance with international law," she added. The report highlights that 42 journalists were killed in conflict zones this year, including 18 in Palestine, which recorded the highest toll.

Other countries such as Ukraine, Colombia, Iraq, Lebanon, Myanmar, and Sudan also saw multiple fatalities, underscoring the heightened risks in regions marked by violence and instability.

This follows an unsettling trend seen in 2023, with more journalists losing

their lives in conflicts over the past two years than in any comparable period since 2016-2017.

While conflict zones remain a critical concern, the overall number of journalist killings decreased slightly during this year.

A notable reduction in deaths occurred in non-conflict areas, where 26 journalists were killed — the lowest figure in 16 years.

This decline was particularly evident in Latin America and the Caribbean, where journalist killings dropped from 43 in 2022 to 12 in 2024.

This suggests some progress in addressing threats against journalists in peacetime, especially in regions previously plagued by violence against media workers.

UNESCO's data, sourced from leading international press freedom organizations, is rigorously verified to ensure impartiality.

Cases are excluded if deaths are deemed unrelated to the victims' journalistic work. However, dozens of cases remain under review, and UNESCO continues to monitor developments closely.

The Organization's mandate extends beyond tracking fatalities. It works to protect journalists through initiatives such as the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

In addition to physical threats, journalists are facing new challenges, including financial and legal pressures.

UNESCO has reported a 42 per cent increase in attacks on journalists reporting on environmental issues between 2019 and 2024, highlighting the evolving nature of risks confronting the media.

Israeli airstrikes kill another 30 Palestinians in Gaza amid degenerating situation

News Desk

UNITED NATIONS: At least 30 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes in the central Gaza area overnight, a senior UN aid official reported Friday, as the situation in the besieged enclave worsened, with mounting casualties and a critical lack of humanitarian aid for the desperate Palestinian people, a senior UN official reported Friday.

"We've seen absolutely horrific images from the scene. There are parents looking for their children, children covered in dust and blood, looking for their parents, multiple injuries on top of the casualties reported, and people still buried under the rubble," Louise Wateridge, Senior Emergencies Officer with UN Palestine refugee agency UNRWA, speaking to reporters in Geneva and New York from central Gaza.

The strikes came only one day after the UN General Assembly passed a resolution demanding an immediate, unconditional, and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

Ms Wateridge described the situation as "absolutely sickening, noting such daily pain and suffering has become the norm for Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip.

Hospitals are overwhelmed, with doctors struggling to treat life-threatening injuries, prevent infections, and



address treatable illnesses. The situation is compounded by severe shortages of essentials, including insulin, syringes, and cancer medications.

"Gaza now has the highest number of child amputees per capita anywhere in the world. Children are among the hardest hit, with Gaza now reporting the highest per capita number of child amputees globally," Ms. Wateridge said.

"Many are losing their limbs. And in scenarios such as this, they're undergoing surgeries without anaesthesia. I spoke to doctors at Nasser Hospital. This is the largest, semi-functioning, hospital in the Gaza Strip now. And they're absolutely beside themselves."

According to UNRWA, nearly 26,000

people have suffered life-changing injuries in the last 14 months — all requiring rehabilitation services, particularly for amputations and spinal cord injuries, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Already in May 2024, more than one in five households in Gaza reported having at least one disabled family member, with 58,000 disabled people identified in the official database of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Despite continued attacks on its premises and staff, "UNRWA here remains one of the largest health actors operating in the Gaza Strip," Ms. Wateridge explained.

"UNRWA is providing 6.7 million

medical consultations during the course of this war," she said, noting that lab services now are limited to three tests, out of 35 before the conflict erupted in October 2023.

Food insecurity also remains an urgent concern in Gaza. Experts from the UN-partnered Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee have already issued an alert over imminent famine in the northern Gaza Strip.

"It's been 14 months. People here really are surviving on bread, lentils, and food in tin cans. We're not seeing fruit and vegetables around... In the past four months alone, nearly 19,000 children were hospitalized due to acute malnourishment," Ms. Wateridge said.

Attacks on an aid convoy on Thursday claimed the lives of several guards, leaving only one truck out of 70 able to deliver food, hygiene supplies and tents to Gaza's population, after a successful UN inter-agency aid delivery the previous day.

"We went from having a very successful convoy where 105 trucks of food and flour did reach the population, and UNRWA distributed all of these supplies, to the complete opposite situation," Ms Wateridge said, citing criminal looting and other safety risks that prevented the convoy from reaching its intended destination.