

فرمان رسول
ہم سے امیر بن برطانیہ نے بیان کیا کہ انہوں نے کہا کہ ہم سے بڑے بڑے لوگوں نے بیان کیا ان سے روح نے بیان کیا ان سے عبد اللہ بن عباس نے ان سے ان کے والد نے اور ان سے عبد اللہ بن عباس رضی اللہ عنہما نے کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا میراث اس کے وارثوں تک پہنچو اور جو کچھ اس میں سے چاہو وہ قرعی کرنا اور رکنا حق ہے۔
(بخاری ص 6746)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



Nation celebrates Quaid-e-Azam's birth anniversary today

The nation is celebrating 148th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, today with national zeal and fervour. It's a public holiday on December 25. National flag will be hoisted atop all public and private buildings.



Imran Khan demands quick development, time frame of talks: Barrister Gohar

Barrister Gohar said Imran Khan was briefed about the start of the negotiation between the government and PTI teams. Gohar said Imran Khan has demanded quick development in talks as PTI has genuine demands.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates Jinnah Underpass at Sectors F-8/F-9 Junction on Tuesday.



Photo: APP

Military courts' verdicts announced under law enacted by parliament: FO

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Office on Tuesday reaffirmed country's commitment to fulfilling all its international human rights obligations and made it clear that the verdicts announced by military courts had been made under a law enacted by the Parliament of Pakistan and in line with the judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

In response to statements on recent verdicts by military courts, FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in a statement said, "Pakistan's legal system is consistent with international human rights law including provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)."

The spokesperson added that the country's legal system had remedies of judicial review by the superior courts and



guaranteed the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that Pakistan believed in constructive and productive dialogue to promote principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. "We remain fully committed to implementing our commitments under the GSP Plus Scheme and core international human rights conventions," the spokesperson said adding

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said, "We will continue to engage with our international partners including the European Union to uphold the international human rights law, without any discrimination and double standards".

PM hopeful of positive outcomes of govt-PTI talks for country's peace, stability

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday assuring the government's sincere efforts and contributions, expressed the hope that the talks initiated between the ruling coalition and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf would bring about positive outcomes to promote peace and economic stability in the country.

The prime minister, in his opening remarks at the meeting of the federal cabinet he chaired,

said that on the National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's initiative, the first round of talks with PTI was held on Monday with the second one scheduled on January 2, 2025.

He said the government's committee comprised Ishaq Dar, Rana Sanaullah, Irfan Siddiqui, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Abdul Aleem Khan, Ijazul Haq and Khalid Magsi.

He said the process would meet success only if both parties set aside their likes and dislikes

for the sake of national interests.

"I do not doubt anyone's intentions. I hope both PTI and the government party will bring about the outcomes for the country's benefits and promote the economic stability" the prime minister said and mentioned the reduced policy rate to 13%, inflation below 5%, constant surge in exports and remittances.

Referring to his meetings with Bangladesh's Chief Advisor Dr Yunus, and the presidents of Indonesia and Türkiye on the

sidelines of the D-8 Summit in Cairo, he said Pakistan-Bangladesh ties were entering a new era as the latter had abolished erstwhile 100% scanning of Pakistan's export products and special desk at airports for screening Pakistani passport holders.

He said Pakistan was also reciprocating with positive indicators and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was scheduled to visit Dhaka in February.

"But all these efforts will come

to fruition if we promote the national unity and solidarity. This is a good initiative of the National Assembly speaker. We will contribute with sincerity. But it takes two to tango. I hope both parties will play their part to serve the national interests and promote national stability," the prime minister added.

Coming to the US sanctions on NDC and other entities, the prime minister called the move illogical as Pakistan's nuclear system was not meant for any aggression but only deterrence.

Pakistan coming out of tough times, says Mohsin Naqvi



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Chairman and Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui called on Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi in Islamabad on Tuesday and held in-depth talks with him on a variety of issues.

In the meeting, issues of mutual interest and overall political situation prevailing in the country were discussed.

The two federal ministers also pondered over measures to provide relief to the people and for long-term solution to public's problems.

Talking on the occasion, Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan is coming out of difficult situation as economic indicators are moving towards improvement.

Every coming day is promising Pakistan's bright future, Mohsin Naqvi said and added disappointment is a sin and the agenda of the rejected elements is something else.

Mohsin Naqvi said those, who are obstructing the development of Pakistan, have nothing to do with the progress of the countrymen. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said those who create obstacles in the path of Pakistan's development do not care about the people.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb not running economy, claims journalist

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is not running Pakistan's economy, journalist Shahbaz Rana has claimed amid the big role of his predecessor in key decision-making committees.

"Talking to opposition comes

on a later stage thing. The PML-N should first install its 'A-Team' to run the country," he said while appearing on Spotlight with Munizae Jahangir which was aired on Aaj News on Tuesday.

"Effectively, 60% to 70% of the economy is being run by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister Ishaq Dar. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is not running it."

Dar was given the additional charge of DPM in April, more than a month after he was sworn in as the FM. When the PML-N announced its decision to form the government after the elections, political pundits thought

that the finance department would go to Dar as he has served in a similar capacity in the past.

But PM Shehbaz broke this chain and brought former banker Aurangzeb to the key position. Reports said that Dar, who is also a relative of the Sharif family, had concerns over the development. It was not just his accession

to the position; later, he was made head of the key committees, including the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, which was supposed to be headed by the finance minister.

"Many committees, including taxation, subsidy, and gas, are being headed by Dar," Rana said.

Khan rejects govt's demand for withdrawing civil disobedience call

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan has rejected the government's demand for withdrawing the call for civil disobedience movement, sources said on Tuesday, as he instructed his party to contin-

ue negotiations with the ruling coalition.

The PTI founder has maintained that he would not withdraw the civil disobedience movement call until the government demonstrates "genuine commitment" to negotiations.

He demanded the judicial

commission to investigate the events of May 9 and November 26, expressing concern that the government may delay discussions. Khan emphasised the need for negotiations to progress "swiftly and meaningfully."

Earlier in the day, former first lady Bushra Bibi and several key

PTI leaders met him in the Adiala Jail.

Sources added that Khan has appointed Sunni Ittehad Council leader Sahibzada Hamid Raza as the spokesperson for the negotiation committee. PTI lawyer Faisal Chaudhry also confirmed this to the media.

"It is essential for the negotiation committee to meet with Khan," PTI Secretary Information Sheikh Waqas Akram said and added that the party desires the government to ease restrictions on the PTI founder so that leaders can have a "meaningful discussion" with their leader.

Alvi predicts PTI founder's release within weeks

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Former President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, has expressed optimism about the impending release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan.

According to reports, Alvi made these remarks to the media outside the Peshawar court after securing a 40-day transit bail. He suggested that significant changes are imminent, hinting at a possible shift in the political landscape.

"Both domestic and international stars are aligning for change," the former Pakistani President asserted. He further emphasised the importance of dialogue and negotiation, stating, "Arbitration doesn't happen where there's occu-



pation. Discussions should be held with the rightful authority, not the one in power. There's still time to reverse all the wrongdoings and appease the PTI chairman."

Alvi expressed confidence in Imran Khan's imminent release, claiming that the former Prime Minister would be freed within a month and a half. "PTI founder Imran Khan will be released within the next six weeks," he predicted.

Working Women's Day celebrated

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A celebration of Working Women's Day was organized by the Women's Welfare Department in Jamshoro, highlighting the importance and contributions of women in social and cultural life through various activities.

The event was attended by a large number of women from different professions, along with senior government officials of Sindh, education experts, and representatives of social organizations. The chief guest, Sindh's Minister for Women Development, Shahina Sher Ali, addressed the gathering. She emphasized that society cannot overlook the hard work and sacrifices of women.

After her passing, her daughter Asifa Bhutto has stepped into her role. Shahina Sher Ali emphasized that success comes through collective efforts and good intentions. She also appreciated the representation of minority women, mentioning Krishna Kohli as an example.



On this occasion, Shahina Sher Ali expressed pride in the fact that women in Sindh are strengthening their roles in every field through hard work.

Shazia Abid, an officer of the Women Development Department and the organizer of the program, also addressed the audience. She stated that the department represents the vision of

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. During her tenure, initiatives such as the establishment of women's police stations and the Lady Health Worker program were introduced. She reaffirmed her commitment to creating an effective and safe environment for women to work across all villages and cities of Sindh.

The aim of this celebration was to raise social awareness, recognize women's hard work, and encourage them to progress further. Prominent speakers such as Professor Khalida Faryal Aalmani, Bushra Arain, Pushpa Kumari, Wali Muhammad, Danish Mehdi, and others also addressed the event.

Christmas Gifts

ISLAMABAD: Christen students carrying Christmas Rashaan bags at a school, in the Federal Capital. ONLINE PHOTO



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

FUWS establishes hospital & girls college in Tehsil Gujerkhan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Falah-e-Ummat Welfare Society (FUWS) making strides in education, healthcare, and women's empowerment, stated by its President, Qazi Qaiser Mehmood while addressing a meeting, underscored the transformative power of education, particularly for women, emphasizing its role in fostering equality and enabling them to redefine societal roles. He stated that empowered women are pivotal to societal progress, calling them a nation's most valuable asset.

Highlighting FUWS's recent initiatives, Qaiser revealed that FUWS establishes hospital & girl college in tehsil Gujer Khan, signifying remarkable development as both facilities thrive. The organization has conducted 18 medical camps, benefiting over 9,530 individuals, and organized a free eye camp that served 2,500 people. Vaccination drives have also been a key focus, with 20,000 individuals immunized against Hepatitis and



12,000 vaccinated against COVID-19 through a dedicated Corona Centre in Tehsil Gujerkhan. Further in 12 schools uniforms, Sweaters, shoes and stationery were also distributed among

the girls and boys students. FUWS gave dowry for the marriages of 12 poor girls. Another initiative by FUWS is to offer a 50% discount to families of police department members.

Ch. M. Latif, a UK-based philanthropist. The agreement aims to strengthen efforts in poverty alleviation, education, healthcare and skill development. Latif praised FUWS's commitment to improving lives in Gujerkhan and shared plans for further collaboration.

Al-Haaj Muhammad Saeed Chishti Nizami, President of HAFI, commended FUWS for its impactful contributions to local welfare, particularly in the fields of education and healthcare. Community leaders, including Dr. Zeshan, Prof. Fida Hussain, Zakir Mehmood Chishti, Mirza Pervez, and Subedar Anwar and others, also shared valuable suggestions during the meeting.

Qazi Qaiser reaffirmed FUWS's commitment to addressing the region's challenges through targeted interventions in health, education, and skill development. "By empowering our people, especially women, we can ensure a brighter, more prosperous future for all," he said.

New Canal Project: A Threat to Sindh's Survival

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

LARKANA: Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Jr, the son of martyr Mir Murtaza Bhutto, has called the six new canal project an act of mass genocide against the people of Sindh. He stated that the new canals being proposed from the Indus River are a death warrant for the people of Sindh. He warned that if these canals are constructed, the entire province would face destruction.

Speaking with the media in Warah, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Jr. mentioned that

the water being extracted from the river through these canals is insufficient, and the very construction of these canals is akin to a death sentence for the people of Sindh. The project, he emphasized, will lead to the devastation of the entire province. He further explained that international organizations are not willing to fund this project due to the government's ignorance. He cautioned that the canal project should not be viewed as a simple issue, as there is no scientific basis for it. This project, he argued, is against the very principles of science.



Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Jr. concluded by expressing that when he speaks of dolphins, he is also talking about the

people of Sindh. The survival of dolphins, he said, is intertwined with the survival of Sindh's people.

Hyderabad Police brutality against lawyers, demand for legal action



Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: An unfortunate incident of police misconduct occurred during the Ayaz Mela, involving Advocate Ayaz Mirani and his colleagues. According to eyewitnesses, despite Advocate Ayaz identifying himself, police officers not only subjected him to physical assault but also arrested him and transferred him to the police station.

Following the incident, Advocate Ayaz was released after the intervention of District Bar General Secretary Shakir Nawaz Sheher, High Court Bar President Ayaz Hussain Teneo, and other senior lawyers.

Advocate Hukma Jamari, former Joint Secretary of the District Bar, strongly condemned the incident, stating that it is the police's duty to protect the public. However, in this case, the law was violated, and the lawyers were subjected to injustice. He further mentioned that an FIR had been filed against four named individuals and five unknown suspects, demanding strict action against them.

The District Bar and High Court Bar Associations have called for the dismissal of the involved officers and stated that if lawyers can be treated this way, it raises concerns about how the general public is treated.

Discussions are ongoing within the legal community regarding further legal action.

Welcome the cooperation of non-resident Pakistanis: President FCCI

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Rehan Naseem Bharara has stressed on exploiting Faisalabad's potential in terms of health tourism and said that he would welcome the cooperation of non-resident Pakistanis in this regard. He was expressing his views during a meeting with NRP (Non-Resident Pakistanis) Secretary General Dr. Maqsood Ahmed today. He said that the government and the private sector are working separately in their respective places, while we have to get out of the cycle of personal ego for the sake of Pakistan and struggle together for the betterment of our beloved homeland. He asked Dr. Maqsood Ahmed to arrange a formal meeting in January so that he could take a final decision for mutual cooperation in consultation with the relevant members of the chamber. He appreciated the spirit of overseas Pakistanis and said that he was happy that this year they sent more foreign exchange to Pakistan than exports. NRP Secretary General Dr. Maqsood Ahmed said that this organization is keen to work in health, agriculture, tourism, energy and other sectors. At present, different Pakistanis are looking after different sectors, while the responsibility of the health sector has been entrusted to him. He said that the role of the chamber is very important in making these projects fruitful and therefore he also wants to sign a memorandum of understanding with the chamber in this regard. Muhammad Azhar, Saleem Bulandia, Shahid Aziz and other members of Dr. Maqsood Ahmed's team were also present on the occasion.

Crackdown on Adulterated Milk Suppliers

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the directives of the Director General Punjab Food Authority, Deputy Director (Operations) Toba Tek Singh, Yasir Mushtaq, led early morning inspections by food safety teams to combat the supply of adulterated milk. The teams conducted spot checks on 76,000 liters of milk at various entry and exit points of the city, out of which 500 liters of adulterated milk were destroyed on the spot. During the operation, 35 milk-carrying vehicles, including motorcycles were inspected and samples were tested. The tests revealed water adulteration and a lack of natural fats in the milk. Heavy fines were imposed on violators.

Deputy Director (Operations) Yasir Mushtaq stated that the consumption of adulterated milk poses severe health risks, including stomach, liver, and intestinal diseases. He emphasized that the Punjab Food Authority maintains a zero-tolerance policy against food adulteration and conducts daily inspections of milk and meat to ensure the provision of pure and safe food to the public.

NA body recommends to review MDCAT eligibility criteria



ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Standing Committee on Health on Tuesday recommended to review the eligibility criteria for appearing in MDCAT exam to provide opportunities to maximum students.

The meeting chaired by Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani, Chairman Standing Committee, discussed in detail the MDCAT test and Pakistan Nursing Council Amendment Bill. The meeting held detailed discussions and took important decisions to conduct transparent examinations.

The committee directed that the MDCAT examinations being held on December 30 for students of Islamabad, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan should be conducted with complete transparency. The committee was informed that the matter is under hearing in the Islamabad High Court whether the examination fee should be collected from the students or whether the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) bear the expenses of the examination itself.

The committee recommended that students be provided with adequate time to prepare for the MDCAT and that the examination be conducted after the FSc results so that students can prepare better.

The committee decided that a letter would be sent to the provincial governments containing recommendations regarding the distribution of seats and merit policy.

During the meeting, all participants expressed their determination to make joint efforts to bring further improvements in the education and health sectors and to resolve the problems of students. The committee emphasized that all decisions will be taken in the best interest of the students and the public.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:41 am
Zohr 12:07 pm
Asr 3:27 pm
Maghrib 5:05 pm
Isha 6:34 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
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

Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi will Celebrate Victory in 2025-26 Elections

City Desk

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi will hold a grand celebration on Wednesday, December 25, 2024, at 6:00 PM, to mark its remarkable success in the elections for the year 2025-26. During this event, the President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, Muhammad Ahmed Shah, along with the members of the Governing Body, will cut a cake to celebrate the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Christmas.

Following the cake cutting, a dinner will be served, and the renowned Qawwali artists, Fareed Ayaz and Abu Muhammad, will captivate the audience with their mesmerizing performances.

It is important to note that members of the Arts Council, along with their families, are invited to join this special occasion.

IIUI Board of Trustees Convenes 16th Meeting in Riyadh

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Trustees (BOT) of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) convened its 16th session at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh. The meeting evaluated decisions made in previous meetings, approved the strategic plan, and set the university's vision for the next five years.

The session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Ahmad Salem Mohammad Al-Ameri, Pro-Chancellor of IIUI and Rector of Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University. Prof. Dr. Al-Ameri welcomed participants and acknowledged the hybrid nature of the meeting, with members attending both in person at the Round Hall of the Conference Building in Riyadh and virtually from various locations.

Expressing gratitude to the President of Pakistan and Chancellor of IIUI, His Excellency Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, for entrusting him with this responsibility, Prof. Dr. Al-Ameri lauded IIUI's contributions to Pakistan and the Muslim world. He emphasized the need for collective efforts to elevate IIUI into the ranks of leading global universities and expressed optimism about addressing institutional challenges and promoting progress.

The session was graced by notable attendees, including the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Nawaf bin Saeed

Al-Malki; Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Dr. Salem Mohammed Al-Malik; President of Ummul Qura University, Makkah, Prof. Dr. Moaddi Mohammed Al-Madhib; President of the Islamic University of Madina, Dr. Saleh bin Ali Al-Aqla; Chairman of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan/ Rector IIUI, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and the Acting President of IIUI, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed. Ch. Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman, Capital Development Authority, Islamabad, Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani-Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training, Allama Muhammad Raghob Hussain Naemi-Chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology (CID), Mr. Muhammad Shakeel Malik, Secretary to the President of Pakistan, Aiwana-e-Sadr.

Virtual participants included esteemed figures such as Hon'ble Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, Chief Justice of Pakistan, Supreme Court of Pakistan, Hon. Mr. Justice Iqbal Hameed Ur Rahman, Chief Justice, Federal Shariat Court, Islamabad, Ms. Amna Baloch-Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, Dr. Muhammad bin Abdul Karim Al-Esa, Secretary General of Rabita Al-Alam Al-Islami and Chairman of the League of Islamic Universities; Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Osman Bakar, President of



the International Islamic University Malaysia; Prof. Dr. Mohamed Sami Abdel-Sadeq, President of Cairo University; Prof. Dr. Salama Gomaa Daoud, President of Al-Azhar University; and Mr. Hissein Ibrahim Taha, Secretary

General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The IIUI delegation, led by Rector Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and Acting President Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed, expressed heartfelt appreciation for the

hospitality of Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University. The delegation commended the host university's unwavering support in promoting collaboration and advancing the shared vision of academic excellence.

Father of the Nation

ISLAMABAD: Children walk past in front of Baba-e-Qaum ("Father of the Nation") Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah portrait painted wall at Sector F-6, in the Federal Capital. As the nation celebrate 148th Birth Anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam on 25th December.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Science exhibition on 'Combating Smog with Science' held at BZU, Multan

Special Correspondent

MULTAN: The Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IMBB) at Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan, hosted an impressive science exhibition under the theme "Combating Smog with Science: Innovations, Solutions, and Prevention," organized by the Zaid FB Society. The event aimed to provide students with an opportunity to showcase their innovative thinking and scientific skills while raising awareness about the critical environmental issue of smog.

The exhibition featured 46 models, presenting advanced solutions such as bio-based



materials and nanotechnology-based air filtration systems, smog towers, green urban designs, and the use of microbes for natural air pollution mitigation. Distinguished

guests included Professor Dr. Nazim Hussain, Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural Science and Technology, and Professor Dr. Muhammad Arif Ali, Chairman of the Department

of Environmental Science. A panel of experts, including Dr. Hamid Manzoor and Dr. Rana Khalid Iqbal, evaluated the models. The best models were awarded cash prizes for their innovative ideas and scientific standards. Speaking at the event, Professor Dr. Nazim Hussain emphasized the need for more such programs, stating, "This exhibition has demonstrated that knowledge, creativity, and determination can solve complex problems."

Professor Dr. Muhammad Arif Ali appreciated the event, noting that such initiatives not only educate but also empower young minds to propose practical solutions.

Comedy play titled "Three Idiots" held at PAC

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A family stage drama "Three Idiots" full of humor and humor was presented in Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Potohar One Production. The producer of the play was Zahoor Ahmed Shah, director Shehzad Pappu and writer Yar Muhammad Khan.

The artists participated, including senior artists of Pakistan Television, Film, Stage and Radio, Nawaz Anjum Zulqarnain Haider, Ahmed Nawaz, Hameed Babar, Shehzad, Pappu, Sameera Rajput, Sofia Ali, Rizwana Khan, Anjam Abbasi, Farooq Jani, Shams Nissa and Mumtaz Ko Do are included. Special guest of the play was Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb, Member of National Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary of Information and Culture Department Ms. Shazia Rizwan.

The drama "Three Idiots" entertained the audience with laughter, emotions and memorable moments.

The play, presented with brilliant acting and an interesting storyline, was well received. Special guest Tahira Aurangzeb said that the play was not only funny but also thought-provoking on important aspects of life. Both the acting and the story were fantastic.

Ms. Shazia Rizwan said that the popularity of the drama "Three Idiots" is a proof that the best quality of entertainment can be provided in the local theater as well.

This presentation was not only entertainment but also a mirror of deep messages of life. At the end of the program, Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb and Ms. Shazia Rizwan encouraged the artists and awarded them certificates.

Collectibles' by Sonraj hosts star-studded event to celebrate OMEGA's legacy of precision and luxury



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sonraj hosted a star-studded event to celebrate legacy of OMEGA, "Tales of Precision" which is exemplified by the marriage of iconic watches with masterful craftsmanship, at Omega boutique recently.

The exclusive gathering showcased OMEGA's heritage and commitment to precision through an intimate display of its most celebrated watches. The event attracted a number of distinguished guests including a host of athletes and celebrities. Adding a touch of sporting glory, cricket legends Javed Miandad, Moin Khan, Zaheer Abbas, and Saleem Yousef graced the occasion, alongside hockey icons Islahuddin Siddiqui, Hasan Sardar, and Samiullah Khan, underlining OMEGA's enduring connection with sporting excellence.

The event was further brightened by luminaries from Pakistan's television and film industry, such as Behroz Sabzwari, Nauman Ijaz, Bushra Ansari, Rubina Ashraf, Shabbir Jan, Nadeem Baig and Javed Sheikh. Karachi's influential socialites also added to the evening's vibrancy, cementing it as a highlight on the city's social calendar.

At the event, Rameez Sattar, CEO of Sonraj, expressed, "As one of the foremost leaders in Pakistan's watch industry, we are both proud and honored to host OMEGA's 'Tales of Precision'.

NUML Hosts 'Paigham-i-Pakistan' Seminar to Promote Religious Tolerance and Harmony

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Studies Department of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the National University of Modern Languages organized a one-day seminar titled "Paigham-i-Pakistan" at the university's Islamabad campus. Renowned religious scholars shed light on the critical importance of religious tolerance, patience, and peaceful co-existence as pillars of a progressive and prosperous Pakistan.

The seminar featured prominent speakers, including Qari Syed Sadaqat Ali, an eminent Qari of the Holy Quran; Dr. Sajid-ur-Rehman,



Former President of Islamic International University and the former Head of the Seerat-un-Nabi Chair at Allama Iqbal Open University; and Sahibzada

Ali Raza Bukhari, a former member of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and a permanent delegate at the United Nations.

Speaking at the occasion, Rector NUML, Maj. Gen. (R) Shahid Mahmood Kiyani HI(M), expressed his gratitude to the participants and lauded the efforts of the Pakistan Studies Department for organizing the seminar. He emphasized the need for religious harmony and character building among the youth, guided by the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBU).

The seminar concluded with a call for collective efforts to nurture an inclusive and peaceful society, reinforcing the message of Paigham-i-Pakistan to combat extremism and promote unity in diversity.

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Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: The Indomitable Spirit Driving Pakistan Air Force Legacy

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the esteemed architect of Pakistan, stands as an enduring beacon of hope and resolute determination. As the nation commemorates his birthday on 25 December, it reflects on his bold declaration that Muslims were not merely a minority but a distinct nation deserving of their own homeland. His impactful assertion, "India is not a nation; it is a subcontinent composed of nationalities," illuminated the profound differences among communities and laid the foundation for the Two Nation Theory. Through tireless negotiations with both British authorities and the Indian National Congress, Quaid transformed this theory into a political reality, culminating in the birth of Pakistan on 14 August 1947. Revered for his unwavering commitment to democracy, freedom and social justice, he also recognised the vital importance of military strength in safeguarding the nascent nation. His strong belief, "There is no power on Earth that can undo Pakistan," continues to resonate across generations, inspiring resilience and unity in the face of adversity.

Quaid's ideology and vision are not merely guiding principles; they are a lighthouse of aspiration that lights our path towards becoming a truly great nation. His conviction in unity, faith and discipline reverberates deeply within our hearts, reminding us of the strength we possess when we stand together. In a world fraught with challenges, Quaid astutely recognised the vital role of Air Power in securing the future of our fledgling nation, understanding that it was not just about military might but about safeguarding our very sovereignty. With fierce determination, he championed the establishment of Pakistan Air Force in 1947, a bold testament to his visionary leadership and an indelible mark on our national identity.

Today, Pakistan Air Force stands as a proud embodiment of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision and the indomitable spirit of Pakistan. With its head held high, PAF soars with purpose and determination. Quaid's resonant words "A country without a strong Air Force is at the mercy of any aggressor. Pakistan must build up her Air Force as quickly as possible. It must be an efficient Air Force, SECOND TO NONE" continue to echo, motivating our Shaheens to perform their duties with utmost dedication. These words serve as a cornerstone of persistence, upholding his legacy while safeguarding national interests which has been the driving force behind PAF's evolution into the formidable guardian of Pakistan's skies. As it evolves into a Next Generation Air Force, PAF draws strength from its rich history and the lessons learned from past challenges.

Quaid-e-Azam was an exceptional leader whose exemplary conduct set a powerful precedent for others to follow, inspiring those around him to unite towards a common goal and establishing himself as a lasting source of motivation for leaders worldwide. His visionary ideals for Pakistan Air Force were firmly anchored in an unrelenting dedication to professionalism, integrity and an unyielding sense of duty. Quaid famously proclaimed, "With faith, discipline and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve," a statement that encapsulates his profound belief in the immense potential of personnel at large and illuminates the path to greatness through dedication and hard work.

Quaid-e-Azam expressed profound reverence for the martyrs of Pakistan, stating, "The sacrifices of our martyrs are the foundation of our freedom. We must always remember their courage and dedication, for they laid down their lives for our future" emphasising the essential role their courage and dedication played in shaping the nation's identity and progress. This sentiment profoundly reflects the legacies of valiant figures of the 1965 and 1971 wars such as Squadron Leader Sarfaraz Rafiqi, Pilot Officer

Rashid Minhas and many more, who displayed extraordinary bravery and selflessness in defending the homeland. Each of PAF heroes epitomized the qualities of unity and devotion that underpin the remarkable achievements of Pakistan Air Force. Quaid urged the nation to honour their legacy by upholding the values for which they fought, reminding us that these martyrs stand as enduring symbols of courage and sacrifice, inspiring generations to safeguard our skies and sovereignty.

Quaid-e-Azam's influence on Pakistan is both profound and enduring. He not only forged the nation from struggle but also instilled values of democracy, equality and justice that resonate today. As the guiding light for future generations, his ideals serve as a moral compass, inspiring the people of Pakistan to honour his legacy and strive for a brighter, more prosperous future. His vision for Pakistan Air Force as a formidable and unparalleled fighting force underscores his understanding of the crucial role Air Power plays in modern warfare and national defence. His foresight in establishing a strong, independent Air Force not only aimed to safeguard Pakistan's sovereignty but also to instill a sense of pride and resilience in its people. By emphasising professionalism, innovation and a commitment to excellence, Quaid-e-Azam laid the foundation for an Air Force that continues to evolve and adapt, ensuring that it remains SECOND TO NONE in all aspects.

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Analysis
Izmi Herlani

Need to realize Jinnah's vision for democratic, self-reliant Pakistan

President Asif Ali Zardari stressed that Jinnah's vision for a democratic and self-reliant Pakistan called upon them to work harder by upholding the values of social justice, economic equity, and the rule of law.

"To achieve Quaid's vision, we must invest in the education of our youth, ensuring they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead Pakistan into a brighter future. We also need to work for the uplift of downtrodden segments of society.

Jinnah's dream of a peaceful and moderate Pakistan obliges us to promote harmony within and beyond our borders," the president said in a message on the 148th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, being celebrated on December 25.

Today, the president said, on his 148th birth anniversary, they paid tribute to the Founding Father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

"On this day, we honour the contributions of the Father of the Nation, who changed the course of history through a political struggle. Quaid-e-Azam's vision, determination, and unwavering resolve led to the creation of an independent homeland for Muslims of the subcontinent," President Secretariat Press Wing, in a press release, quoted the president as saying.

The president said Quaid-e-Azam's leadership during the most critical phase of their history demonstrated his extraordinary qualities, adding as a lawyer, a statesman, and the leader of the All-India Muslim League, he vehemently advocated for the rights of Muslims.

"He presented the case for Pakistan with clarity and conviction, emphasizing the need for a separate homeland where Muslims could freely practice their religion, safeguard their culture, and secure their political and economic rights," he further observed.

President Zardari said Quaid's landmark address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947, still served as a guiding light for them.

In it, Quaid envisioned a Pakistan where the rule of law would prevail, the rights of minorities would be protected, and every citizen, regardless of their religion, caste, or creed, would be equal before the state, he added.

The president said, "These principles of inclusivity, justice, and tolerance are not only the bedrock of Quaid's philosophy but also the ideals towards which we must strive relentlessly. Although we have made significant progress in different fields, the journey towards becoming a prosperous and equitable nation is ongoing."

The president called for renewing their pledge to embody Quaid-e-Azam's ideals in their personal and collective lives.

"His principles of "Unity, Faith, and Discipline" should serve as our guiding light for national cohesion and progress. Let us reaffirm our commitment to building a Pakistan that truly reflects Jinnah's vision—a democratic, inclusive, and prosperous nation where every citizen can achieve their full potential," he further emphasized.



Cartoon by Anjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

December 25: The Legacy of Quaid-e-Azam and the Future of Pakistan

December 25 is a historic day in Pakistan, celebrated as the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. This day is not just a commemoration of his life, but also a reflection on his vision for Pakistan and the enduring legacy of his leadership. Quaid-e-Azam's vision, struggle, and principles remain a guiding light, and his dream of a free and just Pakistan continues to inspire generations.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a Pakistan where all citizens, regardless of their religion or ethnicity, would enjoy equal rights. His vision was a nation where justice, freedom, and opportunities for growth were accessible to everyone. Jinnah's leadership was instrumental in transforming this vision into a reality, as Pakistan came into being not just as a political entity, but as a country where Muslims could flourish, free from discrimination and oppression.

His idea of Pakistan was not only about securing independence for Muslims but also about establishing a society based on the principles of justice, equality, and the protection of minority rights. Quaid-e-Azam believed that a nation could only progress when its citizens were treated with dignity and fairness.

The creation of Pakistan was a monumental achievement, driven by the tireless efforts and vision of Quaid-e-Azam. In the

face of tremendous adversity, he united the Muslim community and led them to demand and eventually achieve a separate homeland. This struggle, marked by sacrifices and unwavering resolve, culminated in the formation of Pakistan.

Jinnah's vision went beyond the political realm. It was about creating a nation where people could live in harmony, celebrate their cultural identities, and work towards collective prosperity. The creation of Pakistan was not just about the independence of Muslims but about giving them a platform where they could shape their own future.

December 25 serves as a day to not only remember the sacrifices and struggles of Quaid-e-Azam but also to reflect on his ideals. Today, Pakistan faces numerous challenges, including political instability, economic hardships, and social inequality. Quaid-e-Azam's vision offers a roadmap for overcoming these issues and moving towards a prosperous future. By adhering to his principles, Pakistan can become a stronger and more united nation.

Quaid-e-Azam emphasized the importance of justice, equality, and opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their background. This message remains relevant today as Pakistan continues to strive for social and economic progress. His leadership serves as a beacon for the nation, guiding it through turbulent times and reminding us of the importance of maintaining moral integrity

and national unity.

As we look at Pakistan's current situation, it becomes clear that the implementation of Quaid-e-Azam's vision is more important than ever. With political, economic, and social challenges facing the country, the values of justice, equality, and liberty that Quaid-e-Azam stood for offer a solid foundation for solving these issues. His message remains a source of strength, providing Pakistanis with the hope and determination to navigate through any crisis.

If we follow Quaid-e-Azam's principles of justice and equality, we can build a strong, self-reliant, and progressive nation. His leadership has shown that a nation can rise above its challenges by adhering to these core values, and it is these values that can help guide Pakistan towards a better future.

December 25 is not just a day to honor Quaid-e-Azam but also a reminder that the future of Pakistan lies in the hands of its people. By following his principles, Pakistan can become the nation he envisioned—a land of peace, progress, and prosperity for all its citizens. It is a day to reflect on his legacy and reaffirm our commitment to making his dream a reality.

Today, if we embrace Quaid-e-Azam's vision, we can overcome the challenges facing our nation. By working together and striving for justice, equality, and progress, we can build a Pakistan that stands tall as a beacon of hope and prosperity for the world. December 25 serves as a reminder that each one of us must play our part in making Quaid-e-Azam's dream of a better Pakistan a reality.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: A Great Leader and the Founder of Pakistan

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, was a visionary leader whose tireless efforts and extraordinary leadership turned the dream of Pakistan into a reality. His sacrifices and principles paved the way for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent to strive for an independent homeland. Every year, December 25th is celebrated with national zeal as his birthday. This day is not only an opportunity to pay tribute to his remarkable personality but also a reminder for the nation to reflect on his ideals and objectives.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was born on December 25, 1876, in Karachi. He received his early education in Karachi and Bombay before proceeding to London for legal studies. Successfully completing his law degree, he returned to India and displayed exceptional skills in the legal profession. Jinnah began his political career in the Indian National Congress but soon realized that the Congress was incapable of safeguarding the interests of Muslims. To protect their rights and autonomy, he joined the All India Muslim League. This decision reflected his vision and determination to improve the plight of Muslims in the subcontinent. Jinnah clearly articulated the Two-Nation Theory, which stated that Muslims and Hindus were two distinct nations with separate cultures, religions, customs, and ways of life. Based on this theory, he demanded a separate homeland where Muslims could live according to Islamic principles. Under his leadership, the Pakistan Movement achieved remarkable success. His relentless struggle, guidance of the masses, and unwavering

efforts against the British government and Congress culminated in the creation of Pakistan on August 14, 1947. The most striking feature of Quaid-e-Azam's personality was his adherence to principles. His three guiding principles, "Unity, Faith, and Discipline," remain a beacon of hope for Pakistan. He consistently emphasized honesty, rule of law, and hard work as the keys to success. In his speeches, Jinnah often stressed the need to build Pakistan as a state founded

on Islamic principles, where minorities would enjoy full protection. For him, democracy, justice, and equality were the bedrock of Pakistan's foundation. December 25 is not just a day to celebrate Jinnah's birth but also an occasion to renew our commitment to his principles and vision. It serves as a reminder of his greatness and the sacrifices he made, enabling us to live in an inde-

pendent country. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a strong, progressive, and prosperous Pakistan. Today, it is our responsibility to turn his dream into reality by upholding the principles of honesty, unity, and justice. The life of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah is an inspiration for all, encouraging us to work with perseverance and dedication toward achieving our goals. December 25 gives us the opportunity to reflect on his principles, strive to turn his vision into reality, and accelerate our efforts to place Pakistan on the path of progress. This day reminds us that by following Jinnah's principles, we can elevate Pakistan to a distinguished position on the global stage.

Writer is District Information Officer, Toba Tek Singh



Analysis
Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi



Analysis
Muhammad Shahbaz Ansari

Prime Minister's Office hosts ACHIEVE Program

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Program (PMYP), hosted an engagement session with participants of the ACHIEVE Program, an initiative designed to uplift young girls from rural Pakistan. The program, a joint effort by The King's Trust International, Zindigi-powered by JS Bank, and the Pakistan Alliance for Girls' Education -PAGE, aims to equip over 300 girls with critical skills essential for personal and professional development.

Led by PMYP Chairman Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, the session featured remarks from key stakeholders and highlighted the program's profound impact. The ACHIEVE initiative offers a comprehensive

training model focusing on leadership development, self-protection, digital literacy, and technical and interpersonal skills, ensuring participants are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society.

In his remarks, Chairman Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan emphasized the importance of creating an environment conducive to women's empowerment, stating:

"An empowered woman leads to an empowered Pakistan. It is our responsibility to build a society ready to embrace the potential of strong, capable women."

He further appreciated the efforts of Zindigi and PAGE and personally interacted with each girl, applauding their personal journeys. The session also included valuable insights from Syeda Amnah Batool (MNA) and the

PMYP focal person, highlighting the pivotal role of youth in shaping Pakistan's future.

Noman Azhar, Founder & Chief Officer at Zindigi, shared, "Empowering youth and women is at the core of who we are. Through our unwavering commitment, we are fostering a ripple effect, where every ACHIEVE program graduate becomes a beacon of hope, driving impactful change and playing a vital role in the societal transformation needed for our nation's progress."

Executive Director of PAGE, Fajer Rabia Pasha, commended the achievements of the girls, stating:

"The ACHIEVE program is a sustainable movement that continues to pave the way for underprivileged girls in Pakistan. The pact we are making is transforming lives and



creating lasting change."

The session was attended by representatives from Zindigi, including Ramla Shafiq, Senior Manager of Marketing, and Moiz Ali Shah, Assistant Manager of Human Resources.

PAGE representatives, including Program Manager Wajeaha Ahmed and Communications Officer Maham Shahzadi, also participated, underscoring the collaborative nature of the initiative.

Through continued collaboration among Zindigi, PAGE, and The King's Trust International, these empowered young women are driving progress toward a more inclusive and prosperous Pakistan.

World Bank approves \$450 million additional financing for reconstruction of 2022 catastrophic floods

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank today approved \$450 million in additional financing for the Sindh Flood Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project to support resilient housing reconstruction for people in Sindh Province affected by the 2022 floods.

The new support will build on the original \$500 million project, approved in December 2022, which has supported owner-driven and multi-hazard resilient reconstruction of over 410,000 core housing units. The additional financing is intended to scale up the comprehensive housing reconstruction efforts in Sindh Province, covering at least 360,000 additional eligible beneficiaries. The additional resources will also support the provision of at least 30,000 safely managed water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities.

"Building resilience to natural disasters and climate shocks through strengthening physical infrastructure, particularly for the most vulnerable has been a key element of the World Bank's support in flood-affected areas



of Sindh Province," said Najy Benhasine, World Bank Country Director for Pakistan. "This additional financing will also strengthen efforts at providing and improving safely managed water, sanitation, and hygiene services which play a critical role in preventing waterborne diseases which contribute to the high rates of child stunting in the province."

The new financing will ensure that vulnerable households especially

single or widowed women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the ultra-poor, are prioritized for reconstruction. The project will encourage their participation in managing housing construction activities through community engagement (establishment of village reconstruction committees) and financial inclusion (provision of bank accounts for female-headed households). Furthermore, a grant of up to PKR 50,000 will be provided to eligible

beneficiaries to support housing improvements, ensuring their homes are accessible and tailored to meet the specific disability needs.

"The additional financing aims to extend the benefits of the parent project, particularly benefiting the most economically and climate vulnerable members of the society and prioritizing citizen engagement and feedback," said Kamran Akbar, Task Team Leader of the project. "It will also train masons with multi-hazard housing reconstruction standards, setting the trend of creating climate-resilient houses, boosting the local economy through use of local materials and labor, and empowering the vulnerable population through provision of safe shelter, financial inclusion and community engagement activities."

The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GDFRR) supported the Sindh Flood Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project through a post-disaster needs assessment, guidance on geo-enabled management systems, and technical assistance, advancing resilient recovery and climate adaptation in Sindh.

Father of the Nation, emphasized love, peace, tolerance, and unity: Anjum

Zain Khan

MULTAN: Chairman of SM Group of Industries, Member of the National Export Development Board, and Member of the Board of Investment, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, conveyed a message on December 25, stating that today, the entire nation of Pakistan is celebrating the birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He said, "December 25 is a day to pay tribute to the Two-Nation Theory. The founder of Pakistan, the Father of the Nation, emphasized love, peace, tolerance, and unity. On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all Pakistanis on the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and also extend greetings to the Christian community on their joyous festival of Christmas."



Renowned Industrialist further stated, "There is no doubt that Jinnah's vision for Pakistan advocates freedom of thought, dialogue, and fostering national unity through discussion. The current circumstances in Pakistan demand that we initiate a national consultative process to address the challenges and lead the country towards development and progress. The security, stability, and prosperity of Pakistan are the dreams of every Pakistani and the realization of Quaid-e-Azam's vision."

He added, "Jinnah believed that nations are built through sincerity, honesty, good deeds, hard work, dedication, and discipline. He tirelessly strived for Pakistan's survival, stability, and national unity. As the Quaid said, 'The more we learn to endure hardships and make sacrifices, the purer, stronger, and more resilient we will emerge as a nation, just as gold becomes refined when tested by fire.'"

"In this context, we must work day and night. My message to the youth of Pakistan is to instill the spirit of work, work, and only work in light of Quaid-e-Azam's teachings. This is the way to put our country on the path of progress and development."

At least 12 killed in explosives factory blast in northwest Turkiye

There is information that 12 of our citizens died in the explosion that occurred in the factory in Karesi district," Balikesir Governor Ismail Ustaoglu said.



"After the explosion occurred in the part of the factory where capsules are produced, the building collapsed. All our teams are here right now," he added.

Emergency crews, including 112 emergency medical and fire teams, were dispatched to the site shortly after the incident.

Turkish Justice Minister Yilmaz Tunc said that an investigation has been launched into the explosion.

On X, Tunc stated that the Balikesir Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has assigned one deputy chief prosecutor and four prosecutors to oversee the investigation.

He said: "The investigation is being conducted comprehensively and meticulously."

Additionally, Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz expressed his condolences to those who lost their lives in an explosion at an explosives factory in Karesi district of Balikesir.

"I wish God's mercy upon our citizens who lost their lives as a result of the explosion that occurred in a factory producing explosives in the Karesi district of Balikesir, patience to their families and loved ones, and a speedy recovery to our injured citizens," he wrote in a post on X.

South City Hospital and NOWPDP collaborate to promote disability inclusion in healthcare

City Desk

KARACHI: In a meaningful initiative to promote disability inclusion in healthcare, South City Hospital and NOWPDP joined hands to commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) by organizing a free medical camp exclusively for persons with disabilities (PWDs) at South City Hospital. The camp provided consultations, screenings, and medical advice, ensuring PWDs received essential healthcare services at no cost. The

As part of this collaboration, South City Hospital's team also visited the NOWPDP Head Office in Karachi for a NOWInclusive Tour. This immersive experience provided the team with a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by PWDs and showcased the transformative impact of inclusion. The tour was described as invaluable and a perspective-changing opportunity for everyone involved.



During the commemorative event at South City Hospital, Dr. Saadia Virk emphasized the importance of disability inclusion in healthcare, stating, "We are committed to taking the mandate of disability inclusion forward by ensuring our services are

accessible and inclusive for all. We are also happy to announce that South City Hospital will be creating more employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This collaboration with NOWPDP is a step toward creating equitable opportunities for

persons with disabilities."

Mr. Amin Hashwani, President of NOWPDP, also addressed the audience, highlighting the broader importance of inclusion, stating, "True progress is measured by how well we embrace and empower the most vulnerable members of our society. Disability inclusion is not just a moral imperative but a necessary step toward building a truly equitable world."

This collaboration underscores a shared vision between South City Hospital and NOWPDP to break barriers, advocate for the rights of PWDs, and foster a more inclusive society. The free medical camp and the NOWInclusive Tour reflect their joint commitment to creating awareness and driving meaningful change.

NOWPDP, a leading organization focused on empowering PWDs, continues to champion initiatives that highlight accessibility, identity, and skill development, paving the way for a more inclusive Pakistan.

NIHCR pensioners, staff awaiting HEC funds

Kehkashan Tabbasum

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research (NIHCR) has been deplorably facing financial crunch created by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for the last over five years at the one pretext or the other.

The NIHCR authorities have repeatedly brought the matter of financial constraints in the knowledge of the HEC high-ups, Ministry of Education and Professional Training

and the Vice Chancellor Quaid-i-Azam University to help out NIHCR financially once for all but to no avail. Ironically, due to apathy of all these stakeholders, pensionary benefits, salary and the allowances of the NIHCR staff and pensioners are accumulating since fiscal 2019-20.

Due to indifference of the HEC authorities, those retiring from service too are not getting their retirement benefits. The NIHCR has yet to pay pension and gratuity to its at least four retired staffers which has not been paid

for the last four years whereas five employees are going to retire in 2025, who are becoming psycho by every passing day owing to the treatment being meted out to the already retired employees by the NIHCR authorities due to prevailing financial health.

The situation has worsened to the extent that the HEC deliberately releases funds late to the NIHCR due to which NIHCR staff and pensioners are paid salaries and pensions after every two months' time. Thus, the staff is forced to borrow money from

relatives; take their daily needs goods on credit and even arrange money for those among them who are more desperate, to make both ends meet.

Presently, the NIHCR has yet to pay to its staff and pensioners: House Rent Ceiling since July 2021 at the pretext that the Higher Education Commission had not released funds to the NIHCR.

Hard hit are the NIHCR pensioners who have not so far been paid their house rent ceilings since July 2021, gratuity and leave

encashment in toto. The NIHCR authorities hold HEC responsible for not releasing required funds to clear the pensioners once for all. According to my well-placed sources in the NIHCR, at least five pensioners are waiting for payment of their pending pensionary dues and house rent ceilings.

Grant of 15 percent Adhoc Relief announced in the Budget 2024-25 to its pensioners for non-release of funds by the HEC.

Implementation of the Special Dispensation for the Civil Serv-

ants in the Federal Government for the Employees in BPS-01 to BPS-16 effective 01-01-2023 for want of funds from the HEC.

Grant of 35 percent and 25 percent Adhoc Relief announced in the Budget 2023-24 to its staff and officers, respectively.

Likewise, the Institute failed to pay 25 percent and 15 percent Adhoc Relief announced in the Budget 2024-25 to its staff and officers, respectively, besides payment of medical allowance and medical reimbursement to its staff for lack of funds.

The financial burden would continue to increase if required funds are not provided in time. There is a dire need to improve the financial health of the NIHCR. It is feared that coming months could be even worse if immediate steps were not taken to improve the funds flow to the NIHCR.

All the stakeholders—HEC, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and the QAU VC—must take cognizance of the prevailing financial situation in getting rid of the NIHCR of the financial backlog.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
112,414.80	113,924.41
Day's High	Day's Low
115,036.49	112,294.42
Index Value	Change
41,329,013,633	-1509.61
Percentage	Time
-1.33%	24 Dec, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,136.99	+34.27
Percentage	Time
+0.42%	24 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
43,130.27	+223.32
Percentage	Time
+0.52%	24 Dec, 11:57 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,036.85	-124.49
Percentage	Time
-0.32%	24 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	174.75	177.00
Bahrain Dinar	735.65	743.65
Canadian Dollar	194.60	197.00
China Yuan	37.99	38.39
Danish Krone	39.15	39.55
Euro	288.35	291.10
Hong Kong Dollar	35.44	35.79
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.92
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.01	905.51
Malaysian Ringgit	61.59	62.19
New Zealand \$	155.37	157.37
Norwegians Krone	24.41	24.71
Omani Riyal	719.50	728.00
Qatari Riyal	75.7	76.4
Saudi Riyal	73.80	74.35
Singapore Dollar	204.99	206.99
Swedish Korona	24.92	25.22
Swiss Franc	311.45	314.25
Thai Bhat	8	8.15
U.A.E Dirham	75.45	76.10
UK Pound Sterling	347.40	350.9
US Dollar	278.10	279.60

CCP leads discussion on enhancing competition in Power Sector

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) organized a dissemination session at its head office to present key findings and actionable recommendations from its recently published Competition Assessment Study on the Power Sector. The session, led by CCP Members Mr. Saeed Ahmad Nawaz, Mr. Salman Amin and Ms. Bushra Naz Malik, focused on the study's insights and discussed the next steps for improving competition within the sector.

Senior officials from various organizations attended, including the Ministry of Energy (Power Division), National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), Privatization Commission, Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO), Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO), Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO), Gujranwala Electric Power Company Limited (GEPCO), Punjab Power Development Board, and the Energy & Power Department KPK.

Mr. Saeed Ahmad Nawaz, Member CCP,



highlighted the inefficiencies of state monopolies, a global issue that often leads to a lack of transparency and accountability. He emphasized the need for corporate governance to address these inefficiencies. Drawing comparisons with the telecommunications and banking sectors, he noted how competition has provided consumers with more choices

and reduced government control. He stressed that decentralization are key to fostering efficiency and attracting foreign investment.

Ms. Kishware Khan (Director General) and Mr. Samiullah Jan Afridi (Assistant Director) delivered an in-depth presentation on the Competition Assessment Study, outlining its methodology, key findings and actionable

recommendations. The session saw active participation from stakeholders, with numerous questions and valuable comments, all of which were addressed by CCP officials. Through its research and advocacy, CCP aims to create a fair, efficient, and competitive marketplace that benefits consumers and businesses alike.

Group photo

KARACHI: H. E. Nayef Shahein R. M. Al-Sulaiti, Consul General of Qatar, along with Salim Valimhammad, Chairman of the Pakistan Chemicals & Dyes Merchants Association, Vice Chairman Shariq Feroz, and Chief Advisor Arif Balgamwala, pose for a group photo at the Qatar Consulate.



Photo: Online

Smoking Damages Heart and Lungs: Dr. Shahid Gill

Zafar Chishty

TOBA TEK SINGH: According to details Sakina Hospital Kamalia Chief Executive, MBBS, MCPS and Assistant Professor Dr. Shahid Iqbal Gill talking to Daily The Spokesman said that by smoking a person suffers from suitable diseases like heart and lungs so people should avoid smoking to be safe from diseases. He further said that nowadays our young generation is very addicted to smoking due to which people are getting heart attack problems. I request parents to take care of their children so that they don't get addicted to smoking. In the End, Dr. Shahid Gill said that the government should also ban cigarettes so that our young generation can be safe.

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The session was specifically designed to elaborate on the regulatory framework, market structure and barriers to competition while offering strategic recommendations to promote a more competitive environment in the power sector. Among the key recommendations discussed was the implementation of the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) model.

This model enables power generation and distribution companies to establish direct contracts for electricity sales, marking a significant step toward introducing retail competition in Pakistan's electricity market.

Daraz 1.1 New Year Mega Sale: Ring in 2025 with smart shopping and maximum savings



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: As the New Year approaches, Daraz Pakistan will be helping consumers turn their New Year resolutions into reality with the launch of the 1.1 New Year Mega Sale. From December 25 to January 5, customers can enjoy fantastic discounts, exclusive deals, and a seamless shopping experience as they enthusiastically welcome the New Year.

With Free Delivery, a variety of vouchers worth Rs. 25 Crore, Flash Sales up to 60% off and exclusive Hot Deals up to 70% off, this is the perfect

time to shop wisely at the start of 2025.

Ehsan Saya, Managing Director of Daraz Pakistan, said, "The New Year is a time for ambition and optimism. By offering unbeatable deals and exclusive benefits, our 1.1 New Year Mega Sale aims to make it easier for shoppers to kick off the year smartly while also helping local sellers grow their businesses. This campaign reflects our commitment to integrating e-commerce into everyday life in Pakistan, ensuring that both our customers and partners succeed in 2025."

PISMIDA Delegation Visits Japan Chamber of Commerce

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE:

A delegation from the Pakistan Industrial Sewing Machine Importers and Dealers Association (PISMIDA), led by Muhammad Umair, Head of International Trade Affairs, visited the Japan Chamber of Commerce & Tokyo Chamber of Commerce to discuss opportunities for collaboration between Japan and Pakistan.

The PISMIDA delegation met with Mr. Yoichi Tomizawa, the Chief Manager of the International Division of the Japan Chamber of Commerce & Tokyo Chamber of Commerce. During the meeting, Mr. Umair outlined potential areas of collaboration, including joint startup programs, conferences, seminars, and Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) services from Pakistan.



inDrive Pakistan launches 'Ride to Donate' to empower youth through sports

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: inDrive Pakistan is proud to announce the launch of the Ride to Donate (RTD) project, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering youth through sports. This socially driven project focuses on enhancing sports facilities in schools across Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore, providing students with the opportunities they need to develop skills, build confidence, and foster teamwork.

Hassan Zaman, GTM, stated, "This project is not just about building playgrounds; it's about creating opportunities for our youth to thrive. We believe that investing in sports is investing in the future of our communities." Sidra Kiran, Communication Manager, added, "We are excited to see the positive impact this initiative will have on students



and their communities. Together, we can empower the next generation through the power of sports."

The participating schools in this initiative include DIL PSP School Malir in Karachi, DIL Model High School Bagga Sheikh in Islamabad and Margharz Welfare Society in Lahore. These schools will benefit from upgraded or newly built sports facilities, enabling students to engage in physical activities and inter-school competitions. The geographic focus on Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore ensures that students in these urban centers have access to enhanced sports opportunities.

Syngenta Empowers 15,000 Wheat Farmers in Sindh

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Syngenta Pakistan, a leading agriculture innovation and technology company that provides crop protection, seeds, and digital services to millions of Pakistani farmers, has joined hands with the Government of Sindh for a groundbreaking initiative to support wheat farmers in the province with free-of-cost distribution of their leading herbicide product to 15,000 growers. This program promises to enhance wheat cultivation and maximize yields across 45,000 acres of farmland.

The Country General Manager of Syngenta Pakistan-Zeeshan Hasib Baig stated that: "Syngenta Pakistan is strongly committed

to support our growers and to promote food security of Pakistan. In this context, we have partnered with the Government of Sindh to empower the wheat growers during the upcoming season for higher productivity and profitability.

The Director General of Sindh Government's Department of Agriculture Extension "Munir Ahmed Jumani" said: "Wheat farming has great potential in Sindh, and it is a pleasure to see Syngenta coming up with this gracious offer to distribute Free of Cost Herbicide among the farmers. Our Agriculture Extension Department will extend every possible support to enable the farmers to maximize productivity, while reducing the cost of wheat cultivation to ensure food security."



ICC reveals schedule of Champions Trophy 2025

Sports Desk

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday revealed the schedule of the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025, which will be hosted by Pakistan.

The ninth edition of the ICC Champions Trophy will kick off in Karachi on 19 February, while the final is scheduled for 9 March.

The eight-team tournament will consist of 15 matches over 19 days and will take place in Pakistan and Dubai.

In Pakistan, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will be the three venues to host tournament play. Each Pakistan venue will feature three group games apiece, with Lahore hosting the second semi-final.

Lahore will also host the final on 9 March, unless India qualify, in which case it will be played in Dubai. Both the semi-finals and the final will have reserve days.

The three group matches involving India, as well as the first semi-final, will be played in Dubai.

Pakistan take on New Zealand in the Group A tournament opener in Karachi on 19 February. The Dubai leg begins



the following day with India taking on Bangladesh.

Group B begins on 21 February, with Afghanistan squaring up against the Proteas in Karachi.

A big weekend then kicks off with rivals England and Australia set to clash in Lahore on Saturday (22 February), with the much-anticipated Pakistan-India clash set for the day later.

The eight sides in the Champions

Trophy competing for the famous white winners' jackets are the teams that finished in the top eight positions on the points table of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

Group A of the tournament features current Champions Trophy holders and hosts Pakistan, along with India, New Zealand and Bangladesh, while Group B features Cricket World Cup 2023 champions Australia, along-

side Afghanistan, England and South Africa.

Schedule of ICC Champions Trophy 2025
19 February, Pakistan v New Zealand, Karachi, Pakistan

20 February, Bangladesh v India, Dubai

21 February, Afghanistan v South Africa, Karachi, Pakistan

22 February, Australia v England, Lahore, Pakistan

23 February, Pakistan v India, Dubai

24 February, Bangladesh v New Zealand, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

25 February, Australia v South Africa, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

26 February, Afghanistan v England, Lahore, Pakistan

27 February, Pakistan v Bangladesh, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

28 February, Afghanistan v Australia, Lahore, Pakistan

1 March, South Africa v England, Karachi, Pakistan

2 March, New Zealand v India, Dubai

4 March, Semi-final 1, Dubai

5 March, Semi-final 2, Lahore, Pakistan

9 March, Final, Lahore (unless India qualify, when it will be played in Dubai)

10 March, Reserve day

South Africa unveil Playing XI for first Test against Pakistan

Sports Desk

CENTURIAN: Cricket South Africa (CSA) on Tuesday unveiled their Playing XI for the first Test of the two-match series against Pakistan, scheduled to start here on December 26.

The Boxing Day Test will be played at the Supersport Park and will feature almost the same team that played in the final Test against Sri Lanka earlier this month, with one change.

Experienced spinner Keshav Maharaj was ruled out of the first Test due to an injury and was replaced by uncapped all-rounder Corbin Bosch in the Playing XI.

Maharaj suffered a groin strain just before the first ODI against Pakistan and was replaced by all-rounder Andile Phehlukwayo in the line-up.

Following the injury, Maharaj underwent a series



of scans to evaluate the extent of the damage. The results confirmed that he is dealing with a left adductor strain.

Bosch will be joining Kagiso Rabada, Marco Jansen and Dan Paterson to form an all-pace bowling attack.

Tony de Zorzi and Aiden

Markram are expected to open the innings with Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs, Temba Bavuma, and David Bedingham to follow.

The Test series against Pakistan is vital for South Africa as they aim to strengthen their chances for the ICC World Test Champi-

onship (WTC) final.

South Africa Playing XI: Temba Bavuma (c), Tony de Zorzi, Aiden Markram, Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs, David Bedingham, Kyle Verreynne (wk), Marco Jansen, Kagiso Rabada, Dane Paterson, Corbin Bosch.

West Indies announce squad for Test series against Pakistan

Sports Desk

ANTIGUA: Cricket West Indies (CWI) on Monday, revealed a 15-member Test squad for the national men's cricket team's upcoming tour of Pakistan.

West Indies will play a two-match Test series against Pakistan, that will run from 17 January to 29 January. This series is part of the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25.

Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Moti, who was unavailable for the team's recently drawn series against Bangladesh, has been added to the squad.

Meanwhile, emerging left-handed batter Amir Jangoo has earned his maiden Test call-up.

Kraigg Brathwaite will continue to lead the team, while Joshua Da Silva will serve as his deputy.

"For the Test series against Pakistan in January 2025, the focus is on building on what we have done well and transforming the learnings from 2024 into tangible results," West Indies head coach Andre Coley said.

"Motie rejoins the squad to bolster the spin attack, while Jangoo's selection comes on the back of his consistency across formats in regional cricket, as well as his demonstrated high level of competency against spin bowling."

The Caribbean team will arrive in Islamabad on 6 January and will play a three-day practice match against Pakistan Shaheens from 10-12 January at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

Following the three-day match, they will take on Pakistan in back-to-back Tests in Multan. The first Test will be played from 17-21 January, while the second Test will be held from 25-29 January.

West Indies Test squad for Pakistan Tour

Kraigg Brathwaite (c), Joshua Da Silva (vc), Alick Athanaze, Keacy Carty, Justin Greaves, Kavem Hodge, Tevin Imlach, Amir Jangoo, Mikyle Louis, Gudakesh Motie, Anderson Phillip, Kemar Roach, Kevin Sinclair, Jayden Seales, and Jomel Warrican.

Tour Schedule

10-12 January - three-day match vs Pakistan Shaheens, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium

17-21 January - first Test, Multan Cricket Stadium

25-29 January - second Test, Multan Cricket Stadium

Basit Ali hails Babar Azam for helping young batters in South Africa

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistan cricketer Basit Ali has praised star batter Babar Azam for guiding the team's younger batters, including Saim Ayub, during the white-ball series against South Africa.

Pakistan suffered a 0-2 defeat in the T20I series, however, they bounced back in style and white-washed South Africa in the ODI series.

Saim played a key role in Pakistan's victory and was awarded Player of the Series as he amassed 235 runs in three games, including two centuries. He also contributed with the ball, taking two wickets.

During an appearance on the ARY News show Sports Room, Basit Ali



praised Saim and acknowledged Babar's role as a mentor to the young teammates.

"It is too early for me to say that he [Babar Azam] reminds me of Javed Miandad after seeing his role in the two games. However, his role in those games was crucial in building the confidence of the Pakistan batters," Basit said.

He praised the shot selection of Paki-

stan's batters throughout the ODI series, which demonstrated their confidence in their abilities.

The former batter further expressed hope that if the players continued to perform like this, Pakistan would definitely qualify for the final four in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

"I hope that players remain confident like this. If so, Pakistan will easily qualify for the semi-final for Champions Trophy 2025," he added.

Meanwhile, he lauded the role of Pakistan's interim coach Aqib Javed for giving ample chances to the batters including Saim Ayub to showcase their skills.

"He [Aqib Javed] took a decision which translated into the brilliant performance of our player," he concluded.

Fakhar Zaman breaks silence on his post in support of Babar Azam

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan batter Fakhar Zaman broke his silence on Monday over his post in support of star batter Babar Azam back in October.

During Pakistan's home series against England, Fakhar, in a post on his official X (formerly Twitter) account, expressed his disappointment over the exclusion of Babar from the last two Tests after a string of poor performances.

Following the post, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) issued a show-cause notice to Fakhar and left him out of the central contracts. The explosive batter was also not considered for the tours of Australia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

While the PCB cited fitness issues for Fakhar's exclusion, critics suggested that his supportive post about Babar was the real reason.

During an interview with a private media outlet, Fakhar addressed the whole situation and clarified the reason behind his post.

"I did think [later] it would have been better if I didn't do it [the post]. But people misunderstood that I criticised the board's decision, which is 100% wrong," he said when asked if he could have avoided such a post.

Fakhar Zaman mentioned that his post was targeted at journalists and former cricketers who were asking to drop Babar Azam from the Pakistan squad.

"I did the tweet before the team announcement. I was watching the news from the last 2-3 days prior to the tweet and some of the journalists and ex-players were saying that he [Babar Azam] should be dropped," he added.

"I felt that these people were disregarding all his services and saying he

should be dropped. It was coming to my mind again and again which prompted me to do that tweet.

"But I tweeted it before the announcement. I wouldn't have done it after the announcement as I am a cricketer myself and also a centrally contracted player of the PCB. I have to play cricket in the future as well."

While addressing his fitness issues, he mentioned that he had requested the PCB for a two-month rest as he was unwell.

"I had an understanding with the PCB that I would rest for two months and I had no idea about my sickness when the team was departing for Australia," he revealed.

"Later, I found out that I was suffering from Hyperthyroidism. Now, I am thankful that I did not go with the team because you cannot perform in such a condition."



Zamurrud Khan visited the Alpine Club of Pakistan

Former MNA and Patron-in-Chief of the Former Parliamentarians Association, as well as Chairman & CEO of Pakistan Sweet Homes, Mr. Zamurrud Khan, recently visited the Alpine Club of Pakistan's sport climbing wall. He was warmly welcomed by Mr. Abu Zafar Sadiq, President of the Alpine Club of Pakistan, and Mr. Karrar Haidri, Secretary of the Alpine Club.

During his visit, Mr. Abu Zafar Sadiq briefed him about the club's activities, including mountaineering, rock climbing, and sport climbing initiatives. The event featured demonstrations by the club's talented athletes, including Abu Zar, Huzaifa Imran, Hassan Faiz, and Ahsan Ullah, who showcased their skills by climbing the wall at impressive speeds.

Mr. Zamurrud Khan expressed admiration for the athletes' performances and praised their talent. He also showed keen interest to engage students of Sweet Home in climbing n other outdoor pursuits n committed to supporting athletes encouraging the development of the sport and the athletes' future prospects.

National Junior Badminton Championship begins

Tahir Amin Malik

ISLAMABAD: Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry inaugurated the National Junior Badminton Championship at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall on Tuesday.



DG Sports Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry inaugurated the event by playing badminton with Director Admin Dr. M Kaleem. Secretary Punjab Badminton Association Tayyab Sohail and other officials were also present on this occasion.

Talking on this occasion, Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that more than 200 boys and girls from across the country are participating in the championship. "We are quite upbeat that fresh talent will emerge from the National Junior Badminton Championship," he added.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry congratulated the Pakistan Badminton Federation for organizing the best event. "Sports Board Punjab is fully cooperating with the organizers for the smooth holding of the championship," he described.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry further said that all possible measures are being taken for the promotion of sports culture across the province.

DG Sports Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry also distributed rackets among the players at the opening ceremony of the National Junior Badminton Championship.

Ronaldo opens up on long-standing 'GOAT' debate with Messi



Renowned soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo has finally broken his silence on the long-standing 'GOAT' debate with Argentine rival Lionel Messi.

In a recently-uploaded video on his YouTube channel, UR Cristiano, the star footballer engaged in a penalty shootout with famous YouTuber MrBeast.

In the video, the American YouTuber and his three friends, all donned in Al-Nassr jerseys, acted as goalkeepers while Ronaldo took a shot at the goal.

During the challenge, MrBeast could be heard shouting, "Nolan says he doesn't like you, he thinks you're not the GOAT... he thinks Messi's better! He calls it soccer, and he said Messi's the GOAT!"

In response to that, former Real Madrid and Manchester United player jokingly said, "Who said Messi's better than me?" and burst into laughter.

Earlier, at a press conference, the Portuguese forward shared his thoughts on comparison with the Inter Miami star.

"It is not important anymore whether I am the best or not, I no longer care about that. It is good for a player to score goals, but for me it is better for the team to win," he said.

"I am used to breaking records, and I no longer look for them. The most important thing for me now is to enjoy and help Al Nassr and my teammates to win," he continued.

Ronaldo is 58 goals ahead of his competitor, Lionel Messi, who has smashed 842 goals, while Brazilian legend Pele is third with 765.

Meanwhile, the Al Nassr captain has opened that he aims of achieving 1,000 goals in future, during a conversation with his former Man United teammate Rio Ferdinand.

Diplomatic Credentials

ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors from Romania, Somalia, Nepal, Japan, and Bangladesh presenting their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari during a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

Pakistan, Azerbaijan mull boosting military ties with focus on cyber, electronic warfare

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: A high level defence delegation led by Deputy Minister of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan-Director General Mr. Agil Gurbanov, along with Lieutenant General Namig Islamzade, Deputy Minister of Defence-Commander of the Azerbaijan Air Force called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters, Islamabad.

During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff shared the recent achievements of Pakistan Air Force, symbolizing his vision of operational excellence in the realm of contemporary warfare domains. The Air Chief reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties between the armed forces and particularly cooperation with Pakistan Air Force in operational and training domains. He also highlighted the impor-



ance of training cooperation; wherein, a large contingent of Azeri air and ground crew is currently undergoing training at an operational PAF base. He noted that the training program is on schedule, with over 50% of the training objectives successfully achieved. He

further emphasized that the initiative is expected to culminate within one-month timeframe, reflecting the commitment of PAF to enhance the operational capabilities of Azerbaijan Air Force.

The visiting dignitaries lauded the historic & exem-

plary professionalism demonstrated by the personnel of Pakistan Air Force and praised PAF's notable progress in developing a thriving domestic capability in the aviation industry in a short timeframe. The dignitaries expressed satisfaction on the training imparted to 70

aircrew & technicians getting trained in PAF and expressed their desire for enhanced Air Force to Air Force collaboration between the two sides. Emphasizing on the need to adapting to the evolving landscape of modern warfare, the Azerbaijan military leadership also proposed the establishment of a more comprehensive training regimen focusing on niche and disruptive technologies, as well as cyber and electronic warfare capabilities. Later the delegation visited PAF Cyber Command, established at Air Headquarters, where it was briefed about the operational capabilities and ongoing projects of PAF's modernization drive.

The visit of this high level defence delegation from Azerbaijan to Air Headquarters Islamabad signifies a resolute commitment of both countries to reinforce their military partnership, fostering collaboration and promoting robust relations.

Chief of the Romanian Naval Forces visits newly commissioned PNS YAMAMA

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Romanian Naval Forces, Vice Admiral Mihai Panait, visited the newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship YAMAMA at Constanta Port, Romania. The dignitary was given a detailed briefing on the ship's capabilities.

PNS YAMAMA is the last of four Offshore Patrol Vessels built for Pakistan Navy by DAMEN Shipyards, Galati, Romania. These versatile, high-tech, and state-of-the-art platforms are designed to operate in contested maritime environments and are equipped to project deter-



rence across all domains of warfare. After its commis-

sioning on 17 December 2024, PNS YAMAMA conducted

its maiden Passage Exercise with a Romanian Navy ship

to commence its operational readiness at sea.

Earlier, Commander Karachi, Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi, called on Chief of the Romanian Naval Forces, Vice Admiral Mihai Panait, in Bucharest. During their interaction, matters of mutual interest, Navy-to-Navy engagements, and cooperation in maritime security were discussed.

Both Flag Officers expressed satisfaction with the growing ties between the two navies and pledged to continue strengthening the existing level of cooperation in operations and training.

Students must utilize knowledge for Pakistan's development: BBZ

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

SUKKUR: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has emphasized that the digital space in Pakistan is under threat, urging the youth to use "democratic and peaceful resistance" to secure digital rights, including high-speed internet.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House on Tuesday, speaking at the convocation ceremony of Sukkur IBA University, Chairman PPP said, "It is a matter of pride for me that this institution was established by my mother, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, during her second tenure as prime minister. The seed planted by her has now grown into a tree, earning recognition not only nationally but also globally."

He highlighted that students from across Pakistan and even international students from countries like Sri Lanka are receiving education at the university.

Discussing the role of students in addressing national challenges and



enhancing Pakistan's global image, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said, "Students must utilize their knowledge for Pakistan's development. Today, we face challenges such as poverty, economic inequality, and climate change."

Bilawal reminded the audience that every generation has fought for its rights. "Democracy wasn't handed to us as a gift; it was achieved through

struggle. Generations of youth, using their education, voices, and skills, have defeated oppressors time and again. From the colonial era to today, the youth have been at the forefront," he highlighted.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stressed the need for better internet access and data privacy protections for the younger generation. He announced plans to visit educational institutions

across the country, including Sindh, to gather student feedback on proposed digital rights legislation.

"Tag me on social media and share your suggestions," he urged the youth.

Addressing climate change, he warned of severe consequences if its impact is not mitigated. "Pakistan risks devastating floods and infrastructure collapse if we fail to address climate change," he stated.

The chairman extended his best wishes to the graduating students, urging them to contribute to national progress through the power of education. He praised the Sindh government's achievements in health and education, highlighting how students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Punjab, and even Sri Lanka come to Sindh for quality education at institutions like IBA Sukkur, just as patients from across Pakistan seek treatment at Sindh's hospitals.

During the event, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari distributed medals and certificates to students, accompanied by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah.

Envoys of Romania, Somalia, Nepal, Japan & Bangladesh present credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors from Romania, Somalia, Nepal, Japan, and Bangladesh on Tuesday presented their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari during a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The president received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Romania, Dan Stoenescu; the Ambassador-designate of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Sheikh Nur Mohamed Hassan; the Ambassador-designate of Nepal, Rita Dhital;

the Ambassador-designate of Japan, Akamatsu Shuichi; and the High Commissioner-designate of Bangladesh, Md. Iqbal Hussain Khan.

Welcoming the envoys, the president congratulated them on their appointments and expressed hope that they would play their role in further strengthening bilateral relations with Pakistan in the areas of trade, economy, and culture.

Earlier, the envoys were accorded a guard of honour by a contingent of the Pakistan Armed Forces upon their arrival at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Armed forces pay tribute to Quaid-e-Azam on birth anniversary

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The chairman joint chiefs of staff committee, the service chiefs, and the armed forces of Pakistan paid tribute to the Father of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on his birth anniversary, the military's media wing said.

"The Armed Forces honour the enduring vision and unparalleled leadership of Quaid-e-Azam, whose tireless efforts united our people and established the foundation for a sovereign and independent Pakistan," the Inter-Service Public Relations said in a statement on Wednesday.

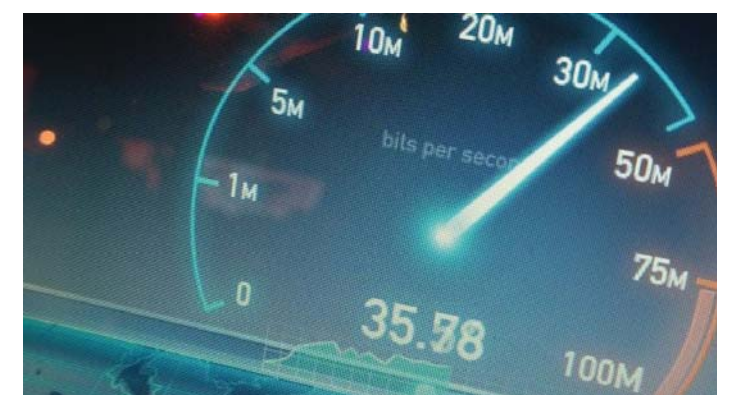
"On this day of national signif-

icance, we renew our unwavering commitment to his guiding principles of Unity, Faith, and Discipline, which continue to inspire the nation."

Furthermore, the armed forces extended greetings to the Christian community on the occasion of Christmas. "In solidarity with our Christian brothers and sisters, we celebrate the universal values of love, compassion, and peace that this occasion represents," it said.

"The Pakistan Armed Forces remain resolutely dedicated to safeguarding the nation and upholding the ideals of justice, equality, and harmony in the service of our people and our homeland."

Internet speed to pick up in Pakistan soon



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Internet users in Pakistan will witness increase in internet speed in next few days after connectivity with subsea cable network 2Africa in Karachi.

Sources said that 45,000-kilometer cable lying process is almost in final stages after which the internet speed will be enhanced up to 180 terabits.

After completion of cable lying process, the internet speed will be accelerated in Pakistan including on all social media apps.

Pakistan will achieve digital progress after connection of cable which will pave way for speedy and smooth connectivity of internet.

According to Transworld Associ-

ates, subsea marine 2Africa is most reliable cable project internationally, and after installation the internet speed in Pakistan will be enhanced from 10 to 42 terabits per second.

It is necessary to mention here that an extension to the original 2Africa cable, known as 2Africa Pearls, was announced in 2021, with plans for further landing points in Oman, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Pakistan, India, and Saudi Arabia.

China Mobile International and Meta are the consortium parties responsible for the Karachi portion of the cable. The pair has contracted Transworld Associates to operate and own the landing.

PTA says 2Africa Cable System is set to go live in Pakistan by 2025.

Only a trickle of UN emergency food aid getting to desperate Gazans: UN

UNITED NATIONS: Only three per cent of food and water deliveries organized by the UN World Food Programme (WFP) have been permitted to enter areas in northern Gaza since October, when Israeli forces unleashed a ground offensive in the northern part of the besieged enclave, the United Nations reported Tuesday.

At the end of December, a joint UN convoy of nine trucks successfully reached people in Beit Hanoun, northern Gaza, who had been cut off from aid for over 75 days, it said.

Images taken by UN staffers showed desperate residents rushing out from shelters to retrieve the bottled water, flour and canned food.

WFP has put in 101 requests to deliver food to areas in Gaza's north governorate since the offensive began on 6 October: only three have been approved, including the

20 December convoy.

In a statement released on Monday, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher warned that the "near-total siege" of the northern region is "raising the spectre of famine", whilst conditions in extremely overcrowded South Gaza are creating "horrific living conditions and even greater humanitarian needs" as winter sets in.

Fletcher, who spent the last week visiting UN staff, partners and communities in several Middle Eastern countries, described Gaza as the most dangerous place in the world to deliver aid, in a year when more humanitarians have been killed than any on record.

An added concern is the breakdown of law and order, and the looting of UN supplies by armed gangs.