

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ

ہم سے مسودین سربرئے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے نیکو بن سب سے بیان کیا ان سے عثمان نے کہا جھ سے منور نے بیان کیا ان سے ابوائل نے اور ان سے ابو موسیٰ رضی اللہ عنہ نے کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا قیدیوں کو چھڑاؤ اور دعوت کرتے والے کی دعوت قبول کرو۔ (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7173)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

RAWALPINDI



Agriculture, IT twin engines of growth: Finance Minister

Federal Finance Minister Aurangzeb while addressing the press conference on the arrival of Kamalia said that we have worked hard and we have done it today independent sources are recognizing the economic stability of Pakistan. (Details on Page 2)



PSX soars 78% in 2024, secures second spot globally: report

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) outshined other asset classes in the country for 2024, with its benchmark KSE-100 Index surging by 78%. This remarkable performance positioned PSX as the second-best performing stock market globally, trailing only Argentina, according to The News, citing a report by Topline Securities.

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Sad accident

Firefighters carry out extinguishing operations on an aircraft which drove off runway at Muan International Airport in Muan, South Jeolla Province, South Korea, on Sunday.



Photo: Reuters

President expresses grief over S. Korea plane crash



The president expressed his condolences with the people and the Government of South Korea, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

He also expressed his sympathies with the bereaved families.

According to foreign media reports, a Jeju Air Flight 2216 crashed at Muan International Airport on Sunday morning, resulting in over 100 deaths.

The Boeing 737-8AS, which had departed from Bangkok with 181 people on board, including 175 passengers and six crew members, crashed as it attempted to land.

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday expressed his grief over loss of precious lives in a plane crash at Muan International Airport in South Korea.

PM expresses condolence over loss of lives in Muan plane crash

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday expressed his grief over the loss of many precious lives in a plane crash at Muan International Airport in Korea. "In this hour of grief, our thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families and with the people and the Government of Republic of Korea," the prime minister posted on X account.

PM expresses condolence over loss of lives in Muan plane crash

According to foreign media reports, a Jeju Air Flight 2216 crashed at Muan International Airport on Sunday morning, resulting in over 100 deaths.



The Boeing 737-8AS, which had departed from Bangkok with 181 people on board, including 175 passengers and six crew members, crashed as it attempted to land.

179 dead in South Korea's worst plane crash

Spokesman Report

SEOUL: A Jeju Air plane carrying 181 people from Thailand to South Korea crashed on arrival Sunday, smashing into a barrier and bursting into flames, killing everyone aboard except for two flight attendants plucked from the wreckage.

A bird strike was cited by authorities as the likely cause of the crash — the worst ever aviation disaster on South Korean soil — which flung passengers

out of the plane and left it "almost completely destroyed", according to fire officials.

Video showed the Jeju Air Boeing 737-800 landing on its belly at Muan International Airport, skidding off the runway as smoke streamed out from the engines, before crashing into a wall and exploding in flames.

"Of the 179 dead, 65 have been identified," the country's fire agency said, adding that DNA retrieval had begun.

Inside the airport terminal,

tearful family members gathered to wait for news.

An official began calling out the names of the 65 victims who had been identified, with each name triggering fresh cries of grief from waiting relatives.

Only two people — both flight attendants — were rescued from the crash, the fire department said.

"Passengers were ejected from the aircraft after it collided with the wall, leaving little chance of survival," a local fire official told families at a briefing, according

to a statement released by the fire brigade.

"The plane is almost completely destroyed," he was quoted as saying.

Both black boxes — the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder — have been found, deputy transport minister Joo Jong-wan said at a briefing.

Under floodlights, rescue workers used a giant yellow crane to lift the burned-out fuselage of the orange-and-white aircraft on the runway at Muan — some

288 kilometres (about 180 miles) southwest of Seoul.

Bits of plane seats and luggage were strewn across the field next to the runway, not far from the charred tail, offering a glimpse into the catastrophic impact of the crash.

'Mayday'

All of the passengers were Korean apart from two Thais, with the youngest a three-year-old boy and the oldest a 78-year-old, authorities said.

Continued on Page 7

Dialogue remains essence of democracy: Irfan Siddiqui

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson for the government's coalition dialogue committee, Senator Irfan Siddiqui emphasized on Sunday that dialogue remains the cornerstone of democracy and the only viable path to address political challenges.

Talking to PTI outside the Parliament, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader reiterated his party's commitment to fostering democratic traditions.

PML-N engaged in constructive dialogue many times to resolve issues and move the country forward, he said. "We have consistently invited the PTI to engage in dialogue for the betterment of Pakistan," he stated while adding that the PML-N has proposed a Charter of Economy to achieve economic stability.

He emphasized that the committee will engage with the opposition for dialogue in line with democratic practices.

Siddiqui added that making things



complex was not in favor of the government. The government would see the PTI's demands, even if they are difficult to fulfill, he said.

He said that dialogue is the beauty of democracy in which issues were resolved when leaders sit together. "Still I think if the two committees reach a conclusion then we will have suggestions, but there are many ifs and buts." He added.

He added that the success of any negotiation demands consensus of both sides where they would make concessions on their demands and admit some.

Musadik flays PTI, calls for constructive talks on national issues



City Desk

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik has called for dialogue to address national issues, stressing the need for constructive discussions while maintaining a clear distinction between criminal cases and political matters.

Speaking to the media at a local hotel here on Sunday, he said, "We were ready for negotiations before. If we want to move forward, let's have a dialogue. How come issues will be resolved if our people do not sit together?" He welcomed initiation of talks with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), describing it as a positive step. However, he clarified that the agenda of dialogue would not include criminal cases involving PTI's

leadership.

Referring to the allegations against the PTI founder, Malik said, "Whether it is the attack on the corps commander's house, the military tower, or martyrs' monuments, such crimes have nothing to do with dialogue. Trials for these offences will proceed based on evidence."

Malik reiterated the government's commitment to economic, political and democratic recovery, stressing that discussions on national issues must remain separate from criminal proceedings. "We are not your enemies; we are friends. Don't sacrifice the country to political tension. Accuse us, argue with us, but let's work for betterment of Pakistan," he urged.

Deputy Chairman Senate expresses condolence over loss of lives in Muan plane crash

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman of the Senate, Syedaal Khan, on Sunday expressed his grief over the loss of many precious lives in a plane crash at Muan International Airport in South Korea.

Syedaal Khan expressed deep sorrow and condolences over the tragic loss of 176 precious lives in the crash. "This heartbreaking tragedy has deeply saddened not only South Korea but the entire world. Our hearts go out to the families of the victims, and we stand with them in this time of sorrow," he said.

"Our thoughts and prayers



are with the affected families," Deputy Chairman said.

"Pakistan stands in solidarity with South Korea during this difficult time.

The Boeing 737-8AS, which had departed from Bangkok with 181 people on board, including 175 passengers and six crew members, crashed as it attempted to land.

AJKSCBA tables various proposals before CJP

MIRPUR (AJK): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Supreme Court Bar Association (AJK SCBA) called on the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi in Islamabad and discussed exchange of fostering cooperation between the superior judiciary of AJK and Pakistan, besides other key legal and administrative matters.

According to a press release

issued here on Saturday by AJK SCBA, the delegation apprised following proposed matters highlighted their significance to encourage the exchange of bilateral cooperation between the superior courts of Pakistan and AJK.

Effective implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Supreme Courts of AJK and Pakistan.

Agriculture, IT twin engines of growth: Finance Minister

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Federal Finance Minister Aurangzeb while addressing the press conference on the arrival of Kamalia said that we have worked hard and we have done it today independent sources are recognizing the economic stability of Pakistan.

He said that they are bringing reforms in the tech and energy sector. If the country runs on taxes, we will increase the rate of tax collection. Tax evasion affects the salaried class. Due to automation, transaction work is reduced, now electricity tariff will also be reduced.

In response to a question, he said that it is better if the government leaves the institutions, privatization will bring transparency in the institutions. Pasco is a corrupt institution. There are problems in agriculture and IT despite being a research institute, there is no result.

Mills not paying farmers will be sails. The price of rice and maize is not determined by the government. IT training will be given to private students with the support of China. Center Aurangzeb added that agricultural reforms in India and Pakistan started at the same time. Where is he today and where are we Now the



Pakistani Rupee is stable against the dollar. If the Deputy Commissioners can reduce the inflation in their areas, it is better. We will not let our hard work go to waste. No matter who it is one hundred and ninety thousand people own more than one vehicle,

why can't they become filers.

On this occasion, the Federal Minister meet the Poultry and Dairy Farms delegations and informed them about the problems related to their sector.

On this Occasion, Former MNA

Ch. Asad-ur-haman, Ch Mustafa Ramde, Former Independent Candidate for Provincial Assembly Ch. Shahid Gujar, Exen Wapda Syed Fazal Abbas Shah, Anjuman Tajers, Media Representative and Other were also Present.

Congratulations to Dr. Fareeha Afham for Passed PMDC Exam

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Congratulations to Dr. Fareeha Afham for passing the PMDC exam. According to the details, Dr. Fareeha Afham, niece of senior journalist Rana Mudassar Iqbal, was congratulated for her success in the PMDC exam.

There was a wave of happiness over the success of the candidates who passed the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) examination. Fareeha Afham scored a remarkable success in this exam, after which she will have an opportunity to enter the medical or dental profession. This success is the result of hard work and dedication. After passing the PMDC exam, Dr. Fareeha Afham will now be allowed to practice in any medical or dental institution in Pakistan, which will start her professional life.

The successful candidates are being congratulated by their families, friends and teachers. It should be noted that the talented Dr. Fareeha Afham obtained her MBBS degree from Semey Medical University of Kazakhstan (Russia). These days, Dr. Fareeha Afham performs house job duties in Allied Hospital 2, Faisalabad.



Polish tourists robbed near Sujawal



Kamran Khamiso Khawaja

SUJAWAL: A Polish tourist couple met with an unfortunate incident near the Sujawal-Badin Bypass road on Sunday. Jakub and Mary, who are on a world tour by bicycle, were en route to Tharparkar district after visiting historical sites in Thatta district when they were intercepted by four unidentified men who robbed them of their mobile phones and other valuables.

The couple embarked on their world tour around seven months ago and had visited 10 countries before reaching Thatta on Saturday night. They visited the Makli Necropolis and Shah Jahan Mosque and were on their way to Tharparkar via the Sujawal-Badin Bypass road when they encountered the incident.

SSP Sujawal Dr. Khalique Pizada, when contacted, revealed that he had ordered a thorough probe into the matter, following which some suspects were arrested by the local police by the time this report was filed.

Jakub and Mary, while talking to local reporters in Thatta, said their purpose for embarking on this journey was to spread the message of peace and humanity. However, members of the civil society feared that the incident would bring disgrace and shame to the district administration of Sujawal.

Students of University of Faisalabad visited the Press Club



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Students of the Department of Communication of the University of Faisalabad visited the Press Club under the leadership of Department Coordinator Awais Sattar. The students spent time in the digital studio set up at the Press Club and visited the Press Club library, gym and other sections.

Students of the Mass Communication Department of the University of Faisalabad made an informative visit to the Faisalabad Press Club. The student delegation was led by Awais Sattar, Coordinator, Department of Communication. The students of the Department of Media visited the Press Club, Gymnasium, Library and other parts. The students expressed special interest in the recently established digital studio and appreciated the vision of the Press Club leadership in providing digital media facilities to the journalists. Senior photo-journalist Tahir Najafi briefed the students about the aims and objectives of establishing the Press Club.

Purchasing

ISLAMABAD: People are busy in buying warm shoes at sunday weekly bazaar at Sector G-10 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Basant Hall Hyderabad hosts exhibition of Central Jail Prisoners' Artwork

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: An exhibition of artwork created by prisoners from Central Jail Hyderabad was held at Basant Hall, organized by a social organization. The Superintendent of Nara Jail, Hashim Khasakhail, visited the exhibition and took a detailed review of the artistic items displayed.

During his visit, Superintendent Hashim Khasakhail stated that this exhibition is an important step in highlighting the rehabilitation and abilities of prisoners. Our goal is to teach prisoners skills that will help them lead dignified lives after their release.

He mentioned that this exhibition is a practical example of the efforts and directions of Provincial Minister



for Jails Ali Hassan Zardari, IG Jails, and DIG Syed Manwar Ali Shah, who are committed to continuing such activities in prisons for the welfare and training of prisoners.

Speaking to senior journalist and writer Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi, the Superintendent of Jail further emphasized that the media should not only assess our efforts but also provide critical and constructive guidance to improve our initiatives.

Senior journalist Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi commented that showcasing the paintings and artworks created by prisoners highlights their hard work and talent.

He added that the large public participation is a significant step forward in making these efforts successful and in supporting the jail administration's initiatives.

GCT organises fun-filled day for over 800 orphaned students at Hyderabad's Rani Bagh

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Over 800 orphaned students from across Sindh had an unforgettable amusement day at Hyderabad's famous Rani Bagh, organised by non-profit the Green Crescent Trust (GCT).

The GCT is dedicated to providing quality education to underprivileged children in Sindh.

The students, enrolled in GCT's network of charitable schools, were treated to an array of fun-filled activities and exciting joyrides at the amuse-

ment park.

The students, hailing from 52 charitable schools in Mehrabpur, Sanghar, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Mirpurkhas, and Badin, were thrilled as they experienced the iconic Ferris Wheel and other rides at Rani Bagh.

The first phase of the gala was graced by Sindh Local Government Minister, Saeed Ghani, who praised GCT's efforts in providing both education and recreation to orphaned and underprivileged children.

In his message on the occasion, GCT's Chief Executive Officer, Zahid

Saeed, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the donors, philanthropists, and supporters who have been instrumental in the organisation's work. He emphasised that GCT, with the generous backing of its partners, has been able to operate for over 30 years, establishing a network of 170 charitable schools across Sindh. These schools now serve over 32,800 students, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds.

Zahid Saeed highlighted that women's empowerment was an integral aspect of GCT's educational

programmes, with a majority of the students and teachers being women.

Looking ahead, the GCT chief expressed confidence that with continued support, the non-profit would achieve its Vision-2025 goal, which aims to expand GCT's network to 250 schools and enrol 100,000 students by the end of next year.

The last phase of this year's fun gala will take place at Benazir Bhutto Park in Sukkur, with Sindh Energy Minister, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, expected to attend as the chief guest.



ISLAMABAD
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:43 am
Zohr	12:10 pm
Asr	3:30 pm
Maghrib	5:08 pm
Isha	6:37 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6

No eight-hour gas loadshedding in Rawalpindi: SNGPL

RAWALPINDI: The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) Rawalpindi has refuted reports of eight-hour gas load shedding in any part of the city, emphasizing its efforts to ensure uninterrupted gas supply during the winter season.

Responding to a report in a local newspaper, the SNGPL spokesperson clarified that despite the increased demand during winter, continuous supply is being provided to domestic consumers.

Muhammad (PBUH) Gallery

Abdul Aleem Khan lauded exhibition of Islamic Civilization

Muhammad Amin

ISLAMABAD: In the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad, there is a unique center based on rare copies of the Holy Quran, collection of Allah, Muhammad Gallery, and pieces of Islamic calligraphy, samples and the history of Islam where religious, social and historical objects have been collected through personal efforts without Government patronage which are of great interest to the new generation.

President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan visited this private museum named "Sobia Mahal" and inspected the collections of Indus Valley, historical artifacts and modern art, there.

He appreciated the efforts of renowned educationist and senior historian Zahid Pervaiz Butt for patronizing this center and said that he got the opportunity to come here and see the combination of both ancient and modern civilizations.

Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan

further said that bringing together such a large number of different objects related to Islamic civilization at one place is an important achievement which will help the new generation to be aware of its ancestors and history and it is no less than a national and religious service.

President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Abdul Aleem Khan inspected the samples of Islamic calligraphy and art placed at "Sobia Mahal" and appreciated their quality and preservation.

He said that more such Islamic Centers should be established which can ignite our mental abilities and religious inclination. Abdul Aleem Khan appreciated the services of renowned historian and educationist Zahid Pervaiz Butt in promoting the "Sobia Mahal" and said that he was pleased to witness here especially Allah, Muhammad Gallery as this is a specially blessed work.

In his talk, Zahid Pervaiz Butt, Executive Director and Patron of this Private Museum "Sobia Mahal", expressed special gratitude for the visit of Federal Minister and President IPP Abdul Aleem Khan.



Auto Show

ISLAMABAD: A woman posing for photograph sitting in a vintage car during Auto Show at Lake View Park in the Federal Capital



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

SSDO to release a comprehensive five-year report

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) is set to release a comprehensive report today (Monday, 30 December, 2024) on cases of child sexual abuse in Pakistan, covering data from 2019 to 2023. The report is based on information gathered from all districts across the country, compiled using official data obtained under Right of Access to Information laws. It provides district-level details of child sexual abuse cases across all provinces and districts of Pakistan.

SSDO's Executive Director, Syed Kausar Abbas emphasized that this report is a significant step toward highlighting the severity of child sexual abuse in Pakistan. He further added that SSDO collected the data using Right of Access to Information laws to help and design more effective strategies for child protection.

AIOU to provide fee concessions to underprivileged children

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: "Allama Iqbal Open University will provide fee concessions to underprivileged, deserving, and needy children for its Spring 2025 semester admissions in programs ranging from matriculation to PhD, starting from January 1. Our mission is to educate every Pakistani, not to make money. Our sole purpose is to enlighten every home with the light of education," expressed the university's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, while sharing details about fee concessions for underprivileged students, the "Community Scheme" scholarships, and the Matric Free Education Plan for the Spring 2025 admissions.

Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated that the "Scholarship for Communities" scheme provides financial assistance to underprivileged groups in society, including disabled individuals, children of martyrs, prisoners, and the transgender community. Under this scheme, as per SOPs, students are granted a fee concession ranging from 50% to 100%.

He further elaborated that under the Matric Free Education Plan, the university offers free matriculation education to children from the former FATA, Balochistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan regions.

It is noteworthy that the university will begin admissions for its Spring 2025 programs, ranging from matriculation to PhD, on January 1. Students can benefit from these financial assistance schemes by contacting their respective regional offices, obtaining the required forms, and applying for financial aid.

Condolences

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Railway Prem Union Central President Sheikh Muhammad Anwar and Chief Organizer Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry visited the residence of former General Manager of Pakistan Railways Aurangzeb Khan and expressed their condolences on the death of his wife. They prayed for the elevation of the deceased's rank and prayed that Allah Almighty grant patience to the bereaved family. They said that the deceased was a woman of very good character, diligent, and observant in fasting and prayer. She was highly respected in the family and spent her entire life in the welfare and well-being of the poor. May Allah Almighty accept her good deeds and grant her a high place in Paradise.

IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter Annual Meetup 2024

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter Annual Meetup 2024 took place on December 26, 2024, at KICS-UET Lahore. Mr. Kashif Bashir, Chair of the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter and Vice Chair of the IEEE Lahore Section, warmly welcomed the distinguished guests and provided a detailed report on the chapter's activities for the year.

Mr. Bashir highlighted the chapter's impressive growth, noting that its membership had increased by 44%, rising from 265 members in 2023 to 382 members in December 2024. He also mentioned that IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter technically sponsored three major international conferences this year: ICIC at UMT Lahore, ETECTE 2024 at UOL, and



ICOSST 2024 at UET Lahore.

In addition to supporting conferences, IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter organized several significant events, including the 2nd Smart City Summit 2024, the AI Workshop in Information and Communication 2024, two IEEE ComSoc Tech Meetups, Information Technology Career Symposium 2024 and the Brainiac Student

Competition. Mr. Bashir also took the opportunity to recognize the achievements of the chapter's outstanding student members, Anees Ur Rehman, Rafay Khokhar, and Abdul Muheet Saqib, who received honorable mentions in this year's Global ComSoc Student Competition.

Dr. Yasir Saleem, Vice Chair of the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter,

Prof. Dr. Majid Hussain, Vice Chair of Technical Events, Dr. Ana Gracia Armada, Vice President of Global Activities for ComSoc, Ms. Alina Munir also shared with the audience that she received an Honorary Mention in the 2021 Global ComSoc Student Competition and is now a faculty member of the CS Department at UET Lahore.

SSP Traffic appreciated the efforts of chairman Clean and Green Islamabad urging all citizens to support the campaign

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: SSP Traffic Police Islamabad, Sarfraz Virk, stated that protecting and maintaining the environment is a collective responsibility. He urged citizens to repair their smoke-emitting vehicles; otherwise, legal action will be taken against them. He expressed these views while addressing participants of a cleanliness awareness walk and waste-picking activity organized in collaboration between the Clean and Green Islamabad Movement and Islamabad Traffic Police, from Ataturk Avenue to Ayub Chowk. The walk was led by Chairman Clean and Green Islamabad Movement, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, and SSP Traffic Sarfraz Virk.

Other participants included students of Air University, civil society members, prominent business community figures such as Asad Aziz, Waheed Cheema, Saif-ur-Rehman, Amir Hamza, Maqsood Tabish, Faseeh-ur-allah Khan, Shehzad Abbasi, and a large number of

individuals from various walks of life.

In his address, Sarfraz Virk emphasized that people walking in parks and on roads should not litter those places, as it contributes to pollution. He urged citizens to act responsibly and, along with adhering to traffic rules, take care of environmental preservation and cleanliness in the city. He appreciated the efforts of chairman Clean and Green Islamabad Movement Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, noting that this awareness walk and waste-picking activity aim to make Islamabad clean, green, and beautiful, urging all citizens to support the campaign.

In his speech, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari expressed gratitude to the Islamabad Traffic Police and SSP Sarfraz Virk for supporting the campaign and spreading the message of cleanliness. He requested that fitness certificates be made mandatory for smoke-emitting vehicles, as their emissions contribute to smog. He stated that the Clean and Green Islamabad Movement is committed to maintaining the city's

cleanliness and protecting the environment. He urged citizens to avoid openly throwing garbage on streets and in parks.

The event aimed to highlight the importance of cleanliness among citizens and raise awareness about reducing environmental pollution. The walk commenced at Kashmir House, where participants carried banners and placards displaying messages on cleanliness and environmental conservation. Awareness pamphlets were distributed among citizens during the walk to Ayub Chowk.

At the end of the walk, a waste-picking activity was held, where participants cleaned up litter from roadsides and parks. Students actively participated in the event, pledging to take responsibility for protecting the environment for future generations. A student remarked, "We must provide a clean and green future for our generations, and this is only possible when we make cleanliness a part of our daily lives."



The event concluded with participants pledging to fulfill their responsibilities in maintaining cleanliness and protecting the environment. The Clean and Green Islamabad Movement's initiative aims to not only raise awareness about the importance of cleanliness but also bring about a positive change through practical actions.

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US Sanctions and Pakistan's Commitment to Its Nuclear and Missile Programs

Driven by the need to protect its national sovereignty, sustain regional deterrence, and assert strategic independence in an unstable geopolitical environment, Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs have come at a substantial cost. These sacrifices reflect Pakistan's unwavering commitment to its defense, security, and strategic autonomy. One of the most significant costs has been economic: the development and maintenance of nuclear and missile infrastructure is extraordinarily expensive. The Pakistani government's focus on these programs has required diverting a considerable portion of the national budget to defense, often at the expense of vital sectors like healthcare, education, and infrastructure development. The Pakistani public has had to make significant sacrifices, underscoring the perceived importance of these programs for the country's survival and defense.

Pakistan's economy has faced challenges such as low growth, high inflation, and widespread poverty. With limited resources, Pakistan had to balance its defense needs with economic development, often prioritizing military spending over social welfare. In the early stages of its nuclear and missile program, Pakistan relied on indigenous methods of development, and at times, covert channels, to acquire the necessary technology. This self-reliance placed a strain on the country's industrial base, directing resources away from civilian projects in favor of military advancements.

The economic burden of maintaining these programs amid sanctions was immense, but Pakistan prioritized its national defense and security over short-term economic benefits or international partnerships. Although Paki-

stan's nuclear program was regarded as a crucial measure for its national security, it came with significant diplomatic consequences. Following its nuclear tests in 1998, Pakistan faced widespread international condemnation and diplomatic isolation. Led by the United States, many countries denounced the tests, viewing them as a breach of international norms and a catalyst for an arms race in South Asia. This development has had a lasting impact on Pakistan's relations with the West, particularly with the United States. While Pakistan remained a key ally in the War on Terror in the 2000s, its nuclear program continued to be a source of tension in its bilateral relations with Western powers. Pakistan has long faced diplomatic pressure to reduce its nuclear capabilities and comply with global non-proliferation norms. However, the country has consistently argued that its nuclear arsenal is vital for ensuring its security, particularly in the face of its larger, nuclear-armed neighbor, India.

Pakistan continues to experience a double standard from the United States, which has not treated India and Pakistan equally. Despite India's involvement in international incidents, such as its controversial actions in countries like the US and Canada, the global community continues to favor India over Pakistan. Recently, the US State Department issued a statement highlighting concerns over the development and proliferation of Pakistan's long-range missile capabilities, leading to sanctions on four Pakistani entities. This follows earlier sanctions imposed in 2023 on Chinese and Belarusian companies for providing components to Pakistan's

ballistic missile program, as well as sanctions in 2021 against Pakistani companies allegedly supporting the country's nuclear and missile development.

In September 2024, the US again singled out Pakistan's missile program, particularly the Shaheen-III (with a range of 2750 km) and Ababeel (with a range of 2200 km) missiles, which are equipped with Multiple Re-entry Vehicle (MRV) capabilities. These missiles are considered among the most advanced in Pakistan's arsenal. Meanwhile, India recently test-fired its own MRV missile, the Agni-V, an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) with a range of 5000-8000 km. While Pakistan's Ababeel has a shorter range compared to India's Agni-V, it is specifically designed for Pakistan's self-defense, primarily to counter India's strategic assets such as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and emerging nuclear submarine bases in the east.

The sanctions and diplomatic pressure from the US are seen by Pakistan as discriminatory and largely ineffective. Pakistan's missile program is independent of US cooperation, and these restrictions are unlikely to hinder its progress. In fact, such actions could push Pakistan toward seeking alternative partnerships, particularly with the Eastern Bloc. The US risks alienating a key regional ally in the fight against terrorism by imposing such sanctions. Pakistan possesses short-range and less advanced missiles compared to those of other superpowers, missile-equipped nations, and India. Its missile system is not intended to pose a threat to any country but is solely designed for the

defense of Pakistan.

It is crucial to emphasize that the National Command Authority (NCA) is the supreme body in Pakistan responsible for decisions related to nuclear and missile policy and programs. The NCA plays a central role in safeguarding Pakistan's national security, overseeing operational, control, and command decisions regarding its nuclear weapons. Established in 2000 by the National Security Council (NSC), the NCA replaced the Air Force Strategic Command, which had been formed in 1983. The NCA is chaired by the Prime Minister of Pakistan and includes key officials such as the Federal Ministers for Defence, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Interior, along with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Chiefs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The NCA operates through two primary committees: the ECC and the Development Control Committee (DCC). The Strategic Plans Division (SPD) is tasked with implementing and managing NCA policies. Any mobilization of nuclear assets requires approval from both the NCA and the NSC, ensuring that no nuclear assets can fall into the hands of any individual or extremist groups. Furthermore, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors regularly visit Pakistan and have affirmed that the country's nuclear assets are secure and reliable, dispelling concerns about their safety.

Ultimately, Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to its peaceful nuclear and missile programs, which are viewed as essential for the country's defense. The entire nation, including all political parties, strongly supports these programs, recognizing them as critical for Pakistan's survival and security in an unstable region.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

ICT Police allocated 329 miln to martyrs' families, distributed plots & welfare support in 2024

The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Logistics Division achieved significant milestones in 2024, ensuring the welfare of officers and their families. Under the leadership of Inspector General of Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the division disbursed Rs 329 million in dues to the families of 501 fallen officers, distributed residential plots to 63 martyr families, and allocated Rs 510 million from the welfare fund

Additionally, under the Prime Minister's Package, 35 next of kin were recruited into the police department, where they are serving in various divisions of the ICT Police, an official told APP on Sunday.

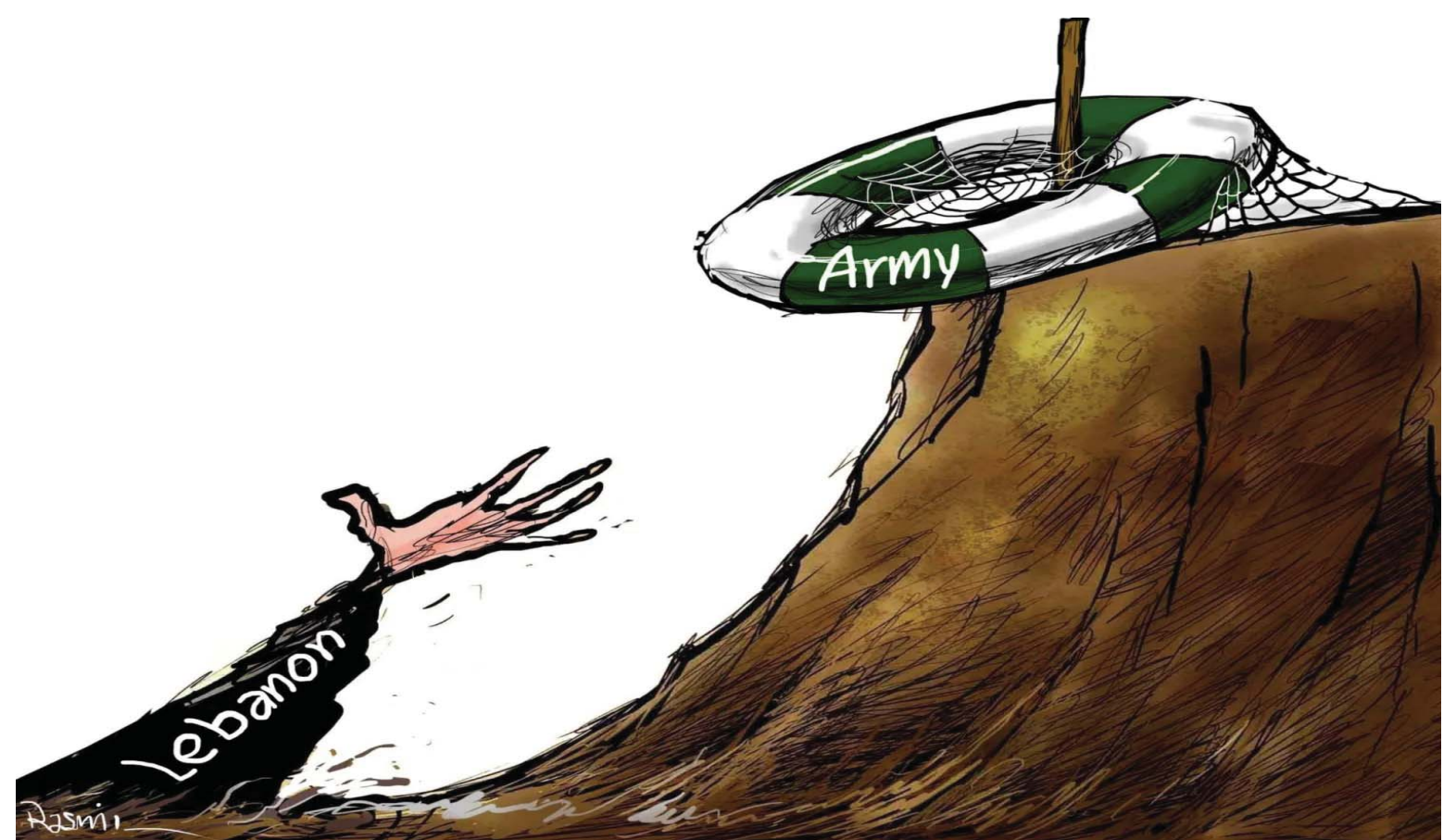
ICT Police allocated 329 miln to martyrs' families, distributed plots & welfare support in 2024

In 2024, several events were organized in honor of Islamabad Police martyrs and their families, including personal meetings where the IG Islamabad listened to the issues faced by the martyrs' families. The foundation stone for "Mubeen Cottages" was also laid, and residential plots were distributed to 63 martyr families. These families will be provided with homes built on these plots.

On August 4, 2024, the "Martyrs Memorial" was inaugurated to honor the heroic sacrifices of these brave officers, ensuring their names remain engraved in golden letters in history. A special event was also held to honor the courage of officers injured in the line of duty, where they were awarded with medals.

The Islamabad Police Logistics Division has disbursed over Rs 510 million for the welfare of martyrs, serving officers, and their families. Among the various welfare measures, Rs 75 lakh were given to 152 children of serving officers as marriage gifts, and Rs 13.6 million were allocated as marriage grants for 15 children of martyrs and deceased officers.

Additionally, Rs 6.3 million were provided to 200 children of serving officers for educational expenses, and more than Rs 2.5 million rupees were given for the educational expenses of 21 children of martyrs and deceased officers.



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

Honoring the Legacy of Pakistan's Great Leader Quaid-i-Azam

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan, left behind a remarkable legacy that continues to shape the nation to this day. As a visionary leader, he played a pivotal role in the creation of Pakistan, securing a separate homeland for Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. His unwavering dedication to the cause of independence and his steadfast leadership inspired millions to strive for a better future.

Quaid-e-Azam, also known as Muhammad Ali Jinnah, is hailed as the founding father of Pakistan. Quaid-e-Azam's vision for Pakistan was rooted in the idea of a homeland where Muslims could practice their faith freely and live in harmony. His leadership during the unrestrained period leading up to the partition of India in 1947 was characterized by his steadfast resolve and diplomatic insight. Through negotiations with the British colonial rulers and the Indian National Congress, Quaid-e-Azam navigated complex political waters to secure a separate nation for the Muslims of the region.

The values that Jinnah embodied, such as honesty, integrity, and simplicity, continue to be celebrated and emulated by the Pakistani people. His simplicity and humility, despite his immense power and influence, are a testament to his strong moral character and his commitment to serving the people. The Quaid's emphasis on education, hard work, and self-reliance has instilled a strong work ethic in the Pakistani people, driving them to strive for excellence and innovation in various fields. His commitment to the welfare of the common man, particularly the poor and the marginalized, has inspired a culture of social responsibility and philanthropy in Pakistan.

Jinnah's legacy has played a significant role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy and international

relations. His commitment to non-alignment and neutrality during the Cold War era earned Pakistan a reputation as a champion of independence and sovereignty. The Quaid's vision of a united and strong Muslim world, which he articulated through his leadership of the Muslim League, continues to inspire Pakistan's engagement with the global Muslim community. His emphasis on regional cooperation and diplomacy has facilitated Pakistan's participation in regional organizations, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and has helped to promote peace and stability in the region.

One of the key aspects of Quaid-e-Azam's legacy is his unwavering commitment to upholding democratic values and principles. He believed in a Pakistan where every citizen, regardless of their background, would have equal rights and opportunities. Quaid-e-Azam's dedication to inclusivity and tolerance serves as a guiding light for modern-day Pakistan, reminding its people of the importance of respecting diversity and fostering a culture of acceptance. Quaid-e-Azam was a staunch advocate for social justice and economic empowerment. He envisioned a Pakistan where every citizen would have access to basic necessities, freedom of speech and employment opportunities. His emphasis on social welfare programs and initiatives aimed at uplifting the marginalized segments of society. Muhammad Ali Jinnah highlights his commitments to creating a more equitable and prosperous nation.

Quaid-e-Azam's legacy is characterized by his unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy, equality, and justice. He believed in the power of unity and diversity, advocating for the rights of all citizens regardless of their religion, caste, or creed. His vision for Pakistan was one of a modern, progressive nation, where all individuals could live in peace and harmony.

In today's fast-paced world, where the challenges facing Pakistan are multifaceted and complex, honoring the legacy of Quaid-e-Azam becomes

even more crucial. Reflecting on his teachings and principles, Pakistanis can draw inspiration and guidance on how to address contemporary issues such as poverty, corruption, and political instability. Quaid-e-Azam's legacy is a reminder of the importance of integrity, leadership, and nation-building, values that are essential for the progress and development of Pakistan.

His commitment to education led to the establishment of numerous educational institutions across the country, providing opportunities for young Pakistanis to excel and contribute to the nation's development. The legacy of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah is one of courage, integrity, and vision. His leadership continues to inspire generations of Pakistanis to work towards a brighter future for their country. As we reflect on his remarkable achievements, we are reminded of the importance of upholding the values of democracy, equality, and education that he held. Quaid-e-Azam's legacy will forever be cherished and honored as a beacon of hope for the nation.

Quaid-e-Azam's legacy continues to resonate deeply with the people of Pakistan. His leadership, vision, and values have left an indelible mark on the nation's history and continue to inspire generations of Pakistanis. Honoring the legacy of Quaid-e-Azam, Pakistan not only pays tribute to its founding father but also reaffirms its commitment to the ideals of unity, faith, and discipline. Quaid-e-Azam's enduring legacy serves as a beacon of hope and guidance for Pakistan, guiding its people towards a brighter and more prosperous future. As Pakistan continues to navigate the challenges of the 21st century, the Quaid's legacy serves as a guiding light, reminding the nation of its founding principles and values. It is up to the current and future generations of Pakistanis to continue to draw inspiration from Jinnah's legacy, working towards a brighter future for themselves and their country.

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Karachi thirsts by the sea

Pakistan's largest city and economic hub has long been suffering from acute water shortages, despite being located on the seashore. The city's population has crossed 20 million and water demand far exceeds supply. The Pakistan People's Party, which has ruled Sindh for more than a decade, has failed to find a lasting solution to the crisis. On the other hand, the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) has repeatedly raised the issue with the central government. An effective solution to Karachi's water problem could be to set up a large-scale desalination plant to purify seawater and make it drinkable.

Karachi requires about 1.1 billion gallons of water per day, but less than half of that is currently being supplied to the city. The main factors behind the water shortage include poor management, old and dilapidated infrastructure, illegal connections, and reliance on inadequate sources such as the Indus River and the Hub Dam. These conditions have put citizens in dire straits, who either have to buy expensive tanker water or stand in long queues at community points.

Desalination, the process of removing salt and other contaminants from seawater to make it drinkable, is being used successfully in many arid and water-scarce countries of the world. Countries like Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, and Australia have largely solved their water problems through this technology. In particular, the "Sorek Desalination Plant" in Israel meets 20

percent of the country's water needs, while Dubai relies on desalination for 98 percent of its drinking water needs.

Establishing a modern desalination plant in Karachi could not only provide a permanent solution to the water shortage but also boost the city's economic activities. The cost of a project would be around \$1.5 to \$2 billion, which could provide 500 million gallons of water per day. The plant could be based on reverse osmosis (RO) technology, which is effective and relatively inexpensive in removing salt and pollutants.

The project could be completed through federal and provincial government funds, public-private partnerships, and financial assistance from international institutions such as the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank. The project could be completed efficiently by hiring international companies.

Desalination of seawater would enable a consistent and reliable supply of water to the citizens of Karachi. In addition, it would lead to industrial development, improved public health, and increased overall productivity. It is essential to adopt modern techniques to minimize the environmental impact of the project, such as properly managing brine discharge and using renewable energy.

The establishment of a desalination plant is the need of the hour for the survival and development of Karachi. The government should prioritize this project to provide a lasting solution to the water crisis and set an example for other water-scarce areas of Pakistan.



Analysis

Ch. Altaf Shahid Sidhu

Azerbaijan's president says crashed plane was shot at from Russia

Reuters

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said on Sunday that a passenger plane that crashed last week, killing 38 people, had been damaged by shooting from the ground in Russia, and he said some in Russia had lied about the cause of the disaster.

President Vladimir Putin on Saturday apologised to Aliyev for Wednesday's "tragic incident" in Russian airspace involving the plane after Russian air defences engaged Ukrainian attack drones. A Kremlin statement did not say Russia had shot down the plane, only noting a criminal case had been opened.

"Our plane was shot down by accident," Aliyev told state television on Sunday, adding that the plane had come under some sort of electronic jamming and had then been shot at while it was approaching the southern Russian city of Grozny.

"Unfortunately, in the first three days we heard only absurd versions from Russia," Aliyev said, citing statements in Russia that attributed the crash to birds or the explosion of some sort of gas cylinder.



"We witnessed clear attempts to cover up the matter," said the Azerbaijani leader, who has close ties to Russia and was educated at one of Moscow's top universities.

Aliyev said he wanted Russia to accept it was guilty of downing the plane and punish those responsible for fatally damaging the aircraft.

Azerbaijan Airlines Flight J2-8243 crashed on Wednesday in a ball of

fire near the city of Aktau in Kazakhstan after diverting from southern Russia where Ukrainian drones were attacking several cities.

The extremely rare publicised apology from Putin on Saturday is the closest Moscow has come to accepting some blame for the disaster.

Four sources with knowledge of the preliminary findings of Azerbaijan's investigation into the disaster told

Reuters on Thursday that Russian air defences had mistakenly shot it down.

BURIALS
Earlier on Sunday, Azerbaijan paid tribute to the pilots and passengers of the plane.

Captain Igor Kshnyakin and co-pilot Alexander Kalyaninov, both ethnic Russians with Azerbaijan citizenship, and Hokuma Aliyeva, a flight attendant, were given full honours at a ceremony at the Alley of Honour in central Baku attended by Aliyev and his wife, Mehriban.

The pilots have been lauded in Azerbaijan for landing in a way which allowed 29 people to survive but led to their own deaths.

The Embraer (EMBR3, SA), opens new tab passenger jet had flown from Azerbaijan's capital Baku to Grozny, in Russia's southern Chechnya region, before veering off hundreds of miles across the Caspian Sea.

Azerbaijan's presidential office said that after the yet-to-be explained incident over Russian airspace, the pilots battled to control the plane – desperately trying to find a landing spot.

With holes in the fuselage, some crew injured, passengers praying



for their lives in a de-pressurised cabin and the plane spiralling out of control, the pilots flew across the Caspian Sea towards their death in a crash landing.

"Only through the courage and professionalism of the pilots was an emergency landing successfully carried out," Azerbaijan's presidential office said.

The Alley of Honour is Azerbaijan's most sacred modern burial ground – where prominent politicians, poets and scientists are laid to

rest, including Heydar Aliyev, the late father of the current president.

Captain Kshnyakin's daughter, Anastasia Kshnyakina, said her father was a dedicated pilot who took his responsibilities to his passengers extremely seriously.

"My father always said: when I take off, I am responsible not only for my life, but also for the lives of all passengers and crew members," Kshnyakina said.

"With his last flight, he proved what a true hero should be."

Mian Akram Farid congratulates Bangladeshi High Commissioner, highlights growing trade and diplomatic ties

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Mian Akram Farid, Central Chairman, EFP, former President ICCI, a distinguished industrialist, extended his warm congratulations to the newly appointed High Commissioner of Bangladesh, Mr. Md. Iqbal Hussain, during a special meeting.

On this occasion, he expressed his honor to be the first in Pakistan to congratulate the Bangladeshi High Commissioner on assuming this important role. He highlighted that the establishment of the current government in Bangladesh has infused new warmth into the bilateral relations between the two countries, fostering a stronger sense of brotherhood among the people of both nations.

High-level diplomatic engagement between Pakistan and Bangladesh commenced in September during the United Nations General Assembly when Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the Chief Advisor of the interim government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, met with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. This



momentum continued during the recent D-8 Summit in Cairo, where both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing cooperation at all levels. As a result of these efforts, for the first time in 54 years, a cargo ship carrying 2300 TEUs recently arrived at the Chittagong port from Karachi, and Bangladesh has purchased 25,000 tons of sugar from Pakistan, which will

soon be delivered. Furthermore, there has been a significant acceleration in other trade and business agreements.

Farid assured the Bangladeshi High Commission of the full support of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), and the entire trade and business community. He

stated that the President of FPCCI, Atif Ikram, and the President of ICCI, Nasir Qureshi, are eager to explore new trade opportunities with Bangladesh.

They are not only keen to visit Bangladesh but also welcome Bangladeshi trade and business delegations to Pakistan. In this regard, the FPCCI has extended a special invitation to the Mr. Jashim Uddin, current President of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce, who is from Bangladesh, to participate in a significant meeting with SAARC member countries.

In response, the High Commissioner of Bangladesh, Mr. Md. Iqbal Hussain, thanked Mian Akram Farid and assured the Pakistani government and business community, on behalf of the Bangladeshi government and the High Commission, that the new government is committed to promoting bilateral trade and exploring new business opportunities with Pakistan. He further stated that he would coordinate with the FPCCI and ICCI to organize special meetings for Bangladeshi business entities.

DFP bereaved over death of veteran scholar professor Makki

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINGAR: Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) has expressed its profound grief and sorrow over the sad demise of renowned scholar Hafiz Abdul Rehman Makki.

In a statement issued here today, the DFP spokesman advocate Arshad Iqbal said that the deceased leader was a strong and powerful voice of the oppressed Kashmiris in Pakistan.

He said that Professor Makki was a strong advocate of Kashmiris' right to self determination.

Meanwhile, in a separate statement the DFP acting chairman extended his



heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Referring to the deceased scholar's significant contribution towards the Kashmiris' ongoing freedom movement, Mr. Saghar said that Professor Makki would always be remembered in the annals of history for his selfless services to the Kashmir cause.

Saghar also paid great tributes to the deceased religious scholar and termed his death as a huge loss for the movement.

While extending his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, the DFP leader prayed to Allah, the almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace.

Peoples paid rich tribute to Asma Butt's services at RPC on her birthday

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: The different schools of thought of the twin cities paid tribute to the 28 years of services of the renowned writer, director, and social activist Ms. Asma Butt, prayers were offered for her long life, and a cake was cut. Yesterday, artists, journalists, and people from different schools of thought paid rich tribute to Asma Butt's services at the Rawalpindi Press Club on her birthday. Among them were Pakistan Union of Journalists President Afzal Butt, Khalid Chaudhry, Sultan Shah, Nair Ali, Sajid Sheikh, Amjad, Anjum Habibi, Tahir Siddiqui, Asma Malik, Salman Sunni,

Shehzadi, Shabbir Shah, Anjum Abbasi, Saber Sunni, Arshad Khan, Sapna Shah, Afandi Shah, Raheel, Anjum Sajjad Gohar from PNCA, Hasnain Bukhari, and a large number of people from social circles. The participants said that Asma Butt is a combination of sociability, humility, and public service. This ceremony is insufficient to praise her, because the 28-year-long list of her artistic and public services cannot be described in a few sentences. They said that in every hour of difficulty, Asma Butt kept art alive. She is also very popular among the journalist community and social circles like artists. On this occasion, the participants prayed for

Asma Butt's long life and said that Asma Butt is like a member of our family. Her services will always be remembered. In the Twin Cities as well as in the friend country of China, Asma Butt has made her culture and traditions known in a positive way through her art. The participants said that we want her to continue her services in the same way. We are with her at every step. On this occasion, Asma Butt thanked everyone from the bottom of her heart. And said that I am extremely grateful to all of you, who honored me like a member of your family, if you are with me, I would like to spend my entire life in the service of art, artists and for the people.



Awami Tehreek Announces Major Nationwide Conference in Islamabad on January 18, 2025

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: In a bold move to safeguard the interests of Sindh and its environment, Awami Tehreek, led by central president Advocate Wasand Thari, has announced a high-stakes nationwide conference in Islamabad on January 18, 2025. The gathering will unite voices against the construction of six contentious canals on the Indus River, known locally as the "dacoit" canals, the controversial amendments to the IRSA Act, and the land grabbing under corporate farming in Pakistan.

Awami Tehreek's central council, convened at D-10 Palijo House, Qasimabad, Hyderabad, emphasized the urgent need to address the environmental, social, and economic risks posed by these proposed projects. These developments, which threaten the fragile ecological balance of the Indus River system and the livelihoods of local communities, have raised serious concerns among experts.

The conference will feature prominent scholars, environmentalists, and technocrats who will present critical insights into the potential ramifications of these policies. Their collective aim is to inspire widespread awareness and galvanize public support to prevent what they see as dangerous shifts in the management of Pakistan's natural resources.

This event is set to become a crucial platform for opposition to policies that could irreversibly damage the country's environment, economy, and the well-being of millions of people dependent on the Indus River.

China's fastest CR450 high-speed train prototype unveiled in Beijing

BEIJING: A prototype of the CR450 EMU (electric multiple units) high-speed train, China's most recently designed high-speed bullet train model, debuted in Beijing on Sunday.

When operational, it is expected to reach a speed of 400 kilometers per hour, making it the fastest high-speed train in the world, according to the country's railway operator.

The train will further shorten travel time and improve connectivity, making travel more convenient and efficient for the country's vast passengers, China State Railway Group Co (China Railway) told the Global Times on Sunday.

The CR450 prototype reached a test speed of 450 kilometers per hour, with key performance indicators operational speed, energy consumption, interior noise, and braking distance — setting a new international benchmark, the company said.

The CR450 will be significantly faster than the currently operating CR400 Fuxing high-speed trains, which operate at a maximum speed of 350 kilometers per hour.

CR450 high-speed train will lower operational resistance by 22 percent and reduce weight by 10 percent compared to CR400 bullet train, the company told the Global Times.

The breakthroughs of the CR450 project will help boost China's railway technological innovation and independence, further strengthening the country's global leadership in high-speed rail technology, according to China Railway.

China has built the world's longest and most advanced high-speed rail network and is ready to enhance passenger travel with faster, more comfortable, and efficient rail services.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
111,351.17	110,423.32	
Day's High	Day's Low	
112,043.77	110,246.93	
Index Value	Change	
21,879,585,057	+927.85	
Percentage	Time	
+0.84%	27 Dec, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
8,149.78	+12.79	
Percentage	Time	
+0.16%	27 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
42,929.21	-396.59	
Percentage	Time	
-0.92%	27 Dec, 11:48 am GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
40,281.16	+713.10	
Percentage	Time	
+1.80%	27 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	172.75	175.00
Bahrain Dinar	735.65	743.65
Canadian Dollar	193.72	196.12
China Yuan	37.99	38.39
Danish Krone	39.15	39.55
Euro	287.40	290.15
Hong Kong Dollar	35.44	35.79
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.86	1.92
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.56	906.06
Malaysian Ringgit	61.59	62.19
New Zealand \$	155.37	157.37
Norwegians Krone	24.41	24.71
Omani Riyal	720.00	728.50
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	308.96	311.76
Thai Bhat	8	8.15
U.A.E Dirham	75.40	76.05
UK Pound Sterling	348.50	352
US Dollar	278.00	279.50

Afghanistan ensure its territory is not exploited by hostile elements seeking to Pakistan: Iftikhar Malik

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber Commerce of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday said Afghanistan, as a sovereign state must take immediate result oriented epoch making measures to ensure its territory is not exploited by hostile elements seeking to destabilize Pakistan. and mutual cooperation can help stamp out terrorism, cross-border insurgencies, and organized crime, a major obstacles to durable peace.

In a press statement in the wake of recent waves of terrorism in KPK and Balochistan he said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir on several occasions categorically stated that Afghan soil should never be used against Pakistan under any circumstances, and ensuring peace and mutual respect between two neighboring Muslim countries is vital for regional stability, security, and economic prosperity.

He said Afghan soil must remain free from



any activities that harm Pakistan's peace and security. Only through mutual respect, cooperation, and vigilance can the both countries ensure lasting peace and prosperity for their people and contribute positively to regional development. He said as Muslim countries, both states have a shared responsibility to foster harmony and reject any external attempts to sow discord. The global community also has a role in supporting this collaboration by respecting the sovereignty of both nations and refraining from interference.

Iftikhar Malik a veteran trade said durable peace will unlock immense opportunities for economic growth as the region holds tremendous potential for trade, energy projects, and connectivity initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline. He said such mega ventures require stability and cooperation, making it imperative for both states to prioritize trust and dialogue bringing an end to perpetual menace of terrorism.

Appreciation

KARACHI: Mashood Ali Khan Director, Mehran Commercial Enterprises, Former chairman PAAPAM receiving "Most Innovative Auto Parts Manufacturer" award from Mr. Teguh Wiweco, Acting Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia at Marriott Hotel Karachi.



Photo: Spokesmen

Pakistani Food Exporters Return from Kuala Lumpur



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Pakistani food exporters delegation returned today after concluding successful month long visit to Kuala Lumpur with an overwhelmingly tremendous response from Malaysian buyers.

Leader of the delegation Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Saif Ur Rehman told the media here Sunday that Malaysian counterparts expressed strong interest in Pakistani products due to their exceptional quality, competitive pricing, and adherence to international standards. The delegation's efforts have

not only strengthened trade ties between Pakistan and Malaysia but also paved the way for further collaboration in the food sector especially snacks including different varieties of Nimko. The visit is expected to significantly boost Pakistan's food exports to Malaysia, contributing to the country's economic growth and promoting its global reputation as a reliable supplier of premium food products, he added. He said visit was aimed to showcase Pakistan's diverse range of high-quality food products and processed foods and the delegation engaged in productive meetings and business-to-business interactions,

BMP wants smooth gas supply to local, export industry throughout winter



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) on Sunday urged the government to ensure smooth gas supply to the local as well as the export industry so that local production and the exports could not be suffered, which have just started to show a positive trend after a long time.

Expressing serious concerns over the threats of gas supply termination and notices of additional security payment by the SNGPL the FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar argued that at a time when the exports data have showed some growth the government agencies, instead of taking business-friendly measures, are creating hurdles for the industry.

He quoted the latest exports data and said the exports of readymade garments rose 23.17pc by value in the first quarter and 16.16pc by quantity, while knitwear rose 14.13pc by value and 2.17pc by quantity while bedwear posted a growth of 13.31pc in value and a growth of 14.55pc in quantity, which is an encouraging sign.

The government should extend its full support to continue this positive trend of exports growth through uninterrupted gas supply to the captive power plants at affordable and competitive rates.

Mian Anjum Nisar called for swift implementation of a system based on modern technology for the selection and transmission of low-cost electricity. He wanted to complete all measures for the reform of the power sector within the specified timeline.

PFC calls for urgent measures to save Murree forests from timber mafia and wildfire

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) has called for urgent cohesive measures to protect the Murree forests from the devastating impacts of the timber mafia and recurring wildfires.

Chairing board of directors meeting here today PFC CEO Mian Kashif Ashfaq emphasized that the forests in Murree are a critical natural asset, not only for their ecological value but also for their role in mitigating climate change and supporting the local economy. The unchecked activities of the timber mafia, coupled with inadequate enforcement of forestry laws, have led



to widespread deforestation in the region. Additionally, recurring wildfires—often attributed to human negligence—pose a severe threat to biodiversity and the livelihoods of communities reliant on these forests.

The PFC highlighted the importance

of preserving Murree's forests, which are vital for maintaining a balanced ecosystem, preventing soil erosion, and ensuring sustainable water resources. The council urged the government to strengthen monitoring mechanisms, enforce stricter penalties for illegal logging, and invest in modern firefighting equipment to combat wildfires effectively.

He called for community involvement in conservation efforts and the implementation of public awareness campaigns to promote sustainable forest management. Protecting Murree's forests is essential to safeguard Pakistan's natural heritage and secure a sustainable future, he concluded.

PIAF for robust strategies as country struggling for high growth

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has called upon the government to announce robust economic strategies, as the country has stuck in low economic growth situation, where double-digit policy rate for the last few years has diminished capacity to increase domestic production.

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol in a joint statement along with senior vice chairman Nasrullah Mughal and vice chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary said that the government will have its work sharply cut out as far as the economic challenges are concerned. Coming at the back of fast-unfolding climate change crisis that pushed millions into poverty with little fiscal capacity of government to provide anywhere near close to what was needed in stimulus spending. Then there is acute debt distress, and inflation at the back of global aggregate supply shock, and accentuated by a world of rising conflicts,



mainly in Ukraine, and the Middle East. The PIAF leaders emphasized that such transparency from the government is

crucial, as the country has had trouble raising enough money to cover its expenses.

Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary said that even though Pakistan's economic crisis is a recurring factor in the country's political unrest, it has a history of ignoring the nation's true issues, which include poor governance, a broken judicial system, outdated laws, complicated tax system, lack of transparency, duplication in the government system, ineffective bureaucracy, improper use of our human, natural and water resources, lack of efficient local government, inadequate data for country's planning, and the consistent flaws in policies in execution by the government departments.

Nasrullah Mughal said that Pakistan's GDP growth rate has always remained below its potential despite efforts to boost economic growth. He said that the development of important sectors and investment prospects was hampered by inadequate revenue collection, structural problems, and governance issues.

Federal Tax Laws Manual a great help for taxpayers



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Urdu translation of Federal Tax Laws Manual, compiled by the Federal Tax Ombudsman, Dr Asif Mahmood Jah serves as a comprehensive source of information to help taxpayers understand their rights and obligations easily available under federal tax laws of customs, income and general sales tax etc.

Addressing here Sunday an awareness session with business community, Coordinator to FTO Muhammad Farhan Munir said it is specifically designed to address common challenges faced by taxpayers and offers guidance on the remedies available for resolving grievances.

This manual provides clear and concise explanations of the tax filing process, assessment procedures, and compliance requirements. It also highlights the avenues for appealing incorrect tax assessments, addressing excessive deductions, and resolving

delays in tax refunds. By simplifying complex legal terms, the manual ensures that taxpayers from all walks of life can easily comprehend and navigate the system, he added.

Muhammad Farhan Munir further highlighting the vital significance said one of the key features of this initiative is the Urdu translation of the manual, making it accessible to a broader audience in Pakistan. The translation ensures that language barriers do not prevent individuals from understanding their rights or seeking redressal. FTO Legal Adviser Almas Ali Jovinda contributed a lot in compiling federal tax law manuals. The manual emphasizes the role of the Federal Tax Ombudsman in resolving disputes, ensuring accountability, and fostering trust between taxpayers and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). With this manual, taxpayers are empowered to address their concerns efficiently, ensuring a fair and transparent tax system for all.

South Africa beat Pakistan to win first Test thriller

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kagiso Rabada turned batting hero as he and Marco Jansen took South Africa to a dramatic two-wicket win over Pakistan on the fourth day of the first Test at SuperSport Park on Sunday.

Needing 148 to win, South Africa crashed to 99 for eight against superb bowling by Mohammad Abbas.

The 34-year-old Abbas took a career-best six for 54.

But Rabada, so often a match-winner as a bowler, went on the attack as a batsman, hitting an unbeaten 31 off 26 balls, while Jansen provided solid support in making 16 not out.

Abbas bowled unchanged for 19.3 overs – four of them on Saturday when he took his first two wickets – in a spell of unrelenting accuracy on a pitch which gave seam bowlers help throughout the match.

It was a remarkable comeback for Abbas, whose previous Test appearance was against the West Indies in Kingston in August 2021.

But it was not quite enough for Pakistan, seeking their first win in South Africa in 18 years.

The result ensured qualification for South Africa in the final of the World Test championship final in England next year.

Aiden Markram and Temba Bavuma batted solidly at the start of the day after resuming on 27 for three.



Markram and Bavuma put on 43 for the fourth wicket, with Bavuma surviving on 14 – and getting six runs – when he hooked Abbas to fine leg, where Naseem Shah stepped over the boundary in catching the ball.

Markram looked secure but was bowled by Abbas for 37 by a virtually unplayable ball which kept low and seamed back off the pitch.

Bavuma and David Bedingham added another 34 runs until Bavuma uncharacteristically charged down the pitch at Abbas and was given out caught behind for 40.

He walked off immediately but Ultra Edge technology showed the only 'spike' was when the ball brushed his trouser pocket.

It was the first of four wickets which

fell for three runs in 12 balls.

Naseem Shah bowled Kyle Verreynne and Abbas had Bedingham and Corbin Bosch caught behind off successive deliveries.

Rabada and Jansen saw South Africa through to lunch at 116 for eight – then polished off the match in just 5.3 overs after the interval, with each stroke cheered by the home spectators.

National Blind Games end as athletes showcase potential across various disciplines

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd edition of the National Blind Games 2024 concluded on Sunday at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad with visually impaired athletes exhibiting extraordinary athleticism and unwavering spirit.

The Games were organized by the Pakistan Blind Sports Federation (PBSF) in collaboration with the BINA Education Foundation and DHA Rawalpindi.

The four-day event brought together 105 male and female visually impaired athletes from across Pakistan, showcasing their resilience, talent and competitive spirit.

Athletes from six regions—Punjab, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad competed in six categories: Blind Football, Blind Chess, Blind Judo, Blind Baseball, Blind Archery, and Blind Athletics.

In Blind Baseball, Gilgit-Balistan emerged victorious, defeating Azad Jammu & Kashmir in the final.

National Blind Games end as athletes showcase potential across various disciplines

In Blind Judo, Shumaila from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa secured the gold medal, Saba from Azad Jammu & Kashmir claimed silver and Zumra Rafeeq from Islamabad won the bronze.

Rashid Nisar from Punjab emerged as the champion in Braille Chess, while Amir Ijaz from Punjab secured silver and Aneela Shahzadi from Punjab won bronze.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa dominated the men's blind football category, while Punjab emerged triumphant in the women's division.

In Blind Archery, Waseem Khan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa claimed gold, Usama Hashmi from Azad Jammu & Kashmir secured silver and Usama Khan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa won bronze in the men's category.

National Blind Games end as athletes showcase potential across various disciplines



In the women's category, Wajjha from Islamabad secured gold, Saba from Azad Jammu & Kashmir won silver, and Zainab from Sindh won bronze.

In Athletics, athletes across different categories showcased their speed and agility with notable performances from Adnan, Manan, Qandeel and Kiran.

In Men's B1 100 Meters, Adnan won gold, while Mohsin claimed silver and Mubashir earned bronze.

In Men's B2 200 Metres, Manan won Gold, Waseem silver and Usman bronze.

In women's B1 100 Metres, Qandeel claimed gold, Shumaila silver and Fatima bronze.

In Women's B2 100 Metres,

Kiran won gold, Hira silver and Nimra bronze.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Salman Elahi, President of the BINA Welfare Association expressed pride in the athletes' performances. "These athletes are an inspiration for us all. Their determination to excel in sports despite their challenges reflects the true

spirit of resilience and hope," he remarked.

National Blind Games end as athletes showcase potential across various disciplines

The PBSF President Muhammad Waqas lauded the support of the sponsors and organizers in making the event a grand success. "The success of these games underscores the importance of continued support for adaptive sports. We aim to further expand the scope of these games to international competitions," he said.

Blind archer Waseem Khan said, "These games allow us to prove that disability is not inability. Competing with my peers motivates me to push my boundaries."

Islamabad's Wajjha, who secured gold shared her excitement about representing her region. "Events like these not only help us showcase our talents but also foster unity among differently-abled individuals across the country," he said.

The event concluded with a vibrant award distribution ceremony, recognizing the athletes' hard work and dedication.

Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Ties

Pakistan CC, Air Port Gymkhana, Mujahid Gymkhana, Steel Town Gymkhana register wins in

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds. The Highlights of the days play was deadly bowling by right arm leg spinner Azam Abbasi 5/23 and Left arm spinner Aarish Ali Khan 4/27.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Master Oil Lubricant.

In the first Match Star Studded Pakistan Cricket Club lead by Former Pakistan Captain Sarfaraz Ahmed beat Punjab Cricket Club by 10 Wickets at KCCA Stadium.

Punjab CC 80 all out in 23 overs. M. Aqib 22. Aarish Ali Khan (sla) 4/27. Waleed Azem (lb) 3/11. Muhammad Omar 2/11.

Pakistan CC 81/0 in 8.3 overs. K. M. Nafay 51 5x4 2x6 not out, Former Captain Pakistan Cricket Team Sarfaraz Ahmed 28 not out.

In the 2nd Match Air Port Gymkhana beat Hyderi Gymkhana by 9 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Hyderi Gymkhana 128 all out in 26.5 overs. Waqar Iqbal 39, Sikandar Muneer 33, Ramiz ul Haq 26. Azam Abbasi (rlb) 5/23, Ahmed Farooq (sla) 4/31.

Airport Gymkhana 133/1 in 13.4 overs. Umair Shaikh 75 10x4 2x6 not out, Haider Ali 48 not out.

In the 3rd Match Mujahid Gymkhana beat Muhammad Hussain Colts by 4 Wickets at Student Ground. Muhammad Hussain Colts 190 in 32.1 overs. Noor ul Nabi 49 4x4, M. Farman 37, Murrasaleen 32. Wali Khan 3/29, Muneer ur Rehman 3/46, Aadil Ashfaq 2/28.

Mujahid Gymkhana 193/6 in 21.3 overs. Yousuf Hayat 64 7x4, Wali Khan 20. Noor ul Nabi 3/27, Ijaz Ahmed 2/30.

In the Fourth Match Steel Town Gymkhana beat Qureshi Dolphon CC by 84 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Steel Town Gymkhana 269/6 in 40 overs. Sajjad Qamar 55 7x4 1x6, M. Arsalan 36, Nemoon Hussain 29, Akhtar Ali 28, Naveed Anjum 25. Taimoor Rehman 2/22, Faizan Ali Khan 2/55.

Qureshi Dolphon CC 185 all out in 33.1 overs. Irfan Noor 84 14x4 1x6, Taimoor Rehman 22. Sajjad Qamar (sla) 4/38, M. Abban 3/32, Abdul Haseeb 3/35.

National Climbing championship Islamabad 2024-25



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: National sports climbing championship 2024-25 kpk Climbing team show a best performance in different categories said by secretary general Najeeb Khattak...

Waleed Mehmood won Gold medal in Boulder rising star categories while Shahzad Ahmad won bronze medal.

In lead categories M. Salman Khan won silver medal while sher Ayaz won bronze medal...

This is the best ever performance giving by kpk alpine team in national championship.

Mr Najeeb said I have meeting with DG KPK sports directorate regarding climbing sports in KPK inshallah soon we will arrange a national level mega event in Peshawar

Inter-Club National Hockey Championship from Jan 1

BAHAWALPUR: The Inter-Club National Hockey Championship will start at Dring Stadium Bahawalpur from January 1, 2025.

District Hockey Association Bahawalpur Secretary Taimur Sameen Khan told the media here that the championship would continue till January 4, 2025. "Hockey teams from different parts of the country will be participating in the championship," he added.

Khan said Olympians Rashid Mahmood, Umar Bhutta, Mirza Mansoor, Rana Muhammad Arshad and he himself had been selected as members of the tournament committee. He added that the tournament committee had been assigned task to make arrangements for holding the Inter-Club National Hockey Championship.

He said that Olympian Rana Mojahid Ali, President Punjab Hockey Association, Olympian Asif Bajwa, Secretary Punjab Hockey Association, and International hockey player Mian Zahid Iqbal had been assigned the task to monitor and supervise the championship in Bahawalpur.

Australia tailenders take lead to 333 after Jasprit Bumrah's fiery spell

MELBOURNE: India seamer Jasprit Bumrah unleashed more destructive bowling but Australia stubbornly battled back to reach 228-9 on Sunday, leading by 333 runs in an absorbing fourth Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Bumrah scythed through the middle order on day four in Melbourne to record figures of 4-56 off 24 overs and hand India an outside chance of victory in a match the home side have mostly dominated.

However, India's hopes were diminished by a stubborn, unbeaten final-wicket stand of 55 from 17.5 overs.

Nathan Lyon was at the crease on 41 while number 11 Scott Boland had seen off 65 balls to be 10 not out at the close.

Up by 105 runs on the first innings, Australia were rocked by losing four wickets for 11 midway through the second session to slump to 91-6.

Marnus Labuschagne and Pat Cummins responded with a vital partnership of 57, taking the steam out of Bumrah's assault.

A charmed Labuschagne scored 70, to back up his first-innings 72, while Cummins produced a captain's knock of 41 – giving him a career-high combined 90 runs for the Test.

179 dead in South Korea's worst plane crash

Continued from Page 1

The accident took place in a matter of minutes as Jeju Air Flight 2216 tried to land — with the control tower issuing a warning of a bird strike, and the pilot soon after calling "mayday".

"It took approximately three minutes from the control tower's mention of a bird strike warning to the aircraft's attempt to land on the runway again," an official said.

Video shows the plane coming off the tarmac and hitting a wall, but officials dismissed speculation that the length of the runway was a factor in the crash.

Lee Jeong-hyun, chief of Muan fire

station, said the cause was "presumed to be a bird strike" but that the exact details would be announced after a full investigation.

Low-cost carrier Jeju Air said it "sincerely" apologised — with top officials shown bowing deeply at a press conference in Seoul — and vowed to do all it could to help.

Boeing said in a statement that it was in touch with Jeju Air and stood "ready to support them".

Engulfed in flames

South Korea's acting President Choi Sang-mok, who only took office Friday, convened an emergency cabinet meeting

and then visited the crash site at Muan. "The entire government is working closely together to manage the aftermath of the accident... making every effort to ensure thorough support for the bereaved families," he said.

The country declared a seven day national mourning period effective from Sunday, with memorial altars to be set up nationwide.

It is the first fatal accident in the history of Jeju Air, one of South Korea's largest low-cost carriers, which was set up in 2005.

On August 12, 2007, a Bombardier Q400 operated by Jeju Air carrying 74

passengers came off the runway due to strong winds at the southern Busan-Gimhae airport, resulting in a dozen injuries.

South Korea's aviation industry has a solid track record for safety, experts say. A number of fatal aviation accidents have occurred globally due to bird strikes, which can cause a loss of power if the animals are sucked into the air intakes.

In 2009, a US Airways Airbus A320 famously landed in New York's Hudson River after bird strikes on both of its engines, in an incident widely known as the "Miracle on the Hudson" because there was no loss of life.

President Zardari visits shrine of Lal Shehbaz Qalandar

President Asif Ali Zardari offering Fateha and showering petals at the shrine of Sakhi Lal Shehbaz Qalandar in Sehwan Sharif on Sunday.



Photo: PID

President signs Seminary Registration Act into law



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari Sunday signed the Seminary Registration Act into law, ARY News reported, quoting NA Secretariat.

According to a National Assembly spokesperson, the Societies Registration Act 2024, makes it a law. The step comes as part of the government's ongoing efforts to regulate and formalize the registration of various entities, including seminaries (Madrasahs).

According to a National Assembly spokesperson, with President Zardari's signature, the bill has been successfully converted into law. The National Assembly is expected to issue the gazette notification soon.

Under the new law, religious seminaries (Madrasahs) will now be required to register under the Societies Registration Act, streamlining the regulatory framework for such institutions.

Read more: Federal cabinet 'okays' presidential ordinance for seminary registration

The spokesperson confirmed that the matter was resolved through mutual understanding, ensuring that the implementation of the law takes place with consensus.

Last week, federal government agreed to all demands presented by Ittehad Tanzeemat Madaaris Deenia (ITMD) regarding Seminary bill.

According to reports, assurances have been given that the registration of Seminaries will be conducted under the Societies Act, addressing a key concern of the organisation.

Furthermore, it has been confirmed that no joint session of Parliament will be convened to discuss this matter.

In line with the proposed amendments under the 26th Constitutional Amendment, a notification is expected to be issued soon, formalising the agreement.

Govt all-out to ensure stability, growth in country, says Attaullah Tarar

City Desk

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that the country had been saved from default, and now the government's entire focus was on ensuring stability and growth.

Addressing a press conference here, he said everyone was acknowledging that country's economy was getting stable and even Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder had admitted it. He said inflation had reduced from 32 per cent to 4 per cent. "Is it not a responsibility of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government to set up price control committees besides appointing price control magistrates at tehsil and union council levels, he questioned.

Comparing to last year, prices of essential items were



coming down, petrol price had reduced but why things in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were not improving. All micro-economic indicators were improving in the country under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he added.

He said that all political parties had their own manifestos under which they had

contested general election.

He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was in government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for almost 11 years adding that during last ten months misgovernance and corruption was witnessed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

While sharing white paper regarding performance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

government he highlighted financial corruption along with financial irregularities. Tarar said that metro bus in Lahore was started to facilitate common man, but the initiative was termed 'Jangla Bus' by a certain person and later the model was replicated in Peshawar. He said that certain people were in habit of taking u-turns.

Information minister said that financial irregularities in KP government was estimated as Rs 152 billion. While giving details of the financial losses, Attaullah Tarar said there were fraudulent payments worth Rs 130 million;

Rs. 84 billion had been estimated as misclassified expenditures, and suspicious disbursement was calculated as Rs. 510 million.

He said the financial irregularity was caused due to

non-seriousness and zero focus on governance. The federal minister said the PTI provincial government was hatching conspiracies and making hue and cry. About the debt crisis, the minister said KP's overall debt burden was Rs. 725 billion, adding that if it would not be addressed, it would surge to Rs 2,555 billion by 2030. He said, "Annual debit servicing costs Rs. 355 billion equivalent to the province's development budget."

He said that KP government did nothing in period of more than one decade, no dam was constructed and even not a single unit of electricity was produced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

What is the mistake of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and why relief was not transferred to people, Attaullah Tarar questioned.

Govt making allout efforts to bring economy back on track: Muqam

Correspondent

SWAT: Federal Minister for Gilgit-Baltistan & Kashmir Affairs and States & Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Engr Amir Muqam on Sunday said that federal government was making untiring efforts for revival of the economy and

promotion of trade and investment in the country.

Addressing the concluding session of the two days Swat Trade Show 2024 as Chief Guest in Mingora Swat district, he said that the trickled down effects of the Govt prudent economic and fiscal reforms have started

viable and the price hike was slashed down to a single digit which is a great triumph indeed.

He termed the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP)'s efforts for empowerment and promotion of local businesses as positive besides economic development of the

region was important.

Engr Amir Muqam said that Swat trade show would help provide opportunities to local traders in expansion of their business and attract investment besides enhancing the country's economy significantly.

The Federal Government

under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was making solid efforts to resolve the economic issues in the country, he said, adding the Prime Minister and his team was making untiring efforts to put the country back on road to economic prosperity.

Grand Jirga reaches consensus to end Kurram conflict, terms of agreement revealed

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Grand Tribal Jirga convened in Kohat to address the Kurram conflict has been adjourned for two days. The parties involved have reached a general consensus, but one party requested a two-day delay for internal consultation before signing the agreement. Key points of the agreement have emerged.

Jirga members state that more than ten points still require signatures from both parties and that the discussions were conducted in a peaceful atmosphere.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Information Minister, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, stated that the Jirga continued late into the night, with a general consensus reached between the parties. Only a few points remain, prompting one party to request a two-day



consultation period.

Barrister Saif explained that Ahl-e-Sunnat requested two days to consult with their leaders and the public. The Jirga granted the extension and will reconvene on Tuesday. He confirmed that major points have been agreed upon, and the agreement will

be signed after consultations are complete.

He further stated that, in accordance with the Apex Committee's decision, the elimination of bunkers and weapons will be ensured.

Saif told reporters that the jirga would be convened again on Tuesday after the

forum, via mutual consultation, decided to grant two days' time to one of the parties who asked for more time for further discuss with its leaders on a few points.

Jalal Bangash, the secretary for the Anjuman Association and member of the peace jirga, said that all demands and

proposals put forward had been accepted and the Turi Bangash tribe has signed the agreement.

He said that progress in peace talks, under way at Kohat, was aimed at brokering an agreement for lasting peace between the warring tribes whose clashes have resulted in over 100 fatalities since November last in Kurram.

The issue remained unresolved despite multiple truces announced during the past year as elders from both sides strive to negotiate a lasting peace agreement, Bangash said. He added that road supplies and other essential services would be restored soon as part of the agreement.

Bunkers would be abolished and the area would be de-weaponized as per the Apex Committee's decision, the KP government spokesperson said.

PPP's Concerns with Federal Government Escalate: Shazia Marri

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP), in a historic gathering held on the anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's martyrdom, highlighted the pressing issues faced by the nation and its people, as addressed by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Shazia Marri, the Central Information Secretary of PPP Parliamentarians and a member of the National Assembly, along with Sarinder Valasai, In-charge of Bilawal House Media Cell, held a press conference emphasizing PPP's stance on key national matters.

Marri stated, "Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is a straightforward and fearless leader who raises his voice whenever the people of Pakistan are in distress." She pointed out the serious nature of PPP's disagreements with the federal government, stressing that threats will not resolve issues.

According to the media release, Marri termed the nationwide participation in the December 27th



commemoration at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh as a reflection of the people's unwavering commitment to Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's mission. She noted that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is deeply concerned about the challenges faced by the country, including economic instability, inflation, and poverty.

While commending the vision of past PPP leaders, she reminded that Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs are a result of their efforts, asserting that any threat to these assets would require unified national defense. She also criticized the federal government for unilateral decisions, particularly concerning water distribution and the construction of new canals from the Indus River, without consulting stakeholders.