

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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RAWALPINDI



Zelensky says Western troops in Ukraine would help 'force Russia to peace'

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday backed the deployment of Western troops to Ukraine as one of the "best instruments" to "force Russia to peace".



Govt saved Rs 1.1 trillion through talks with IPPs: Awais Leghari

Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Thursday said that the government has saved Rs 1.1 trillion through negotiations with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). He said that people could no longer afford to pay the electricity bills and the government was going to revamp the entire power sector.

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Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, presiding over a meeting of the committee formed by the Prime Minister to strengthen bilateral cooperation and trade with Indonesia ahead of the Indonesian President's visit to Pakistan on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Constitutional bench of Supreme Court questions military trials for May 9 riots

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Supreme Court constitutional bench raised concerns on Thursday regarding the specific trial of civilians implicated in the May 9 riots under military courts, questioning such an approach as inconsistent with established legal precedents.

On December 13, the bench conditionally permitted military courts to issue rulings for 85 civilians still detained for their alleged roles in the riots. A week later, military courts sentenced

25 individuals to prison terms ranging from two to 10 years for their participation in violent attacks on military facilities during the riots. Another 60 civilians received similar sentences for their involvement in the nationwide unrest.

Last week, the mercy petitions of 19 convicts associated with the May 9 incidents were accepted by the courts on humanitarian grounds.

Violent protests broke out on May 9, 2023 when jailed former prime minister Imran Khan was

arrested from within the premises of Islamabad High Court. Protesters attacked state buildings and military installations. Khan and his party denies involvement in such protests and called for the formation of a judicial commission to check the veracity of claims.

On Tuesday, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail while hearing on appeals against the military trial of civilians asserted that it is not within the executive's authority to assume "judicial roles."

A seven-member constitutional bench, led by Justice Aminuddin Khan, continued its examination of the intracourt appeal regarding the decision to prosecute civilians in military courts on Thursday.

At the outset of the session, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi noted that while the country has experienced terrorist attacks in the past, those responsible were tried in civilian courts.

He questioned the rationale behind trying individuals involved in the May 9 events in military

courts, asking, "Where [were the hearings for those] attacks held?" He emphasised that if terrorists were prosecuted in ordinary courts, it raises the question of why those involved in the May 9 riots should face military trials.

Justice Mandokhail raised concerns during the hearing about the discrepancies between decisions made in military courts and those in antiterrorism courts, questioning whether "special evidence" was being used in military trials.

Continued on Page 7

Internet slowdown, disruptions deal heavy blow to Pakistan's IT industry

Naveed Ahmad Khan

The slowdown and disruptions in internet services have severely impacted the information technology industry in Pakistan, prompting international companies operating in the country to begin relocating various operations abroad. As a result, export growth has plummeted to just 34 per cent.

In the latter half of 2024, users in Pakistan frequently faced slow internet speeds, challenges in downloading media on WhatsApp, and inconsistent connectivity.

Digital analysts noted that the government had been testing a "firewall" to monitor certain platforms and restrict access to specific content. While the government denied throttling internet services, it stated that it was upgrading a 'web management system' to improve cybersecurity.

A recent report by Top10VPN.com, an independent VPN reviewer, highlighted that Pakistan experienced the highest



financial losses globally due to internet outages and social media app shutdowns last year, amounting to a staggering \$1.62 billion in total economic impact.

Amidst this, WhatsApp has moved its session server routing outside of Pakistan.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) confirmed the transfer, stating that the shift of WhatsApp's content delivery network abroad has caused difficulties for users in maintaining connectivity.

In 2021, Pakistan's export growth was at 47%, but it dropped to just 24% last year.

IT expert Nighat Dad has warned that if the situation of internet slowdowns persists, many more IT companies may be forced to relocate abroad.

Individuals connected to such industries have expressed their distress, with online taxi drivers and other riders feeling overwhelmed by the situation.

The PTA has completed its investigation into the internet slowdown and telecom operators have identified various issues on social media platforms. The increasing use of VPNs has added extra strain on bandwidth, emphasising the need to enhance bandwidth to meet internet demand, it added.

Earlier this week, digital rights activist Usama Khilji slammed the government for the internet shutdown, saying that it would not be able to achieve its target of trillion-dollar information technology exports if such actions are taken.

No breakthrough in Govt-PTI dialogue, says Rana Ihsan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister Rana Ihsan Afzal Thursday reaffirmed the govern-

ment's commitment to constructive dialogue with PTI, stressing transparency and a willingness to move forward without delay.

In an exclusive talk with a

private news channel, Ihsan Afzal said that the government's dialogue with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has stalled due to PTI's failure to present its written

demands and show seriousness in the talks.

Afzal said PTI has failed to finalize and present its charter of demands, which is hindering

the progress of the talks.

He emphasized the importance of avoiding deadlock in the negotiations due to unrealistic conditions.

COAS Gen Munir played 'key role' in seeking \$2b UAE loan, claims Umar

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir played a "key role" in seeking the financial loan from the United Arab Emirates when he served as the Inter-Services Intelligence director general during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf tenure, former finance minister Asad Umar has claimed.

"Times have come that we are celebrating loans. An old loan and they have only told us that we are not taking backing from you. We will take it next year and so much happiness on this," he said while appearing on Rubaroo which was aired on Aaj News on Thursday.

"I was the finance minister when we got this \$2 billion loan from UAE. I must tell you that the then DG ISI and incumbent army chief General Asim Munir played a key role in it," Umar said.

When pressed, the former finance minister said that



he, along with jailed former prime minister Imran Khan and imprisoned ex-foreign minister Shah Qureshi, had visited the country together. He claimed that former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa had prior sent Gen Munir to the Gulf country.

He went on to add that he and Gen Munir were together in a meeting with the close representative of the UAE Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in final negotiations. "So, I can tell you that he had a main role in it."

Tarar appreciates Gandapur on learning correct way of protest

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Thursday appreciated Chief Minister of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur on understanding about the correct way to hold a protest in the country.

"Ali Amin Gandapur has finally learnt the right way to protest," said the minister while sarcastically responding to the statement made by the CM KP today in a gathering regarding his newfound approach for holding a protest.

The CM KP had specifically commented on the comparison recently drew by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif between the protest strategies adopted by the people in Japan and the opposition in Pakistan.

The minister, in a news statement, said the whole nation knew the usual tactics



of chaos, violence and arson opted by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during their protests. "It is commendable that for the first time in ten months, the Chief Minister has chosen the correct manner of protest," he added.

He said it would have been quite better if he had protested peacefully with sounds like 'oooo oooo' on November 26 and May 9 instead of resorting to aggression and arson.

Protests, in the civilized society, are held in a peaceful manner without disrupting the normal life, he remarked.

Ahsan chairs preparatory meeting for Indonesian President's upcoming visit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday chaired a meeting of the committee, constituted by the Prime Minister to enhance bilateral cooperation and trade between Pakistan and Indonesia.

"The meeting was held in preparation for the first official visit of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to Pakistan," a news release said.

Senior officials from the Ministries of Planning, Commerce, Finance, and Foreign Affairs, as well as

the Secretary of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), attended the meeting, which was also joined by Pakistan's Ambassador to Indonesia via video link.

The participants deliberated on proposals to strengthen cooperation and boost trade between the two countries in various sectors.

Highlighting the significance of the Indonesian President's visit, Ahsan Iqbal said: "This landmark visit will open new avenues for trade and cooperation, further strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Indonesia."

Traders and Industrialists Are Vital for the National Economy: Sharjeel Inam

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Sindh's Senior Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has emphasized that President Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah recognize the significance of traders, industrialists, and business communities, as they contribute substantially to the national economy. He noted that businessmen and industrialists pay the highest taxes, provide employment to millions, and require maximum facilities to enhance economic growth and generate more job opportunities. Speaking at a luncheon hosted in his honor by the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), Sharjeel Memon assured the business community that the government is serious about resolving their issues. He highlighted the government's open invitation to private investors



to establish industrial zones, which would boost the economy, increase investments, and create new jobs. He also pledged to brief President Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and CM Murad Ali Shah on the concerns of traders and industrialists.

Sharjeel Memon described the Dhabiji Special Economic Zone as a golden opportunity for traders, offering zero import duties and a ten-year tax exemption. He emphasized that Dhabiji SEZ is linked to CPEC, providing huge advantages for businesses.

Malir Expressway: Set to be inaugurated within two days by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, this project is a modern gift for Karachi and Pakistan, easing logistics for industrialists.

Yellow Line BRT: Special invitation for KATI representatives to join board meetings. Plans to introduce electric buses (EVs) instead of diesel-hybrid ones.

DC Jamshoro reviews arrangements of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar Urs

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

JAMSHORO: Deputy Commissioner Jamshoro, Ghazanfar Ali Qadri, presided over a meeting at his central office in Jamshoro to review the arrangements for the 773rd annual Urs of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (RA). The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner-I Nooruddin Hingorjo, representatives of Rescue 1122, Sindh Emergency Response Service Hyderabad, and various other officials. The primary focus of the meeting was to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for devotees during the Urs celebrations.



DC Jamshoro emphasized the importance of effective emergency planning to ensure the safety of visitors in case of any unforeseen situation. He directed the concerned officials to provide all necessary facilities to devotees, considering the large number of attendees expected at the annual Urs. The meeting primarily focused on finalizing arrangements to ensure a secure and well-managed environment for the devotees.

Desecration of the Holy Quran by Indian soldiers in Srinagar Central Jail

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZZFARABAD: The Convener of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Kashmir branch, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Safi, and the entire Hurriyat leadership, in a statement from Islamabad, expressed deep sorrow and anger over the desecration of the Holy Quran by Indian soldiers in Srinagar Central Jail and condemned the incident in strong words. Hurriyat leaders said that

No Muslim will tolerate the desecration of his holy book, the Holy Quran. Hurriyat leaders said that the sentiments of Muslims all over the world have been deeply hurt by this incident. The Holy Quran is the last holy book of Allah for the guidance of humanity, which every Muslim holds dearer than his own life. Such blasphemy will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

They further said that the Indian Hindutva government is trying to hurt the religious sentiments of Kashmiri Muslims day by day under a well-thought-out plan. The BJP government has made the life of Kashmiris unbearable in its hostility towards Muslims.

The All-Party Hurriyat Conference has appealed to the Kashmiri people to hold strong protests everywhere against the desecration of the Holy Quran by so called Indian forces.

Multan Arts Council Has Done a Great Job By Combining the Work of Artists and Craftsmen



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: President of the Board of Management of Multan Arts Council, Mian Amir Naseem A Sheikh, has said that the cultural values of Punjab are the pillars of peace, love and unity and their protection is the common responsibility of all of us. He said this on the occasion of the inauguration of the cultural corner organized by Multan Arts Council. He said that the Multan Arts Council has done a great job by combining the work of artists and craftsmen.

Director Multan Arts Council Saleem Qaiser said that the cultural corners will be further expanded in Multan Arts Council. Director Information Lamtan Sajjad Jahania said that the establishment of cultural corners in arts councils across Punjab reflects the beautiful colors of culture. Renowned poet and intellectual Professor Anwar Jamal said that the establishment of cultural corners has spread a wave of happiness among artists. Renowned poet and columnist Shakir Hussain Shakir said that the establishment of cultural corners has increased the beauty of the Arts Council and artists and craftsmen are expressing great joy. In Multan Arts Council, cultural works of Aini Kaleem, Mukhtar Ali, Hamid Iqbal, Rashid Sial Zameer Hashmi, Ustad Alam Ali Ijaz Nizami, Professor Anwar Jamal Farah Rehman, Ustad Jahangir, Ustad Alamgir, Bushra Seemab Zaheer Abbas and Zawar Hussain from Multan College of Arts were displayed in the art corners, which are receiving immense public appreciation.

A high-level meeting held chaired by DC Office Dadu

Azad Baloch

DADU: A high-level meeting was convened at the DC Office Dadu by Deputy Commissioner Mukhtiar Ali Abro to review progress on public service delivery, provision of basic facilities, price control, removal of encroachments in cities, retrieval of government land from illegal occupiers, improvement of sanitation systems, addressing land acquisition issues for Public Health Engineering Department schemes, and other important district matters.

During the meeting, Assistant Commissioners from all talukas presented performance reports to the Deputy Commissioner. The DC conducted a detailed review, expressed dissatisfaction with underperforming officers, and issued strict instructions for improvement.

Promotion of Tourism

FAISALABAD: People are enjoying the beauty of City into double-decker bus.



Photo: Online

Humanity is Superior to all Things: All religions teach respect for humanity: Bishop Yousuf

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: A training program was organized for youth under the auspices of the Catholic Commission for Interfaith and Interchurch Dialogue Pakistan, in which youth belonging to different religions and sects participated. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman of the Catholic Commission for Interfaith and Interchurch Dialogue Pakistan, Bishop of Multan, Bishop Yousuf Sohan, said that humanity is superior to all things. All religions teach respect for humanity. We must move towards peace, brotherhood and reconciliation. To make the society peaceful, the youth need to be made



Speaking on the occasion, Executive Secretary Catholic Commission for

Interfaith and Interchurch Dialogue Pakistan, Samuel Clement, said that giving importance to humanity is the need of the hour. An ideal society can be established by leaving differences behind and promoting commonalities. He said that if we do not treat anyone like our brothers, we are not worthy of being called human beings. We, people of different religions, are living together peacefully in Pakistan. This is the beauty of this society. It needs to be improved further. On this occasion, Professor Abdul Majid Wattoo, Sarfaraz Clement, Sultan Mahmood, Shazar Gul, Amroz Gul, Hina Salman, Maryam Ghazi and others participated and spoke.

Eshal Shaukat, Visits Gujrat to Promote Clubfoot Awareness and Skill Development

Aziz Ur Rehman Mujahid

GUJRAT: Eshal Shaukat, the Pan-Asian Youth Ambassador for WASUP (World Against Single Use Plastic), visited the Mahomad Gatrud Artificial Limb and Clubfoot Center in Gujrat to observe the impactful work being done to combat disability. During her visit, Eshal met with clubfoot patients and was briefed by Dr. Hina, a dedicated professional working at the center. Dr. Hina explained the step-by-step process involved in the treatment of clubfoot and highlight-

ed the contributions of various departments working in collaboration to restore mobility and hope to patients.

Eshal expressed admiration for the center's efforts in saving lives from disability and acknowledged the vital role it plays in offering free treatment and care to those in need. She emphasized the importance of addressing disability issues and commended the center for its commitment to improving lives.

In addition to visiting the clubfoot center, Eshal Shaukat also toured the Informatics College of Allied Health Sciences

(ICAHS) in Gujrat. She was welcomed by the college's principal, Miss Ayisha Ayub, who shared the institution's vision and mission. Miss Ayub highlighted that the primary goal of ICAHS is to produce skilled paramedical professionals, enabling the youth to gain employment and contribute positively to society. She emphasized that the college provides an excellent opportunity for students, especially those who have completed matriculation, to acquire professional skills and secure a stable future.

Concluding her visit, Eshal

expressed deep appreciation for the remarkable work being done at both the Mahomad Gatrud Artificial Limb and Clubfoot Center and Informatics College of Allied Health Sciences. She emphasized the importance of addressing disability issues and providing opportunities for skill development. Eshal remarked, "Working on disability is crucial, and the clubfoot center is doing an outstanding job toward this cause. Patients from everywhere are welcomed here. Let's work on clubfoot—one step at a time."

Her visit highlighted the importance of collaborative



efforts in healthcare and education to promote inclusion, independence, and skill development, inspiring others to take meaningful steps toward social and community welfare.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:45 am
Zohr12:15 pm
Asr3:39 pm
Maghrib5:17 pm
Isha6:45 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ5556311-4
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-89266316
Wapda Islamabad9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint 119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank
Rawalpindi0331-5022125

Transfer of rights must be equitable and lawful in society: Ch Kaleem

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: "As a young political voice of Samot, Gujrat Khan, Chaudhry Kaleem Rasool said he believes Pakistan's politics needs fresh perspectives and a commitment to transparency, unity, and progress for all citizens."

Ch. Kaleem Rasool is a young Political personality from Samot, Gujrat Khan, District Rawalpindi.

Moreover, he is working as a social worker in his area. He thinks political parties need political change in Pakistan which is possible only when young people join politics. That's why he is very interested in politics as it allows him to play his part in a better way for beloved country and serve the public. He is a passionate and motivated person who believes in self-confidence and women empowerment. He says and believes that women can do anything if they want to. As per our religious laws both (men & women) have equal rights. The transfer of rights must be equal for all with respect to the laws.

Al-Shifa opens an advanced genetic testing lab to prevent childhood eye cancer

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital inaugurated a state-of-the-art genetic testing laboratory to prevent and control eye cancer in children.

Genetic testing offers significant benefits; it can alleviate uncertainty and guide individuals in making informed decisions about healthcare management. If the result is negative, it may reduce the need for unnecessary check-ups, said the president of Al-Shifa Trust, Major General (Retd) Rehmat Khan.

Speaking at a seminar at the inauguration of Pakistan's first genetic testing lab for eyes, he said that a positive outcome following genetic testing can guide individuals toward available options for prevention, monitoring, and treatment.

Major General (Retd) Rehmat Khan said that all the patients at the trust will get free testing even though ophthalmic genetics and DNA diagnosis are very costly processes.

Ophthalmic genetics is a subspecialty of ophthalmology focusing on genetic conditions affecting the eye, which involves studying the causes, patterns of transmission, projection, and treat-

ment of eye diseases caused by genetic defects, he informed.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr Tayyab Afghani, consultant and HOD of Orbit and Oculoplastic Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, said that Pakistan has a higher rate of eye cancer in children than its nearby countries. Because of this, the trust has chosen to step up its efforts to fight the problem.

He said that every year, different trust centres treat about 700 kids with eye cancer. This is twice as many as in India, right next door.

He said people should not be careless about eye cancer. The number of people with eye cancer is going up, so they should see a doctor right away. Most people who go to hospitals are in the very last stages of their illness.

Afghani said that most of the kids with eye cancer come from low-income families who live in far-flung areas where there aren't any specialised eye hospitals.

He said that some tumours are incurable, while others may severely disfigure eyes, requiring complex surgical procedures. However, eye problems due to cancer need more time and effort to be treated.

Dr Rutaba Gul briefed the media



persons about the development. Others who spoke on occasion included Prof. Dr. Shahid Mehmood Baig, Prof. Dr. Saba Sarfaraz, Dr Faheem Azher, and Prof. Dr. Irshad, Prof. Dr. Anesa Sultan, Dr. Saad Wajid Ali Khan.

Tree plantation drive

ISLAMABAD: Workers are planting the Washingtonia Palm trees at the green belt in the middle of the Srinagar Highway during the "Beautification of Capital" which is the joint project of Azerbaijan and Pakistan.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Students of Government Technical Institute Rawalpindi visit AIOU

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A group of faculty members and 70 students of Computer Science from the Government Technical Institute (GTI), Rawalpindi, conducted a one-day study visit to Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday.

During the first phase of the visit, the students were taken to the Directorate of Student Advisory and Counseling Services. The Director Student Affairs, Syed Ghulam Kazim Ali, provided a detailed briefing about the university's profile, its nationwide educational network, student facilities, and the ongoing admissions for the Spring Semester 2025.

Later, the students were given a tour of the university's printing press, where they were shown the machinery and introduced to the various stages of designing, pasting, plating, and printing. They also visited the Data Center, Call Center, Facilitation Center, Central Library, and Radio/TV studios.

Dr. Aftab Khan, Chairman, Computer



Science Department highlighted the significance and utility of computer science education. He stated that computer and artificial technology have become essential in today's life. Addressing the students, Dr. Aftab said, "You have made the right choice in pursuing education in this

field, which offers vast opportunities for growth."

He further informed the students that Allama Iqbal Open University provides online education for postgraduate diplomas, BS, MS, and PhD programs in computer science.

Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi met with Sardar Attique



Bureau Report

RAWALPINDI: Former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and President Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Azad Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi, met with the President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan and inquired health of wife of Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan who under treatment in C M H Rawalpindi. The President Muslim Conference told about the well-being of his wife. Mr Niazi prayed for her speedy recovery. Other important matters were also discussed including The recent political crisis and internal unrest in Azad Kashmir were also discussed.

Population Welfare Department Will Continue Mission. Ch. Naeem

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Population Welfare Officer Toba Tek Singh, Chaudhry Muhammad Naeem, highlighted the department's efforts in 2024. Throughout the year, various group meetings and seminars were organized to raise public awareness on important issues. These initiatives focused on pre-marital counseling, child marriage awareness, marital counseling for harmony, and promoting birth spacing methods for healthier families. The Population Welfare Department Will Continue Mission in 2025, focusing on family planning, gender equality, and women's health awareness. The goal is to create a stable and prosperous society by addressing key social issues and ensuring a better future for generations.



Meeting held at Education Office

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Monitoring Officer (DMO) Sadaf Irshad and CEO Education Dr. Aqeela presided over an important meeting at the CEO Education Office. All the officers of the education department participated in the meeting. In the meeting, they discussed in detail the plan of curricular and extracurricular activities for strengthening the monitoring system of government schools and for the moral training of students according to the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif. On this occasion, character development of students was promoted. Emphasis was placed on inculcating moral values in the curriculum and conducting various activities to impart them. DMO Sadaf Irshad said that it will prove to be an important development to make the monitoring system of schools functional and to improve the education and training of students.

Consumption of Ultra-processed products, increasing Non-Communicable Diseases

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have emerged as the leading cause of death globally, accounting for approximately 60% of all deaths in Pakistan. These diseases significantly diminish productivity and human capital while escalating healthcare costs due to severe illness, disability, and death. Key contributors to NCDs include high sugar consumption, ultra-processed foods, tobacco

use, and physical inactivity. PANAHA has established a think tank based on top health experts and other professionals to guide PANAHA to take effective measures to reduce NCDs in Pakistan. The 5th meeting of this think tank was conducted at a local hotel in Islamabad on Thursday, January 9th. Key guests were Maj Gen (r) Masud Ur Rehman kiani, Dr. Saba executive director Heart Files, Dr. Afsha tahseen Bajwa Ex. Chairman Pakistan commission for child Right, Dr. Col. Shakeel

Mirza, Dr. Qayyam Awan, President press club Islamabad Mr. Anwar Raza, General Secretary PANAHA Mr. Sanaullah.

President PANAHA, Maj Gen. (R) Masud Ur Rehman Kiani, expressed grave concern over the alarming rise in heart diseases and related conditions. He emphasized the importance of addressing modifiable risk factors for NCDs and underscored PANAHA's expanding role in educating the public about proven, effective prevention

strategies. Highlighting diet-related risk factors, he stated, He seek the guidance from think tanks to work more effectively for reduction of modifiable risk factors of these NCDs. General Secretary PANAHA Mr. Sanaullah ghumman has presented the progress report of the last think tank meeting and highlighted key achievements

Respected guests advocated for the immediate adoption of Front-of-Pack Labels (FOPL) and taxing sugary drinks will help



consumers understand the nutritional content and quantity of the foods they consume. During the

meeting, participants agreed that one of the primary drivers of the increase in NCDs is the prevalence

of unhealthy foods, particularly ultra-processed items high in salt, sugar, and fat.

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‘Pakistan opposes any further nuclear weapons testing in Korea or elsewhere’

The handsome, serene, ever-smiling, and dashing Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Justin Trudeau, finally succumbed to the ever-increasing pressure on many accounts on top of its faltering economy, rising inflation and housing and rental costs, sour relations with the USA and India, and on personal account divorce with his wife after 18 years of loving relations. Trudeau's legacy was shaped by his parents—his father, former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, whose leadership inspired his career, left his own legacy having both success and failure.

Justin Trudeau became Canada's 23rd Prime Minister on November 4, 2015, following the Liberal Party's victory in the federal election. His second term commenced after the October 21, 2019, federal election, when the Liberal Party secured a minority government. On January 6, 2025, Trudeau announced his resignation as Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party, effective upon the selection of a new party leader. Given that the next federal election was scheduled for October 2025, Trudeau had approximately nine months remaining in his second term at the time of his resignation announcement.

Justin Trudeau's tenure has faced significant criticisms and failures across various areas. Ethics controversies, including the SNC-Lavalin scandal, WE Charity scandal, and violations of conflict-of-interest rules, have damaged his credibility. Despite climate commitments, his approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline and failure to meet emissions targets drew ire from environmentalists. Promises of Indigenous reconciliation fell short, with many communities still lacking clean

water. Rising costs of living, skyrocketing housing prices, and increasing federal debt sparked concerns about economic management. His pandemic response faced criticism for early vaccine rollout delays and insufficient safeguards against CERB abuse.

Relations between Canada and India have significantly deteriorated during Justin Trudeau's tenure, marked by mutual mistrust and diplomatic tensions. Trudeau's 2018 visit to India, intended to strengthen ties, was widely criticized for being poorly managed, with controversies surrounding the invitation of a convicted terrorist to official events. More recently, tensions escalated due to Trudeau's public support for the Indian farmers' protests, which angered the Indian government, as they viewed it as interference in their domestic affairs. The situation reached a new low with allegations surrounding the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent Khalistani activist, in Canada. Trudeau accused India's intelligence agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), of being involved in the assassination, citing credible evidence. These accusations and counteraccusations had plunged diplomatic relations into a deeper crisis, further hindering progress in trade, investment, and strategic partnerships between the two nations.

Justin Trudeau's relationship with Donald Trump was marked by a mix of cooperation and tension, shaped by their differing ideologies and priorities. They worked together on the renegotiation of NAFTA, resulting in the USMCA, though

the process was contentious, with Trump imposing tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum and Trudeau retaliating. Public spats further strained relations, such as Trump calling Trudeau "dishonest" after the 2018 G7 summit and Trudeau being caught mocking Trump at a NATO event in 2019. Policy differences were evident, with Trudeau advocating for climate action and immigration openness, in stark contrast to Trump's policies. Despite these challenges, Trudeau maintained diplomatic ties, recognizing the importance of the U.S.-Canada partnership. Their cooperation extended to border security, defense, and handling the Huawei-Meng Wanzhou case, though it led to significant backlash from China. Trudeau's approach reflected a pragmatic effort to navigate a turbulent U.S.-Canada relationship during Trump's presidency.

During Justin Trudeau's tenure, relations between Pakistan and Canada remained relatively low-profile, focusing on areas like trade, immigration, and international cooperation. Canada continued to be a key destination for Pakistani immigrants, students, and skilled workers, with Pakistan ranking among the top sources of immigration to Canada. However, bilateral trade remained modest, with limited efforts to significantly enhance economic ties. Trudeau's government emphasized issues like human rights and women's empowerment, aligning with Canada's broader foreign policy agenda, but these did not translate into substantial bilateral initiatives with Pakistan. The two countries occasionally engaged on multilateral

platforms like the United Nations, but no major breakthroughs or agreements marked their relationship. Relations were cordial but lacked significant strategic or economic deepening, reflecting a status quo dynamic during Trudeau's period.

Justin Trudeau has often emphasized the importance of his family, portraying himself as a devoted husband and father. Married to Sophie Grégoire Trudeau in 2005, the couple frequently appeared together at public events, showcasing a modern and relatable family image. However, in August 2023, they announced their separation after 18 years of marriage, surprising many Canadians. Despite this, they reaffirmed their commitment to co-parenting their three children and maintaining a close family bond.

Justin Trudeau's resignation as Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party marks a significant shift in Canada's political landscape. Given the internal pressures and declining public support that led to his departure, a swift return to power appears unlikely. The Liberal Party is now focused on selecting a new leader to rejuvenate its prospects ahead of the upcoming general election. Trudeau's future political trajectory will depend on his ability to rebuild public trust, address past controversies, and adapt to the evolving priorities of Canadian voters. While his political experience and previous leadership could position him for a future role, any potential comeback would require substantial effort to overcome the challenges that precipitated his resignation.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Pakistan urges dialogue to lower tensions on Korean Peninsula

Voicing concern over North Korea's latest launch of a ballistic missile, Pakistan has called for diplomatic engagement and dialogue to address the challenges confronting the Korean Peninsula.

"We strongly support the calls for revival of talks among the relevant parties," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council which met two days after North Korea fired off what Pyongyang described as a new type of intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile (IRBM) loaded with a hypersonic glide vehicle.

Ambassador Akram called these developments detrimental to regional and international peace and security.

Pakistan, he said, supported the objective of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, the implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and the goals of global non-proliferation and disarmament.

"Provocations such as missile tests on the one hand — and coercive actions and threats on the other — must be ended," the Pakistani envoy said. "Pakistan opposes any further nuclear weapons testing in Korea or elsewhere."

In this regard, Ambassador Akram called on all parties to exercise restraint and not escalate existing tensions, urging the Security Council to consider adopting some Confidence Building Measures by the parties in order to reduce tensions.

Pakistan, he added, remains committed to working within the framework established by the United Nations resolutions to promote peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

"We hope that the Security Council will find ways of reviving the dialogue and playing its due role in reducing tensions and threats to peace and security in the region."

Opening the debate, a senior UN official warned that North Korea has been actively working towards acquiring new military capabilities that undermine the global non-proliferation architecture.

"While stating that the launch had no negative impact on the security of neighboring countries, [Pyongyang] regrettably did not issue airspace or maritime safety notifications," said Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations.

According to the country's official statement, the system can "deal a serious military strike to a rival by effectively breaking any of its dense defensive barriers", he said, adding that hypersonic glide vehicles travel at least five times the speed of sound and make evasive maneuvers, making defence measures against the weapon much more difficult.

For his part, North Korean Ambassador Song Kim stressed that the test-fire of a new-type intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile is part of the plan to develop national defence capabilities to enhance the sustainability of the strategic deterrent, in conformity with the changing security environment of the region. As such, it had no negative impact on the neighbouring countries security.



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

Uzbekistan is firmly committed to protecting intellectual property

Akhtamov Shamsinur

In an information society where time and economy are rapidly developing, where knowledge and innovation play an important role, ensuring the protection of intellectual property is one of the important conditions facing every country. Uzbekistan is also implementing a number of reforms to strengthen the protection of intellectual property.

In particular, at an event dedicated to improving the system of protection of intellectual property objects, the Head of our state, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, noted that if the issue of intellectual property is not considered at the level of state policy, Uzbekistan will not be competitive in this area even after 10 years. This statement emphasizes the need to actively work in the field of intellectual property protection and include this issue in the priorities of the state.

The normative and legal documents adopted for the protection of intellectual property are constantly being improved, and legal mechanisms are being developed to develop the industry. Previously, the protection of intellectual property was regulated by codes and laws, but the fact that Article 53 of the new constitution stipulates that intellectual property is protected by law indicates that the protection of intellectual property has been elevated to the constitutional level.

At the same time, Uzbekistan actively participates in international treaties and conventions aimed at protecting intellectual property. For example, Uzbekistan is a party to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, which establishes the basic principles and rules in the field of industrial property protection, including patent law

and trademark rights. In addition, Uzbekistan has joined the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. Participation in these international treaties serves to improve the legal protection of intellectual property and ensure its compliance with international standards. The Protocol "On Cooperation in the Field of Intellectual Property", concluded in February 2024 between the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the National Centers for Intellectual Property of the Republic of Belarus, will not only contribute to the exchange of international experience between the two countries, but also contribute to further improvement in the field.

Uzbekistan has once again proven its commitment to protecting intellectual property rights by acceding to the Geneva Convention for the Protection of the Interests of Phonogram Producers and their Phonograms against Illicit Reproduction and the World Intellectual Property Organization Internet Treaties. The implementation of these initiatives will serve to create a solid foundation for opening up new opportunities for expanding bilateral trade, economic and investment cooperation.

The most common type of intellectual property infringement is the production of counterfeit products. In particular, in recent years, the production of counterfeit copies of well-known and trusted brand products has become increasingly popular. In particular, illegal income has increased by importing counterfeit copies of our national products, which have created their own brand, have their own customers, and have gained the trust of consumers with their quality, produced in China and other neighboring countries and imported into the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The proliferation of counterfeit products is not only harming honest entrepreneurs, but

also violating the rights of consumers. Therefore, in order to reduce the number of counterfeit products on the Uzbek market, constant preventive monitoring measures are being carried out to prevent the spread of counterfeit products, and appropriate fines are being applied to persons who produce and sell counterfeit products, depending on the nature of the offense.

At the same time, the Intellectual Property Agency under the Ministry of Justice of Uzbekistan has launched a continuous explanatory work to traders and buyers through radio stations in central markets and shopping malls of our republic about the serious harm that counterfeit products can cause to human health, the serious damage that honest entrepreneurs carrying out entrepreneurial activities suffer from counterfeit products, as well as the liability measures established by law for the production of counterfeit products, and a catalog of counterfeit products identified during surveillance and preventive measures has been created. This catalog reflects information on counterfeit goods in each sector (food, medicine, perfumery, etc.), allowing the consumer to determine which product is counterfeit or not through this catalog.

In the field of copyright protection and combating counterfeiting, not only the detection of various violations of the law by employees of special state bodies, but also the fact that every consumer who becomes aware of this violation does not ignore this situation and promptly contacts the relevant law enforcement agency will help protect intellectual property and prevent the registration of new violations. In addition, the preparation of short social videos about contract products and cases of intellectual property violations and their public display on the Internet, explanatory work by law enforcement officers on the spot, as well

Youth and the Army: Building a Lasting Partnership for National Security - I

One of the most direct and impactful ways in which Pakistani youth contribute to national security is through service in the armed forces. Each year, thousands of young men and women enlist in the Pakistan Army, Navy, and Air Force, driven by a strong sense of duty and patriotism. The Pakistan Army, in particular, has long depended on the bravery and professionalism of its young

sons are also making vital contributions to national security through law enforcement and intelligence agencies. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan became a key player in the global fight against terrorism, facing numerous internal security challenges posed by terrorist groups, insurgents, and extremist factions. Young Pakistanis have not only volunteered to serve in security agencies but have risen to leadership roles in organizations such as the Pakistan Rangers, Frontier Corps, Anti-Terrorism Force (ATF), and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

A noteworthy example of youth involvement in counterterrorism efforts is the role of the Pakistan Rangers in Karachi and other volatile regions, where young officers have worked tirelessly to combat urban terrorism, protect civilians, and maintain law and order. During the Karachi Operation, launched in 2013 to address terrorism, extremism, and organized crime, young law enforcement officers played critical roles in reclaiming the city from militant groups and ensuring long-term peace. Additionally, young officers in the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) have been instrumental in intelligence gathering, counterinsurgency operations, and community outreach to counter extremist ideologies, further strengthening Pakistan's security apparatus. Youth-led organizations in Pakistan, such as the Shaheen Force (volunteer national guard units), have emerged as key contributors to enhancing domestic security by involving young people in local defense efforts, particularly in border regions and areas facing insurgent threats.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Speakers term sustainable, affordable energy critical for country's development

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 4th International Hydropower Conference 2025, hosted by Energy Update in collaboration with the Private Power Infrastructure Board (PPIB) and the International Hydropower Association, brought together industry leaders, policy-makers, and global experts to discuss hydropower's transformative role in shaping a sustainable energy future for Pakistan.

The speakers highlighted various challenges, including the significant financing and long timelines required to construct large dams and establish hydropower projects.

Speaking at the conference, Senator Sherry Rehman stated that sustainable, affordable energy is vital for the country's development. "Pakistan has immense hydropower potential," she said. Rehman stressed that every household and business activity depends on affordable and sustainable energy. She pointed out that global conflicts often disrupt energy supply chains and added, "Pakistan has been heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels, but it's time for us to switch to renewable energy sources like wind and solar. This shift will not only help

reduce carbon emissions, the primary cause of global warming, but also ensure energy security."

Managing Director of PPIB, Dr. Shah Jehan Mirza, revealed that of the total identified 64,000 MW hydropower potential in Pakistan, only 11,000 MW is currently being utilized. He explained that while hydropower projects have significant benefits, they typically take 7-8 years to complete, and lenders are often reluctant to finance such large-scale initiatives.

Malaysian High Commissioner Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan commended the conference organizers and emphasized that energy is the backbone of a country's economy. He remarked that, like Pakistan, Malaysia is blessed with abundant natural resources and generates electricity through hydropower, gas, and other sources.

General Manager of WAPDA, Tanveer Mujahid, underscored the importance of clean and green energy for the country's development. "WAPDA is committed to a strategic vision of tapping Pakistan's hydropower potential," he said. Mujahid explained that hydropower currently constitutes 30% of the total energy mix, and WAPDA is actively pursuing

various projects to add more clean energy to the system.

CEO of TNB REMACO, Hafiz Isahak, highlighted his organization's expertise in providing maintenance, repair, diagnostic, and project management services for the power sector in Malaysia and other countries, including Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Muzammil Zia, focal person for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), described CPEC as a game-changer for Pakistan's power sector.

Other speakers, including GM of China International Group Company Wang Huihua and Dr. Jehanzeb Nasir, Ch. Abdul Rasheed, Minister Hydel & Power AJK, Azam Joya-GM C&M Water, Dr. Irfan Yousaf-CEO MKAI Climate Consulting, AVM Ijaz Malik-Disaster Management Specialist, Zafar Iqbal Wattoo-RHC addressed the prospects and challenges facing hydropower projects in Pakistan.

Earlier, M. Naem Qureshi, Managing Editor of Energy Update, welcomed participants to the conference and described it as a milestone in promoting the hydropower sector in the country.



ISSI Launches Special Study on Indian Electoral Politics

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) launched its Special Study, "Quantifying Electoral Politics of Congress and BJP," authored by Director ISC Dr. Khurram Abbas, and researchers Maheen Shafeeq and Usama Hameed. This groundbreaking research, the first of its kind in Pakistan on the 18th Lok Sabha, offers a comprehensive analysis of political trends in India through quantification of the newly-elected MPs from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the leading opposition party Indian National Congress (INC) on various indicators like caste, religious affiliation, wealth status, and familial roots in the country's politics.

The study's launch featured a distinguished panel of experts who shared their perspectives on its findings. Along with the keynote address by Mr. Khalid Rahman, Chairman Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), the other speakers included Ambassador Babar Amin, former diplomat; Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja, Executive Director of Center for International Strategic



Studies, Azad Jammu & Kashmir; and Ms. Maryam Mastoor, Research

Fellow, Institute of Regional Studies. Dr. Khurram Abbas introduced the

significance of and rationale behind this data-based study, and method-

ological approach which was employed to collect and analyze the data.

In his remarks on the occasion, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted that the 2024 elections in India were particularly noteworthy for their scale and political implications. With over 969 million eligible voters, the elections spanned seven phases, making them the longest in Indian history. He observed that while the BJP pursued aggressive campaigning with slogans like "Abki Baar 400 Paar," their performance reflected a decline in dominance, securing 240 seats compared to 303 in 2019. This contrasted with notable resurgence for the Congress, which gained official opposition status after a decade.

The keynote address by Mr. Khalid Rahman, Chairman of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), provided a critical perspective on India's electoral process, questioning whether the claim of being the "largest democracy" reflected true democratic substance or was merely a façade. He highlighted systemic issues such as the manipulation of voter rolls, suppression of civil society organizations, and changes to the Chief Election Commissioner appointment

process that consolidated executive control.

Amb. Babar Amin drew attention to the systematic exclusion of minorities in BJP-governed India, arguing that their rights and interests are increasingly sidelined, with a particular focus on religious minorities who face growing marginalization.

While commending the Special Study for debunking prevalent myths, Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja underscored that the facts revealed in this Study outwardly deny the BJP's claims of representing a common Indian.

In her remarks, Maryam Mastoor raised critical questions regarding the grave political disenfranchisement of religious minorities in the country, Congress Party's commitment to secularism, and the future of secular face of the country when secular parties are increasingly falling for a "Soft Hindutva" approach. Maryam Mastoor also questioned the BJP's reluctance to conduct a nationwide caste census, pointing out such a census could directly harm privileges and opportunities that a chunk of upper castes has been enjoying under the present structure.

Taliban say India is a 'significant regional partner' after meeting

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Taliban's foreign office said they saw India as a "significant regional and economic partner" after meeting with its most senior foreign ministry official, the highest level talks with Delhi since their takeover of Afghanistan in 2021.

India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met acting Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on Wednesday.

Afghanistan's foreign ministry said in a statement that they had discussed expanding relations with Afghanistan and to boost trade through Chabahar Port in Iran, which India has been developing for goods to bypass the ports of Karachi and Gwadar in its rival Pakistan.

"In line with Afghanistan's balanced and economy-focused foreign policy, the Islamic Emirate aims to strengthen political and economic ties with India as a significant regional and economic partner," the statement from Afghanistan's foreign ministry said late on Wednesday. India's foreign ministry said after the Dubai meeting that India was considering engaging in development projects in Afghanistan and looking to boost trade ties.

No foreign government, including India, officially recognises the Taliban administration.

However, India is one of several countries with a small mission in Kabul to facilitate trade, aid and medical support and has sent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan

under the Taliban. Regional players including China and Russia have signaled they are willing to boost trade and investment in Afghanistan.

The Delhi meeting could ruffle Pakistan, which borders both countries and has fought three wars in the past against India.

Pakistan and Afghanistan also have a strained relationship, with Pakistan saying that several militant attacks that have occurred in its country have been launched from Afghan soil - a charge the Afghan Taliban denies.

Earlier this week India's foreign office told journalists they condemned airstrikes conducted late last year by Pakistan on Afghan soil.

Somalian Ambassador calls on IIUI President

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Somalia, H. E. Shiekh Noor Mohamed Hassan met with the President of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed on Thursday at the university's new campus. The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, highlighting the role of IIUI in accommodating Somali students and promoting collaboration in education.

The ambassador acknowledged the significant contri-



butions of IIUI to Somalia, stating that many Somali ministers and individuals in key positions are graduates of the IIUI. He emphasized the potential for further collaboration between IIUI and Somali educational institutions. He also expressed grat-

itude to the IIUI President for meaningful initiatives aimed at facilitating foreign students. The President of IIUI, while welcoming the ambassador, noted that the university represents more than 40 nationalities and is

committed to enhancing facilities for foreign students. He shared plans for a separate hostel facility dedicated to international students, as part of a broader hostel revamping initiative.

The ambassador also mentioned the accompanying Second Secretary of the embassy Mohamed Abdurahman Hersi stating that he is also an IIUI graduate, thus reflecting the university's enduring impact on the country. Both sides agreed on the importance of building stronger academic and cultural ties.

Tania takes charge at upcoming PC Residences, Gulberg Lahore

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: In a significant development, Hashoo Group has announced the appointment of Tania Ahmed as the first lady Resident Manager in Pakistan to lead the upcoming PC Residences, Gulberg Lahore. PC Residences is the latest brand launched by Hashoo Group and will offer guests a premium serviced living experience for extended stays. This appointment reflects Hashoo Group's commitment to promoting diversity, inclusivity, and innovation in leadership roles within the hospitality industry.

Tania will oversee operations at the upcoming PC Residences, a luxury living concept under the Pearl-Continental Hospitality Division of Hashoo Group. PC Residences will redefine luxurious living with its



blend of residential comfort and exceptional amenities. Located in Lahore's Central Business District, PC Residences will offer



30+ elegantly designed and fully furnished residences in various configurations across seven floors. Each residence features

modern interiors, private balconies, internet connectivity, fully equipped kitchens, spacious living areas, and dining spaces, creating a home-like environment for individuals and families. Tania Ahmed's leadership at PC Residences represents an

important step for Hashoo Group and the hospitality industry in Pakistan, breaking traditional barriers and setting a new standard for female representation in leadership. Tania brings extensive expertise and a fresh perspective to her role. A graduate in Business Administration from Coventry University, UK, with certifications in French Patisserie and Thai Cuisine from Le Cordon Bleu, Thailand, she has excelled in various capacities, including running a successful culinary business and serving as Cluster Marketing Manager for Pearl-Continental Hotel Bhurban and Muzaffarabad most recently. Her participation in Hashoo Group's "Star of the Future" Leadership Development Programme has equipped her with comprehensive insights into key operational areas, enabling her to enhance guest experiences

and drive operational excellence. Sharing his views, Bastien Blanc, Chief Executive Officer - Hospitality Division, Hashoo Group, said, "Tania Ahmed's appointment as the first Lady Resident Manager reflects our commitment to fostering opportunities for women in leadership roles. Her expertise and innovative vision will elevate PC Residences as a benchmark for extended-stay living across the region and beyond."

PC Residences by Hashoo Group offers a premium serviced living experience tailored for modern travelers, professionals, expatriates, and families. By combining elegantly designed living spaces, luxurious amenities, and exceptional services, PC Residences, Gulberg Lahore, delivers the comforts of home with the excellence of the Pearl-Continental brand.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
112,638.26	114,148.45
Day's High	Day's Low
114,329.95	112,594.66
Index Value	Change
17,080,047,164	-1510.19
Percentage	Time
-1.32%	9 Jan, 2025 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
8,319.69	+68.66
Percentage	Time
+0.83%	9 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
42,635.20	+106.84
Percentage	Time
+0.25%	8 Jan, 4:43 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
39,605.09	-375.97
Percentage	Time
-0.94%	9 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	174.25	176.50
Bahrain Dinar	736.85	744.85
Canadian Dollar	195.10	197.50
China Yuan	37.97	38.37
Danish Krone	38.08	38.48
Euro	289.50	292.25
Hong Kong Dollar	35.44	35.79
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.77	1.83
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.05	905.55
Malaysian Ringgit	61.27	61.87
New Zealand \$	154.13	156.13
Norwegians Krone	24.2	24.50
Omani Riyal	721.25	729.75
Qatari Riyal	75.8	76.50
Saudi Riyal	74.00	74.55
Singapore Dollar	205	207.00
Swedish Korona	24.76	25.06
Swiss Franc	303.71	306.51
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08
U.A.E Dirham	75.65	76.30
UK Pound Sterling	348.50	352
US Dollar	278.75	280.25

Pakistan, Korea initiate negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreement

Spokesman Report

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA: In a groundbreaking move to deepen economic cooperation, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and the Republic of Korea's Minister for Trade, Inkyo Cheong, have officially launched negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

The joint declaration, signed during a high-profile event in Seoul, underscores a mutual commitment to enhancing trade, investment, and collaboration between the two nations.

The EPA seeks to build on the longstanding diplomatic ties between the two countries, established in 1983, and promote mutually beneficial trade in goods and services, economic cooperation, and supply chain resilience. The agreement will align with World Trade Organization (WTO) principles and is expected to be a cornerstone of bilateral relations moving forward.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted the untapped potential of bilateral trade, which currently stands at \$1.3 billion annu-



ally. He emphasized the opportunity for Pakistani businesses to learn from Korea's transition from low-tech industries to advanced sectors, underscoring the shared vision for economic advancement.

Korean Trade Minister Inkyo Cheong emphasized Pakistan's strategic importance,

stating, "Pakistan's geographical location and its vast market of 250 million people make it a critical partner for Korea's economic growth plans." Minister Cheong also announced his intention to personally lead the first round of negotiations, which will be hosted in Pakistan. He invited Pakistan's Federal Minister

Jam Kamal Khan to co-chair the discussions, signaling Korea's commitment to fostering a high-level partnership.

Minister Cheong revealed ambitious plans for shifting Korea's production base from its Northeast Asian neighbors to Pakistan upon the conclusion of the EPA. He highlighted the potential to target new markets in East Africa and Central Asia by using Pakistan as a strategic manufacturing hub. Additionally, he expressed a strong desire to bring a business delegation to Pakistan to explore investment opportunities and strengthen ties between the private sectors of both nations.

Both sides expressed their determination to conclude the negotiations expeditiously. The Terms of Reference (TOR) provide a comprehensive framework for addressing key issues such as trade liberalization, investment, digital trade, intellectual property rights, and climate resilience.

With the first round of negotiations set for early 2025, both nations are poised to embark on a new era of economic collaboration, targeting global markets and ensuring shared prosperity.

Group Photo

ISLAMABAD: A group photo of Sohail Altaf, Zafar Bakhtawari, Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, Aamir Rahim Qureshi, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Zahid Maqbool, Usman Shokat, Khalid Farooq Qazi, Fahad Barlas, Rizwan Mashhadi, Shumail Dawood, Raja Amir, Dr. Hassan Surosh, Uzair Bakhtawari, Hamza Surosh, Ali Waqas, Imran Ali, Waqas Bin Mahmood, Ruheel Anwar Butt, Imtiaz Abbasi, Imran Bukhari, Mirza Nisar, and others during the visit of the ICCI delegation, led by UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, to the RCCI.



SECP alerts public against a fraudulent investment scheme

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has identified another illegal deposit taking/investment scheme being operated under the name of Summit 4X Trade and Summit AH Experts. The scheme's sponsors, Abdul Hai and Summer Abbas, are mainly targeting the residents of district Layyah through branch offices, WhatsApp and calls.

They persuade the people to make investment in Summit 4X Trade and Summit AH Experts promising lucrative profits of upto 30%. To further their deceptive motives, Mr.

Abdul Hai has registered a Company namely Summit AH Experts (SMC-Private) Limited with SECP under the Companies Act, 2017, to create an illusion of legitimacy by misusing its registration status to gain public trust.

SECP clarifies that the Company or unregistered entities are not authorized to accept deposits/investments in any form or arrangement.

SECP strongly warns the general public NOT TO INVEST OR DEPOSIT FUNDS with Summit 4X Trade/Summit AH Experts/Summit AH Experts (SMC-Private) Limited or any similar illegal investment or deposit-taking platform.

Eighteen Housing partners with Pak Charity to build Iconic Mosque and Community Hub



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Elite Estates Private Limited (EEPL), the developers of the prestigious Eighteen Housing project, has partnered with Pak Charity, a leading not-for-profit trust dedicated to community development, to construct a state-of-the-art mosque and allied facilities, including research centers, within the residential community.

The partnership was officially announced during a special ceremony held at the Eighteen Housing site. The event was attended by key representatives from both organizations, including Mr. Tarek Hamdy, CEO Eighteen, and Mr. Haleem Ur Rehman Shah, trustee and CEO of Pak Charity. Distinguished guests and community members also joined the gathering

to celebrate this landmark collaboration.

This initiative represents a significant milestone in enhancing spiritual and communal spaces at Eighteen, seamlessly integrating modern living with timeless traditions.

Under the agreement, Pak Charity will design, construct, and manage the mosque and its allied facilities, which will feature Islamic education rooms, a library, a conference hall, staff residences, and ample parking, among other amenities. The 40-year partnership highlights both organizations' dedication to fostering values of community, inclusion, and sustainable development.

Mr. Tarek Hamdy, CEO Eighteen, emphasized the importance of this collaboration during the ceremony.

TCL Showcases Its Latest Display Innovations and Breakthroughs Across Smart Devices

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: TCL, Pakistan's No. 1 LED TV brand showcases a diverse range of display technologies at CES 2025. This includes QD-Mini LED TVs, professional monitors, smart projectors, and RayNeo AR Glasses. Additionally, TCL unveils its latest AI advancements in new product categories and a comprehensive smart home ecosystem, underscoring its commitment to providing smarter and healthier lifestyles and inspiring greatness globally.

TCL's leadership in display innovation is highlighted by its flagship TCL X11K QD-Mini LED TV. This model redefines home entertainment with over 14,000 local dimming zones, delivering breathtaking clarity and visual precision. Enhanced by TCL's All-domain Halo Control Technology, it offers a truly immersive viewing experience, bringing every frame to life with vivid detail. To



complement these visuals, TCL has strategically partnered with Bang & Olufsen, a leader in luxury audio, to deliver their

bespoke sound solution. Audio by Bang & Olufsen, which gives the users an experience as captivating as the visuals.

Rawalpindi and Islamabad chambers discussed solutions to traders' issues

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Led by Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General of UBG (FPCCI), a high-level delegation from the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce yesterday to congratulate the newly elected officials. During the meeting, the delegations from both chambers discussed solutions to traders' issues, a joint strategy for promoting business activi-

ties, leveraging each other's experiences, easing trade laws, reforming the tax system, and reducing business costs. The ICCI delegation included Acting President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, Acting Senior Vice President Ameer Reham Qureshi, Acting Vice President Malik Mohsin Khalid, former Chairman Founder Group and former President ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik, former President Zahid Maqbool, and Executive Members of ICCI Ruheel Anwar Butt, Imtiaz

Abbasi, Imran Bukhari, Mirza Nisar, and others. The delegation presented bouquets to the newly elected President of RCCI, Osman Shoaq, Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, Secretary of Gymkhana Club Rawalpindi Rizwan Mashhadi, and Board of Governors members Dr. Shumail and Waqas Bin Mahmood.

During his speech, RCCI Group Leader Sohail Altaf stated, "New avenues of cooperation between the

Rawalpindi Chamber and the Islamabad Chamber will open, and we will work together to solve the issues of the business community."

Zafar Bakhtawari said, "Our goal is to promote the trade and business sector, and I hope that we will achieve our shared objectives by working together. We will develop an effective action plan to resolve the issues of traders."

President RCCI Osman Shoaq, Acting President ICCI Nasir

Mehmood Chaudhry, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Zahid Maqbool, Babar Choudhry stated, "Through mutual support, we can further enhance business activities. At this juncture, former Presidents of RCCI Raja Amir, Dr. Hassan Surosh, Dr. Shumail Dawood, Saqib Rafiq, Uzair Bakhtawari, Hamza Surosh, Ali Waqas, Imran Ali, and others reaffirmed their commitment to providing excellent services for the welfare of the business community."

Training Program on "Certified Seed Potato Production" Held at NARC

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A three-day training program on Certified Seed Potato Production, was organized at the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) in Islamabad from January 7-9, 2025. The training, focused on the Aeroponic Potato Seed Production System, witnessed the participation of forty individuals, including representatives from seed companies, agricultural extension services, and farmers from across the country.

Addressing the training session, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali (S. I), Chairman PARC, highlighted the significance of developing aeroponic potato seeds for Pakistan. He said that traditional potato cultivation yields only five tubers per plant, whereas aeroponic systems can produce between 50 to 60 tubers per plant. Despite cultivating potatoes on approximately 850,000 acres, Pakistan remains heavily reliant on the importation of 6,000 to 12,000 tonnes of seed potatoes annually due to the compromised quality of locally produced seeds.

This partnership between the Korea Partnership for Innovation of Agriculture (KOPIA) and the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) aims to enhance agricultural productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, promote on-farm processing, facilitate human resource development, and create substantial employment opportunities. Dr. Cho Gyoung-Rae, Director KOPIA-Pakistan Center, outlined the project's objective to supply 160,000 tons of certified seed potatoes annually, starting in the fifth year of the production cycle.

Dr. Aish Muhammad, the Project Coordinator, emphasized that the initiative aims to reduce the cost of potato production while improving yields by ensuring the availability of quality seed potatoes at affordable prices. Dr. Kazim Ali, the Project In-charge, provided an overview of the project's targets and achievements, assuring the participants of the quality of the seed potatoes and the transparency in the distribution process to farmers and seed companies.

PCB unveils domestic cricket schedule for 2025

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Thursday unveiled the complete schedule of the men's domestic cricket tournaments set to take place in the year 2025. Three first-class tournaments, including the ongoing President's Trophy Grade-I, will headline Pakistan's bumper domestic cricket calendar.

Apart from the red-ball, focus will also be placed on white-ball tournaments, which include one 50-over List-A event, three T20 and one non-first-class three-day tournament.

Development cricket has seen some exciting changes as well with the introduction of the U15 and U17 tournaments, and the Champions U19 One-Day Cup and three-day Trophy. These three events will serve as a clear pathway for aspiring and talented cricketers.

A total of 21 domestic, age-group and pathways tournaments are set to take place in 2025. This includes a minimum of 131 first-class, 37 50-over List-A and 119 T20 matches.

Additionally, the club, age-group, schools, colleges and universities tour-

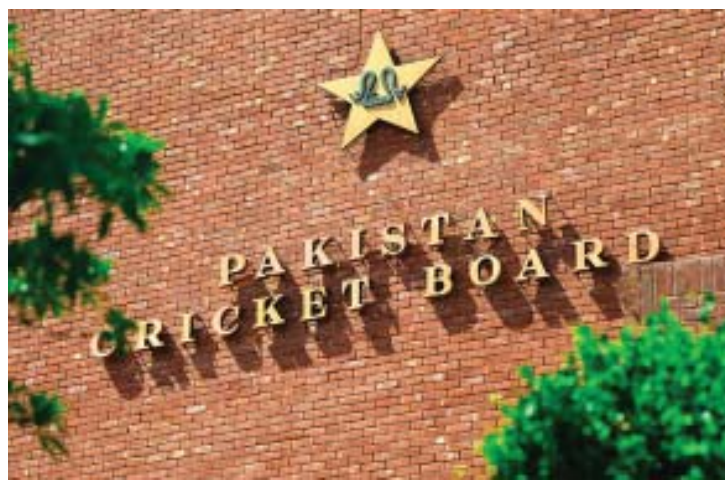
naments are set to yield more than 10,000 matches across the country, further creating opportunities for emerging cricketers.

The 18-team National T20 Cup will take place in March and will provide opportunities to players from 16 regions across Pakistan to showcase their talent in the shortest format.

President's Trophy Grade-II, the non-first-class three-day departmental tournament, will be held in April and May, which will be a battleground for the departments vying for places in the 50-over List-A and first-class departmental tournaments.

The exciting Pakistan Super League 10 will catch the eye-balls in April and May, following which the senior men's domestic events will come to a three-month halt. During this time period, the PCB will hold training, fitness and conditioning camps across the 16 regions to get the players ready for the upcoming domestic tournaments, while also preparing for the second half of the year, which again promises to be exciting, competitive and challenging.

Quaid-e-Azam Trophy and the Champions Cup – the two premier first-class tournaments – are set to take



place in September and October. These events will provide the players opportunities to perform in red-ball matches and strengthen their claims for places in the Pakistan Test side.

The 50-over List-A tournament – President's Cup Grade-I – is slotted for the November-December window, which will be followed by the second edition of the Champions T20 Cup. The Champions Cup One-Day tournament will be played in January 2026.

September as the top performers of the Inter-District U19 players will progress to regional academies and then take part in this tournament.

After working their way up from the Club and District and Regional level, the best of the best U19 men's cricketers will be assembled as part of the inaugural five-team Champions U19 Cup and Trophy under the guidance of the five mentors, which is set to take place in October and November.

The District U19 and senior events along with the Inter-Schools, Collegiate and Universities tournaments are also set to take place as usual helping Pakistan cricket widen the talent scouting net in the year 2025.

Domestic cricket schedule 2025 (Subject to any late changes):

- Men's domestic Tournaments
- January-February-President's Trophy Grade-I (first-class)
- March-National T20 Cup
- April-May-President's Trophy Grade-II (non-first-class three-day)
- April-May-Pakistan Super League 10
- September-October-Quaid-e-Azam Trophy
- September-October-Champions

- four-day Cup (first-class)
- November-December-President's Cup Grade-I (50-over List-A)
- December-Champions T20 Cup
- Age-group and Pathways Tournaments
- January-June-National Club Championship (Grade-I and II)
- February-National U15 One-Day Tournament
- February-National U17 One-day Tournament
- February-April-Challenge League Senior (two-day)
- April-Challenge U19 One-day Cup (Intra-District)
- May-Regional Inter-District U19
- May-June-Regional Inter-District Senior Tournament
- June-July-August – Regional U19 Academies
- September – National U19 Cup (Inter-regional)
- October-November-Champions U19 One-day Cup and three-day Trophy
- September-October-Inter-Schools Tournament
- October-November-Inter-Colleges Tournament
- November-Inter-University Tournament

National Track Cycling Championship 2025 begin today

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF) has announced that the National Track Cycling Championship 2025 will be held today till 12th January 2025 at the Cycling Velodrome, Nishtar Sports Complex, Lahore. The event will witness participation from 8 male and female teams, including four provincial teams and four departmental teams, showcasing the best cycling talent from across the country.

Addressing a media briefing, Idris Haider Khawaja, President of the Pakistan Cycling Federation, expressed his enthusiasm for the upcoming championship, emphasizing its importance in promoting cycling and fostering competition at the national level.

During the session, a journalist raised concerns about the condition of the velodrome. Moazzam Khan Klair, General Secretary of the PCF, acknowledged the challenges faced by the cycling community, stating:

"The velodrome, built in 1955, is now in a very poor condition. We have repeatedly requested the authorities, including the Pakistan Sports Board and Sports Board Punjab, to construct an updated wooden track. This upgrade is crucial for hosting international-level competitions in Pakistan in the future."

The championship will feature grand opening and closing ceremonies, graced



by prominent dignitaries. The Chief Guests for the ceremonies will be the Director General Sports Punjab and the President of the Pakistan Olympic Association, with the Director of Activities also joining the event.

The Pakistan Cycling Federation invites sports enthusiasts, media representatives, and cycling fans to witness this thrilling championship and support the efforts to elevate cycling in Pakistan.

Nazimabad Gymkhana, Airport, Baqai Dolphin and Azeempura Gymkhana secure victories in Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament at various Grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Ubais ullah 137, Hamza Ghanchi 104, Waleed Ahmed 102, Sunny Nazir 97 and deadly bowling by slow left arm spinner Ahmed Farooq 5/47.

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

Scores in Brief:

Nazimabad Gymkhana beat Doab c.c by 32 runs at Abbasi Gymkhana Ground.
 Nazimabad Gymkhana 251/6. Hamza Ghanchi 104 16x4 4x6, Ali Hashmi 63 9x4 1x6, Abdul Latif Junejo 32, Hassan Ali 22. Subaz Saeed 2/40.
 Doab c.c 219/8 in 40 overs. Kifayat Zalbari 86 7x4 7x6, Muhammad Zubair 24, Umer Ahmed 20. Ali Hashmi 3/41, Hamza Ghanchi 2/23, Abdul Rehman 2/25
 In the 2nd Match Airport Gymkhana beat Pak Mughal c.c by 45vruns at Student Ground. Airport Gymkhana 255/7 in 40 overs. Haider Ali 86 10 x4, Shafiqullah 51 4x4,

Umair Shaikh 46, Zubair Dilawar 30. Muhammad Saqib (sla) 4/45.
 Pak Mughal c.c 210 all out in 33.2 overs. Muhammad Tahir 42, Muhammad Faheem 41, Arbab Faheem 24, Amir Ali Shah 21. Ahmed Farooq (sla) 5/47, Umair Shaikh 3/46.
 In the 3rd Match Baqai Dolphin c.c beat Muhammad Hussain Jr. c.c by 87 runs at Baqai Ground. Baqai Dolphin c.c 266 all out in 35 overs. Ubais ullah 137 8x4 9x6, Fahad Ansari 32, Sikandar Khan 25. Muneeb ullah 3/58.
 Muhammad Hussain Jr. c.c 179 all out in 32.2 overs.

M. Alyan Sheir 80 11x4 1x6, Sufyan Hussain 37, Arfat Akhtar 28. Asadullah Khan 3/34, Nafay Zahid 2/29, Muhammad Uzair 2/44.
 In the 4th Match Azeempura Gymkhana beat Delhi Boys c.c by 6 Wickets at Pak Star Ground. Delhi Boys c.c 202 all out in 34.3 overs. Sunny Nazir 97 9x4, Umair Mughal 40, Muhammad Musanna 20. Muhammad Shoaib 2/20, Ghulam Mohiuddin 2/24, Waleed Ahmed 2/46.
 Azeempura Gymkhana 206/4 in 27.1 overs. Waleed Ahmed 102 15x4 1x6, Lal Kumar 38, Rameez Shahid 26.

Saim Ayub undergoes medical check-up at clinic in London

LONDON: Pakistan's left-handed opener Saim Ayub continues his recovery journey as he visited a private clinic in London on Thursday to undergo a detailed evaluation of his injured ankle.

The 22-year-old cricketer, accompanied by assistant coach Azhar Mahmood, had his appointment with Dr. David, a specialist consultant orthopaedic and trauma surgeon, who is set to provide a comprehensive update on Ayub's condition.

Earlier, Saim underwent an initial assessment with Dr. Lucky Jayaseelan, a renowned Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Surgeon.

The test results from these evaluations are expected to be presented to a medical panel today, which will determine the course of treatment and provide a time-frame for his recovery.

"There are some positive developments regarding the treatment. The reports will be out soon," Azhar Mahmood shared.

Saim sustained a fractured ankle on the opening day of the Cape Town Test against South Africa, ruling him out for an initial six weeks.

In response, Mohsin Naqvi, chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), took swift action, ensuring the young star received specialized treatment in the United Kingdom.

"Saim Ayub is a valuable asset for Pakistan cricket," Naqvi stated. "We will provide every possible resource for his treatment and recovery."

Naqvi also extended his heartfelt wishes for the player's swift recovery.

"I am praying for his complete health and will continue to monitor his condition closely by staying in constant contact with the doctors," he remarked.

Pakistan suffer major blow ahead of Test series against West Indies

Pakistan faced a significant setback ahead of their upcoming home Test series against West Indies due to an injury to their backup wicketkeeper-batter Haseebullah Khan.

The 21-year-old player sustained an unfortunate injury during practice, which ruled him out of the upcoming two-match series.

He was struck on the hand by a ball, which resulted in a wound that required stitches. Consequently, he will not be available for selection in the matches ahead.

Haseebullah, who has previously represented Pakistan in one ODI and three T20Is, was expected to be included as the second wicketkeeper in the squad alongside Mohammad Rizwan for the series against the West Indies.

ICC team visits Karachi stadium to review Champions Trophy preparations



Sports Desk

KARACHI: An International Cricket Council (ICC) delegation on Thursday visited National Stadium Karachi in order to review the arrangements regarding Champions Trophy scheduled to start next month, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

The six-member delegation was included broadcasters and logistics people.

The ICC delegation was briefed on the development works by Director International Usman Wahla.

He briefed that the deadline for completing the development works at the National Stadium is January 25 while the Champions Trophy 2025 will start in Pakistan from February 19.

The delegation members visited different parts of the main building of the National Stadium and reviewed the facilities available in the media center. The delegation members also visited the media gallery.

The ICC delegation also reviewed the facilities in the conference hall.

They looked at the records displayed on the walls with interest and went near them to take pictures.

The delegation also inspected both the dressing rooms in the old building.

The delegation members also visited the chairman boxes and the PCB gallery.

Pakistan's young squash prodigies receive warm welcome

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD:



Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) accorded a warm welcome to the country's young squash prodigies, Mahnoor Ali Khan and Sehrish Ali, upon their arrival to the country at Bacha Khan International Airport on late Wednesday.

According to a statement issued here by PSF, the two sisters have brought immense pride to Pakistan with their outstanding accomplishments on the international stage.

Mahnoor Ali Khan, the top-ranked player in Asia in the U-13 category, showcased her dominance by clinching both the U. S. Junior Open and the Scottish Junior Open titles. Her sister, Sehrish Ali secured the bronze medal at the Scottish Junior Open.

Group Captain (R) Irfan Asghar, Director Academies PSF, received the champions at the airport. A large number of squash enthusiasts, players and supporters also gathered at the airport to celebrate the young athletes' feats.

Constitutional bench of Supreme Court questions...

Continued from Page 1

Advocate Khawaja Haris, representing the defence ministry, cited a five-member Supreme Court ruling that deemed military trials of civilians null and void. He argued that the ruling underscored fundamental rights that had been clearly articulated.

The constitutional bench expressed skepticism about the military prosecution of specific individuals linked to the May 9 riots. Justice Mussarat Hilali inquired, "Where was the decision made regarding who would be tried in military courts and who would not?"

Mazhar questioned the rationale behind the varied legal proceedings for suspects involved in the May 9 riots, noting that the first information report against them was filed collectively. He asked, "Where did the distinction arise for some to be tried in antiterrorism courts while others faced military courts?"

Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan also probed the defence ministry's lawyer about the total number of individuals accused in connection with the May 9 events and whether any anti-terrorism court orders had been issued against those tried by military courts.

Moreover, Justice Mandokhail sought clarification on who initiated the process of detaining individuals under military custody. Justice Hilali requested a precedent for civilian military trials conducted without suspending the Constitution.

Justice Rizvi highlighted past terrorist attacks on various military installations and questioned, "Where were the hearings for these attacks held?"

In the proceedings, Justice Rizvi pointed out a previous case involving a conspiracy to hijack the army chief's plane, which was tried in a civilian court. He questioned the rationale behind the military trials for those involved in the May 9

events, asking, "If that trial was conducted in ordinary courts, what did the May 9 individuals do to warrant military prosecution?"

Justice Mazhar requested a FIR for each case, stressing the need for clarity.

Justice Mandokhail noted that individuals acquitted by anti-terrorism courts were subsequently sentenced by military courts and asked whether specific evidence was being presented in the military trials.

He expressed concern about the lack of support for anti-terrorism courts, stating, "These courts must make decisions based on the evidence presented."

Justice Rizvi further questioned the severity of the May 9 incident, asking, "Is it more serious than terrorism that the accused are being tried in military courts?"

Advocate General of Punjab Ahmad Awais claimed that inmates in solitary confinement are allowed outside their cells after breakfast at 7:30am and remain outside until 5pm.

Justice Mandokhail inquired about the specific location, asking, "Which lawn is it? Is it the one with the death cell?" Awais clarified, "No sir, this is not the lawn you have seen... there is a tuckshop, and you can also have coffee."

Advocate Faisal Siddiqui responded by questioning whether the jail environment resembled a home-like setting. Justice Hilali noted that if the AGP was found to be misleading the court, it would request a report from the prison reform committee.

In defense, AAG Punjab stated, "I have been practicing for 30 years; why would I lie?"

Justice Hilali, reflecting on her experience as an AAG in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stated, "We are the government's lawyers; we have to support the government."

Analyst Hafceezullah Niazi then addressed the court, asserting that all accused indi-

viduals were being held in a "high-security area" and claimed they were not allowed to sign the power of attorney.

Justice Mazhar stated that no one was preventing them from submitting the power of attorney. The lawyer countered, mentioning that Brigadier Javed Akbar had been denied the opportunity to sign it.

The AAG replied that lawyers had access to meetings with their clients. Justice Mandokhail emphasised that, according to the jail manual, the superintendent was required to provide necessary facilities to inmates.

The court adjourned the hearing until the following day.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: PM adviser on IPC, Rana Sana Ullah is presiding over a meeting regarding electricity issue in Gilgit Baltistan. Governor GB, and Chief Minister GB are also present in the meeting on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Naqvi bids farewell to US Ambassador Donald Blome

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi hosted a farewell meeting with outgoing US Ambassador Donald Blome on Thursday.

The two discussed matters of mutual interest, including the strengthening of Pakistan-US relations and strategies for addressing global challenges such as terrorism.

Minister Naqvi praised Ambassador Blome's contributions to fostering ties between the two nations and extended his best wishes for the diplomat's future endeavors.

During the meeting, the US Ambassador condemned recent incidents of terrorism



in Pakistan, reaffirming the need for global cooperation to combat the menace. Minister Naqvi echoed this sentiment, stating, "Terrorism is a global issue that requires a unified

response. The international community must collaborate to devise a comprehensive plan for its eradication."

The Interior Minister also emphasized Pakistan's strict stance on illegal immigration, declaring that no unauthorized foreign nationals would be allowed to reside in the country. Ambassador Blome expressed gratitude for the support he received from Pakistani institutions during his tenure, acknowledging their cooperation in facilitating diplomatic efforts.

The meeting was attended by Federal Secretary of Interior Khurram Ali Agha and US Deputy Head of Mission Natalie Baker.

NHA, MP, FWO & Police to ensure joint measures

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: On the directions of Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan it has been decided to start pilot project of motorbike service for security and surveillance on Motorways. In the first phase the Motorway Police will start security bike service with its own resources while later it will be further increased. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan while presiding over a high-level meeting at the Ministry of Communications took notice of the theft of security fences, complaints of cattle and animals coming on Motor-



ways and other problems being faced by passengers, assigned the task of increasing patrolling on Motorways and further tightening security, there. He directed that at the same time 30 to 35 motorbikes should be patrolling in different sectors on the Motorways so that those traveling on the Motorway can feel maximum security and any complaint can be redressed on the spot. Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan directed to adopt an effective strategy to prevent theft of security fences around the Motorways for which the National Highway Authority, Motorway Police, FWO and the concerned district police will take joint steps. Federal

Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that the Motorway Police will have to take maximum responsibility for the safety of citizens and adopt such a mechanism that can make travel on the Motorway as safe as possible. He also suggested to bring more legislative amendments in the powers of the Motorway Police. Abdul Aleem Khan said that areas on the Motorway where crimes and fence thefts are more common should be identified and the NHA officer and Motorway Police of the area where such an incident occurs will be responsible. Similarly, new fences should be arranged wherever these are broken or stolen on Motorways

FBR issues clarification on monitoring of transit, shipment cargo

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Revenue (FBR) issued clarification on the new process of monitoring of transit, shipment cargo.

The Certain sections of the national press have published news items on January 9, 2025, regarding FBR's new process of monitoring the transit cargo according to which satellite tracking has been replaced with human monitoring only, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

It has been reported in the press that the license of the only company having a satellite tracking system has been revoked abruptly and the same has been awarded to four tracking companies which qualified technically four years ago.

It was alleged that these companies do not possess modern tracking equipment and significant experience.

Such news items are based on lack of understanding about the previous system, the present interim arrangement and FBR's wholehearted efforts to put in place a vibrant, risk free and state of the art technology based new system.

The license of the company that was tracking the cargo movement since 2013 was not terminated abruptly and without valid grounds rather it was done after following the due process of law and on account of following charges of outdated tracking technology, frequent technical faults and inability to perform the live satellite tracking en-route but charging fee to the tune of Rs.445 million and making windfall profits.



The suspension of its operations due to cyber-attacks and multiple cases were registered by various field formations on account of different violations, during the course of hearing TPL accepted that its devices were unable to provide satellite services, and they send unnecessary or frivolous alerts.

This resulted in breaking the monopoly/hegemony of the company providing substandard services while charging exorbitant charges making

windfall profits and compromising the integrity of the en-route cargo.

The credentials of four companies entrusted to task of tracking transit cargo these companies were technically evaluated and found eligible by the Licensing Committee and in fact they were granted the license under Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rules but the same had to be cancelled in view of the court cases.

The following steps have been taken to ensure safe transportation of transit and transshipment cargo during the interim time for installation of PMD devices on vehicles and movement of cargo in convoys under Customs escort from the port of arrival till the port of destination.

The Selected Scanning of the cargo is also being done at both the ports of destination and arrival to guarantee the safety of cargo and provide deterrence against any possible pilferage incident.

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Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem of Pakistan Navy Promoted to the Rank of Vice Admiral

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem has been promoted to the rank of Vice Admiral with immediate effect.

Vice Admiral Muhammad Saleem got commission in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1991. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College Lahore and National Defence University, Islamabad. He has also done MPhil in Public Policy from National Defence University and International Electronic Warfare Manager Course from UK.

The Admiral has an illustrious career with vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments. His major Command appointments include Commanding Officer PN Submarines HAMZA & HURMAT, Commander 9th Auxiliary & Mine Hunting Squadron, Commandant PNS BAHADUR and Commander Karachi. His major Staff appointments include Senior Staff Officer (Operations) to Commander Submarines, Director Naval Operational Plans and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel) at Naval Headquarters,



Islamabad. He also performed duties as Director General National Intelligence Academy, Islamabad. Vice Admiral Muhammad Saleem also served as Directing Staff at National Defence University, Islamabad and Naval Attaché of Pakistan in India. Currently, the Admiral is serving as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Training & Personnel) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

In recognition of his meritorious service, the Admiral was awarded Hilal-Imtiaz (Military).

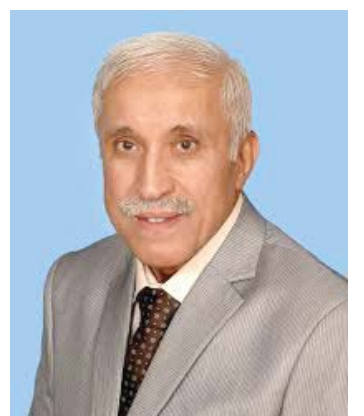
Pakistan, Denmark resolves to foster maritime cooperation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh and the Danish Ambassador to Pakistan, Jakob Linulf, reaffirmed their resolve to foster maritime cooperation between the two countries on Thursday.

The dignitaries expressed this resolve during a dinner hosted by the Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs in honor of the Danish envoy.

During the meeting, both officials discussed the potential possibilities of trade between the two countries and ways to further strengthen their



ties.

Islamabad to host Pioneering Global Summit on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training will host the International Conference on "Girls' Education in Muslim Communities: Challenges and Opportunities," a landmark two-day event from 11th -12th January 2025.

The global summit aims to address the challenges and opportunities in advancing girls' education across Muslim communities worldwide;

foster dialogue; and find actionable solutions to address the challenges.

The conference will provide an ideal platform for high-level discussions and collaborations.

The event will bring together over 150 international dignitaries, including ministers, ambassadors, scholars and academia from 44 Muslim and friendly countries, representatives from international organizations including UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank.

Senator Rubina Khalid visits BISP Tehsil Office in Pabbi



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid has announced that the quarterly stipend under the Benazir Kafaalat program for deserving women has been increased from Rs. 10,500 to Rs. 13,500. She described this as a New Year's gift from BISP to registered families, aimed at providing maximum support during challenging times.

During her visit to the BISP Tehsil

Office in Pabbi, Nowshera District, Senator Rubina Khalid spoke to media representatives and highlighted that BISP's registration process has become more dynamic. She urged eligible individuals to visit their nearest BISP Tehsil Office to register, emphasizing that an original National Identity Card, Form B, and children's school details are mandatory for registration. She told media that health and education services are being provided through the Benazir Nashonuma and Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Programs.