



**President summons Senate session on Tuesday**

President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned the Senate to meet on Tuesday at 4:00 pm, reported 24NewsHD TV channel on Saturday. Earlier, the President had summoned the National Assembly session at the parliament house in Islamabad on Monday at 5:00 in the evening. The house will discuss issues of national importance besides transacting legislative business.



**Finance minister leaves for Hong Kong to participate in Asian Financial Forum**

Federal Minister for Finance, Senator Mohammad Aurangzeb, here on Saturday departed for Hong Kong to participate in the 18th Asian Financial Forum. During his visit, he would meet with key officials from major Asian financial institutions, as well as high-ranking government officials.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Address to conference**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the International Conference on Girls' Education on Saturday.



Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif (Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan).

Photo: PID

**PM for collective efforts at sustainable educational opportunities for females**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday called upon the global and local organizations, philanthropists and entrepreneurs to join hands in creating scalable and sustainable opportunities for ensuring education to women.

Addressing a two-day International Conference on "Girls' Education in Muslim Communities: Challenges and Opportunities," as a chief guest, the prime minister said that in the next decade, millions of young girls would enter the jobs market with immense prospects for social and economic prosperity.

"As they do so, they have the potential to not just lift themselves, their families and the nation out of the poverty but also to enrich the global economy, new markets and find innovative solutions to their shared challenges," he observed.

The prime minister also stressed that they should assure the womenfolk that their rights should be respected and their ambitions be met, besides, no cultural or social impediment stood in the way of achieving their dreams.

The prime minister said the founding father Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a strong advocate for women's role in nation building.

The prime minister said through the youth programmes, the government was committed to providing quality education and creating jobs, and offering meaningful opportunities which included scholarships, vocational training and demand driven skills in AI, data and cyber security etc; as well as, provision of free laptops to the high achievers.

He said the pursuit of knowledge was the sacred duty of every Muslim regardless of gender as emphasised upon by the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

His all-inspiring message was preached in the society which was still in darkness and in denial of the basic rights to women, and

to address these grave injustices, Islam introduced a transformed social paradigm which declared the pursuit of knowledge as the true measure of social development, he added.

Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Brahim Taha said education of girls was important for progress of a society. He expressed concern that girls were being deprived of education in Palestine.

Secretary General of Muslim World League (MWL) Muhammad Bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa stressed that it was obligatory on men and women to acquire education, adding, "We have to stress on the importance

of education of girls."

The conference aimed at addressing the challenges and opportunities in advancing girls' education across Muslim communities worldwide; foster dialogue; and find actionable solutions to address the challenges.

The event brought together over 150 international dignitaries, including ministers, ambassadors, scholars and academia from 44 Muslim and friendly countries, OIC Secretary General, General Secretary Muslim World League, representatives from the international organizations including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank.

**PTI did not consult JUI over talks with govt: Maulana Fazl**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Saturday that the PTI did not take the party into confidence prior to its talks with the government.

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, he said that the JUI-F was not interested in negotiations with the government in the present circumstances.

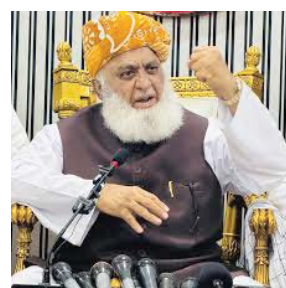
He said that the completion of the government's five-year term and its legitimacy were two different things.

Fazl said that the government could not absolve itself of responsibility by merely making claims that the economic indicators had improved.

He went on to say he had issues with those politicians who made 'compromises'. "These politicians do this only to ensure they remain in power."

The JUI-F chief said there was a need to reach a consensus in order to resolve the issues confronting the country.

He called upon the provincial assemblies to pass the Madaris Registration Bill at the earliest. "Neither reli-



gious seminaries have tolerated government interference in their affairs in the past, nor will they do it this time," he said emphatically.

He asserted that the party wanted to avoid confrontation.

Fazl lamented that the candidate, who had been declared a winner from PB-45, did not win even from a single polling station.

He said his meeting with Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi was of a private nature. "The minister visits my home frequently."

The JUI-F chief said that the government tried to bring some seminaries under its control.

Responding to a question about Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Fazl said he had great respect for him.

**No Banigala shifting offer made to Imran Khan, says Kh Asif**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Refuting PTI's claims that an offer had been made to the former prime minister and the party founder Imran Khan to shift him from Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi to his Banigala residence in Islamabad, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said on Saturday there was no truth in these claims.

Speaking to the media in Sialkot, he, while accusing the PTI of orchestrating plans against the country, said that every party plan had flopped. "However, efforts are underway to ensure there is political stability in the



country," he added.

The defence minister further said that all indicators were showing that the country's economy was heading in a right direction. "It is impossible that overseas Pakistanis will stop sending remittances to the country at the request of the PTI founder," Asif said.

**11 PIA officials enjoy free ride on first flight to Paris**

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) officials have made the most of the resumption of the airline's flights to Europe after four and a half years as 11 officials were among the passengers who were onboard the flight from Islamabad to Paris.

Those who travelled for free included the national flag carrier's CEO, director technical, director HR and director commercial.

And if that was not enough, they all travelled in the Club Class rather than in the Economy Class.

Moreover, the family of one of the officials was also onboard the flight.

However, according to the PIA spokesman, the family had paid for their journey, while the officials had gone to the French capital to review the airline's flight operation.

Gandapur says 10 of 12 workers killed in Sanjdi coalmine explosion were from KP

**Bureau Report**

Peshawar: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said on Saturday that 10 residents of his province were among 12 workers killed in a coalmine collapse in Sanjdi, 40 kilometres from the Balochistan capital Quetta.

The mine in the Sanjdi coal field collapsed after a methane

gas explosion on Thursday and a dozen miners were trapped inside it, according to the Balochistan mining department.

Rescue teams from the Balochistan mining department and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) recovered bodies of four miners on Friday after an hours-long operation.

In a statement issued from his office, CM Gandapur said 19 of the deceased miners hailed from the Shangla district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"We share the grief of the bereaved families," the chief minister was quoted as saying

by his office.

On Friday, Balochistan Chief Mines Inspector Abdul Ghani said the workers had been digging coal at 4,000 feet inside the mine, adding that the entire mine had caved in due to the intensity of the gas explosion.

"The mining department will conduct a thorough investigation to assess what kind of safety measures were put in place by the private mine owners," he said.

At least 82 coal miners working on different projects were killed in Balochistan in 46 accidents last year, according to the Balochistan mining department.

**LHC to hear Imran Khan's bail pleas in May 9 cases on Jan 13**

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: A two-member bench of the Lahore High Court (LHC) headed by Chief Justice Aalia Neelum will hear jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's bail petitions on January 13.

Justice Asjad Javaid Ghural is member of the bench. The LHC registrar has scheduled Imran Khan's petitions for hearing and issued the cause list. Imran Khan has filed bail pleas in Jinnah House and other cases of May 9. He has pleaded that he was in the custody of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in Islamabad on May 9.

He said that he was implicated in these cases and it was political victimization. He said that he had been facing the cases for the last two years, but still political victimization was continuing. He asked the court to grant him bail in eight cases.





# CM Maryam Nawaz inaugurates the Pak-Turk Maarif International School and College

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif inaugurated the Pak-Turk Maarif International School and College in Multan. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif attended the inauguration ceremony as the chief guest.

The little girls of the Turk Maarif International School and College welcomed them in Turkish and presented a bouquet. Turkish Education Minister Yusuf Takin, Turkish Ambassador to Turkey, President of Maarif International School Foundation Birel Aygun and other Turkish officials were also present. The national anthems of Pakistan and Turkey were played at the ceremony.

A documentary film about the Pak-Turk Maarif International School was also shown. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited the Pak-Turk Maarif International School.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited the library and other departments of the Pak-Turk Maarif International School. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of Maarif International School Multan, said that it is an honor to welcome you all to the historic city of Multan on the inauguration of the Turk Maarif International School.

The presence of the Turkish Education Minister is a symbol of deep and lasting friendship between the two nations. The presence of the Turkish Minister of Education is a source of pride. The leadership and dedication of Turkish Minister of Education Yusuf Tekin is a beacon of light for all of us.

He said that he also welcomes the esteemed members of the Maarif Foundation from the bottom of his heart. The tireless efforts have made the Maarif Foundation a reality.

The efforts of the Maarif Foundation to promote education and cultural exchange are a reflection of the shared vision of Pakistan and Turkey. He said that on behalf of the people of Punjab, I thank you all.

The Maarif Foundation has played a valuable role in the educational landscape of the region. I also thank President Recep Tayyip Erdogan from the bottom of my heart, he is a true brother of Pakistan—President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's unwavering support has further strengthened the relations between the two nations.

He said that in times of need, Turkey has always proven its sincerity by standing side by side with Pakistan—President Erdogan's vision has played an important role in promoting development and progress in Punjab and across the country. I pray that Pak-Turkey friendship and partnership continue to flourish for generations to come.



## Election

FAISALABAD: A lawyer is casting her vote during annual election of District Bar in City on Saturday.



Photo: Online

## Importance of women's education is greater than ever today

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: PTI leader and candidate for NA-148 Dr. Rubina Akhtar has said that the importance of education among women is more important than ever in any country, especially in Muslim countries, because without the education and skills of women, no country can ever be economically strong.

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of education and advised that get an education even if you have to go to China. It is welcome that a global conference on women's education in Muslim countries is being held in Pakistan.

Delegations from 44 countries are participating in the conference, but there is a need to collectively formulate a plan of action in which such a practical and comprehensive policy should be formulated to address the



challenges faced by women's education and to solve them, which has far-reaching results and is an example

for future generations.

She expressed these views while addressing a women's corner meeting

in Basti Jhok Balu NA-148. A large number of women participated on this occasion.

## Construction of additional canals on the Indus poses an existential threat to the Sindhi nation

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Leaders from the Sindhi Association of North America, Pakistan People's Party Sindh, Awami Tahreek, Sindhiyani Tahreek, Sindh Taraqi Pasand Party, Sindh United Party, Awami Jamhuri Party, Jeay Sindh, Awami Workers Party, along with water experts and technocrats, participated in the Sana Sindh Water Conference held at the Pakistan Arts Council in Karachi.

This technical and socio-political session, titled "Let the River Flow," featured speeches by Dr. Maqbool Halepoto, Walid Shaikh Nisar Khuhro, Advocate Wasand Thari, Umrah Samo, Dr. Qadir Magsi, Jagdish Ahuja, Niaz Kalani, Zulfiqar Junior, Bakhshal Thalo, Ibrar Qazi, Nasir Memon, Mahmood Nawaz, Ahsan Laghari, Syed Lal Shah, Shabina Faraz, and others.

The collective stance emphasized that the construction of additional canals on the Indus River is an existential threat to the Sindhi nation. They reiterated that the Indus is not merely a river but the lifeline and creator of one of the world's oldest civilizations.

Let the river flow, unbound and untamed, carving its destiny through every obstacle. Like the river, let life and creativity break barriers, shaping a world of endless possibilities.

## Abducted dispenser freed from the clutches of kidnappers; 3 killed



Rafiullah Mandokhel

ZHOBB: A dispenser who was kidnapped with his business associate on Wednesday has been recovered safely from the clutches of kidnappers. Local tribes and Levies personnel encircled the kidnappers in the hilly terrain and killed three of them.

On January 8th, some armed men appeared at a local health facility in the Gwal Ismailzai area on the Zhob-Quetta national highway, asking the dispenser Juma Rahim and his business partner under the pretext of a patient's medical examination. The health practitioners smelled a rat in the intention of the men on the way; however, upon resistance, the kidnappers shot and killed Masood Khan Kakar on the highway. Due to their vehicle breaking down, they took Juma Rahim away on foot towards the mountains, leaving their vehicle behind.

The news of the tragic incident spread like wildfire in the area, and the local tribes chased the kidnappers at different locations. After 24 hours, the kidnappers were overcome, and the abducted Juma Rahim was freed from the clutches of the kidnappers. The eyewitnesses say, there was also an exchange of fire between the local tribes and the kidnappers that resulted in the deaths of three kidnappers.

## Revolutionary Step by Sindh Government: Free Crop Insurance Program for Farmers

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: In a groundbreaking move for Sindh's agriculture sector, the provincial government has announced a Free Crop Insurance Program for Farmers, which is expected to be a game-changer for agricultural development and farmer welfare. Sindh's Minister for Agriculture, Sardar Muhammad Bux Mahar, has taken this initiative to ensure financial security for farmers against natural disasters, unexpected rainfall, floods, and crop diseases.

Under the dynamic leadership of Sardar Muhammad Bux Mahar, the Sindh government is not only taking measures to financially safeguard farmers but also introducing modern strategies to enhance the agricultural sector. "Our goal is to ensure financial stability for every farmer in Sindh, and this crop insurance program is a significant step in that direction. We guarantee that this initiative will directly benefit farmers, and no malpractice will be tolerated." To ensure the success of this project, Sardar Muhammad Bux

Mahar has issued special directives to establish a transparent system that will provide digital registration and direct financial assistance to farmers.

Farmer representatives and agricultural experts have lauded this initiative and praised the efforts of the Agriculture Minister. They believe that:

"Muhammad Bux Mahar is making crucial decisions for the welfare of farmers in Sindh. If implemented effectively, this program will bring positive transformations to Sindh's agricultural economy."

The government is collaborating with local and international insurance companies to execute this plan efficiently. Following the directives of Minister Mahar, the registration process for insured crops will begin on a priority basis.

The initial phase of the program will cover the following districts:

Farmers have expressed great trust in Muhammad Bux Mahar, acknowledging his sincere efforts in promoting Sindh's agriculture sector. A farmer, Khan Muhammad Jatoi, stated:



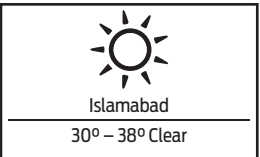
"For years, we have been waiting for compensation for crop losses. With Muhammad Bux Mahar's leadership, we finally have hope for a better future."

The Free Crop Insurance Program, initiated under the

leadership of Sardar Muhammad Bux Mahar, is a revolutionary step for Sindh's agricultural sector. If implemented with transparency and efficiency, this initiative has the potential to transform the lives of farmers by providing

them with financial security and strengthening Sindh's agricultural economy. This visionary move by the Agriculture Minister marks a historic milestone in the province's journey towards sustainable and prosperous farming.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:45 am
Zohr	12:16 pm
Asr	3:41 pm
Maghrib	5:19 pm
Isha	6:47 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

# Chairman NHA visits Rescue 1122 Punjab Headquarters

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: NHA is working on a comprehensive plan of action to ensure safety of the commuters on National Highways and Motorways. Provision of emergency services to the commuters on National Highways and Motorways to minimise loss of lives as outcome of any accident is the integral part of this plan. In order to give concrete shape to the emergency services provision plan of action, Chairman NHA visited the headquarters of Rescue 1122. Chairman NHA Muhammad Shaheryar Sultan shared the vision of the Federal Minister for Communications regarding placement of Rescue 1122 emergency services

at all National Highways and Motorways across the country in collaboration with provincial emergency departments. The Chairman on the occasion said that every human life is important. In case of any accident, prompt emergency services can help save lives. It is the top most priority of NHA to work tirelessly to minimise accidents on roads and provide emergency services in case of accidents.

DG Rescue 1122 provided briefing about operations of 1122 addressing key achievements and operational issues. It was also briefed that out of 74 locations, ambulances have been stationed at 44 locations. The remaining 30 locations were indicated for

placement of ambulances.

The Chairman NHA assured that NHA will take all possible measures and help out this purpose and instructed Member Central Zone NHA for liaison with Rescue 1122 team to achieve the target oriented goal for this purpose.

The Chairman NHA commended the dedication and professionalism of Rescue 1122 personnel and expressed his appreciation for the tireless efforts of Rescue 1122 personnel in safeguarding the lives and property of the citizens.

The Chairman NHA also inspected key facilities which included control room and communication systems, ambulance bays and maintenance facilities and training centres



and equipment. Chairman expressed their resolve efforts to ensure safety and commuters on National Highways and Motorways. NHA and DG Rescue 1122 to ensure collaborative emergency services for all

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## Former PM AJK Raja Farooq Haider called on President AJK Barrister Sultan



Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here today. During the meeting, the duo discussed in detail the issues of mutual concern, prevailing political situation in AJK and human rights situation in Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Both the leaders agreed in principle to launch an effective campaign from the base camp to promote Kashmir cause at global level besides highlighting the plight of the Kashmiri people. Voicing their serious concern over the fast deteriorating political and human rights situation in the Indian held territory of Jammu and Kashmir, they said on the one hand India was killing innocent civilians in Kashmir while on the other hand it had choked every kind of dissent in the region by imprisoning Hurriyat leaders, civil rights activists and journalists who criticized its sledgehammer policy towards Kashmir and the Kashmiri people. On this occasion, former Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan appreciated Barrister Chaudhry's significant contribution to the Kashmir cause and his efforts to highlight the issue at international levels. Meanwhile, Minister for Power Development Organization Chaudhry Muhammad Rashid and Minister for Public Works Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq also had a detailed meeting with president the Aiwane-e-Sadr. During the meeting the current political situation in Azad Kashmir, as well as other matters of concern came under discussion. Speaking on this occasion, Barrister Chaudhry stressed the need for highlighting Kashmir issue internally and externally.

## Initial consultations were held today between Chaudhry Anwarul Haq and Khawaja Farooq

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Initial consultations were held today between Leader of the House and Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq and Leader of the Opposition Khawaja Farooq Ahmed regarding the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner under Article 50 Sub-Article 4 of the Constitution. During this, it was unanimously decided that the scope of the consultations would be further expanded to make this constitutional appointment non-controversial.

## Motor Car Stand Union Holds Press Conference Against TMA Wana

Umer Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: In a press conference at the Wana Press Club, the Chairman of the Motor Car Stand Union, Marth Khan, President Hussain Khan, Finance Secretary Ismail Khan, and others stated that they reject the tender for the General Bus Stand, which was held in secrecy.

They claimed that the tender was awarded to a specific group, which is unjust and discriminatory towards the local tribes. They demanded that the one-sided decision be reversed, otherwise, they would protest in the Wana market and hold the district administration and TMA South Waziristan Lower responsible for any clashes between the tribes.

Union President Hussain Khan stated that they had legally obtained an NOC by paying Rs. 4.85 lakhs to the former TMA and Rs. 8 lakhs in February 2021. He alleged that the Tehsil Chairman and current TMA had conspired to hold the tender in Peshawar, which they strongly condemned.

Union General Secretary Khan Zaman said that awarding the tender to controversial individuals, Arshad Khan and Ghulam Rasool, is a conspiracy to create divisions among the tribes, which they will not allow to succeed. He pointed out that the High Court's stay order on the Wana Bus Stand is being violated, which is against the law and the court.

The union leaders appealed to the Deputy Commissioner Wana, Nasser Khan, Commissioner D. I. Khan Division, and the authorities to cancel the tender and revoke the orders awarding the General Bus Stand to Arshad Khan and Ghulam Rasool, citing that the tender was held in their absence.

## A delegation FANSA and IRSP visited the model village Takht Bhai

Correspondent

TAKHT BHAI: A delegation from the Freshwater Action Network South Asia (FANSA) and IRSP Mardan Water Supply and Sanitation Company visited the model village of Takht under the auspices of TMA Takht Bhai. The delegation appreciated the efforts made by TMA Takht Bhai in collaboration with the youth organization, Tanzeem Nojawan Takht, for improving cleanliness and beautification in the village. During the visit, TMO Rehman Sher emphasized that development is impossible without public participation. Chief Officer Usman Ali Nashad highlighted that the model village concept is gaining recognition across the province, with work beginning on additional model villages in Aslam Kalle and Pir Abad.

## Operation Against illegal Encroachment in Kamalia

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: In the light of the orders of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the campaign to end the encroachment is going on. Under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Muhammad Naeem Sindhu, Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Iqra Nasir and Chief Officer Ali Raza are conducting an operation against encroachment in the city under their supervision. Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir said that a zero tolerance policy has been adopted to eliminate encroachments and no one will be allowed to take the law into their hands. She appealed to the people to cooperate with the administration and end the encroachments. Playing your role to make Kamalia city beautiful can be made. Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir Said that this operation against encroachments will continue in the future.



## Birth anniversary of Hakim Said observed

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Several simple but graceful events were held on Thursday to mark the birth anniversary of Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, the martyred founder of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and Hamdard University (HU), at Madinat al-Hikmah, the main campus of the university.

The day began with recitation of the Holy Quran at the mausoleum of Hakim Said, after which Fatcha was offered by the students and staff of the university, who were led by Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Syed Shabib-ul-Hasan. A memorial ceremony was then held at the Hamdard Public School, which was also attended by Hakim Said's daughter and HU's Chancellor Madam Sadia Rashid.

The chief guest on the occasion was Prof Dr Ahsana Dar and the guest of honour was Accountant General of Sindh Baber Khan. The other prominent personalities present on the occasion were HU's Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Shabib-ul-Hasan, Registrar Kaleem A.



Ghias, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan's Director Syed M. Arsalan, HFP's Adviser Sumera Javed, Syed Mansoob Ahmed, Shakila Khurram, Saleem Farooqi, and Alia Kashif Azimi.

An exhibition of calligraphic pieces prepared by the students of the univer-

sity and arranged at Bait al-Hikmah was inaugurated by Madam Sadia. She expressed delight over the high quality of some of the paintings on display.

A brief citation describing the life and achievements of the martyred visionary was read out on the occasion.

Hakim Said — who was instrumental in reviving Unani medicine in Pakistan and launching a number of educational institutions and business and philanthropic ventures — was born on Jan 9, 1920 in Delhi. He was assassinated by unknown gunmen on October 17, 1998.



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# Pakistan Issues Guidelines for Carbon Market Trading: A Great Initiative for Sustainability

**Ahad Hassan**

In a landmark development, the government of Pakistan has officially issued comprehensive guidelines for carbon market trading, setting the stage for the establishment of a formal carbon trading system in the country. This initiative is a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey toward sustainability, economic development, and climate resilience. The guidelines aim to provide a clear roadmap for the operational functions of carbon markets, aligning Pakistan with international climate commitments while fostering green job creation and facilitating private sector engagement.

Carbon markets are a critical tool in global efforts to mitigate climate change. By allowing businesses and nations to buy and sell carbon credits, carbon markets place a price on carbon emissions and incentivize reductions. As the world seeks to curb the impacts of climate change, carbon trading mechanisms have become an essential part of the global solution.

Pakistan, one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, has long struggled with rising temperatures, shifting weather patterns, and natural disasters. The carbon market will enable Pakistan to meet its climate targets more effectively by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fostering sustainable development

practices, and enhancing its resilience to climate-related risks.

A critical feature of the new guidelines is their focus on private sector participation. The government recognizes the vital role that businesses will play in achieving national climate goals. By offering incentives such as tax breaks, carbon credits, and access to new financial streams, the guidelines encourage private sector investments in cleaner technologies and emissions reductions. This also aligns with Pakistan's broader vision of creating a sustainable, market-based economy.

Pakistan is a signatory to the Paris Agreement, which sets global targets for reducing carbon emissions and limiting global temperature rise. The guidelines aim to ensure that Pakistan's carbon trading system aligns with international standards, facilitating the country's participation in global carbon markets. This will allow Pakistan to sell carbon credits to other countries or industries, creating a potential revenue stream while contributing to the global effort to mitigate climate change.

One of the key promises of the carbon trading system is job creation in green sectors. As the carbon market grows, it will stimulate employment opportunities in areas such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, carbon management, and environmental consulting. This will not only support Pakistan's green economy but also offer long-term bene-

fits to communities across the country. The success of any carbon market hinges on the integrity and transparency of its processes. To ensure credibility and accuracy, the guidelines emphasize the need for a robust Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system. This system will be essential for tracking emissions reductions, certifying carbon credits, and ensuring that participants adhere to the required standards.

Through the MRV system, the government will be able to monitor progress towards emissions reduction targets, verify the validity of carbon credits, and prevent fraudulent practices. The guidelines outline the establishment of a transparent, accountable reporting framework that will build trust among stakeholders and ensure the market operates efficiently.

While the issuance of these guidelines is a significant step, the full establishment of Pakistan's carbon market will require careful planning, infrastructure development, and ongoing stakeholder collaboration. The government will need to work closely with private sector players, environmental organizations, and international partners to ensure the smooth implementation of the carbon market.

The guidelines also highlight the need for public awareness and education on the benefits of carbon trading. By promoting understanding and engagement among businesses and the general public, the

government aims to create a vibrant, sustainable carbon market that delivers tangible benefits for both the environment and the economy.

Pakistan's decision to issue guidelines for carbon market trading represents a bold and forward-thinking approach to addressing the challenges of climate change. The initiative provides a clear roadmap for creating a dynamic carbon market that will not only help Pakistan meet its international climate obligations but also contribute to long-term economic growth and resilience.

Through private sector engagement, the creation of green jobs, and the implementation of a rigorous MRV system, the guidelines set a solid foundation for the success of the carbon market. As the global community moves toward a low-carbon future, Pakistan's leadership in establishing this market will position the country as a key player in the global fight against climate change, demonstrating that economic development and environmental sustainability can go hand in hand.

The government's proactive steps in issuing these guidelines reflect its commitment to a sustainable future, offering hope and opportunity for future generations. Pakistan is now poised to reap the environmental, economic, and social benefits of a well-functioning carbon market—an initiative that holds promise for both the nation and the planet.

## Israel continues denying 'vital aid' to reach Gaza amid harrowing living conditions

Israeli authorities continue to deny UN-led efforts to reach North Gaza with lifesaving aid, including the most recent attempt on Friday, as Palestinians languish without basic needs, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

OCHA is also deeply concerned about the impact that dwindling fuel supplies are having on essential services rendering the situation in Gaza critical. Palestinian telecommunication providers are now warning that their services may start to shut down on Saturday due to fuel shortages.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on Friday that Al Awda Hospital – the last partially functioning hospital in North Gaza governorate – is critically low on fuel and essential medical supplies.

Parts of the region, namely Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanoun and Jabaliya refugee camps, have been besieged for more than three months now and Al Awda has been overwhelmed with patients.

Conditions have only deteriorated following the forced closure of the Kamal Adwan and Indonesian hospitals in the north, due to repeated attacks, raids and forced evacuations.

Dujarric, the UN spokesperson, called for immediate action to be taken to make roads passable and facilitate access to the crippled health facilities.

Meanwhile, new reporting from OCHA indicates that during the first week of this year, Israeli forces killed three Palestinians, including a child, and injured 38 others across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

During the first week of the year, Israeli settlers also injured 18 Palestinians across the West Bank, including nine in Silwad village in Ramallah governorate.

Separately, armed Palestinians shot and killed three Israeli settlers and injured eight others near Qalqiliya.

Already this year, more than 50 Palestinians in the West Bank have been displaced due to home demolitions, the majority in Silwan in East Jerusalem.

In the Jenin refugee camp, security forces with the Palestinian Authority have been clashing with militant factions for more than a month.

OCHA reports that since the operation began, access to the camp has been heavily restricted.

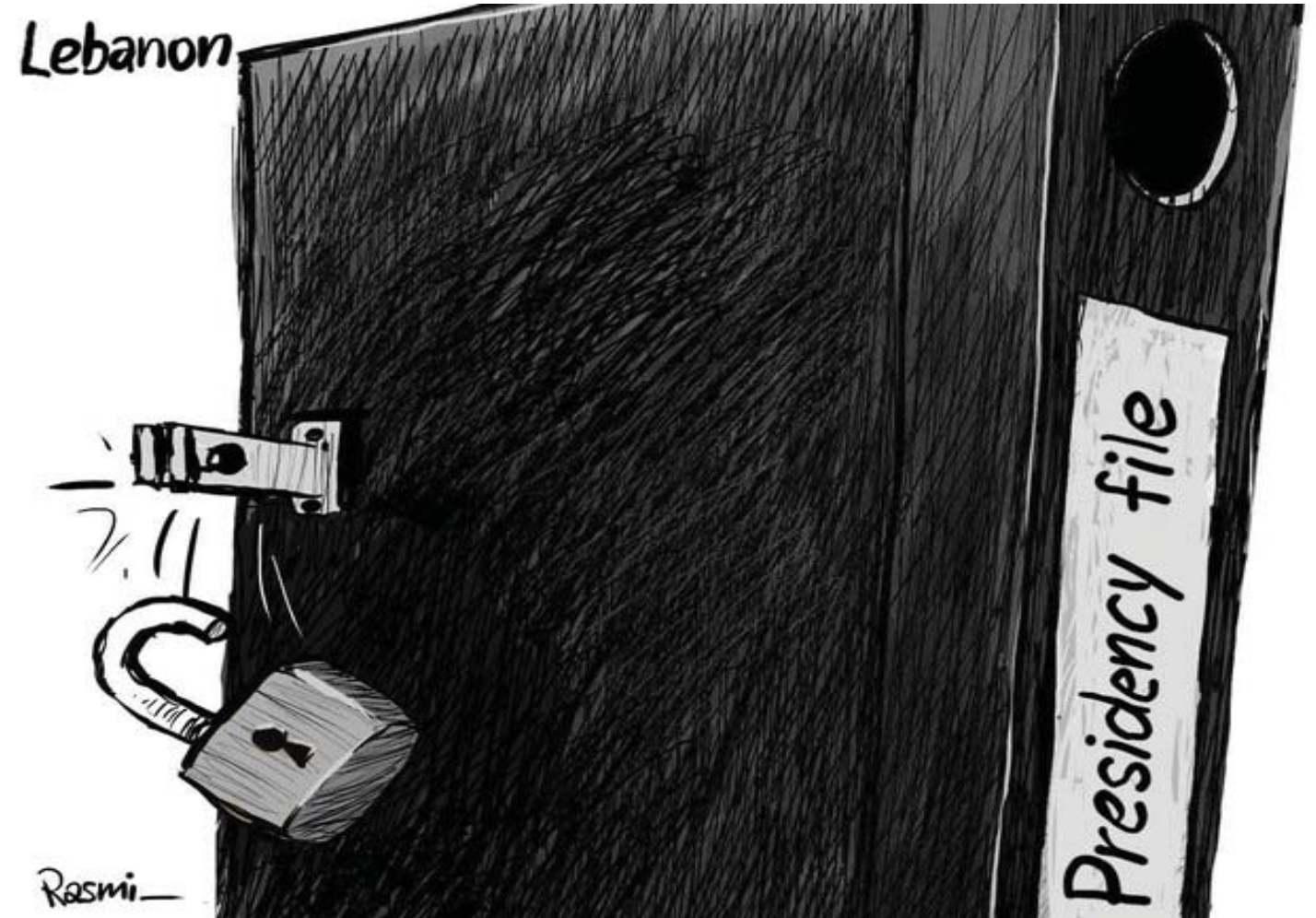
The UN's Palestine refugee agency, UNRWA, estimates that some 3,400 people remain in the Jenin camp, amid dire conditions whilst more than 2,000 families have been displaced to Jenin city.

OCHA has mobilised partners to respond to the needs of the affected families both inside and outside the camp, according to Mr. Dujarric. In Lebanon, \$30 million was allocated on Friday from the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund to address the devastating impact of the recent conflict.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator Imran Riza, highlighted the destruction of civilian infrastructure and the crippling of basic services, including healthcare, water and sanitation, amid heavy fighting between Hezbollah and Israeli forces.

Although a ceasefire is now being observed, the humanitarian toll remains severe.

The funding will focus on food security, shelter, nutrition, protection, healthcare, water, sanitation and education while localised, community-driven responses will ensure the most vulnerable populations are prioritized.



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

## 2025 Vision for the Future, Dynamic Fusion of Education and Economic Development

**Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq**

Envisioning the future of 2025, the integration of education and economic development plays a critical role in shaping a prosperous and sustainable society. The dynamic fusion of these two pillars can pave the way for innovation, growth, and progress. The potential vision for the year 2025 where education and economic development are linked to drive positive change and foster a thriving global community. Education has always been a fundamental component of societal advancement.

In the year 2025, the landscape of education is expected to undergo significant transformations. With the rapid evolution of technology, personalized learning experiences, and the emphasis on developing skills for the future, education systems are likely to become more flexible, inclusive, and diverse. The focus will shift from traditional rote learning to fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities among students. In this dynamic educational environment, collaboration between educational institutions, industries, and governments will be crucial.

Strong partnerships, educational institutions can align their curricula with the needs of the job market, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to thrive in a rapidly changing economy. This collaboration can also facilitate research and innovation, driving technological advancements and creating opportunities for economic growth. Furthermore, the integration of vocational training and lifelong learning programs will become increasingly

important in 2025. As the nature of work evolves and new industries emerge, continuous upskilling and reskilling will be essential for individuals to remain competitive in the job market.

Educational initiatives that offer flexible, accessible, and practical training opportunities will empower individuals to adapt to changing economic demands and pursue rewarding careers. On the economic development front, the year 2025 is expected to witness a paradigm shift towards sustainable and inclusive growth. Governments, businesses, and communities will collaborate to create a supportive ecosystem that fosters innovations.

The concept of the knowledge economy will be central to driving economic progress. One of the key reasons why the knowledge economy is central to driving economic progress lies in its potential to spur innovation and creativity. Knowledge-based industries such as information technology, biotechnology, and renewable energy will flourish, creating new job opportunities and driving productivity gains. A knowledge economy promotes human capital development and skill enhancement, which are critical factors in achieving sustainable economic growth. As highlighted by the World Bank (2007), investments in education, training, and lifelong learning can significantly enhance productivity and competitiveness, ultimately boosting economic progress.

Countries that prioritize education, research, and technology transfer will be at the forefront of this economic transformation, attracting investment, talent, and innovation. Moreover, the year 2025 will see a greater emphasis on sustainability and environmental stewardship in economic development strategies. With the looming threats of climate change and resource depletion, businesses and

governments will need to adopt green practices, reduce carbon emissions, and promote circular economies. Sustainable practices into economic policies, countries can mitigate climate risks, protect natural resources, and promote long-term economic resilience.

The vision for the future of 2025 envisions a dynamic fusion of education and economic development that drives innovation, growth, and prosperity. Embracing technology, collaboration, and sustainability, societies can create a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous future for all. Education will be the cornerstone of this vision, equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to thrive in a rapidly changing world, while economic development will provide the opportunities and resources for sustainable growth.

In Pakistan, working together to integrate education and economic development, we can build a brighter future for generations to come. Education is the cornerstone of progress, providing individuals with the knowledge, skills, and mindset essential for navigating the complexities of modern work environments. Moreover, the fusion of education and economic development in 2025 will be characterized by a strong emphasis on collaboration between academia, industry, and government. This three-way partnership will facilitate knowledge transfer, technology diffusion, and innovation ecosystems that drive economic competitiveness and propel sustainable growth. Establishing robust linkages between educational institutions, businesses, and policy-makers, countries can foster a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and continuous improvement across all sectors.

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

## Mini-Lateralism: Redefining Global Alliances - I

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, the limitations of traditional multilateralism have become increasingly evident. The post-Cold War era saw the proliferation of large international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and regional alliances. While these frameworks aimed to ensure cooperation on key issues like security, trade, and climate change, their efficacy has faced mounting challenges due to bureaucracy, divergent national interests, and an inability to address pressing problems swiftly. Against this backdrop, mini-lateralism has emerged as a pragmatic and strategic alternative to multilateralism, driving contemporary global politics significantly.

Mini-lateralism refers to forming smaller, more focused coalitions among states with shared interests and common goals. Unlike multilateral platforms that involve dozens or even hundreds of countries, mini-lateral groupings are nimble, results-oriented, and better equipped to produce tangible outcomes. While some view it as a departure from inclusivity, others argue it reflects a more realistic and agile response to the complexities of 21st-century geopolitics.

**Why Mini-Lateralism is Gaining Ground?**  
 The contemporary world is shaped by rising geopolitical tensions, economic interdependence, and technological transformations. Large multilateral organizations, while aspirational in their scope, often struggle to accommodate the diverse priorities of member states. For instance, the United Nations faces gridlock due to conflicting interests among major powers, particularly in the Security Council. Similarly, the WTO's inability to resolve trade disputes and negotiate new agreements highlights the diminishing relevance of broad-based platforms.

In contrast, mini-lateralism thrives on its efficiency and flexibility. Mini-lateral groupings are formed with a limited number of like-minded states, prioritizing functionality over inclusivity. Examples include the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) involving the United States, India, Japan, and Australia, which focuses on maritime security and countering China's influence in the Indo-Pacific. Likewise, trilateral agreements such as AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) underscore a strategic response to regional security dynamics. Such frameworks allow countries to align specific issues, by passing the lengthy deliberations typical of multilateral institutions.

Moreover, mini-lateralism complements bilateralism by fostering cooperation between small groups of countries while avoiding the pitfalls of one-on-one power asymmetry. It also enables states to pool resources, expertise, and influence in pursuit of shared goals without being overwhelmed by divergent national interests.

1) Geopolitical Shifts and Strategic Competition: The resurgence of great power competition, particularly between the United States and China, has altered global power dynamics. As major powers seek to counterbalance each other, mini-lateral alliances serve as a crucial mechanism for promoting regional stability and strategic alignment. For example, the Quad's emphasis on maritime security reflects a shared interest in containing China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific.

2) The Decline of Multilateral Institutions: Global institutions like the United Nations and WTO are increasingly viewed as ineffective in addressing critical global issues.



Analysis

Om Parkash

To be continued



# Minister Rana Tanveer inaugurated the 7th Pakistan Edible Oils Conference in Karachi

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain inaugurated the 7th Pakistan Edible Oils Conference here in Karachi today. He was accompanied by Malaysian Minister for Plantation & Commodities YB Dato Seri Johari Bin and Malaysian High Commissioner H. E. Dato Muhammad Azhar Mazlan.

While addressing the conference Rana Tanveer Hussain said that Pakistan is indeed a very important market for edible oils and oil seeds. Unfortunately, our indigenous production is very low and our dependence on the import of edible oil is around 90% of our requirements. We import around 3 million tons of palm oil from Malaysia and Indonesia. Indonesia due to its huge production occupied a major share in the Pakistan market that is around 85%-90%. Our

government is making all efforts to increase local production.

The Minister informed the audience about the progress in increasing the production of local Rapeseed and Sunflower seed. He stated that we are giving maximum incentives to increase our local production and in this regard, I invite our brothers from Malaysia and Indonesia to come forward in the field of Agri Production in Pakistan.

Rana Tanveer Hussain commended the efforts of Pakistan Edible Oil Conference (PEOC) in providing a platform to all the stakeholders to come under one-roof not only to interact but also to explore the possibilities of enhancing the trade between brotherly countries of Pakistan.

He maintained that apart from edible oils, Pakistan is a huge market to crush oil seeds which not only produce edible oil for the local industry but also meal for our poultry industry. Our

crushing industry has enhanced the value addition and we hope that with the existing crushing capacity, we can explore the possibilities of exporting soyameal and canola-meal all over the world.

The minister underscored the opportunities for Malaysia and Indonesia in particular and many countries in general to invest in Pakistan's infrastructure projects which will not only enhance our capabilities but will also facilitate international trade. "We have the best logistics available in Pakistan and we are still improving the infrastructure at our Seaports", he added.

Rana Tanveer Hussain expressed his profound gratitude to the Malaysian Minister, Dato Seri Johari Bin Abdul Ghani for sparing his valuable time for the conference. He said, "I shall be happy to further interact with him to enhance the bilateral trade between Malaysia and Pakistan".



## Certificates Distribution Ceremony for Volunteers under Pakistan Hajj Volunteers Group

**Special Correspondent**

JEDDAH: A certificates distribution ceremony for volunteers of the Hijaz Region was organized under the auspices of the Pakistan Hajj Volunteers Group (PHVG) in Saudi Arabia. A large number of Hajj volunteers and community leaders attended the event.

Addressing the ceremony, Consul General Jeddah, Khalid Majeed, appreciated the services of the volunteers, stating that PHVG volunteers selflessly serve and guide the guests of Allah, which is commendable. He assured the volunteers of the Consulate's full support.

Director General Hajj, Abdul Wahab Soomro, emphasized the need to strengthen mutual cooperation for better service to pilgrims. He announced plans to further enhance collaboration between the Pakistan Hajj Mission and PHVG to improve services for the guests of Allah.

Representing the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, General Manager for Social Services and Volunteers, Abdullah Al-Harbi, participated in the event and distributed certificates



of appreciation to the volunteers.

Concluding the ceremony, the group's Central Coordinator, Ashraf Ali Khan, expressed gratitude to Abdullah Al-Harbi, representatives from the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, Pakistan Embassy Riyadh, Consulate General Jeddah, Pakistan Hajj Mission, and other community members. He highlighted that the volunteers not only serve the guests of Allah but also

contribute to Pakistan's goodwill.

The event was attended by Deputy Consul General Adnan Javed, Director Hajj Faheem Khan Afridi, PHVG officials from Riyadh and Dammam, journalists, community members, and hundreds of volunteers. The ceremony was hosted by Abdul Malik and Kamran Khan, during which certificates of appreciation were distributed among hundreds of volunteers.

## Controversial statements Elon Musk is making are deeply worrying: Kanjira

**Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah**

LONDON: Atta Ullah Ghanjera, CEO of Flavour Peri Peri Chicken, a prominent London businessman and social activist, has expressed serious concerns about Elon Musk. He stated that, through his posts on the social media platform X, Elon Musk has unsuccessfully attempted to use his influence to spread harmful ideas and undermine democracy by disseminating false information about Pakistanis living in the UK.

"The controversial statements Elon Musk is making are deeply worrying," Kanjira remarked. He added that Musk's behavior reflects a global trend where powerful individuals exploit their platforms to normalize prejudice and create division.

"Elon Musk has shown sympathies with far-right ideologies, which are rooted in anti-Muslim incitement, Ghanjera further stated. He emphasized that



British citizens of Pakistani origin actively contribute to the country's development and prosperity by collaborating with local communities and the UK government.

"This contribution can be witnessed in every sector—healthcare, education, parliament, and local councils—where Pakistanis, including women, are working alongside others to build a better society. When examining crimes in proportion to the total population, Pakistanis do not even make up 2% of offenders. Furthermore, Pakistanis have introduced businesses that have created thousands of jobs," he noted. Ghanjera strongly condemned Musk's statements, saying, "Elon Musk's remarks are intended to incite hatred and create divisions against peace-loving people."

It should be noted that Elon Musk recently made serious allegations against the British government and politicians, accusing them of covering up grooming gang crimes and even demanding the dismissal of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

## Lord Nazir condemns child sexual abuse and supports the strongest measures against offenders

**Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah**

LONDON: Lord Nazir Ahmed Of Rotherham, while speaking to the Daily The spokesman said "I have noticed attempts to falsely associate me with grooming gangs and recent events being discussed in the UK". Let me be clear:

I categorically condemn child sexual abuse and support the strongest measures against offenders, no matter their background.

In my case, the charges were based on allegations over 50 years old. During the trial, Judge Richardson QC described the Prosecution's conduct as follows:



massive and fundamental failure to exercise the...disclosure regimen on

the part of the prosecution. In this case, that may only be characterised

as shameful... all manner of issues and concerns have been raised by this material, as has been made clear in Mr Khan's submissions."

He continued: "The schedule of when material was disclosed reveals a very worrying state of affairs. The trial stopped. It could not go on fairly. It sabotaged the trial. The Prosecution had asked for 'one more bite of the cherry, and in my view, that is completely unacceptable in this case, which was antique to start with. It is not a strong prosecution case and it has proceeded at a pace which can only be described as bordering glacial."

Judge Richardson went further to say that the Crown's "egregious conduct was nothing short

of disgraceful," adding, "Enough is enough. The case was irremediably damaged and degraded to the level where I must now intervene and put a stop to the agony of it continuing. It is my intention to grant a stay of the indictment."

He also remarked: "I have never taken such a course as this ever before.

While I served my sentence, I always maintained my innocence and believe the case against me was malicious and unjust. Despite the Judge stating the case against me was not strong, I was convicted at a time when social media was falsely associating me with grooming gangs as is happening now. Nothing can be further from the truth.

Any attempt to link me with grooming gangs or similar crimes is baseless, politically motivated and does a huge disservice to the victims of child abuse and interferes with the course of justice.

I stand firmly against child abuse and support justice for victims. However, vilifying entire communities—Muslims, Pakistanis, or others—is divisive and unjust. Let us focus on justice, unity, and the truth.

Lord Nazir Ahmed further stated, "I am deeply concerned about the campaign launched against the Pakistani community living in the UK by targeting me. I have begun consulting my lawyers on this matter to explore legal options for addressing the issue.

## Majority of sexual grooming gang crimes in the UK are committed by white men: NPCC

**Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah**

LONDON: The majority of sexual grooming gang offences in the UK are committed by white men, according to the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). This statement comes after Elon Musk, billionaire owner of Twitter/X, posted several false accusations against British Pakistani men.

Recent data from the police database shows that, where ethnicity data was available, 85% of "group-based" child abusers in the first three quarters of 2024 were white. Similarly, in 2023, 83% of offenders were white.

Richard Fewkes, the director of the NPCC's Hydrant Programme, which targets child sexual abuse, stated there is no "significant issue" tied to "any particular ethnicity or setting."

Fewkes' comments followed Musk's controversial online campaign against the UK government, where Musk made

false claims regarding Prime Minister Keir Starmer's handling of grooming gang offences during his tenure as head of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Starmer had previously ensured that offenders from various backgrounds, including Pakistanis, Asians, and white men, were prosecuted for their crimes during the height of the grooming gang scandals.

Musk falsely accused the Prime Minister of being "complicit in the rape of Britain" due to his record as the former director of public prosecutions. Musk also targeted safeguarding minister Jess Phillips, calling her a "witch" and a "rape genocide apologist."

Speaking at a press briefing, Fewkes stated: "The data reflects what you would expect to see across the country in terms of ethnicity. Offences involving grooming gangs are predominantly committed by white offenders. There is no significant issue with any partic-

ular ethnicity or setting."

The NPCC added that this data, which was collated for the first time, will now inform training for new officers and guide decision-making at a local police force level. Fewkes also clarified: "The data we collect now is a starting point."

In recent days, the issue has sparked heated debates, with calls for a national statutory inquiry into child rape by Pakistani men. Reform UK leader Nigel Farage has demanded a probe into "the extent to which gangs of Pakistani men were raping young white girls." This has led to further false accusations from several anti-Muslim and anti-immigration figures targeting the Pakistani community as a whole.

However, Fewkes cautioned that the focus on grooming gangs involving specific ethnicities has overshadowed other critical aspects of child sexual abuse, including cases occur-



ring within families. Assistant Chief Constable Becky Riggs, NPCC's lead for child protection and abuse investigation, emphasized the importance of

addressing "all threats from all races and ethnicities."

Riggs also warned that the recent debates have "marginalized victims"

and diverted attention from broader issues of child sexual abuse.

Gabrielle Shaw, Chief Executive of the National Association for People Abused in Childhood, condemned the politicization of the issue, stating: "The weaponization of people's trauma should not be used to score political points or as clickbait."

According to The Telegraph, grooming gangs are responsible for two child sexual abuse offences reported to police every day. Their analysis revealed that there were 4,228 offences of "group-based" child sexual abuse in 2023, which accounted for 3.7% of the 115,489 child sexual abuse and exploitation crimes, including online offences, reported that year.

The NPCC also noted that data for the final quarter of 2024 is still being processed and was not included in the latest figures.



**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
113,247.29	112,638.26
Day's High	Day's Low
113,554.07	112,013.59
Index Value	Change
18,689,624,716	+609.03
Percentage	Time
+0.54%	10 Jan, 2025 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,248.49	-71.20
Percentage	Time
-0.86%	10 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
41,918.40	-716.80
Percentage	Time
-1.68%	10 Jan, 12:02 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,190.40	-414.69
Percentage	Time
-1.05%	10 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	173.25	175.50
Bahrain Dinar	737.40	745.40
Canadian Dollar	194.35	196.75
China Yuan	37.97	38.37
Danish Krone	38.08	38.48
Euro	288.75	291.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.47	35.82
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.77	1.83
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.65	906.15
Malaysian Ringgit	61.28	61.88
New Zealand \$	153.98	155.98
Norwegians Krone	24.16	24.46
Omani Riyal	721.75	730.25
Qatari Riyal	75.9	76.60
Saudi Riyal	74.00	74.55
Singapore Dollar	204.5	206.5
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	344.50	348
US Dollar	278.75	280.25

# Regional connectivity is the cornerstone of inclusive development: speakers

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: An international seminar on "Regional Trade & Connectivity: Discovering New Horizons & Opportunities" was held at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis (ISSRA), bringing together heads of foreign missions, policymakers, and industry leaders.

Mr. Musadik Masood Malik, Federal Minister for Petroleum was the chief guest on the occasion whereas H. E Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. He lent his global expertise to the discussions.

The event was hosted by ISSRA in collaboration with National Logistics Corporation (NLC). The seminar aimed at strengthening regional connectivity and exploring opportunities leading to economic integration across the region.

H. E Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem articulated a compelling vision for modern supply chains. "The modern supply chain is no longer merely a network; it is the lifeline of global trade," he stated. To ensure resilience, it is crucial to invest



in infrastructure and leverage digital technologies to forecast disruptions and maintain seamless operations. He appreciated the role of NLC in promoting regional connectivity.

Ambassadors from regional countries shared their perspectives on efforts to enhance connectivity within their respective countries.

They emphasized the importance of harmonized policies, infrastructure development and removal of trade barriers to achieve the goal of regional integration.

The seminar featured thought-provoking panel discussions addressing critical challenges, including inadequate transport infra-

structure, bureaucratic inefficiencies, security concerns, and geopolitical complexities. The speakers called for modern technologies to streamline customs processes, logistics operations, and cross-border trade.

Participants also highlighted untapped opportunities in the region, such as enhanced trade in industrial and agricultural products, energy cooperation, and the potential for tourism growth. Pakistan's location as a gateway to Central Asia was underscored as a significant asset which necessitates greater investment in transport and logistics infrastructure to maximize this advantage. The speakers had a unanimous view that regional connectivity is not merely an economic imperative but a pathway to shared prosperity and mutual understanding among the nations. They expressed optimism that the seminar's deliberations would pave the way for actionable strategies to transform regional challenges into opportunities, fostering a new era of economic integration and collaboration.

The event was also attended by a large number of participants from academia, business community and senior government officials.

## Women largest entrepreneurs' 12th Wexnet 2025 exhibition begins

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: The exhibition organized by the Trade Development Authority (TDA). Jawad Paul Khuwaja, Federal Secretary of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce inaugurated the exhibition. On this occasion there ere many stalls were displayed in Expo Centre, Lahore. The Chief Guest Jawad Paul Khuwaja visited the different stall on this occasion. He said this Wexnet 2025 exhibition will be beneficial for all the women entrepreneurs and will provide a platform for women across Pakistan to expand their businesses nationally and internationally. On this occasion Ayesha Farooqui, Chairperson Handicrafts Association of Pakistan (HAP) Ayesha Farooqui, Asma Amir, Vice Chairperson, Asma Amir and Amjad Iqbal, Chairman Future Key Club Mrs. Touqeer Fatima Information Secretary (HAP) were also present on this occasion and they all appreciated this 12th



Wexnet, 2025 exhibition. There were number of stall, Cosmetic, Jim's Jewellery, Clothes, Botiques, and food were displayed in two hall at Expo Centre, Lahore. Cotham College also displayed their food stall in this exhibition.

## Jam Kamal acknowledges private sector's role in enhancing trade

**Commerce Desk**

DUBAI: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan Saturday emphasized the critical role of the private sector in strengthening trade and investment ties between Pakistan and the UAE during a luncheon hosted by the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) Dubai at the Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD).

The high-profile event brought together over 100 distinguished guests, including prominent Pakistani businessmen, VIPs, members of the PBC, and officials from the Pakistan Consulate Dubai. It provided a platform to discuss investment opportunities, enhance exports, and bolster bilateral trade relations.

In his keynote speech, the minister lauded the newly elected PBC board, expressing confidence in its ability to work in collaboration with the Commer-



cial Wing of the Pakistan Consulate to advance Pakistan-UAE trade relations. Highlighting the deep-rooted ties between the two nations, he described them as built on mutual respect, trust, and shared aspirations.

Recognizing the immense contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in the UAE, the minister acknowledged their role in fostering economic prosperity and growth. "The private sector plays a pivotal role in leading and solidifying trade and investment initiatives between Pakistan and the UAE," he stated, urging business leaders to capitalize on opportunities to boost bilateral trade and unlock new avenues for economic development.

## Ethiopia opens stock exchange in drive for investors

**AFP**

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed rang a Wall Street-style bell to officially launch the country's first stock exchange in 50 years on Friday, part of efforts to liberalise the struggling economy.

Only one company was listed on the exchange on opening day — Wegagen Bank — but an official said they were aiming to eventually include 90 firms and four million investors, without setting a timeline.

A first sale of shares in state-owned Ethio Telecom was launched in October, but the firm was not immediately listed on the exchange as expected.

"It is a new beginning," Abiy said at the launch. "I want to call upon Ethiopians to take risks." Since taking power in 2018, Abiy has been a vocal supporter of opening up the heavily state-controlled economy to competition and foreign investment.

But internal conflicts — including a devastating civil war in the northern Tigray region between 2020 and 2022 — have led to sanctions by the United States and hampered reforms.

Ethiopia has not had any form of stock exchange in 50 years, since the 1974 fall of Emperor Haile Selassie and the rise of a Marxist-inspired regime, known as the Derg, which nationalised the economy.

In recent months, the authorities have adopted a series of economic reforms to attract investors.

In December, parliament passed a law



permitting foreign banks to open subsidiaries in Ethiopia, albeit with restrictions that international firms could own only up to 49 percent of shares.

Ethiopia also announced a major reform of the exchange rate in July, allowing its currency, the birr, to float freely against the dollar.

Pegging the currency to the dollar had become increasingly unsustainable.

A \$3.4-billion aid programme from the International Monetary Fund and a \$1.5-billion financing plan from the World Bank were held back until Ethiopia accepted the

reform. Africa's second most populous country, with some 120 million people, Ethiopia recorded high rates of economic growth — often exceeding 10 percent annually — between 2004 and 2019.

But the economy has been hit by internal conflict and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine.

Growth slowed to an average of 5.9 percent between 2020 and 2023, while inflation soared from 20.4 to 30.2 percent over the same period, according to the World Bank.

## Pakistan, China reaffirm commitment to 'high-quality' CPEC phase II development

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to the high-quality development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC 2.0), with emphasis on industrialisation and special economic zones (SEZs) as well as on clean energy, agriculture and livelihood projects.

The fifth meeting of the CPEC Joint Working Group on International Cooperation and Coordination (JWG-ICC) was held in Beijing. Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch and Vice Foreign Minister of China Sun

Weidong co-chaired the meeting, Foreign Office spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch said in a press statement, on Saturday.

The group also acknowledged the "pivotal role of CPEC in promoting regional connectivity, win-win cooperation and common prosperity, including through partnerships with other countries."

The two sides reviewed with satisfaction the progress made since the fourth meeting of the JWG-ICC held in Islamabad on January 21, 2024.

The foreign secretary described CPEC as the "cornerstone" of China-Pakistan economic coopera-

tion as well as a "shining symbol" of the enduring friendship between the two countries.

The Chinese vice foreign minister highlighted the mutually reinforcing relationship of the five new corridors introduced under CPEC 2.0, namely growth, livelihood, innovation, open and green corridor with Pakistan's national development framework centered on "5 E's namely, Exports, E-Pakistan, Energy, Environment and Equity."

The two sides expressed the resolve to deepen cooperation in the fields of media, cultural exchanges and people-to-people linkages to accelerate the



building of China-Pakistan community of shared future in the new era.

## Sarwa Islamic Savings Account profit rate revised for January 2025

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Sarwa Islamic Savings Account (SISA) operates under the Shari-ah-compliant Wakala-bil-Istismar model, which is an investment agency arrangement.

In this structure, the account holders (referred to as the 'Muwakkil', or principal) appoint the 'Wakeel' (agent) to manage their funds on their behalf.

In the case of the Sarwa Islamic Savings Account, the account holders request the Registrar and National Savings (RNS) or Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) to designate the Ministry of Finance (MoF) as their agent for investing the funds in government projects or revenue-generating assets that comply with Shariah principles (referred to as the Shariah Approved Project Portfolio).

Upon receiving such a request, CDNS will instruct the MoF to establish Shari-ah-compliant agreements for the management of these investments, aiming to generate profits for the account holders.

Account holders will receive the actual profit derived from the investments made under the Wakala-bil-Istismar framework. The expected profit rates for these investments are calculated and disclosed by RNS/CDNS based on the proportionate share of each account holder's investment.

If the profit exceeds the anticipated rate, the additional earnings will be considered an incentive for the MoF as the managing agent. However, if there is a loss, the account holder (as the principal) will bear the corresponding risks, with losses shared in proportion to their investment, as per the terms of the Wakala arrangement.

Effective January 2025, CDNS has revised the profit rates for various savings schemes, including Sarwa Islamic savings account. The profit rate for the Sarwa Islamic savings account is now set at 10.44 percent (pc), a decrease from the previous rate of 11.16pc. This adjustment reflects the overall decrease in inflation rates within the country.



# Imam ul Haq makes comeback as PCB announces test squad against West Indies

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Left-handed opening batsman Imam ul Haq made a comeback as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Saturday announced a 15-member squad for the two ICC World Test Championship Tests against the West Indies, scheduled to be played from January 17 to 29 at Multan Stadium Multan.

The squad features seven changes from the 15-member Test team that toured South Africa. The retained players are: Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Babar Azam, Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mohammad Rizwan, Noman Ali, and Salman Ali Agha.

To strengthen the spin department, off-spinner Sajid Khan and mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed have been recalled to partner with left-arm spinner Noman Ali. Openers Imam-



Imam ul-Haq and Mohammad Hurraina have also been brought back, replacing the injured Saim Ayub and the out-of-form Abdullah Shafique. As part of workload management, the pace quartet of Aamir Jamal,

Mohammad Abbas, Mir Hamza, and Naseem Shah has been rested. In their place, the selectors have retained Khurram Shahzad, recalled Mohammad Ali and included uncapped Kashif Ali.

In the absence of wicketkeeper-batter Haseebullah, who sustained a split in his right-hand webbing during the Cape Town Test, former Pakistan U19 and Shaheens captain Rohail Nazir has been added to the squad.

Pakistan squad for the West Indies Tests:

Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Imam-ul-Haq, Kamran Ghulam, Kashif Ali, Khurram Shahzad, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Hurraina, Mohammad Rizwan (wicketkeeper/batter), Noman Ali, Rohail Nazir (wicketkeeper/batter), Sajid Khan, and Salman Ali Agha

# Athanaze hits 99 as West Indies begin prep for two-match Test series

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: West Indies closed the opening day of the three-day warm-up match against Pakistan Shaheens with 273-7 in 74 overs on the back of Alick Athanaze's 99 at the Islamabad Club on Friday.

The toss was uncontested as the teams mutually decided for the West Indies to bat first in this non-first-class fixture.

Left hander Athanaze, batting at No.5, faced 142 balls, which included 15 fours and one six. He was dismissed by Ahmed Safi Abdullah one shy of century.

Earlier in the day, opening batters Kraigg Brathwaite (34, 39, 5x4s, 1x6) and Mikyle Louis (34, 63b, 4x4s, 1x6) stitched a 47-run opening partnership before the former fell to Ahmed Safi.

Louis, Keacy Carty (22, 46b, 3x4s) and Kavem Hodge (17, 22b, 2x4s) became Mohammad Rameez Jnr's preys, as the right-arm leg-spinner returned figures of 3-40 in 13 overs.

Amir Jangoo (29 not out, 42b, 2x4s, 1x6) and Joshua Da Silva (11 not out, 28b) will resume batting for West Indies on day two with 16 overs remaining in the first innings as the first dig for both the teams has been restricted to 90 overs for maximum practice.



Apart from Rameez Jnr and Ahmed Safi, Hussain Talat was the other wicket-taker for Shaheens as he dismissed Tevin Imlach (13, 36b, 1x4).  
**Scores in brief:**

Warm-up match (Day 1 of 3): Pakistan Shaheens vs West Indies at the Islamabad Club Ground  
**Toss - Uncontested**  
West Indies 273-7, 74 overs (Alick

Athanaze 99, Kraigg Brathwaite 34, Mikyle Louis 34, Amir Jangoo 29 not out, Keacy Carty 22; Mohammad Rameez Jnr 3-40, Ahmed Safi Abdullah 2-91)

# Sri Lanka bowlers skittle New Zealand in 140-run win in third ODI

AFP

Sri Lanka razed New Zealand's top-order Saturday to comfortably win the third one-day international in Auckland by 140 runs and salvage a lone victory in the series.

The home side's hopes of chasing down Sri Lanka's 290-8 nosedived when they crumbled to 21-5 at Eden Park, before being dismissed for 150 off 29.4 overs.

Sri Lanka rebounded after suffering heavy defeats in the first two games to cede the three-match series.

They were led by some lethal seam bowling from Asitha Fernando and Eshan Malinga, who claimed three wickets each, as did spinner Maheesh Theekshana.

Fernando (3-26) was the chief destroyer with the new ball as New Zealand's first five wickets tumbled inside the first seven overs.



The victory margin would have been greater, were it not for Mark Chapman's 81 off 81 balls, the number three New Zealand batsman the last out when he

was bowled by Theekshana (3-35).

No other New Zealander reached 20, with five of the top six dismissed for two runs or less.

Earlier, injured opener Pathum Nissanka top-scored for Sri Lanka with 66 off 42 balls.

Nissanka, was on 50 off 31 balls when he retired hurt after suffering an apparent hip injury, having got his team off to a flying start at 66 without loss in 10 overs.

He recovered and returned in the 34th over to add a further 16 runs, hitting six fours and five sixes in total.

There were half-centuries from Kusal Mendis (54 off 48) and Janith Liyanage (53 off 52) in a vastly improved Sri Lankan batting effort.

New Zealand seamer Matt Henry continued a fine series, claiming 4-55 to lift him to 150 ODI wickets, while captain Mitchell Santner took 2-55 with his spin.

# Bangladesh star Tamim Iqbal retires from international cricket

AFP

Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal announced his retirement from international cricket on Friday with the 35-year-old star run-getter insisting the "chapter is over".

Tamim, who scored more than 15,000 international runs and smashed 25 centuries — the most by any Bangladeshi across all formats of international cricket — had been tipped to return to the squad for next month's Champions Trophy.

However, with his last appearance for the national team coming in September 2023, the veteran opener has opted to focus on lucrative franchise



cricket instead.

"I have been away from international cricket for a long time. That distance will not be bridged," Tamim wrote on Facebook.

"My chapter in international

cricket is over."

The left-hander made his Test debut in 2008, a year after his bow in ODI and T20 cricket.

In all, he played 70 Tests, 243 ODIs, and 78 T20Is, making centuries in all formats.

Tamim had initially quit the international team in 2023 only to change his mind the following day after the personal intervention of Bangladesh's prime minister.

He was then left out of the 2023 World Cup squad with captain Shakib Al Hasan blasting Tamim as "totally childish".

Earlier this week, Tamim met with national selectors who were keen to restore him to the squad for the Champions Trophy.

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto also expressed his desire to have Tamim back in the fold.

"I have been thinking about this for a long time," Tamim added about his retirement.

"Since there is a big tournament like the Champions Trophy ahead, I don't want there to be discussions surrounding me again and the team's focus to be disrupted."

Backing his decision, Tamim explained that it's the right of any professional sports person to continue playing or retire.

"I've given myself time. Now, I realised that the time has come."

Tamim is currently playing in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) in Sylhet.

The Champions Trophy takes place in Pakistan and Dubai from February 19 with Bangladesh placed in Group A alongside India, Pakistan and New Zealand.

## Day 2 of the National Track Cycling Championship 2025

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The second day of the National Track Cycling Championship 2025, held at the Nishtar Sports Complex Cycling Velodrome, Lahore, witnessed thrilling competitions as teams showcased exceptional skills and sportsmanship. Nine teams, including the four provinces, Islamabad, Police, WAPDA, Railway, and HEC, participated in both men's and women's categories.

Prominent officials from the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), including Gul Muhammad Kakar, Kaleem Ahmed Awan, and Shahzada Butt, graced the occasion to boost the morale of the cyclists.

The results of today's events are as follows:

3 KM Individual Pursuit (Women)

Ghazala Muneer (WAPDA) 1st

Nida Bibi (WAPDA) 2nd

Shama (HEC) 3rd

4 KM Individual Pursuit (Men)

Izzat Ullah (WAPDA) 1st

M. Sharif (WAPDA) 2nd

Khizar (KPK) 3rd

3 KM Team Pursuit (Women)

WAPDA 1st

HEC 2nd

Punjab 3rd

4 KM Team Pursuit (Men)

WAPDA 1st

Punjab 2nd

HEC 3rd

Cyclists, especially women, exhibited great enthusiasm throughout the championship.

General Secretary of the PCF, Moazzam Khan Klair, extended his gratitude to the President of the PCF, Idris Haider Khawaja, for his efforts in ensuring smooth arrangements for the championship alongside his dedicated team.

The final day of the championship promises more exciting events, as the nation eagerly awaits to see which teams and individuals will emerge as the ultimate champions.

## Zone-VI W and Zone-III W qualify for final of Woodward Trophy U-17 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Zone-VI Whites and Zone-III Whites moved into Final of the Woodward Trophy Under-17 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament after beating their opponents in the Semi Finals at various cricket grounds.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Medicam Group of Companies.

**Scores in Brief:**

In the first Semi Final Zone-VI Whites beat Zone-II Whites by 3 Wickets at KCCA Stadium. Zone-II Whites 141 all out in 39.3 overs. Mahab Furqan 47 5x4, Haris Naveed 33. Niqab Shafiq (sla) 3/14, Hammad Alam (rlb) 2/26, Abdul Hayee (rlb) 2/40.

In reply Zone-VI Whites 142/7 in 36 overs. Muhammad Azaan 46 5x4, Soman Kabir 35, Abdul Hayee 20. Muhammad Nadeem (mf) 4/34. Later, Jameel Ahmed President RCAK Zone-II given the Medicam Man of the Match Award to Niqab Shafiq of Zone-VI Whites.

In the 2nd Semi Final Zone-III Whites beat Zone-V Whites by 6 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Zone-V Whites 143 all out in 38.1 overs. Abdullah 46 6x4, Muhammad Akbar 30, Rayyan Chohan 19. Nizamuddin (mf) 4/19, Asadullah (rlb) 3/36.

In reply Zone-III Whites 144/4 in 32.4 overs. Daniyal Ali 45 2x4 2x6 not out, Amaan Ahmed 35, Muhammad Waseem 17 not out. Muhammad Hasnain (ob) 2/25. After the end of the Match Muhammad Raees President Zone-III given the Medicam Man of the Match Award to Daniyal Ali of Zone-III Whites.

## Shami returns to India squad for England T20s after year absence

Sports Desk

Fast bowler Mohammed Shami on Saturday returned to India's squad for the upcoming T20 international series against England after more than a year's break due to injury.

Shami, 34, last played for India in the 50-over World Cup final in November 2023 and recently participated in a few domestic matches to mark his return to competitive cricket.

Shami, who underwent heel surgery, was expected to join India in Australia in December but missed the 3-1 Test series loss.

He is part of a 15-member squad for the five T20 matches against England starting January 22 in Kolkata.

White-ball star Suryakumar Yadav will lead the team with spin bowler Axar Patel as his deputy.

Pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah is missing with doubts over his participation in the following three ODI matches with the touring England team due to an injury he suffered in the final Australia Test.

India are yet to announce the squad for the ODI Champions Trophy starting next month with the deadline to announce the provisional squad for the tournament on Sunday.

India T20 squad to face England: Suryakumar Yadav (capt), Sanju Samson (wk), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Rinku Singh, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel (vice-capt), Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Mohammed Shami, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Dhruv Jurel (wk).

## Shakib's bowling suspension stays in place after failed reassessment

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's suspension from bowling in all competitions organised by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will remain in place after he failed an independent re-assessment, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said on Saturday.

Shakib failed the independent re-assessment test conducted at the Sri Ramachandra Centre for Sports Science in Chennai, India last month. "While Shakib is currently unable to bowl, he is eligible to continue playing as a batsman in all forms of domestic and international cricket," the BCB said in a statement.

Bangladesh are free to pick the 37-year-old as a specialist batter for the Champions Trophy, with the eight-team competition kicking off on February 19 in Karachi.

The former Bangladesh skipper was suspended from bowling in December, after initial independent assessment at the testing centre of Loughborough University in the UK, for exceeding the maximum permitted elbow extension of 15 degrees.

His action was scrutinised by on-field umpires in his one-off appearance for Surrey in September — his first appearance in the County Championship since the 2010-11 season. In 2019, he received a two-year ban from playing after the International Cricket Council found he had breached its anti-corruption code.



## Group Photo

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with the Ministers of Education participating in the International Conference on Girls' Education at Prime Minister's House on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## Sindh govt's public and private partnership projects being acknowledged worldwide: Bilawal

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the development of Karachi is need of the hour as without the uplift of this mega city, the prosperity of Pakistan is impossible therefore PPP was playing its due from Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's time.

Addressing the opening ceremony of first phase of Shahrah-e-Bhutto in Karachi, PPP Chairman said he was pleased to know that Sindh government has completed this project under public and private partnership (PPP). He said public and private partnership idea was floated by Benazir Bhutto in 1993.

He said Sindh government was fulfilling vision of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. Bilawal was pleased to told the business



men that Sindh government made several projects under public and private partnership.

PPP chairman said when Sindh government realized that Centre was reluctant to provide them funds then the provincial government paid attention to the idea of public and private partnership. He said Sindh govern-

ment's public and private partnership projects were being acknowledged worldwide. He said public and private partnership is a win win solution for the government and businesses.

He said government was working on public and private partnership in water, green energy and other sectors. Bilawal said Karachi need

infrastructure as population was increasing day by day. He urged Sindh government to find international investors for public private partnerships.

He said once local investors were satisfied with public and private partnership then global investors will focus on it otherwise it is difficult to woo foreign investors. Bilawal urged the government to focus on water, sanitation and energy projects where public and private partnership is need of the hour.

Bilawal directed Sindh government to promote green energy and solar energy under private public partnerships. He said PPP does not believe in politics of hate and confrontations and he urged all political parties to support government in public and private partnership projects. He said

Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto played marvelous role for the uplift of the city with the construction of Shahe Faisal, Steel Mills, large scale industrialization and jobs.

Bilawal said Shaheed Benazir Bhutto also continued its fight against dictators for the restoration of public rights. She did great work for the uplift of youth and development of Karachi. During his first term as President Asif Zardari released maximum resources for Karachi. He said businesses community and then Karachi Mayor Mustafa Kamal knew that Zardari played key role for the uplift of businesses. He said with the opening of Shahrah-e-Bhutto, job opportunities will be created and this road will link the people of the area to entire Karachi and Sindh.

## Maryam, Khawaja Asif trying to sabotage govt-PTI talks, says Asad Qaiser

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser said on Saturday that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif's recent statements were an attempt to sabotage the ongoing dialogue process between his party and the ruling coalition.

Responding to Maryam and Khawaja Asif's commentary on the ongoing negotiations, Qaiser said these people blame jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's tweet's for possible failure of talks, but in fact they are doing everything in



their control to disrupt the talks. He said the PTI is a victim; it has been

victimized. He said the PTI was stopped from exercising its basic right on November 26 and gunfire was opened at innocent people. He said that PTI was also victimized on the pretext of the violent incidents of May 9.

He said that PTI people were being punished by military courts despite the fact that military courts could not try civilians in any case. He said that blame was being put on Imran Khan despite all these injustices. He said the PTI had lowered the number its demands despite its reservations. He said the PTI was not afraid of anyone; it wanted to move forward just for the sake of Pakistan.

## Mubashir Rehman elected as president of Lahore High Court Bar Association

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: Hamid Khan Group has won annual elections of Lahore High Court Bar Association on Saturday.

According to official results, Mubashir Rehman has obtained 2400 votes and became the president of Lahore High Court Bar while Asma Jahangir's group's runner up candidate could get only 1897 votes.

At the seat of General Secretary, Naseer Bhulla got success with 3736 votes while Malik Sharjeel won the second seat of Secretary by getting 3458 votes. Ijaz Gujjar won seat of Finance Secretary by obtaining 3682 votes and Hafiz Shujat Ali won seat of Joint Secretary by getting 3127 votes.

Malik Sharjeel won seat of Senior Vice President in Bar election with 4476 votes and Malik Saif Khokhar won the second seat of Vice President by getting 3,23 votes. In the seat of vice-president Cantonment, Alaton Jhakar won with 3157 votes. Waqas Aslam won the seat of Vice President Model Town by getting 3387 votes and the seat of Auditor was bagged by Prof Atique Ahmed with 3726 votes.

## Pakistan, Egypt share historical and religious ties: Salik Hussain

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain said that Pakistan and Egypt are bound by historical, religious, and cultural ties that encompass many dimensions.

He was talking to a high-level delegation led by Egypt's Grand Mufti Dr Nazir Muhammad Ayyad in Islamabad on Saturday. During the meeting, various proposals were discussed regarding rising trend of religious intolerance in the world, the eradication of terrorism, sectarianism and promotion of inter-faith harmony.

Egypt's Grand Mufti Dr Nazir Ayad remarked that the Muslim



Ummah is facing the threats of terrorism, and there is a need to develop a joint action plan to counter it.

Earlier in the day, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar met OIC Secretary General Hissein Ibrahim Taha.

During the meeting, Ishaq Dar commended the OIC's principled

stance and unwavering support for the just struggle of Kashmiris for their right to self-determination.

Ishaq Dar also appreciated the high level participation from the OIC in the international conference on "Girls' Education in Muslim Communities: Challenges and Opportunities"

## Faceless customs assessment system to contribute in economic uplift: PM



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that the faceless customs assessment system would contribute to Pakistan's economic development and was a significant step towards the digitization of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with Chief Collector Customs, Karachi Zone Jamil Nasir who called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister praised the chief collector customs and his team at Customs Karachi zone for their outstanding contributions in the development and implementation of the faceless customs assessment system.

The prime minister announced a

reward of 15 million rupees for the team working on the development and implementation of the faceless customs assessment system.

The prime minister said that due to customs assessment system, there had been a significant improvement in transparency, efficiency, and service delivery in customs operations.

He emphasized the use of modern technologies, especially artificial intelligence, to make the faceless customs system foolproof and at par with global level, adding to ensure a fair, transparent, and effective customs system, further innovation in the system should be introduced to align it with the international standards.

"This system is an important milestone in providing a business- and investor-friendly environment in the country," he added.

## Los Angeles wildfire economic loss estimates top \$150 bln



## Reuters

LOS ANGELES: U. S. private forecaster AccuWeather said that estimated damage and economic loss from the California wildfire, already one of the worst in history, is over \$150 billion at a preliminary level.

Raging wildfires in Los Angeles killed several people, destroyed hundreds of buildings and stretched firefighting resources and water supplies since they began on Tuesday, with fierce winds hindering firefighting operations and fueling the fires.

AccuWeather, which estimates the loss between \$135 billion and \$150 billion, added that if the fire spread to densely populated neighborhoods

the current estimates for loss would have to be revised upward.

"Should a large number of additional structures be burned in the coming days, it may become the worst wildfire in modern California history based on the number of structures burned and economic loss," AccuWeather Chief Meteorologist Jonathan Porter said.

Property consultant CoreLogic estimates that there are over 456,000 homes, with nearly \$300 billion in reconstruction value, at moderate or greater risk within the Los Angeles and Riverside metropolitan areas.

However, this number represents the areas at risk in general and not linked to the ongoing fire event.

## FBR Chairman says most Pakistanis don't fall under tax-net



## Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Rashid Mahmood Langrial has said that most Pakistanis don't fall under tax-net.

Speaking at an event "Think Fes 2025" in Lahore, Chairman FBR acknowledged that around 60 per cent Pakistani population fall below the income tax threshold.

However, he pointed out that there

are around 6.7 lac people who do fall into the tax net, including the super-rich class, who are not paying their fair share. He claimed that those who talk on TV about how to fix the tax system, are themselves tax evaders.

Calling for reforms, Rashid Mahmood Langrial said the tax system in Pakistan is pretty flawed, with tax rates incorrect and a design that only caters to about 5% of the population.

Chairman FBR said that the problem lies on both sides as taxpayers aren't paying up and tax collectors failed to collect taxes from the wealthy class which led to the inclusion of the salaried class into the tax net.

He acknowledged that tax rates imposed on a common man and salaried individuals, should be corrected and the government is aware that some tax rates should be reduced.

Chairman FBR warned tax evaders about the promulgation of a law that would bar them from purchasing vehicles, property and other things.