



Success of talks depends on govt's attitude: Abbas
Majlis-e-Wahdat-ul-Muslimeen chief Allama Raja Nasir Abbas said that the government delayed talks by a week when it refused to allow the negotiating committee to meet Imran Khan. He added that the work that is taking weeks can be done 'in hours'.



Rs5mln showered at overseas wedding in Sialkot
Brothers of an overseas Pakistani groom rained down more than Rs5 million in a spectacular show of wealth at a wedding in Sialkot. A special container was placed in the wedding hall, where family members and friends of the groom stood on a platform, showering local and foreign currencies. The sky turned white with the rain of notes, attracting hundreds of onlookers. The procession began in the groom's village of Bakhre Wali.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Solidarity with Palestinian people

KARACHI: Supporters of the religious and political party Jamaat-e-Islami hold Palestine national flags and shouting slogans during a demonstration against Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, to show solidarity with Palestinian people, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Forces kill 9 terrorists in Waziristan: ISPR

City Desk
RAWALPINDI: Pakistani security forces have killed nine militants and apprehended two in two separate operations in North Waziristan, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) announced. The operations, conducted overnight between January 11 and 12, targeted militant hideouts in the Dosali and Eshaam areas of the region.
According to the ISPR, the first operation in Dosalli was launched following intelligence reports indicating the presence of militants. A heavy exchange of fire ensued, resulting in the deaths of six militants and the capture of two more who were wounded.
The second operation, in Esham, also involved a fire-fight that left three militants dead and two injured. Security forces recovered weapons, ammunition, and explosive materials from the slain militants.
The ISPR statement identified the militants as members of a group engaged in terrorist activities against security forces and the targeting of innocent civilians. A clearance operation continues in the area to eliminate any remaining militants.
The ISPR emphasized the Pakistani security forces' commitment to eradicating terrorism from the country.



Imran Khan reiterates Judicial Commission demand on Nov 26 and May 9 incidents: Sahibzada Hamid

Naveed Ahmad Khan
RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) negotiation committee has announced that they are ready for the third round of talks with the government, following a meeting with party founder Imran Khan in a "controlled environment".
Addressing reporters outside Adiala Jail along with PTI senior leaders Omar Ayub and Asad Qaiser, Sunni Ittehad Council head Sahibzada Hamid Raza said that the PTI committee will present two written demands during the upcoming meeting, which includes the formation of an "impartial judicial commission" to investigate the events of May 9 and November 26. The commission should be headed by a senior



Supreme Court judge to probe the incidents and identify those responsible.
Raza stated that the government must make progress on their demands during the upcoming round of negotiations, warning that the talks will not proceed if the judicial commission is not

formed by January 31. He also stressed that the release of political prisoners is also part of their demands.
Before the PTI's negotiating team's session with Imran Khan, Ali Amin Gandapur held a one-on-one meeting with the PTI's founder for more than one hour.
The PTI's negotiating committee was allowed visit to meet the party's founder in jail today.
"The government authorities on Saturday night contacted with PTI leadership and informed them about the permission of meeting with the party's founder in Adiala Jail," sources said.
The party's negotiating committee comprises of seven members will visit PTI's founder in prison. "The party's negotiators will consult with the founder about the third round of dialogue with the government," sources added.
The development came after news started circulating that the political talks were not moving in right direction with statements from the leaders of sides after the second round of talks. A delay in

President pays tribute to security forces for successful operations against Fitna al-Khawarij

City Desk
ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari Sunday paid tribute to the security forces for their successful operations against Fitna al-Khawarij in North Waziristan.
He appreciated security forces for eliminating nine terrorists of Fitna al-Khawarij in two different operations.
He expressed determination to fully eliminate Fitna al-Khawarij from the country.
He said security forces were carrying out operations to eradicate the menace of terrorism, adding the whole nation was united against terrorism.
He said operations against Fitna al-Khawarij would continue till complete eradication of terrorism.



PM hails security forces operation against Khawarij

Bureau Report
LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has hailed officers and jawans of the security forces for a successful operation carried out against Khawarij in North Waziristan.
Nine Khawarij (terrorists) were killed by the security forces in the latest action. In a laudatory message issued on Sunday, the premier paid glowing tribute to the security forces, saying the war would continue till complete annihilation of the demon of terrorism from the country.
He said the armed forces stand as iron wall in defence of the country against terrorism, adding that the people of Pakistan stand shoulder to shoulder with the security forces. The premier said the officers and jawans were serving the country steadfastly day and night.
PM Shehbaz Sharif said the whole nation pays rich tribute to its valiant armed forces.



Taliban don't consider women as human being: Malala Yousafzai

City Desk
ISLAMABAD: Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai has said that Taliban government has deprived Afghan girls of their basic right to education, adding that 'Taliban don't even consider women as human being'.
Addressing the two-day "International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities: Challenges and Opportunities", in Islamabad, Nobel laureate said that Taliban have made legislation seeking ban on girls' education.
Malala said, "if we don't talk about deprivation of educational right for Afghan girls, the mission of this moot will not be completed. She said it was the basic right of every girl that she is allowed to attend school for at least 12 years". She said worldwide 120 million girls fail to attend schools and in Pakistan 10 million girls are out of schools.
According to AFP, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai urged Muslim leaders on Sunday not to "legitimise" the Afghan Taliban government and to "show true leadership" by opposing their curbs on women and girls' education. "Do not legitimise them," she said at a summit on girls' education in Muslim nations being held in Pakistan's capital Islamabad.
"As Muslim leaders, now is the time to raise your voices, use your power. You can show true leadership. You can show true Islam," said 27-year-old Yousafzai. The two-day conference has brought together ministers and education officials from dozens of Muslim-majority countries, backed by the Muslim World League.



Finance Minister meets with Servis Long March leadership on eve of AFF

Commerce Desk
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held an important meeting with the leadership of Servis Long March, including Chinese Chairman Jin Yongsheng and CEO Omar Saeed, on the eve of the Asian Financial Forum in Hong Kong.
According to press release issued by finance ministry here Sunday, during the meeting, Minister Aurangzeb emphasized the importance of establishing a favorable policy framework to enable Pakistani businesses to explore opportunities in international equity capital markets.
He appreciated Servis Long March's intention to list on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and assured the government of Pakistan's support not only for this listing but also for other companies pursuing international equity capital raising.
Chairman Jin Yongsheng and CEO Omar Saeed highlighted Servis Long March's growth trajectory and the potential benefits of listing on an international platform to access global capital markets.
The discussions also focused on the broader implications of this collaboration, emphasizing the need to enhance Pakistan's presence in international financial markets and attract foreign investment.
The meeting concluded with a mutual understanding of the need for continued dialogue and cooperation to address the complexities of international listings and capital raising.
The interaction between Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and the Servis Long March leadership reflected a shared commitment to developing Pakistan's capital markets and strengthening the country's position in the global financial landscape.



Secretaries General of OIC, MWL laud Pakistan for 'successful' moot on girls' education

City Desk
ISLAMABAD: The Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Husein Ibrahim Taha and Secretary General of Muslim World League (MWL) Sheikh Dr Muhammad Bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa lauded Pakistan for its successful hosting of the two-day International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities.
The dignitaries expressed these views as they wrapped up their visit to Islamabad after participating in the event that gathered over 150 representatives from 44 Muslim and friendly countries.
Continued on Page 8



Muslim Conference AJK organizes 'Kashmir Banega Pakistan' Convention

Abdul Majeed Tahir

KOHALA/MUZAFFARABAD: Former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and President of Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan addressed the Kashmir Bane Ga Pakistan Convention organized by the Muslim Conference here at Kohala. In his address Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has said that Defending Pakistan is a part of the faith of the people of Kashmir. The Kashmir Bane Ga Pakistan Convention at the Kohala Martyrs' Memorial is of utmost importance. The Kashmir Bane Ga Pakistan Convention is actually a renewal of the Pakistan Accession Resolution and the Neela Butt Declaration of Kashmir freedom movement. The Pakistan Accession Movement is actually a movement to complete Pakistan. The slogan of Kashmir Bane Ga Pakistan is a great guarantee of the secure future of South Asia. The sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs can never be in vain.



The President of the Muslim Conference, while addressing, said that delay in the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue can lead to a major accident. The ideological chaos of Azad Kashmir is the fulfillment of the enemy's long-standing desire. The stability of Pakistan is the eternal desire of the people of Kashmir. The flag of Pakistan is a symbol of the two-nation theory, while the flag of Azad Kashmir is a symbol of the ideology of accession to Pakistan.

The sacrifices of the armed forces of Pakistan for Kashmir cannot be forgotten. Pakistan and the forces of Pakistan will firmly fight against any conspiracy against it.

The former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir added said said that Pakistan is the last and safest refuge of the Kashmiri people. The secure future of our future generations is solely and exclusively linked to Pakistan. The slogan of Kashmir will become Pakistan is the popular public foundation

of the defense of Pakistan.

The President of the 6Muslim Conference further said that it is our first duty to guard the ideologies of Raees-ul-Ahrar Quaid-e-Millat Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas and Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan and Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan.

The President of the Muslim Conference further said that the sacrifices of the armed forces of Pakistan for Kashmir cannot be forgotten.

The Pakistani flag will always remain high on the land of Kashmir. Pakistan and the armed forces will firmly fight against any conspiracy against Pakistan. The Muslim Conference is the custodian of the ideological heritage of the Ghazis, Martyrs and Mujahideen.

Finally, the President of the Muslim Conference expressed special gratitude to all the workers of the Muslim Conference, MSF, Youth Wing, Women Wing, Lawyers Wing,

Traders Wing, Reception, Administration, Media and Public Relations Department. In this historic convention, Hurriyat Conference Convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi, former President of the Muslim Conference Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jaral Advocate, Secretary General Madam Mehr-un-Nisa, Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed, Major Sardar Nasrullah Khan, Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Raja Liaquat Khan and others also spoke on the occasion.

Mass marriage ceremony

KARACHI: Pakistani Hindu brides arrive to participate in a mass marriage ceremony in the Provincial Capital. The Pakistan Hindu Council organized a mass marriage ceremony for 102 couples who could not afford their individual wedding expenses.



Photo: Online

GDA and PTI Agree to Strengthen Contacts

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: A significant political development has emerged regarding the opposition alliance. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Advisor on Information and PTI leader Barrister Dr. Saif held an important meeting with Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) chief Pir Pagara. Senior politician Mohammad Ali Durrani was also present during the meeting.

On this occasion, Pir Pagara conveyed his goodwill and best wishes for PTI founder Imran Khan, while Barrister Dr. Saif delivered a message of goodwill from former Prime Minister Imran Khan for Pir Pagara and the GDA leadership.

During the meeting, the leaders held important consultations on the political situation and future strategy. Both PTI and GDA agreed to collaborate on resolving national issues and enhancing mutual coordination. It was further agreed to strengthen communication and interactions between the two parties in the future.

Barrister Saif also conveyed goodwill messages from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, to which Pir Pagara reciprocated with expressions of goodwill and appreciation.

Pir Pagara praised Mohammad Ali Durrani's role in bringing opposition forces together and encouraged him to further enhance his efforts in establishing stronger inter-party relations. Meanwhile, Barrister Saif appreciated Mohammad Ali Durrani's efforts on behalf of the PTI leadership, particularly in fostering dialogue among opposition parties.

This meeting marks an important step toward greater coordination between PTI and GDA in shaping future political dynamics.

DBA Attock Annual elections Completed

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The annual elections for the District Bar Association Attock for the year 2025-2026 have been completed. Advocate Abdullah S. Awan has been elected as President, while Umar Saleem has been elected as General Secretary, Samina Aslam as Vice President, Ahmed Ali Shah as Joint Secretary, and Jaweria Gulzar Awan as Executive Council Member. Supporters of the successful candidates celebrated with drum beats, garlands of flowers, and showers of petals. According to the details, Advocate Abdullah S. Awan, supported by former member of Punjab Bar Council Syed Azmat Bukhari, former President of Lahore High Court Sheikh Ahsan-ud-Din Advocate, and Rana Afsar Ali Khan Advocate from the Malak Israr Ahmad Advocate (Shaheed) Group, won the presidency of the District Bar Attock with a majority, securing 215 votes. His opponent, Malik Naveed Akbar, received 160 votes. Umar Saleem Advocate was elected General Secretary with 267 votes, while his opponent Syed Najeeb Saadat secured 174 votes. Samina Aslam Advocate was elected Vice President with 285 votes, while her opponent Farzana Yusuf obtained 150 votes. Ahmed Ali Shah Advocate secured 289 votes to become the Joint Secretary, with his opponent Umar Farooq Advocate receiving 89 votes. Jaweria Gulzar Awan won the Executive Body Member seat with 295 votes. On this occasion, Senator Advocate and Member of Provincial Assembly Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari also cast his vote. The election results were announced by a three-member committee comprising Sohail Siddiqui Advocate, Shoaib Malik Advocate, and Malik Sajjad Advocate. The Executive Body of the Bar, including Jaweria Gulzar Awan, Irfan Shah, Zohra Nisa, Muhammad Sabir, Muhammad Riaz, Haris Malik, Tajammul Hussain, Asma Siddiqui, Inam-ul-Haq, Tariq Sultan, and Muhammad Imran, were also elected as Executive Council Members. On the occasion of the elections, District Police Officer Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan instructed SHO City Police Station Attock, Sohail Anjum, to ensure peaceful conduct of the elections. A large number of people congratulated Syed Azmat Ali Bukhari Advocate, Sheikh Ahsan Advocate, and Rana Afsar Ali Khan Advocate on Abdullah S. Awan's victory.

Sindh Awami Forum's Mach Kachahri

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The Sindh Awami Forum organized a Mach Kachahri in the SITE area, where the new canals being taken from the Indus River were strongly condemned as an attack on Sindh. Thousands of people—including Urdu, Pashto, Seraiki, and Sindhi speakers—unanimously passed a joint resolution, making it clear that all new canals from the Indus River are completely unacceptable.

In the presence of thousands of attendees, the following resolutions were adopted:

1. The newly excavated canals from the Indus River will devastate Sindh's environment, agriculture, and economy. We completely reject them.

2. The 1991 Water Accord is not being fully implemented, yet the conspiracy to divert more water from the Indus is

unacceptable.

3. The federal and provincial governments must immediately stop their encroachment on Sindh's resources, or the people of Sindh will be forced to react strongly.

4. The movement against the plunder of Sindh's water, land, and resources will be intensified.

5. A series of awareness campaigns, gatherings, and protests will be launched to unify Sindh's people and resist this injustice.

Sindh Awami Forum President Habib Jatoi, Sindh Hari Committee President Akbar Jatoi, senior journalist Allah Bux Kumbhar, young writer Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi, and others addressed the gathering. They declared that the people of Sindh consider these new canals even more dangerous than a dam. The leaders warned:

"Just as public resistance defeated

the Kalabagh Dam project, the plan to take six new canals from the Indus will also fail."

The gathering expressed severe outrage at both the federal and provincial governments. The speakers held the ruling authorities responsible for protecting Sindh's resources, particularly targeting the Sindh government, which, despite being in power in Sindh, remains an ally in the federal setup.

"We state clearly: if this project moves forward, the reaction from the people of Sindh will be extreme, and it will be impossible to control."

The Mach Kachahri was described as more than just a cultural tradition; it is a vital political, social, and intellectual platform. The speakers emphasized that this gathering serves as a strategic meeting point to organize mass resistance against injustices.

"This Mach Kachahri is not just about



burning wood; it is about shaping young minds. Such programs are essential for intellectual awakening. The Sindh Awami Forum deserves appreciation for leading this awareness campaign."

The event concluded with a firm commitment to take all necessary steps to safeguard Sindh's water and resources. The leaders announced that if required, a province-wide protest movement would be launched to resist this aggression against Sindh's rights.

Salwat Saeed: A Golden Era of Public Service and Development in Faisalabad Division

The tenure of Salwat Saeed, an accomplished officer of the Pakistan Administrative Service Group, as Commissioner Faisalabad Division, stands as a stellar example of public service, timely completion of developmental projects, and administrative reforms. Her initiatives, which focused on public welfare, education, healthcare, and economic growth, remain a memorable chapter in the history of Faisalabad Division, encompassing districts Toba Tek Singh, Chiniot, and Jhang.

Commissioner Salwat Saeed introduced an "Open Door Policy" in government offices, enabling citizens to present their grievances directly to officials without any hindrance. This initiative bridged the gap between bureaucracy and the public, ensuring a swift resolution of issues. To further enhance accessibility, she leveraged digital technology and launched the

E-Live Court. This platform allowed citizens to submit complaints online from the comfort of their homes and receive prompt resolutions. The initiative not only saved time and resources but also marked a significant step toward digital governance, ensuring transparency and efficiency in government affairs. Understanding the needs of the business community, Salwat Saeed spearheaded the establishment of a Business Facilitation Center in Faisalabad Division. This center provided a one-window solution for obtaining various licenses and government documents, streamlining processes for entrepreneurs. The initiative saved time and resources for businesses, encouraged investment, and boosted economic activity in the region. It was a pivotal step in simplifying governmental procedures for the business sector. Salwat Saeed emphasized integrating ethical education into the curriculum to shape the character

of the younger generation. Under her leadership, public schools introduced moral and social training programs, playing a crucial role in students' character development. Teachers were provided with specialized guidance, and parents were encouraged to actively participate in their children's moral upbringing.

Addressing the challenges faced by children with autism and their families, Salwat Saeed established dedicated centers in all four districts of Faisalabad Division. These centers provided high-quality care, education, and training for children with autism. They not only met the needs of these children but also offered guidance and support to their parents, ensuring a holistic approach to their development.

In an effort to support working women, Salwat Saeed introduced daycare centers in government offices. These centers allowed women to perform their professional duties without worrying about their children's care. This initiative created a supportive and motivating environment for women, fostering their professional growth. To ensure access to clean drinking water, Salwat Saeed initiated the restoration of water filtration plants across Faisalabad Division. These efforts provided citizens with safe and clean water, significantly reducing public health issues and improving the overall quality of life. Improving healthcare facilities was a top priority for Salwat Saeed. She revamped public hospitals, intro-

duced transparency in the performance of doctors and medical staff, and modernized treatment systems. These efforts ensured that the public received better healthcare services, enhancing trust in government-run healthcare institutions. Salwat Saeed's efforts to beautify cities and promote cultural heritage were noteworthy. She led projects for the restoration of parks, refurbishment of recreational spots, and construction of cultural monuments. These initiatives not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of Faisalabad's urban areas but also highlighted their cultural significance, creating a vibrant and welcoming environment for residents. Providing facilities for children with special needs in educational institutions was another significant achievement of her tenure. She improved the infrastructure of special education schools, equipped them with modern tools, and ensured the appointment of specially trained

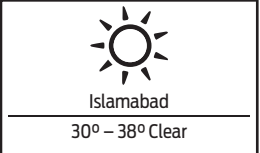
teachers. These measures elevated the quality of education and care for special children. Salwat Saeed's tenure as Commissioner Faisalabad Division is a testament to dedicated public service, development, and systemic reform. Her initiatives addressed immediate challenges and paved the way for long-term progress and innovation. Projects like the Business Facilitation Center, restoration of filtration plants, and the introduction of E-Live Courts have set Faisalabad Division on a path of sustained growth. Her contributions to public welfare, education, healthcare, and urban development will be remembered as a shining example of how effective leadership can transform lives. Salwat Saeed's legacy is a guiding light for future administrators, demonstrating that sincere intentions and innovative approaches can bring about meaningful change.

Writer is District Information Officer, Toba Tek Singh



Muhammad Shahbaz Ansari

Analysis



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:45 am
Zohr 12:16 pm
Asr 3:42 pm
Maghrib 5:20 pm
Isha 6:48 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

IGP Islamabad visits safe city, vows to enhance surveillance and performance

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi visited various departments of Safe City Islamabad to review their performance, on Sunday.

An official told APP that the IGP Rizvi inquired with the Director Technical at Safe City Islamabad about the performance of surveillance cameras, the command and control center and other departments. He issued directives to further improve the performance of Safe City Islamabad.

IG Rizvi also emphasized that he intends to make Safe City Islamabad the best model of its kind. He said that this project should incorporate the latest systems to ensure the safety of Islamabad.

Additionally, the number of surveillance cameras in the federal capital is increasing, ensuring that no area in Islamabad will be beyond the reach of the cameras.

IG Rizvi also mentioned that software development teams have been established at Safe City Islamabad to update existing software and create

Secretary Archives and Libraries visits Bahawalpur Museum

Chaudhry Asad Shakir

BAHAWALPUR: Secretary Archives and Libraries Punjab Muhammad Khan Ranjha along with his wife Director General Punjab Institute of Language, Art and Culture (PLAC) Miss Benish Fatima Sahi visited Bahawalpur Museum Bahawalpur. Director Museum Muhammad Zubair Rabbani welcomed the guests and presented them with a bouquet and a souvenir of the museum.

Chief Librarian Central Library Bahawalpur Dr. Rana Javed Iqbal, Deputy Director Rashid Ahmed Arshad and Public Relations Officer Nadia Noreen were also present on the occasion. Muhammad Zubair Rabbani informed the Secretary Archives and Director General PLAAC about the establishment of the museum, its development projects and the seminars, conferences and other literary and cultural programs to be held here under the annual calendar and Public Relations Officer Nadia Noreen briefed Muhammad Khan Ranjha and Benish Fatima Sahi in detail about the museum artifacts and all the galleries.

Muhammad Khan Ranjha appreciated the display of the museum's archives and said that the museum's

archives of the Pakistan Movement and the state are among the best archives. He also appreciated the various activities during the statehood period and the role of the state in the establishment of Pakistan through the photographs of the Nawabs of Bahawalpur displayed in the Bahawalpur Gallery.

He paid tribute to the Nawab of Bahawalpur and said that the efforts of the Bahawalpur State in the establishment of Pakistan and its stability are commendable.

The guests expressed special interest in all the galleries of the museum and considered all the antiques including the statehood as the asset of the museum and said that the objects of the statehood period present in Bahawalpur are worth seeing.

The guests said that it is impossible to know the history, civilization and welfare measures taken during the reign of the Emirs of Bahawalpur without visiting the museum. Muhammad Khan Ranjha and Miss Benish Fatima Sahi further said that the excellent manner in which the staff, under the dynamic leadership of Director Museum Muhammad Zubair Rabbani, has preserved all the artifacts including the state for the future is commendable.



Protest

ISLAMABAD: Family member's of employees of old Munal restaurant hold placards during protest in favor of their demands at Pir Sohawa, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

DPO Jhelum Bajwa's services will always be remembered

Correspondent

JHELUM: The services of District Police Officer (DPO) Nasir Mehmood Bajwa in Jhelum have been highly praised. CEO of British Council Gold Partner IELTS Institute, SLS College, Sarfraz Malik, paid tribute to his contributions, describing him as an honest, dedicated, and committed officer who significantly reduced the crime rate in Jhelum during his tenure.

Sarfraz Malik stated that the DPO effectively acted against drug dealers and other mafias, eliminating



criminal groups and maintaining law and order in the

city. He further highlighted that Nasir Mehmood Bajwa's tenure brought a sense of safety and security to the people of Jhelum.

He added that Bajwa's services will always be remembered, and the people of Jhelum extend their best wishes to him.

DPO Nasir Mehmood Bajwa has recently been transferred and appointed as Additional Director of Administration at the Special Protection Unit, Punjab, Lahore. The residents of Jhelum wish him great success in his new role.

Price Control Magistrates Inspecting Markets

Zafar Chishty

TOBA TEK SINGH: Acting on the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the district administration has intensified efforts to curb artificial inflation and ensure the availability of essential commodities at government-notified rates. Under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Muhammad Naeem Sinhu, Price Control Magistrates are actively inspecting markets across the district to enforce compliance with official price lists. During these inspections, various shopkeepers found overcharging were penalized, and strict action was taken against violators. Citizens have welcomed these measures, terming them a significant step toward providing relief to the general public.

The district administration has also appealed to residents to purchase goods at notified prices and report any irregularities to the authorities for prompt action.

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy Launches "The Facets of Hate Speech"



City Desk

LAHORE: Two-Time Academy Award Winner Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy's SOC Films is proud to announce the launch of its latest campaign, "Facets of Hate Speech" [Nafrat Angez Guftugu ke Pehlu]. This groundbreaking initiative features a YouTube series of five films, aiming to spark a new dialogue around the rising concerns of the Pakistani community regarding hate speech. The series will also shed light on the work of individuals who are addressing one of the greatest crises of our times.

The films feature activists, experts, and officials commenting on serious situations. This series aims to challenge social norms and change the narrative on topics that have been deemed too taboo to speak on.

"This campaign is a crucial step in confronting the grave threat of hate speech which has deeply woven itself into the fabric of Pakistani society—an alarming reality that challenges the future we envision for our country. Hate speech fuels intolerance, discrimination, and violence. It silences dissent, undermines human rights, and jeopardizes the very foundation of a just and equitable society. Through this series, we aim to give voice to the victims of hate speech, amplify the voices of those working tirelessly to combat it, and inspire action for a more inclusive, and tolerant Pakistan," said Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy.

NUML Students Seek Relaxation in Attendance requirement

Kehkashan Tabbasum

ISLAMABAD: The students of the German Department of the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad Campus have sought intervention of the Rector for granting a relaxation in the attendance requirement to 70pc to them.

In an email request to the NUML Rector they have pleaded that it is a certificate course not a degree program as allowing them to take the exams would help them continue their course to B1 without setbacks, reliable sources in the German Department confided to this scribe on Saturday.

Copies of the applications which the students addressed to the Head of German Department, made available to this correspondent, state that students of the German Department studying A1+A2 Certificate courses were not allowed by the authorities concerned to appear in the final examinations due to the shortage of attendance.

Hence, the educational future of students of the German Department has been put at stake by the authorities concerned for not allowing them to appear in their final examinations to prove their mettle.

The students, through applications, had twice requested to the Head of the German Department to allow them to appear in the examinations by taking a lenient view keeping in view time period and heavy tuition and transport fees paid to the university but in vain, the sources claimed.

An aggrieved student, on the condition of anonymity, disclosed that unfortunately the Head of Department neither took decision at its own nor forwarded their applications to next authority i.e. Dean, Registrar or the Director General of the university in order to save students' precious time.

Resultantly, the sources divulged, due to the importance of the issue owing to time constraints, the students addressed their plight to the Rector, which is pending for want of a favourable decision.

Our goal is an educated Pakistan: Waseem Qamar Adeel

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Superior College Principal Waseem Qamar Adeel has said that Superior Group of Colleges is an institution that guarantees the training of male and female students, in which, along with excellent education, personality development and career counseling are also done.

This institution has produced hundreds of doctors, engineers, IT professionals, pilots, bankers, judges, lawyers, journalists and civil servants in its 23-year educational journey, which is why today becoming a superior is everyone's dream.



ination system is in line with world standards, he expressed these views while addressing a parents and teachers

meeting yesterday. He added that we also prepare students for board exams according to modern research, which is

why our students take first, second and third positions in boards and universities every year.

Our goal is an educated Pakistan. On this occasion, Vice Principal Rizwan Ahmed said that success requires highly educated teachers and a good environment, which is available in our institution.

Our students are second to none in sports and extracurricular activities along with education. No, we are fulfilling the dreams of students and parents. Parents should take time out every month to get their children's reports. A large number of parents and students were present on this occasion. They appreciated the communication between parents and teachers. This also motivates the students and results are also revealed.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
 Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
Syed Afraz Ali Nazish
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore:
Head Office: AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.
 spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Phone: +92 51 2227123,
WhatsApp +92 346 5008408
Karachi office: A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,
 Karachi Phone: 021-33399390
 Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com
Lahore Office: 7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.
 spokesmanlahore@gmail.com

America First to America Everywhere

Intoxicated by a landslide victory in the presidential elections and securing a majority in the U. S. Congress and Senate, flanked by business magnates and entrepreneurial billionaires, the U. S. President-elect, who is just a week away from taking the oath of office to become one of the most powerful individuals in the modern world, has wasted no time in signaling a dramatic shift in policy. Contrary to his campaign rhetoric of non-interventionism, he has begun to outline bold expansionist policies that, if implemented even partially, could alter the geography and history of the world for generations to come.

While he had promised to withdraw the U. S. from foreign wars and conflicts, it now appears his vision was not about reducing global entanglements but rather reshaping them. His policies suggest a pivot from participating in the wars of other nations to initiating conflicts of his own—starting with the immediate neighbors of the U. S. and potentially extending to other parts of the world. This ambition for a “new America” includes a significant expansion of the U. S. defense forces to facilitate territorial acquisitions, the enlargement of federal bureaucracies to manage newly acquired territories, and the bolstering of homeland security forces to address the inevitable backlash of terrorism and unrest resulting from these policies.

He is particularly serious about annexation of Canada. In his latest press conference, he said “We have a massive trade deficit with Canada, reaching up to \$250 billion. We don’t need their milk, cars, lumber, or energy and other products, yet we provide them with subsidies. Moreover, the USA is responsible for Canada security, Canada has little or no military. They don’t pay to NATO as much as they

should. I asked Prime Minister Trudeau what would happen if the U. S. withdrew its economic and military support, and he admitted that Canada would face severe challenges and will be obliterated. I told him that we would continue our support, if Canada were a U. S. state, not as a separate country.” He further added that the people of Canada loved the idea.

His second hot target is Greenland while addressing the pre-inaugural Press Conference, the President-elect was hawkish. He said acquiring Greenland is an “absolute necessity” for U. S. national and economic security. He emphasized Greenland’s strategic importance for global freedom and stated that if Denmark resisted, the U. S. could impose “very high” tariffs or consider other actions, including military measures.”

According to him, Greenland holds immense strategic importance for the United States. Its location between North America and Europe makes it critical for Arctic defense, monitoring Russian and Chinese activities, and securing emerging Arctic shipping routes as ice melts. The U. S. operates Thule Air Base in Greenland, a vital part of its missile early warning and space surveillance systems, contributing to NATO and NORAD operations. Economically, Greenland is rich in rare earth minerals, oil, gas, and fishing resources, which are essential for reducing reliance on adversaries like China and boosting U. S. energy independence.

In his press conference, he vowed to regain control of the Panama Canal, citing its strategic and economic importance. Historically, the U. S. built and

controlled the canal from its opening in 1914 until its transfer to Panama in 1999 under the Panama Canal Treaties signed by President Carter. The canal was a vital asset for U. S. trade and military mobility, particularly during World War II.

President-elect Donald Trump announced plans to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the “Gulf of America,” stating, “We’re going to be changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America, which has a beautiful ring... And it’s appropriate.” This proposal aligns with Trump’s agenda to assert U. S. sovereignty and dominance, particularly in relation to Mexico, citing concerns over immigration and trade imbalances.

Implementing President-elect Trump’s expansionist policies—annexing Canada, acquiring Greenland, and controlling the Panama Canal—would require a substantial increase in military spending. Securing Canada, the second-largest country in the world by landmass, would involve deploying at least 300,000 additional troops for occupation and policing, costing approximately \$100 billion annually. Establishing military infrastructure in Greenland, such as Arctic bases and radar systems, would add \$50 billion annually. Taking control of the Panama Canal, a region with strategic and economic significance, would involve initial operations costing \$20-30 billion and ongoing expenses of \$10 billion annually. Overall, modernizing and expanding the military for such global ambitions could raise the defense budget by \$500 billion annually.

Countering domestic and regional blowback from these expansionist policies

would necessitate a dramatic expansion of U. S. homeland security capabilities. The annexation of Canada, Greenland, and Panama would likely provoke resistance movements, terrorism, and unrest, requiring the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to double its workforce by adding 300,000 personnel. This expansion, along with enhanced counter-terrorism and surveillance programs, would cost an estimated \$50-75 billion annually. Additional measures to manage increased immigration control and internal dissent could further raise these costs, creating an immense strain on domestic security resources.

To fund this expansionist vision, the U. S. would need to nearly double its current defense and security budget, increasing total spending to \$1.7-1.8 trillion annually. This would impose immense pressure on the U. S. economy, potentially leading to higher taxes or deficits.

These expansionist policies would sharply contradict Trump’s earlier promises of non-interventionism. While the rhetoric suggests retracting the U. S. from foreign wars, these actions would signify a shift toward starting new conflicts and territorial expansions. Far from avoiding global entanglements, these moves would provoke international resistance, destabilize alliances, and damage relationships with NATO and other partners. Countries like China, Russia, and the EU would likely respond with retaliatory measures, economic sanctions, and military build-ups, leading to heightened tensions and potentially triggering a new era of global conflict.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

US–Middle East strategy

The Middle East has long confounded US policymakers, challenging their perceptions of stability and democracy. President Joe Biden’s administration, like its predecessors, has grappled with the illusion of a quiet region. Just days before the Oct. 7 attacks, National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan expressed satisfaction with the relative calm in the Middle East.

This echoes previous misjudgments, such as former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s assertion of stability in Egypt shortly before the dawn of the Arab Spring, and President Jimmy Carter’s characterization of the Shah’s regime in Iran as an “island of stability.” Each such instance illustrates a recurring lesson: The Middle East’s quietude often masks deeper unrest.

Despite the belief among some that US administrations can pivot away from the complexities of the region, the truth remains that the Middle East continually commands attention. Under Biden, the initial tranquility in Gaza belied the underlying tensions that had festered.

Historically, American leaders have viewed the Middle East as a distraction from more pressing global issues, often prioritizing alliances with autocratic regimes over fostering genuine democratic movements. This pattern has perpetuated a cycle of dependency and repression, stifling the aspirations of millions.

Before the Arab Spring, the notion of “linkage theory” suggested that resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict was essential for wider regional progress. However, the uprisings revealed that citizens in fact prioritized their own governments over external issues such as Israel, and therefore sought to directly address domestic grievances such as economic hardship, corruption, and lack of political freedom.

While this shift in focus was promising, it also highlighted the disconnect between US policy and the aspirations of Middle Eastern populations. The uprisings demonstrated that although the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a significant factor, it is not the sole determinant of regional stability.

Today, Israel remains central to US interests in the region. However, the prioritization of Israeli security has often come at the expense of the democratic aspirations of Arab nations. Many Arab populations harbor anti-Israel sentiments, and democratic elections could lead to governments that are more aligned with these views.

As a result, support for autocratic regimes has become a strategy for maintaining regional stability, even at the cost of suppressing democracy. This reveals the paradox in which the US promotes the pursuit of democracy, while simultaneously bolstering leaders who undermine it.

This dynamic has further contributed to friction between the US and Israel. Many US officials recount Israeli skepticism about American efforts to promote democracy, particularly during the George W. Bush administration and its “Freedom Agenda.” Israeli leaders feared that the democratization of Arab states could lead to the rise of Islamists, and therefore perceived open political systems as potential threats to their security. Such skepticism often manifests as a reluctance to support US initiatives that strive to promote democratic governance in the Arab world.

US authorities have frequently overlooked the long-term implications of supporting authoritarian regimes; although such governments might offer short-term stability, they are inherently fragile. As Michael McFaul, a former US ambassador to Russia, asserts, the longer an autocracy endures, the more likely it is to collapse. In contrast, stable democracies tend to grow increasingly resilient over time.

The conflation of quietude with stability has led to misguided policies, indicating that a reckoning is overdue. The perception that stability can be maintained through autocracy ignores the aspirations of people who yearn for freedom and justice.



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

Khan’s Civil Disobedience

During Khan’s tenure, Pakistan faced significant economic challenges, including high inflation, escalating debt, and depleting foreign reserves. Critics argued that his government’s economic policies, particularly regarding inflation management and external debt, were ineffective. His failure to adequately address these issues distressed Pakistan from international financial institutions, leading to credit downgrades and strained economic relations. Khan’s economic mismanagement further weakened the country’s financial position, making it more vulnerable to external pressures from international creditors. These economic problems, combined with growing domestic political unrest, led to claims that Khan’s leadership harmed Pakistan’s long-term economic stability.

create unnecessary friction that Pakistan can ill afford.

Economically, a reduction in remittances would worsen Pakistan’s already precarious financial situation. The country is struggling with a significant trade deficit, foreign debt obligations, and soaring inflation. A decrease in remittances would likely worsen currency depreciation and further deplete foreign exchange reserves, potentially leading to more austerity measures, higher taxes, and cuts in public spending. During negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international financial institutions for aid and loans, a reduction in remittances could compromise Pakistan’s ability to meet financial obligations and hinder much-needed economic reforms.

His call reflects a lack of regard for the nation’s well-being, with his actions being viewed as self-serving rather than in the national interest. The Pakistani people and diaspora have consistently demonstrated their loyalty and patriotism, prioritizing the country’s interests over those of any political leader. The Pakistani diaspora, in particular, has distanced itself from this call for civil disobedience, considering it an anti-state action. This sentiment is reflected in the 31% increase in remittances sent to Pakistan in 2024. From January to November 2024, overseas Pakistanis sent \$21.5 billion, with Saudi Arabia contributing the largest share at \$7.29 billion, a 38.7% increase from the previous year. Pakistanis in the UAE

sent \$6.15 billion, up 55% from last year, while those in the UK sent \$4.71 billion. Overseas Pakistanis sent \$3.61 billion from the European Union and \$3.44 billion from the United States to Pakistan. In addition to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, other Gulf countries contributed \$3.17 billion in remittances to Pakistan, while Australia and Malaysia also emerged as key destinations for Pakistani job seekers abroad.

Despite the malicious efforts of our enemies and some anti-state elements, Pakistan’s economy is continuing to grow and improve. The Pakistan Stock Exchange experienced a significant surge on the last trading day of 2024, with the 100 index rising by more than 3,900 points. By the close of trading, the 100 index stood at 115,259 points, an increase of 3,907 points. During the day, the highest point reached by the 100 index was 115,422 points. A total of 1.05 billion shares were traded, valued at Rs 40.88 billion, while the market capitalization rose by Rs 432 billion to reach Rs 14,558 billion. Throughout the trading session, the 100 index fluctuated within a range of 1,796 points, with 81.5 crore shares traded worth Rs 32.9 billion. The market capitalization saw an increase of Rs 112 billion, settling at Rs 14,126 billion.

The economic and trade performance demonstrates that investors have strong confidence in the initiatives taken by the government and the Army Chief to improve the economy and create a favorable environment for growth. The Pakistani diaspora remains loyal and patriotic, fully rejecting this harmful call for civil disobedience. The people of Pakistan stand united against those who seek to undermine the nation for personal political gain.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Drainage of Sindh’s Lifeblood

The Indus River, the lifeblood of Sindh, is once again facing the brunt of political conspiracies.

Recently, a conference titled “Indus River’s Water Crisis” was held by SANA (Sindhi Association of North America) in Karachi, focusing on the current water issues of Sindh. The conference, attended by political leaders from the PPP, nationalists, writers, and intellectuals, firmly opposed the proposed new canal projects and pledged to launch a vigorous struggle against them.

The exploitation of Sindh’s water is not a new phenomenon, but it has taken a more alarming form under the guise of the “Green Initiative.” This project aims to divert the water of the Indus River to Punjab, specifically to cultivate the desert areas of Cholistan, which would devastate Sindh’s agricultural and ecological systems.

Historically, Sindh has faced consistent injustice when it comes to its water rights:

1. In 1859, Sindh’s water was taken away during the construction of the Bari Doab Canal in Punjab.
2. Post-1945 water agreements gave Sindh only 75% of its rightful share, but over time, Punjab took more than its share.
3. The 1960 Indus Waters Treaty saw the allocation of Sindh’s tributary rivers to India, with no fair compensation for Sindh.
4. The 1991 water accord remains largely unimplemented, with Punjab consistently taking more water than it

is entitled to.

5. Proposals like the Kala Bagh Dam continue to threaten Sindh’s water resources.

Six New Canals – A Threat to Sindh’s Survival?

Currently, the “Green Initiative” is under consideration, with plans to construct six new canals. This plan, presented as a solution for irrigation in Punjab’s desert areas, would result in:

Draining Sindh’s lifeline – The water diverted from the Indus River will leave Sindh’s fertile lands parched.

Environmental Disaster – The proposed canals would cause irreversible environmental damage, endangering wildlife and agriculture in Sindh.

Leaders at the conference expressed deep concerns:

Dr. Qadir Maghsbi stated that, for 150 years, Sindh’s water had been siphoned off through planned conspiracies, and this new project is just another attempt to devastate Sindh.

Nisar Khuhro, President of PPP Sindh, confirmed that the PPP would never allow such a project and had historically taken a stand on water rights, even proposing telemetry systems to stop water theft.

Zulfiqar Bhutto Jr. highlighted the environmental impact, warning that the new canals would ruin 12 million acres of land and disturb the livelihoods of 60% of Sindh’s population living along the river.

Advocate Wassand Thry of the Awami Tehreek called the project a

violation of international water laws and accused the PPP government of selling Sindh’s water for political gain.

What Should the People of Sindh Do? The conference also announced a significant event in Islamabad on January 18, where leaders will unite to resist the new canal projects and pressure the federal government to abandon these plans.

However, this movement cannot be restricted to conferences alone. The people of Sindh must take the following steps:

1. Launch a unified and organized struggle against the diversion of water.
 2. Engage international organizations like the International Water Law Institute and UNICEF to raise awareness.
 3. Use media platforms to highlight the severity of the issue on a global scale.
 4. Form alliances with people in Punjab, as the fight for water should not be limited to Sindh alone.
 5. Consult legal experts to take this issue to international courts if necessary.
- Water – A Life or Death Issue for Sindh
- The resistance against projects like Kala Bagh Dam was one of Sindh’s greatest successes in the past. Now, the survival of Sindh depends on the outcome of the battle against these new canals. If Sindh’s people remain silent, the Indus River may no longer flow as we know it.
- The landowners, farmers, youth, business community, intellectuals, and every citizen of Sindh must unite and take action. If we fail now, future generations will face dry rivers, barren lands, and a displaced Sindh community.
- This is not just a water issue; This is a matter of Sindh’s survival!

Lebanon, Syria pledge firm ties after years of tensions

AFP

Syria's new ruler and Lebanon's prime minister pledged on Saturday to build lasting ties during the first visit by a Lebanese head of government to Damascus since the civil war started in 2011.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati's trip came after Islamist-led rebels seized Damascus last month, bringing an end to the rule of Bashar al-Assad.

Previous Lebanese governments refrained from visits to Syria amid tensions at home over militant group Hezbollah's support for Assad during the conflict.

Syria's new leader Ahmed al-Sharaa said he hopes to turn over a new leaf in relations, days after crisis-hit Lebanon finally elected a president this week following two years of deadlock.

"There will be long-term strategic relations between us and Lebanon. We and Lebanon have great shared interests," said Sharaa.

It was time to "give the Syrian and Lebanese people a chance to build a positive relationship", he said, adding he hoped Joseph Aoun's presidency would usher in an era of stability in Lebanon.

Sharaa said the new Syria would "stay at equal distance from all" in Lebanon, and "try to solve problems through negotiations and dialogue".

Mikati said ties should be based on "mutual respect, equality and national sovereignty".

The new authorities in Syria also

said Sharaa had phoned Aoun to congratulate him Saturday.

Syria was the dominant power in Lebanon for three decades under the Assad family, with president Hafez al-Assad intervening in its 1975-1990 civil war and his son Bashar al-Assad only withdrawing Syria's troops in 2005 following mass protests triggered by the assassination of Lebanese ex-prime minister Rafic Hariri.

After mending ties with Damascus, his son Saad Hariri was the last Lebanese premier to visit the Syrian capital in 2010 before the civil war.

Taking office on Thursday, Aoun swore he would seize the "historic opportunity to start serious... dialogue with the Syrian state".

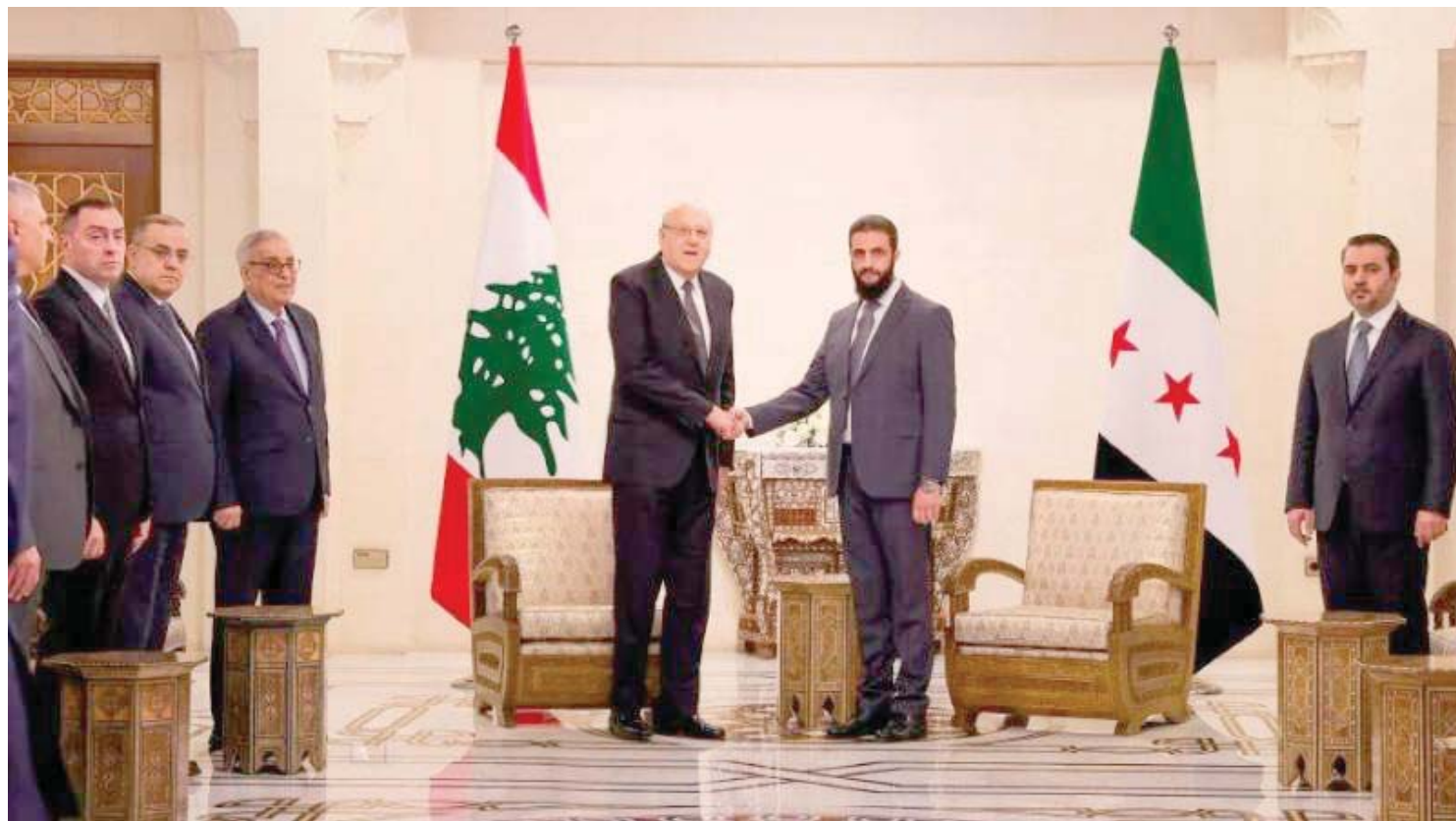
With Hezbollah weakened after two months of full-scale war with Israel late last year and Assad now gone, Syrian and Lebanese leaders seem eager to work to solve long-pending issues.

Among them is the presence of some two million Syrian refugees Lebanon says have sought shelter there since Syria's war started.

Their return to Syria had become "an urgent matter in the interest of both countries", Mikati said.

Lebanese authorities have long complained that hosting so many Syrians has become a burden for the tiny Mediterranean country which since 2019 has been wracked by its worst-ever economic crisis.

Mikati also said it was a priority "to draw up the land and sea borders



between Lebanon and Syria", calling for creation of a joint committee to discuss the matter.

Under Assad, Syria repeatedly refused to delimit its borders with its neighbour.

Lebanon has hoped to draw the maritime border so it can begin offshore gas extraction after reaching a similar agreement with Israel in 2022.

The Lebanese premier said both sides had stressed the need for

"complete control of (land) borders, especially over illicit border points, to stem smuggling".

Syria shares a 330-kilometre (205-mile) border with Syria with no official demarcation at several points, making it porous and prone to smuggling.

Syria imposed new restrictions on the entry of Lebanese citizens last week, following what Lebanon's army said was a border skirmish with unnamed armed Syrians.

Lebanese nationals had previously been allowed into Syria without a visa.

Several foreign dignitaries have headed to Damascus in recent weeks to meet the new leaders, with a delegation from Oman also in town earlier Saturday.

Unlike other Arab Gulf states, Oman never severed diplomatic ties with Assad during the war.

Italy's Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani visited Damascus on Friday,

while France's Jean-Noel Barrot and his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock did last week.

Shaibani has visited Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan this month, and said Friday he would head to Europe soon.

Syria's war has killed more than half a million people and ravaged the country's economy since starting in 2011 with the brutal crackdown of anti-Assad protests.

Software Technology Park Dadyal will be operational today

Bureau Report

DIDIAL: Another revolutionary initiative of the Special Communication Organization SCO, Software Technology Park Didial, will be functional from January 13, 2025. Software Technology Park Didial will be operational from January 13, 2025. This park will provide state-of-the-art facilities for freelancers, startups and entrepreneurs working in the IT and ITES sector in the region. The Software Technology Park will be functional 24 hours a day and uninterrupted power supply has been ensured here. In addition, high-speed fiber-based internet facility will also

be available so that the users do not face any hindrance in their work. A separate space has been allocated for women entrepreneurs so that they can continue working on their projects in a safe and conducive environment. The aim of Software Technology Park Didial is to promote technological development, provide a platform to the youth and strengthen the local economy. An inauguration ceremony will be held soon in this regard, in which experts and important personalities from various fields will participate. According to a press release issued by the SCO spokesperson, this is the fourth most modern software technology park of its

kind in Mirpur division. Before this, the software technology parks established in Mirpur Kotli and Bhimber, in addition to the freelancing hubs established in Khairwal and Kunhian, are working very successfully, from where hundreds of people are working and playing their role in the country's economy and development. The spokesperson further said that SCO is establishing freelancing hubs in other areas of Mirpur division, including Nakial, Sahansa, Khoi Ratta, Nad Islamgarh, Samahini, Panjedi and Afzalpur, as well as in remote and difficult areas so that the young generation there can benefit from this latest technology.

Grand jirga on Pak afghan border Angoor Adda

Umer Wazir

SOUTHWAZIRISTAN: To boost trade activities Ahmadzai Wazir convened a grand jirga on Pak afghan border Angoor Adda.

A negotiating committee comprising tribal elders, scholars, and businessmen held successful talks with local tribes.

The committee included Chief of Ahmadzai Tariq Khan, Malik Baz Gul, Malik Rasool Zaman, Chairman Maulana Abdulah Nadeem, Malik Shahryar, Maulana Sabirullah, Malik Syed Ra Nur, and President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Saifur Rehman.

In the initial jirga, fruitful discussions were held regarding the opening of the Angoor Adda gate and restoration of trade activities.

The local tribes reiterated their joint stance, stating that the Ahmadzai Wazir tribes, settled on both sides of the Angoor Adda gate, had made immense sacrifices



for the country's stability and had demonstrated unwavering patriotism during global powers' confrontations.

They requested the jirga to allow them special cards or easy access to cross the gate, considering their loyalty to Pakistan. The committee assured them that they would vigorously pursue their legitimate demands

and acknowledged the patriotism of the war-torn tribes in Angoor Adda.

While talking to the media, the committee members expressed hope that a second jirga would be held with the Angoor Adda community within the next few days, and they expected the Angoor Adda gate to reopen and other issues to be resolved soon.

Bangladesh govt eases visa restrictions for Pakistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: In a notable initiative to strengthen economic and trade relations, Bangladesh has eased visa restrictions and regulations for Pakistani citizens.

This measure aims to foster improved bilateral relations and enhance trade activities between the two countries.

During a speech at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Saturday, Bangladesh's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Iqbal Hussain Khan, announced this development.

LCCI President, Mian Abuzar Shad, welcomed the participants and underscored the necessity of increasing trade between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The event also featured remarks from Bangladesh's Honorary Consul General, Qazi Humayun Fareed, as well as officials from the LCCI, Sheikhpura Chamber, and Gujranwala Chamber, including Senior Vice President Ahmad Naveed Ranjha.

The High Commissioner indicated that the Bangladeshi government has streamlined the visa application process and eliminated the need for clearance from Dhaka for Pakistani



diplomatic missions.

He emphasised that promoting trade and investment between the two nations would be a primary focus, with the LCCI playing a pivotal role in this endeavor.

Iqbal Hussain Khan further expressed Bangladesh's commitment to enhancing relations with Pakistan, recognising that the bilateral ties have not been optimal over the past decade.

He pointed out that Bangladesh, with its population of 180 million, offers a substantial consumer market for Pakistan to explore. Despite the considerable trade potential, the High Commissioner remarked that

this opportunity remains largely unexploited.

Additionally, the High Commissioner commended Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the Chief Advisor to Bangladesh's interim government, for his advocacy of regional cooperation and called for closer collaboration among South Asian nations.

He urged the revitalisation of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to advance regional trade and cooperation, highlighting that while global regional cooperation is on the rise, South Asia continues to face challenges that necessitate collective action.

Misinformation Targeting British Pakistanis in Grooming Gang Scandal

Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah

LONDON: Recent discussions surrounding the grooming gang scandal have reignited concerns about misinformation and biased narratives unfairly targeting the British Pakistani community. While sexual exploitation and grooming are abhorrent crimes that warrant full condemnation, experts caution against politicizing the issue or perpetuating harmful stereotypes.

Sexual exploitation and grooming are grave societal problems that transcend nationalities, religions, and ethnicities. Criminal behavior exists in every community, and collective blame undermines justice while fostering division.

The resurgence of debates around the grooming gang scandal has been criticized as part of a biased agenda aimed at sowing discord and maligning the British government. Elon Musk's recent comments on the social media platform

X have amplified these tensions, as he openly supports far-right figures like Nigel Farage (Reform UK) and Tommy Robinson, both of whom have a history of spreading anti-Muslim rhetoric.

Musk's inflammatory tweets have drawn widespread condemnation from British officials and European leaders, who view them as a direct attack on democracy. His statements have been described as an attempt to propagate prejudice and incite division within communities.

Contrary to the claims being propagated, official data and studies confirm that the majority of child sexual exploitation offenders in the UK are white men, reflecting the country's demographic makeup.

- The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) reported that 85% of "group-based" child abusers in the first three quarters of 2024 were white.
- While some high-profile cases involved men of Pakistani heritage,

these do not represent an entire community or ethnicity.

The UK Parliament recently rejected a Conservative-led motion for a national inquiry into grooming gangs, with 364 votes against and 111 in favor. Lawmakers emphasized the importance of addressing systemic failures rather than scapegoating specific communities.

British Pakistanis are integral to the UK's progress and development, making significant contributions in various sectors:

- Healthcare:** Pakistani-origin doctors account for 8% of junior doctors, 4% of consultants, and 10% of other specialists in the NHS.
- Politics and Leadership:** Prominent figures include Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London), Shabana Mahmood MP (Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice), and Humza Yousaf (Former First Minister of Scotland).
- Business and Sports:** Esteemed individuals like Sir Anwar Pervez (busi-

ness magnate) and Amir Khan (boxing champion) highlight the community's achievements.

Experts stress that systemic failures—such as insufficient safeguarding measures—allowed grooming gang cases to persist. In some instances, authorities hesitated to act decisively, fearing accusations of racism, which ultimately harmed victims and delayed justice.

To effectively combat sexual exploitation, experts recommend:

- Strengthening child protection laws and safeguarding systems.
- Allocating better resources for victims and ensuring institutional accountability.
- Encouraging cross-community dialogue to address root causes of exploitation.
- Avoiding divisive narratives that unfairly stigmatize entire communities.
- Inflammatory rhetoric and biased reporting can fuel discrimination,



alienation, and hate crimes. Accurate and responsible journalism is essential to ensure justice and societal progress. Equal scrutiny must be applied to all offenders, regardless of ethnicity or background.

The UK must prioritize efforts to prevent exploitation, protect victims, and promote unity. Educational initia-

tives, stronger social services, and improved legislation are vital steps in addressing this complex issue without marginalizing any community.

By grounding discussions in facts and justice, the UK can effectively combat sexual exploitation while preserving community cohesion and inclusivity.

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

Pakistani business delegation meets adviser for commerce of Bangladesh

Spokesman Report

DHAKA: A high profile business delegation from Pakistan, led by Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President of Pakistan Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), met with Sheikh Bashir Uddin, Adviser for Commerce in Bangladesh's Interim Government. They discussed ways and means to enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

The Adviser for Commerce welcomed the delegation and emphasized the importance of strengthening economic ties between the two countries. President FPCCI thanked the adviser for meeting and informed that a prominent multi-sectoral exporters' delegation is visiting Bangladesh with the aim to enhance trade and commercial ties. Highlighting the vast potential for expanding bilateral trade in various fields, he expressed confidence that enhanced economic engagement could pave the way for a new era of trade relations, benefiting businesses and economies on both sides.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh Syed Ahmed Maroof was also present during the meeting.

Earlier, the delegation held a meeting with Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun. Discussions centered on exploring trade and investment opportunities between the two countries.



Protest

ISLAMABAD: Family member's of employees of old Munal restaurant hold placards during protest in favor of their demands at Pir Sohawa, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Political stability a fundamental factor for sustainable economic growth

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday said political stability is a fundamental factor in achieving sustainable economic growth, as it fosters an environment of predictability, security, and trust.

In a press statement here today he said a stable political environment encourages long-term planning and investment, both from domestic and foreign investors. When governments operate smoothly, enforce the rule of law, and implement consistent policies, the business community feels confident to invest resources, expand operations, and contribute to economic development. He said, political stability is not just a facilitator of sustainable economic growth but a prereq-



quisite for attracting foreign investors and bolstering the confidence of the business community. Without it, economies face uncertainty, stagnation, and missed opportunities for development. He said foreign investors are particularly sensitive to political instability, as it increases risks of sudden policy changes or disruptions caused by social unrest. A politically stable nation assures investors of the security of their investments and the likelihood of a predictable return. He said economies with stable governance structures, those in many advanced nations, consistently attract higher levels of foreign direct investment (FDI) compared

to regions plagued by political turmoil.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said, moreover, political stability creates an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and innovation. When businesses are confident about the future, they are more willing to take risks, invest in new technologies, and hire more employees. This boosts productivity and strengthens the overall economy, creating a virtuous cycle of growth and development.

He said these elements are essential for restoring and maintaining confidence, especially in times of global economic uncertainty. Stable governance also allows governments to focus on long-term economic planning, infrastructure development, and social programs that enhance the quality of life for people, he concluded.

PFC to participate in Ethiopia expo



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) is set to participate in the 3-days 5th Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition being held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from January 15.

Talking to a delegation of interiors designers led by Ms Maria Tauqir GM Interiors Chenone CEO PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq said This event is a significant platform for fostering trade ties and showcasing Pakistan's growing industries, including its vibrant furniture sector, to African markets. He said PFC delegation, aims to present a wide array of high-quality, handcrafted furniture, reflecting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and crafts-

manship. The event provides a unique opportunity to strengthen business connections, explore new export avenues, and enhance trade collaborations with African countries, he added.

He expressed optimism about the council's participation, emphasizing that Africa holds immense potential for expanding furniture exports. The exhibition will not only highlight Pakistan's capabilities in furniture production but also promote its innovative designs and superior quality in international markets. He said this expo is organized by Federal Ministry of Commerce and Trade Development Authority, aiming to deepen bilateral trade relations with African nations. PFC's participation underlines its commitment to boosting Pakistan's economic footprint globally, especially in emerging markets like Africa, and contributing to the country's export-led growth, he concluded.

Visit of FPCCI delegation will enhance economic relations, promote regional cooperation

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Convener Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry regional committee on Food Shahid Imran Sunday said it's good timely decision of FPCCI to take Pak businessmen delegation to Bangladesh which will enhance the long-awaited static volume of trade between two countries.

Talking here today to a delegation of traders led by Mian Azhar Shoukat he said Bangladesh's emerging economy and Pakistan's diverse industrial base provide a foundation for mutually beneficial trade relations. Pak delegation aims to highlight Pakistan's expertise in textiles, surgical instruments, and agriculture while exploring Bangladeshi strengths in

ready-made garments and ICT. The FPCCI delegation's visit underscores the shared commitment of both countries to enhance economic ties, promote regional cooperation, and drive sustainable growth. The outcomes of this visit will pave the way for stronger trade relations, increased investment, and closer economic collaboration between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

He said Pak delegation led by dynamic FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh will not only engage in business-to-business (B2B) interactions but also explore joint ventures and investment opportunities in key sectors. The visit will also help facilitate knowledge exchange and improve mutual understanding of trade policies and regulations.

Any concerned taxpayers, importers or exporters may approach any regional office of FTO

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr Asif Mahmood Jah after completing the entire laid down process got paid within the ambit of law record refunds amounting to Rs 21 billion to aggrieved taxpayers during the year 2024.

Addressing the awareness session with business community here Sunday Coordinator to FTO Muhammad Farhan Munir said scores of refund's complaints received nationwide during the period under review were dully processed according to law and orders were issued for their

refunds. He said all entire businesses community has reposed full confidence in the overall performance of FTO for timely redressal of their genuine grievances without any delay. He said 66.55 percent more complaints were filed during last year of which 95.96 percent were disposed of by giving them lawful relief. He said any aggrieved tax payers, importers or exporters can approach any regional office of FTO and can also file direct complaints to FTO secretariat through email, fax, by post, website, WhatsApp, which will be processed within 24 hours from the time of submission.

Muhammad Farhan Munir on the other hand urged the participants to pay their Federal Board of Revenue taxes timely to help run affairs of the states smoothly as government is fully committed to the welfare of the business community and working day and night for ease of doing business by offering a basket of unprecedented incentives for economic growth. He said FTO will visit Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Government College University Faisalabad instant months and Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry next month at the invitation of FTO coordinator Saif Ur



Rehman where he will address the traders of South Punjab.

Impressive \$17.8bn remittances in six months to support account balance: PIAF

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: As the remittances to Pakistan have hit a record high in first six months of the current fiscal year the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has said that foreign remittances flows are crucial which can support the country's account balance amidst low volumes of foreign direct investment and constant growth of exports.

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol, in a joint statement issued here today along with senior vice chairman Nasrullah Mughal and vice chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry, observed that overseas Pakistanis sent 33 percent more remittances in the first six months of July and Dec the current fiscal year (FY25), compared to the same period of the previous fiscal year.

According to experts, workers' remittances recorded a significant inflow of \$3.1 billion during December 2024, marking a year-on-year growth of 29.3% and a month-on-month increase of 5.6%.

BMP for keeping check as debt servicing eats up forex reserves

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's (FPCCI) Businessmen Panel (BMP) has denounced the government for not keeping a check on foreign exchange market, as the foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan has decreased by \$15 million on a weekly basis, clocking in at \$11.70 billion, because debt servicing on foreign loans continues to eat up SBP's holdings. FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar said that the exchange rate looks stable, but increasing debt servicing costs have put the economy at risk, as that Pakistan's economy was stuck in a low-growth trap with poor human development outcomes and increasing poverty.

PSL Platinum category unveiled

13 Australian, 8 English, and Kiwi stars highlight platinum list; Draft to be held tomorrow in Lahore

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The wait is finally over as the Pakistan Super League (PSL) gears up for its highly anticipated draft, set to take place on January 13 in Lahore.

The PSL administration has announced the Platinum Category, which features an impressive lineup of international cricket stars, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

The Platinum Pool boasts players from Australia, England, New Zealand, Bangladesh, and other cricketing nations.

Notable names include Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Kane Williamson, David Warner, Chris Lynn, Moises Henriques, Usman Khawaja, and Naveen-ul-Haq. Shakib Al Hasan, Alex Hales, Jason Roy, Tom Curran, and Sean Abbott also head-



line the list.

Other prominent players on the Platinum roster are Tim Southee, Imran Tahir, Tabraiz Shamsi, Jimmy Neesham, and Reza Hendricks.

Caribbean stars such as Jason Holder, Alzarri Joseph, and Shai Hope join the roster, alongside Sri Lanka's Kusal Mendis and Afghanistan's Rashid Khan.

Australia leads the pack with 13 players in the Platinum category, followed by England with 8, New Zealand with 7, and the West Indies with 5 players.

South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan each contribute 2 players.

With preparations in full swing, PSL 2025 promises to deliver another thrilling season, captivating cricket fans worldwide.

Four more fixtures decided of Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Sun CC, Young Pak Flag CC, Faisal Gymkhana and Sports & Science CC Secure victories

Sports Desk

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

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

Scores in Brief:

Sun Cricket Club beat Naya Nazimabad Gymkhana by 23 runs at Naya Nazimabad Gymkhana Stadium. Sun CC 253/7 in 40 overs. Rehmat 72 8x4 1x6, Roman Ali 40, Javed Khan 33, Fawad Akbar 30, Asif 21, Shoaib Shah 20. Naya Nazimabad Gymkhana 230/9 in 40 overs. Kashif Bashir 78



11x4, Zafar ullaah 35, Irfan Ali 26, Azmat ullaah 21. Fawad Akbar 3/41. Javed Khan 2/10. Atta Khan 2/38. In the 2nd Match Young Pak Flag Cricket Club beat Lines Area Gymkhana by 3 Wickets at RLCA (G) Ground. Lines Area Gymkhana 210 all out in 29.3 overs. Adil Hussain 67

10x4, Ahmed Mohiuddin 44, Abdul Rafay 22, Naveed ullaah 21. Yasir ullaah Siddiqui (ob) 4/36, Iqrar Shah 2/38. Young Pak Flag CC 211/7 in 28 overs. Iqrar Shah 64 8x4 not out, Jamshed 35, Yasir ullaah Siddiqui 31, Naveed Talib 30. Naveed ullaah 2/25, Wasif Waheed 2/40.

In the 3rd Match Faisal Gymkhana beat Taimoria Sports by 77 runs at Student Ground. Faisal Gymkhana 147 all out in 24.1 overs. Aun Abbas 58 8x4 2x6, Fayyaz Hussain 22. Yousuf (lb) 6/32, Muhammad Izhar 2/10. Taimoria Sports 69 all out in 24.3 overs. M. Azam 15. Ejaz Shah (ob) 3/13.

In the Fourth Sports & Science CC beat Union Sports by 113 runs at Pak Star. Sports & Science CC 238/5 in 40 overs. M. Sajjan 79 8x4, Daniyal Ali 43, Abdullah Touseef 35, Rahil Khan 24. Umar Shah 3/28. Union Sports 125 all out in 25.4 overs. Hassan Abbasi 44, Arbaz Ahmed 43. Bilal Khan (sla) 3/8, Jahanzaib Khan 3/18, Daniyal Ali 2/9.

National Track Cycling Championship 2025 closing ceremony was held

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The National Track Cycling Championship 2025 concluded in grand style today with a vibrant Closing Ceremony at the Nishtar Sports Complex Cycling Velodrome, Lahore. Organized by the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), the event celebrated exceptional athletic performances and marked a pivotal moment for cycling in Pakistan.

The championship showcased thrilling competition, with athletes delivering outstanding performances in multiple categories. The winners were:

Elimination Men

• 1st Place: Sabir (WAPDA)
• 2nd Place: Izzatullah (WAPDA)

• 3rd Place: Khizar (KPK)
Elimination Women

• 1st Place: Sadaf (WAPDA)
• 2nd Place: Ghazala (WAPDA)

• 3rd Place: Adeen (HEC)
Team Sprint Men

• 1st Place: WAPDA
• 2nd Place: Punjab
• 3rd Place: HEC
Organized by the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), the event celebrated exceptional athletic performances and marked a pivotal moment for cycling in Pakistan.

The Closing Ceremony was attended by several distinguished guests, including:

• Rizwan Aftab, CEO of ACTIVIT
• Arif Saeed, President of the Pakistan Olympic Association
• Muhammad Khalid Mehmood, General Secretary of the Pakistan Olympic Association

Prominent sports personalities such as Nooh Dastagir Butt, Shajar Abbas, and Shehroz Khan also graced the occasion, adding to the event's grandeur.

Idris Haider Khawaja, President of the Pakistan Cycling Federation, and Moazzam Khan Klair, General Secretary, congratulated the winners and lauded all participants for their hard work and dedication. They encouraged the athletes to prepare for upcoming

competitions, including the much-anticipated Tour de Pakistan, which promises to take cycling in Pakistan to new heights.

The success of the championship was a result of the tireless efforts of the organizing committee and officials, including Shahzada Butt, Gul Muhammad Kakar, Khawaja Zaheer ud Din, Kaleem Awan, Waqar Ali, Talha, Qaiser, Sakawat Ali, and many others, whose contributions were acknowledged during the ceremony.

This year's championship not only celebrated the remarkable achievements of the athletes but also underscored the growing recognition and development of cycling as a major sport in Pakistan.

ICC delegation visits Gaddafi Stadium to assess readiness for Champions Trophy



LAHORE: A six-member International Cricket Council (ICC) delegation Sunday visited Gaddafi Stadium Lahore to assess venue's readiness for the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, to be hosted by Pakistan from February 19 to March 9.

The delegation comprised of ICC officials, broadcasters, and logistics personnel and it reviewed facilities including the media boxes, dressing rooms, and enclosures at the venue.

The visit will provide the delegation with the first hand information on the state of affairs at the venues in Pakistan. It reviewed PCB's readiness for the ICC event. PCB's Director International Cricket Usman Wahla briefed the delegation on the ongoing upgradation work at the stadium.

The Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi recently claimed that the things were in place for the inauguration of the upgradation work on January 25.

The PCB has further relocated the tri-nation ODI series featuring South Africa and New Zealand to the Gaddafi stadium Lahore and NBP stadium Karachi to further satisfy the ICC on the preparedness for the mega event.

The tri-series matches will also help PCB put the upgradation work to the litmus test and see whether there are some shortcomings so that these may be rectified prior to the start of the ICC Champions Trophy on February 19.

The ICC delegation has already visited NBP stadium, Karachi and Rawalpindi stadium, Rawalpindi.

Cricket Match Was Organized at Sports Complex T. T. Singh



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: According to the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the district administration is active for the promotion of sports activities. District Sports Office Toba Tek Singh under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sindhu is playing an active role. In this regard, a friendly cricket match was organized between Ittefaq Cricket Club Faisalabad and Super Star Cricket Club Toba Tek Singh at Sports Complex Jhang Road. On this Occasion, the chief guest, Manager Allied Bank Hamid Shoaib and District Sports Officer Muhammad Jamil in the ceremony, attended In his address, he praised the importance of sports and the positive role of the players and said that the youth are being provided ample opportunities to participate in sports. This match organized by the District Sports Office is an important initiative for the promotion of sports is allowing the young players to highlight their skills Got a chance.

If the grounds are settled, the hospitals will be deserted



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Electronic Media Association Faisalabad, beat Sports Journalists Association of Faisalabad Sjaif in the cricket matches.

The team of Electronic Media Association Faisalabad, led by Public News Correspondent Hussam Ahmed, entered the field while the host team of Sports Journalists Association of Faisalabad Sjaif came to play under the leadership of Jamil Siraj It was no less than a test, so the decision was made that the match 6 overs to be played Sjaif team captain Jamil Siraj won the toss and invited EMAF to bat, who piled up a total of 92 on the board, mostly from left-hander Bilal. Irfan Zafar and Sadaqat Shah took two wickets each from Sjaif. In reply, Sjaif's team scored only 62 runs. The second match consisted of five 5 overs in which Emaf batsman Bilal played the same aggressive innings and set a target of 96 which could not be achieved by Sjaif's batting line.

Naseem Shah, Rana Munir, Qamar Butt, Jamil Siraj, Tawfiq Yusuf, Sadaqat Shah, Imran Hameed, Shahid Hussain and Muhammad Faizan played well from Sjaifside.

Najmul to lead Bangladesh in Champions Trophy



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Najmul Hossain Shanto will captain Bangladesh in the Champions Trophy in Pakistan and Dubai next month, the cricket board said Sunday, with key players including Liton Das missing the cut.

Former star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is also missing from the 15-man squad for the one-day international tournament.

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

Bangladesh are ninth in the ICC ODI rankings.

They play their opener against India in Dubai on February 20. Bangladesh squad: Nazmul Hossain Shanto (capt), Soumya Sarkar, Tanzid Hasan, Towhid Hridoy, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mohammad Mahmudullah Riyad, Jaker Ali, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Rishad Hossain, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Parvez Hossain Emon, Nasum Ahmed, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Nahid Rana.

Pakistan Shaheens & West Indies warm-up match ends in draw



ISLAMABAD: The three-day warm-up match between Pakistan Shaheens and the West Indies concluded in a draw on Sunday at the Islamabad Club Ground, chasing a target of 312 runs, Pakistan Shaheens finished at 128 for 2 in 30 overs.

Opening batsman Mohammad Huraira, who is also part of the Test squad impressed with a quick-fire 80 runs off just 80 balls including 12 fours and 2 sixes. This followed his earlier innings of 74 runs, contributing to an 82-run partnership with Omair Bin Yousuf who scored 25 runs.

In their first innings, Pakistan Shaheens declared at 212 for 9, trailing by 134 runs. West Indies then batted for 40 overs in their second innings, scoring 177 for 5 before declaring, setting the Shaheens a challenging target.

West Indies had a shaky start, falling to 25 for 3 and later 73 for 5, but Alick Athanaze (58 not out) and Tevin Imlach (57 not out) rescued the innings with an unbeaten 104-run partnership for the sixth wicket.

For Pakistan Shaheens, Musa Khan took 2 wickets for just 5 runs while Ali Raza also picked up 2 wickets for 32 runs.

The West Indies Test squad will now travel to Multan where their first Test match begins on Friday, 17 January.

India's cricket board elects Devajit Saikia to top job

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: India's powerful and hugely wealthy cricket board on Sunday elected its new chief, former player and advocate Devajit Saikia, the only person nominated to the top post.

"Devajit Saikia is declared duly elected as the Secretary of BCCI," the Board of Control for Cricket in India said in a statement.

Saikia, 55, succeeds Jay Shah, who left the position to become chairman of the International Cricket Council, the global governing body.

Businessman and state cricket administrator Prabhjit Singh Bhatia has been appointed BCCI treasurer, the board added.

Shah's departure last month to become chairman of the ICC prompted the appointment of Saikia, who was already



on the BCCI board as interim secretary. An unknown among fans after a

modest playing career, Saikia has close ties with India's ruling Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Saikia began in administration by serving as general secretary of a cricket club in the northeastern state of Assam under the leadership of Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Sarma is now Assam's chief minister for the BJP, which has governed India nationally since 2014 under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Saikia and Sarma both later served in the Assam state cricket association.

When Sarma was tapped to lead the state, he appointed Saikia his advocate general — the government's chief legal adviser.

Saikia was a wicketkeeper-batsman with modest returns in first-class cricket where he played four matches for his home state Assam, scoring just 53 runs.

Closing Ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Malala Yousafzai at the closing ceremony of the International Conference for Girl's Education on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Siddiqui seeks collective efforts to overcome barriers to girls' education

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui emphasised the need for collective action to overcome the barriers to girls' education, underscoring the importance of education in empowering women and strengthening communities.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of a two-day global conference on "Girls' Education in Muslim Society: Challenges and Opportunities" on Sunday, the minister reiterated

his commitment as education minister to ensure that every child in Pakistan, regardless of gender, socio-economic background, or geographical location, has access to quality education.

"Addressing educational disparities remains a top priority for the government as education plays a vital role in empowering girls, in their prosperity, development and well-being," the minister added.

Expressing concern over the persistent opposition to girls' education, the minister called on the nation to unite in chal-

lenging these entrenched societal norms and attitudes.

He stressed that girls' education was not only a moral imperative but also an economic necessity, highlighting that educated girls are better equipped to care for their families and access better job opportunities.

Meanwhile, the minister acknowledged the significant challenges facing girls' education, noting that millions of girls are still out of school in Pakistan.

Highlighting the significant obstacles girls face in accessing education, he said that the

government had launched several initiatives aimed at increasing girls' enrolment and improving the overall quality of education nationwide.

The federal minister for education, outlined several key measures aimed at improving the quality of education, including teacher training, the construction of new schools, and the provision of scholarships for female students.

He also noted that efforts were underway to enhance school infrastructure, particularly in underserved and rural areas, to ensure better educa-

tional opportunities for all students.

He stressed the need to create a society where girls have access to quality education that enables them to reach their full potential.

The minister also highlighted the vital role of parents, teachers and community leaders in promoting girls' education, urging that their contributions be recognised.

He called for collective action to remove the barriers to girls' education and eliminate the existing inequalities in the education system.

Punjab CM allocates Rs62bn for 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' scheme

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has approved Rs62 billion in funds for the "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" program.

According to the report, the initiative aims to provide affordable housing to deserving individuals, with a target of disbursing loans to 40,000 beneficiaries by May 2025.

Chairing a special meeting



on the housing scheme, CM Maryam Nawaz directed

officials to expedite the loan disbursement process and consider increasing the loan amount to Rs 2 million.

Maryam Nawaz emphasised that providing every citizen with a home is a fundamental right.

During the briefing, it was revealed that 5,000 citizens have already availed loans under the program, while over 4,200 homes are nearing completion.

The scheme, in collaboration with the Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) and the Housing and Urban Development Department, will also provide ready-made homes to underprivileged families.

CM Maryam Nawaz reiterated her commitment to ensuring that no family in Punjab remains homeless, stating, "A home is every citizen's basic right."

Secretaries General of OIC, MWL...

Continued from Page 1

Both Secretaries General expressed confidence that the step would galvanize concerted efforts to improve quality education and women empowerment in the Muslim World.

They expressed gratitude to the government of Pakistan for a wonderful hospitality extended to them and their respective delegations during their visit to Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and senior government officials saw off the dignitaries at their departure at the Islamabad International Airport.

Director Home Publicity, Press Information Department Nergis Shazia Chaudhary presented a photo album to the guests as a souvenir of their visit to Pakistan.

Young Kashmiri talent shines at global stage

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad-based young Kashmiri migrant student, Zujajah Shaiikh has brought honor to her community and country by achieving remarkable milestones in international essay competitions.

Zujajah won the prestigious Bronze Award in the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition (QCEC) 2021, organized by the British Royal Commonwealth Society.

Competing against over 25,648 participants from around the world, Zujajah's story, titled "Earthlings," was based on the theme "It's been 30 years since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. How does the world look like?"

Her essay explored the far-reaching impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on daily life and humanity's responsibility toward preserving the planet.

The compelling narrative carried a profound message: "What you are doing to



your Mother Earth? In a parallel universe, you might be happier, but I don't think there will be Planet B for you."

Further showcasing her literary talent, Zujajah recently excelled in another prestigious writing competition organized by

the Goi Peace Foundation in October 2024.

Her insightful essay on the theme "My Experience of Overcoming Conflict" earned her an Honorable Mention Certificate in the Youth Category in the 2024 International Essay Contest for Young People.

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

Mohsin Naqvi visits old age home in Sialkot run by Firdous Ashiq Awan



Faisal Khawar Butt

SIALKOT: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday visited an old age home in Sialkot along with former federal minister Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan, who is now associated with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

On this occasion, Naqvi and Awan also cut a cake to welcome the New Year. Naqvi praised Awan for taking care of the elderly people. He said that he was impressed by the best facilities being provided to the elderly people by Awan. He said that he had

always been with this organisation and would always stand by it. He said the government would help in expansion of the facility and provide more facilities to the elderly people living there.

Awan said that people of her constituency have stood by her in every thick and thin. He said that Naqvi is an active and committed politician and the national cricket team was bringing laurels home under his patronization. She said that Naqvi arrival at the old age home is a matter of pride and happiness for the elderly citizens living there.

Orders to demolish all bunkers in Kurram issued

Umer Wazir

KURRAM: In a decisive move to maintain peace in Kurram, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kurram has issued a notification for the demolition of all bunkers in the highly disturbed area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The DC directed the executive engineer (C&W) for Upper, Lower, and Central Kurram to take immediate action.

Specific instructions were given to begin dismantling bunkers in Balishkhel and Khar Kali without delay, with readiness to extend operations

to other areas as necessary.

Work on bunker removal in Balishkhel and Khar Kali is set to commence today.

The demolition of these structures, often associated with sectarian conflict, marks a significant step toward de-escalating tensions in the region.

The decision to remove the bunkers was finalised during a recent meeting of the provincial apex committee.

Officials have been urged to act promptly and ensure all defensive structures contributing to unrest are dismantled.

Sindh CM and Karachi traders clash over city problems

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah expressed his frustration with Karachi traders, accusing them of focusing on criticism to grab headlines.

Addressing traders' concerns, the CM acknowledged the issues but urged them to "speak good words" and collaborate with the government.

"We admit there are problems, but criticising for the sake of it will not solve them," CM Murad Ali Shah remarked.

In response, traders advised the Sindh government to improve its performance to avoid criticism.

Atiq Mir, head of the Karachi Traders' Alliance, questioned, "If we



don't criticise broken roads, poor law and order, and sewage problems, then what should we do?"

He highlighted the tragic consequences of negligence, saying, "Children are falling into sewers and dying, and parents are left cursing."

Ali Shah, Chairman of the All Karachi Traders' Alliance, added that the Sindh government appears fearful of criticism and must focus on delivering results.

Rescue operation completes, 12 bodies of trapped miners recovered from Quetta mine

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Rescue teams have completed relief operation and recovered all dead bodies of the miners who had been trapped under the rubble after a gas explosion inside a coalmine 40 kilometres from Quetta.

Chief Mines Officer Abdul Ghani Baloch told media the media that dead bodies of eight miners were recovered after rescue efforts of 60 hours. Mines Officer said after the explosion, the main entrance of the mine has closed. According to Chief Inspector Mines Abdul Ghani bodies of three miners were recovered on the first and one on second day and remaining 8 miners were recovered on Sunday from a depth of about 4,500 feet.

The accident had occurred in the



coal mine in Sanjeedi on Thursday due to methane gas overflow. Officials say that teams of PDMAO mines workers jointly conducted a rescue operation to evacuate the miners. Among the deceased miners, 10 belong to Shangla district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one from Swat district and one from Balochistan. More than 70 thousand miners work in these coal mines in Balochistan.