



## President Asif Ali Zardari to visit China for bilateral talks next month

President Asif Ali Zardari is scheduled to pay an official visit to China next month, sources revealed. During the visit, President Zardari will hold meetings with his Chinese counterpart and other officials.



## Ahsan chairs meeting on Gwadar Ports' effective operationalization

Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday chaired a meeting that focused on devising short and medium-term strategies for effective operationalization of Gwadar Deep Seaport within six months. Among others, the meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awas Manzoor Sumra, Member Infrastructure Waqas Anwar, and senior officials from the Planning Commission.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## Souvenir

General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) presenting the Souvenir to Lt General S M Kamr-ul-Hassan, Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of the Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh at GHQ Rawalpindi.



Photo: ISPR

## COAS reiterates demand for Afghanistan's action against Fitna al-Khawarij

### Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir has said that only intelligence-based operations are being carried out to eliminate terrorism.

"No full-fledged operation is being conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," the army chief said while speaking with political leaders from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Peshawar.

The army chief reiterated Pakistan's call for the Afghan government's action against Fitna al-Khawarij in Afghanistan and address the spread of terrorism from across the border into Pakistan.



"Afghanistan is our brotherly Islamic neighbour. Islamabad has always wanted better relations with Afghanistan. The only difference with Afghanistan is the presence of Fitna al-Khawarij within

# Army to eliminate Fitna al-Khawarij from Pakistan soon, says Prime Minister

### Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while lauding security forces under the leadership of the Army Chief for their operations against terrorists across the country has expressed the confidence that the terror network, Fitna Al-Khawarij, will soon be eliminated permanently.

The Prime Minister addressed the federal cabinet meeting in Islamabad on Tuesday and said relentless operations against the terror group are ongoing, and peace has been restored in Kurram following a successful peace agreement.

The premier said food items and medicines are being supplied to the area. He expressed the confidence that all the stake-



holders will make collective efforts to keep peace intact.

Highlighting the army's efforts, Shehbaz Sharif said that a large number of terrorists has been neutralised during various security operations in Balochistan and KP, and the nation recognises the sacrifices of the armed

forces. "Peace will be restored in the country as was done in 2018 under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif," he added.

The Prime Minister added that trade routes on the Pakistan-Iran border have reopened, boosting bilateral commercial traffic. Shehbaz Sharif said a new

crossing point has been opened on Pakistan-Iran border in Panjgur, saying this will promote legal trade and help check smuggling. He thanked Iranian cooperation for the opening of the new crossing point.

The Prime Minister praised the holding an international conference on girls' education in Islamabad, calling it a positive development.

Shehbaz Sharif called for proactive steps to address the challenges in the education sector. He asked the Minister for Education to closely coordinate with the provinces for promotion of education, emphasizing this will be a major national service.

The Prime Minister pointed out that 22.8 million children are out of schools in Pakistan with

majority of them girls.

Referring to the international conference held recently in the federal capital on girls' education, the Prime Minister noted that good discussions took place regarding the education of girls. He recalled that Pakistan also declared education emergency a few months back.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister also criticised the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government for pushing the country into economic mess.

On aviation, the PM announced progress in removing restrictions on PIA and revealed plans to expand its flights network. He expressed the hope that the PIA flights to London will resume soon, saying this will facilitate Pakistani travellers.

## Defence Ministry's lawyer submits more arguments in military trials case

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Justice Jamal Mandokhel on Tuesday said the question was under what circumstances a civilian could be tried in a military court as Khawaja Haris, the counsel for the Ministry of Defence, continued his arguments during the hearing of intra-court appeals filed against declaring the trials of civilians in military courts null and void.

A seven-member constitutional bench of the Supreme Court (SC), headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, heard the appeals.

Haris said any person stopping the army personnel from performing his duties or inciting him against the institution's high command would be tried under the Army Act. "The SC has ruled in the past that retired personnel will be deemed to be civilians," he added.

Addressing Haris, Justice Mandokhel said all his arguments were based on the FB Ali case. "In that case, both serving and retired army officers had been nominated."

The question was, he went on to



say, whether there was any allegation against any convict in the May 9 case that he or she stopped the Pakistan Army personnel from performing their duties or incited them against the institution's top brass. "A civilian can only be tried in a military court when the army personnel complains against him," the judge opined.

Disagreeing with Justice Mandokhel, Haris said whoever

violated the army's discipline would be tried in a military court.

The judge asked whether an attack on the army's convoy would be deemed to have violated the institution's discipline.

Justice Musarrat Hilali asked if a civilian arguing with a soldier at a checkpoint would also violate the army's discipline.

Continued on Page 7

## President, PM laud security forces for eliminating eight terrorists



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday paid tribute to the security forces for eliminating eight Khawarij (terrorists) in two different operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Appreciating the forces for anti-terror operations in Tank and Tirah Valley, the president and prime minister reiterated the nation's resolve to root out terrorism from the country.

"The people of Pakistan stand in support of their security forces to eliminate terrorism and are fully resolved to root out this scourge," the president remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the government and the security forces were pursuing the objective of eliminating terrorism in toto.

"The entire nation feels proud of its brave security forces. We will continue to thwart the nefarious designs of the terrorists," the prime minister added.

## Security forces kill eight terrorists in Tank, Tirah Valley operations



Photo: File

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: According to a statement issued on Tuesday by military's media wing, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), six Khawarij were neutralized when the security forces effectively targeted their hideout during an intelligence-based operation in District Tank.

In the second intelligence-based operation conducted in Tirah Valley of Khyber District, security forces killed two terrorists.

Sanitization operations were being conducted to eliminate any other Khawarij found in the area.

A large quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered from the hideouts of the slain terrorists who were

involved in numerous attacks on members of the security forces and public.

The ISPR statement said that the security forces stand first against terrorists and are determined to thwart attempts aimed at sabotaging peace and progress of the country.

It may be mentioned here that the security forces had killed 27 terrorists in an intelligence-based operation in Balochistan. On 12 January 2025, security forces conducted an IBO in the Kacchi district of Balochistan, and after an intense fire exchange, 27 terrorists were killed.

It said the troops also destroyed multiple hideouts of the militants during the operation.



# CM Punjab distributes scholarships to students of Bahawalpur Division

**Asim Tanveer & Chaudhry Asad Shakir**

BAHAWALPUR: The caravan of knowledge and faith reached Bahawalpur. Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif distributed scholarship checks among the students of Bahawalpur Division at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Baghdad Al-Jadeed Campus. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif mingled with the students present at the ceremony. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif made squash player Sohail Adnan, who won the British Junior Championship Under-13, sit next to her and also presented a prize check of Rs 5 million. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif sat among the students and had a conversation. The students participating in the ceremony expressed their enthusiasm and the female students raised enthusiastic slogans. The student's emotional Saraiki speech brought tears to her eyes, and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz made her sit on her seat. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif performed the national anthem with the students at their request. A guard of honor was presented in honor of the students on the instructions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz



Sharif. A police contingent presented a general salute to the students. "This is our homeland. We are its guardians." A documentary about the Honhar Award was presented at the ceremony. 3011 students of Bahawalpur Division were given meritorious scholarships

worth Rs. 173.2 million. After Lahore Division, Bahawalpur Division had the highest number of meritorious scholarships for students, 2296 students of public sector universities received scholarships worth Rs. 147.1 million. 400 students of colleges of Bahawalpur

Division received meritorious scholarships worth Rs. 8 million. 315 students of medical colleges were given scholarships worth Rs. 18.1 million. More than 11,000 students of 4 divisions have received meritorious scholarships worth more than Rs. 72 million.

## Jashan e Molod e Kaba

FAISALABAD: President Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Associations Rana Fayaz Hussian along with others cutting the cake during the celebrations of birth anniversary of Hazrat Ali (AS) in City.



Photo: Online

# Mass wedding ceremony of 55 couples held at University of Faisalabad

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: A mass wedding ceremony of 55 couples was organized at The University of Faisalabad under the auspices of Madina Foundation. The special guest of the ceremony was Additional Deputy Commissioner Faisalabad Dr. Shahab Aslam. Renowned religious scholar Qari Niaz Ahmed prayed for the happy

married life of the newlyweds after the Nikah sermon. Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Shahab Aslam said that the government appreciates this initiative of mass weddings by Madina Foundation. He further said that providing gifts of basic necessities and dowry packages to the newly married couples to start a new life is also a good initiative of Madina Foundation. He congratulated

Madina Foundation and the university administration for their services in this good cause.

The guest of honor of the ceremony was Rector of the University, Professor Dr. Amanullah Malik. In his address, he congratulated all the newlyweds. The newlyweds who tied the knot were also given dowry packages and special gifts by Madina Foundation. Food was also arranged

for the more than 2500 guests present at the ceremony. Deans, teachers and students of various departments of the University of Faisalabad actively participated in the arrangements for the mass wedding ceremony. On this occasion, the expressions of gratitude and joy on the faces of the parents of the newlyweds were visible and they were very grateful to the Medina Foundation.

# Institutions must maintain a mutual check and balance: Barrister Sultan



**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry stressed the significance of the judiciary, legislature, and administration as the three basic pillars of the state. He emphasized that these institutions must maintain a mutual check and balance to prevent

each other from exceeding their limits, which is essential for a modern democratic and welfare country. Speaking at the 12th Judicial Conference, President Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry highlighted the judiciary's role in protecting citizens' fundamental rights, especially when they are at risk of being affected by the actions of the legislature and administration. He also emphasized

the importance of the legislature in performing its duties while upholding the rights of the people.

Chief Justice of the High Court of Azad Kashmir, Sadaqat Hussain Raja, was among the key speakers, along with other esteemed justices, including Justice Sardar Liaquat Shaheen, Justice Mian Arif Hassan, and Justice Shahid Bihar. Meanwhile President Chaudhry

and Chief Election Commissioner Azad Kashmir Justice (R) Abdul Rashid Sulehria held a farewell meeting, where the President appreciated the Commissioner's services and excellent performance. Overall, President Chaudhry's address emphasized the importance of a balanced and efficient system of governance, with a focus on modernization and improvement of the judicial system.

## FBR inspector suspended for submitting bogus medical certificate

**Bureau Report**

FAISALABAD: An FBR inspector was suspended for submitting bogus medical certificates. According to the issued notification, Inspector Azhar Ishaq has been suspended for 120 days. Informed sources of the FBR said that the FBR had assigned employees to monitor sugar mills. An inspector named Azhar Ishaq submitted a bogus medical to escape from duty, on which the Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office Faisalabad conducted an inquiry into the matter, in which the FBR recommended his suspension and strict departmental action due to his absence from duty through bogus medical, on which the higher authorities of the FBR headquarters have suspended Azhar Ishaq Inspector for 120 days.

## Trees play an important Role in Keeping the Environment Clean



**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Dean Children's Hospital Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti and MS Dr. Kamran Asif along with other administration of the hospital planted trees in the premises of the hospital.

Dean Children's Hospital Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti along with MS Dr. Kamran Asif planted trees in the premises of the Children's Hospital Multan and while talking to the media, he said that tree plantation and trees play an important role in keeping the environment clean. While planting the trees, he emphasized that it is very important to promote the tree plantation campaign to make Pakistan green, lush and clean. And this step will not only help in eliminating environmental pollution but will also guarantee a healthy and prosperous environment for future generations.

## BISP and Health Department Sindh strengthen collaboration

**Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi**

KARACHI: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, held an important meeting with the Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, to discuss key issues such as the growth of BISP beneficiaries and their children, birth registration, and bilateral data sharing.



During the meeting, it was revealed that in Sindh, under the "Benazir Nutrition" initiative, 140 facilitation centers and 39 mobile teams are actively providing essential health and nutrition services to beneficiaries. Emphasis was also placed on intensifying activities at the union council level to address malnutrition and related diseases in pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and their children.

It was agreed to ensure the presence of NADRA staff at BISP Dynamic Registration Centers, so that eligible families can easily complete the birth registration of their children. Furthermore, mutual consent was expressed on data sharing between BISP and the Health Department to provide more efficient services to the beneficiaries.

## Government bus stands inaugurated in Wana for the first time

**Umer Wazir**

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: In a significant development, the Lower South Waziristan District Headquarters in Wana inaugurated its first-ever Government General Bus Stand on Tuesday. The ceremony was attended by Assistant Commissioner Wana Faisal Ismail Khan, Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) Shahid Iqbal Khattak, and Tehsil Chairman Wana Moulana Saleh Wazir.

According to Assistant Commissioner Faisal Ismail Khan, the new bus stand is a long-awaited solution to the transportation woes of the local population. For a few decades, the people of Wana, Waziristan had been facing severe difficulties due to the absence of a general bus stand, resulting in exorbitant rent prices. Faisal Khan assured that the construction of the bus stand would bring significant relief to the public and pave the way for strict action against illegal bus stands.

The bus stand's construction process was transparent, with tenders published in national newspapers, said TMO Shahid Iqbal Khattak. He added that the establishment of legal bus stands at other local levels would be implemented soon. The Wana General Bus Stand boasts modern facilities, including separate waiting rooms for men and women, a mosque, bathroom, and bus stops connecting to various cities across the country.

## NDMA, UN host national consultation on women, girls leading community transformation

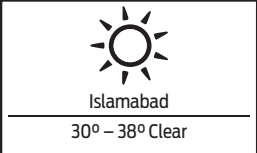
ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) Gender & Child Cell (GCC) in collaboration with Gender Task Force and UN agencies hosted a two-day National Level Consultation titled "Transforming Communities through Women and Girls' Leadership for Climate Resilience and Gender Equality" in Islamabad on 14 & 15 January, 2025.

The consultation aimed to highlight the critical role women and girls play in driving transformative change within communities, particularly in the context of climate resilience and disaster management.

Chairman NDMA emphasized the importance of proactive responsiveness and social resilience in disaster management. He stressed the need for adaptive measures to address climate-related challenges. The chairman acknowledged that disasters disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, particularly women and girls. However, he said that it is inevitable to tap their potential for resilience-building within formal disaster risk reduction (DRR) and anticipatory action frameworks.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri in her address highlighted the importance of integrating gender considerations into climate strategies. She stated that in the face of growing climate challenges, empowering women and girls to take leadership roles is not just an opportunity but a necessity.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**  
 Fajr .....5:45 am  
 Zohr .....12:17 pm  
 Asr .....3:44 pm  
 Maghrib .....5:21 pm  
 Isha .....6:49 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

*Assistant Commissioner (HQ) Ali Sameer Visited Rajana Kangoi*

**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: On the direction of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, the district administration is active to achieve 100% of the target of revenue recoveries.

In this regard, Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Ali Sameer visited Rajana Kangoi. Revenue staff including Tehsildar Toba Tek Singh Ali Abbas were also present on this occasion.

Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Ali Sameer conducted revenue recovery and water recovery on the spot. The Assistant Commissioner directed the revenue staff to ensure revenue recovery in the government treasury in any case and to complete the collection of withholding tax as soon as possible.

The Assistant Commissioner said that action will be taken against the revenue staff showing poor performance in view of achieving the revenue target.

# Mushaal demands immediate release of political prisoners including Yasin

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Mullick, wife of unlawfully incarcerated Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik, called upon the international community, Muslim world and UN bodies to take practical and tangible steps for resolution of the long-standing Kashmir dispute and release of all political prisoners including her husband forthwith.

Talking to a delegation led by secretary-general of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy Prof Dato Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, Mushaal informed them on the dire human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), emphasizing the need for international intervention to ensure settlement of the issue as per the UN agreed formal and aspiration of Kashmiri people.

Mushaal, Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation, shed light on the fast aggravating human rights violations, particularly the incarceration of Kashmiri leaders, including her husband Yasin Malik.

She urged the OIC to rally the international community to protect the fundamental human rights of the Kashmiri

people and ensure their right to self-determination, as guaranteed by UN Security Council resolutions. On the occasion, Prof Dato Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano presented his books on resolutions made by OIC and international Islamic fiqh academy. Delegation extended their full support for Kashmir cause and resolution of the dispute as per the wishes of Kashmiri people. The delegation expressed deep concern on the incarceration of her husband Yasin Malik along with other Kashmiri prisoners languishing in Indian Jails. They reaffirmed their commitment to raise voices for oppressed Kashmiris under Indian Occupation till they get their right to self determination

Mushaal vowed that Kashmiri people would continue their struggle for breaking the shackles of Indian subjugation and would not yield to the Indian occupation forces' brutalities and state terrorism.

She made it clear that fascist Indian regime should realise the bitter reality that they could not continue their unjust occupation for long so better to let Kashmir decide their fate as per their free will so as to ensure perpetual resolution to Kashmir dispute once and for all.



## Public transit

ISLAMABAD: Passengers are boarding into Blue Line Metro bus during the peak time, its always very busy in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Solace, Prayer and Solidarity for Los Angeles, America

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Convenor World Minorities Alliance, Nominee Nobel Peace Prize and Former Federal Minister of Pakistan Mr. J Salik said that we can't forget the people who came and helped us in our hard time, when we were facing the worst flood.

Convenor World Minorities Alliance, Nominee Nobel Peace Prize and Former Federal Minister of Pakistan Mr. J Salik lead a program for Solace, prayer and solidarity with the sufferers of uncontrolled fire in Los Angeles, USA, today at his residence. Participants in this program were wearing white dresses with candles in their hands. Former Federal Minister said during his address that we are equally in pain with brothers and sisters who are suffering from the worst fire in Los Angeles. He said that we couldn't forget when Angelina Joli came to Pakistan to help flood victims in our country, today the time is hard in Los Angeles so our Solace, prayers and solidarity are with them. He



said that it's the time of trial for all of us but by the grace of God it will be passed soon. In the program the special prayers for the fire in Los Angeles, California, Flood in UAE, Flood in kingdom of Saudi Arabia and war in Gaza were offered for God's mercy upon the world. Even the prayers for the animals and tiny creatures were offered at this occasion as they are also suffering during all this hustle in the world.

# Experts urge government to take immediate steps to reduce consumption of ultra-processed food

**Bureau Report**

QUETTA: Pakistan is facing a severe crisis of non-communicable diseases, with millions of people suffering from diabetes, obesity, heart disease, kidney disease and some types of cancer. 60% of deaths in Pakistan are due to these non-communicable diseases. Consumption of ultra-processed products is a major contributor to this national health emergency. Scholars are highly respected in our society.

Mr. Munavar Hussain, Food and Nutrition expert said, "Processed food and beverage products, especially sugary drinks and junk foods, are major contributors to diabetes, heart disease, cancer, kidney failure, and other chronic diseases. The annual cost of diabetes management in Pakistan exceeded US\$ 2,640 million in



2021".  
 "In Pakistan, more than 1,100 people die every day due to diabetes and its complications, more than 41% of

adults in Pakistan are either obese or overweight. Furthermore, more than 33 million people are currently living with diabetes, and another 10 million are at risk of developing the disease," said Sanaullah Ghumman, General Secretary of PANAH. "The government must shoulder its responsibility to address this issue with strong policies, including Taxing UPPs and enactment of mandatory front of the pack warning labels on UPPs. This would yield three-fold benefits: increased government revenue, reduced healthcare costs, and a healthier population. Ghumman said that Pakistan has a lower tax on the beverage industry compared to many countries regionally and globally.

The religious leaders assured in their speeches that they would use their platform to educate the public about the health hazards of ultra-processed products. They urged the government to increase taxes on these unhealthy food items instead of taxing stationery and other basic necessities of life.

## LMKR Partners with LG & HTP to Modernize Karachi's Property Tax System

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: LMKR is building a comprehensive system to modernize Karachi's Urban Immovable Property Tax Administration System (UIPT-MIS). Signed on Dec. 20, 2024, with Local Government & Housing Town Planning (LG&HTP) Department under the World Bank-funded CLICK initiative, the agreement is part of the Government of Sindh's efforts to improve transparency and efficiency in tax operations.

With proven expertise in enterprise solutions and GIS technology, LMKR will develop and implement a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS) and a GIS-based mobile data collection application. These tools will enable LG&HTP to identify properties, calculate taxes, and perform valuations more effectively. A centralized platform will streamline operations, while taxpayers gain convenient self-service options to view tax information, bills, and payment statuses.

Nasir Tanveer, VP Technology Business & Alliances at LMKR, said: "Our partnership with LG&HTP underscores LMKR's commitment to driving innovation in urban management. This project will empower Karachi with a sustainable and transparent property tax system, fostering trust and accountability."

## Pakistan included in prestigious list of "50 Destinations to take in 2025"

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has been included in the prestigious Financial Times list of "50 Destinations to Take in 2025," underscoring its growing appeal as a premier travel destination, especially for trekking enthusiasts captivated by the stunning landscapes of Northern Pakistan.

Aftab Rana, Managing Director of PTDC expressed his great satisfaction that Pakistan is getting recognized by the leading global media houses as one of the best tourist destinations at global level. He said, this recognition highlights the country's growing appeal as a premier travel destination, particularly for trekking enthusiasts drawn to the breathtaking landscapes of Northern Pakistan.

Rana said that northern regions of Pakistan are the home to some of the most dramatic and awe-inspiring mountain scenery in the world with the presence of 5 peaks over 8000m out of 14 in the world and more than 120 peaks over 7000m. The region's rugged beauty, combined with an improved security situation, enhanced accessibility, and better accommodation options, has led to an increasing number of visitors discovering its hidden gems.

He said in August 2024, Pakistan introduced a groundbreaking initiative of offering free of cost online visas to citizens of more than 126 countries, further facilitating travel and tourism. This move aims to attract global tourists, encouraging them to explore the diverse cultural, historical, and natural treasures the country has to offer.

He said that the recognition by the Financial Times and other leading international media houses is a testament to Pakistan's commitment to promoting its diverse tourism offerings. As the country continues to improve infrastructure and facilitate travel, it is poised to become a leading destination for adventure and cultural tourism in 2025 and beyond.

## DC Naeem Sindhu and DPO Ibadat Nisar Inspect Procession Arrangements in Kamalia



**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH, KAMALIA: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sindhu and District Police Officer Ibadat Nisar visited the route of the procession held to mark the birth anniversary of Hazrat Ali (RA) in Kamalia. During the visit, they reviewed security arrangements, cleanliness, lighting, and other facilities along the procession route. They issued necessary instructions to ensure smooth proceedings and public convenience. The DC and DPO also visited the central Imambarah alongside the procession organizers to assess the preparations. DC Naeem Sindhu emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among all departments to maintain peace, ensure traffic management, and facilitate the public. DPO Ibadat Nisar assured robust security measures and urged citizens to cooperate with the authorities for a peaceful environment. Both officials appealed to the public to uphold religious harmony and unity during the celebrations. The organizers expressed satisfaction with the support provided by the administration and police, appreciating their efforts to ensure a seamless and secure event.



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# Uzbekistan and the UAE forge strong bridges of cooperation

## Spokesman Report

In an era of global interconnectedness, the burgeoning partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the United Arab Emirates serves as a compelling example of the transformative power of international collaboration. Over the past few years, these two nations have developed a relationship grounded in mutual respect, shared aspirations, and a commitment to innovation in public governance.

This partnership is not merely a diplomatic initiative but a dynamic exchange of knowledge, technologies, and policy frameworks. It illustrates how bilateral cooperation can strengthen institutional resilience, promote the rule of law, and enhance the quality of public services for the benefit of citizens in both countries.

**Foundations of Shared Ambitions**  
 The relationship between Uzbekistan and the UAE is rooted in a shared vision of progress. Both nations aim to modernize their governance systems with a focus on digital transformation, transparency, and legal reform. For Uzbekistan, a country implementing a sweeping reform program under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the UAE provides a model of effective governance and innovation. Meanwhile, the UAE views Uzbekistan as a key partner in Central Asia, offering untapped potential for collaboration and investment.

During this meeting, the two sides affirmed that their strategic objectives align across multiple domains. The UAE expressed support for President Mirziyoyev's initiative to establish an international commercial court in Tashkent. This support extends to ensuring the effective organization of the court's operations, a key element in enhancing Uzbekistan's investment appeal and safeguarding investor capital.

Cooperation in Justice and the Rule of Law  
 Uzbekistan and the UAE are working jointly to reform their judicial systems. Their programs focus on simplifying procedures, ensuring access to legal assistance, and introducing innovations such as electronic document management systems. These initiatives aim to make legal services more accessible and efficient.

The UAE's support in training Uzbek specialists and assisting in harmonizing the legal framework with international standards underscores the importance of this partnership. This exchange of expertise is complemented by joint efforts to align Uzbekistan's legal infrastructure with global standards, particularly in areas such as commercial law and intellectual property rights. Such collaborations enhance Uzbekistan's legal infrastructure, laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth.

Strengthened bilateral relations between the ministries of justice of both countries, formalized through a memorandum of understanding, pave the way for long-term cooperation in law and justice. The memorandum establishes a legal framework for effective and mutually beneficial collaboration in legal and judicial matters.

Planned activities under the memorandum include joint events such as forums, conferences, and courses on legislative and legal issues, professional development programs for lawyers, expert meetings, and training for officials and specialists. Additionally, the memorandum fosters collaboration in judicial and forensic fields.

Transforming Public Services and Digitalization  
 One of the most notable aspects of this partnership is its focus on improving public services. Renowned for its citizen-centric governance approach, the UAE plays a key role in advising Uzbekistan on modern service delivery mechanisms. This collaboration has contributed to the further development of Uzbekistan's network of public service centers, simplifying access to essential services and reducing bureaucracy for citizens.

Moreover, the UAE's experience in digitalization has been instrumental in shaping Uzbekistan's digital government strategy. The implementation of electronic document management systems, the creation of online legal information resources, and the development of e-governance platforms are direct outcomes of this bilateral engagement. These initiatives have not only improved access to public services but also laid the groundwork for greater transparency and accountability in Uzbekistan's institutions.

Digital transformation has become a central theme of the bilateral agenda, reflecting a shared recognition of technology as a driving force for governance reforms. Uzbekistan's efforts to digitize its judicial and administrative systems have been significantly bolstered by the UAE's expertise. From blockchain property regis-

tries to AI-powered legal analytics, the partnership is pushing the boundaries of innovation in public administration. These efforts are not only about adopting technologies but also fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability within Uzbekistan's public sector.

**A Vision for the Future**  
 The success of the Uzbekistan-UAE partnership offers valuable lessons for other countries in the region. It demonstrates that bilateral cooperation can transcend traditional economic projects and security concerns to focus on governance and institutional reforms. By leveraging each other's strengths, the two nations are creating a model of constructive engagement that prioritizes shared benefits and long-term sustainability.

As Uzbekistan continues to implement its ambitious reform agenda, its partnership with the UAE is poised to grow even stronger, moving beyond current achievements. Joint projects in governance, justice, and innovation illustrate how international cooperation can serve as a powerful tool for strengthening institutional resilience and improving the quality of life for citizens.

Uzbekistan and the UAE are paving the way for future generations, showing how mutual respect and the exchange of expertise can lead to sustainable progress. Their collaboration stands as a testament to the transformative potential of international partnerships in building societies that are not only prosperous but also equitable and inclusive.

*Exclusive article on Uzbekistan and the UAE forge strong bridges of cooperation*

## Gwadar PhD scholar to improve local fisheries after learning in China

In the bustling city of Qingdao, China, Aidah from Gwadar, Balochistan, is standing at the forefront of academic excellence as she pursues her PhD in fisheries resources at Ocean University of China (OUC).

The azure waters of the East China Sea shimmer in the distance, serving as a constant reminder of her profound connection to the sea,

water, and fish. "The sea is in my blood", Aidah says, reflecting on her journey. It is under the mentorship of Chinese Professor Liu Qun that Aidah has discovered the immense potential of sustainable fisheries management.

Upon her arrival at the OUC, she was immediately captivated by the inclusive environment. "Teachers here are welcoming and humble," she remarks. "They treat all students equally, regardless of nationality. This experience has been incredibly enriching, both academically and personally."

Her research focuses intently on the coastline of Balochistan, particularly the demersal and biological fish species in both shallow and deep waters. By studying their health, the effects of overfishing, and the policies that affect them, Aidah aims to develop sustainable fisheries management practices to safeguard future fish populations. "Overfishing is a massive issue along the Balochistan coastline," she emphasizes. "Unlike Sindh, where policies and fishing seasons are more regulated, Balochistan needs a comprehensive approach."

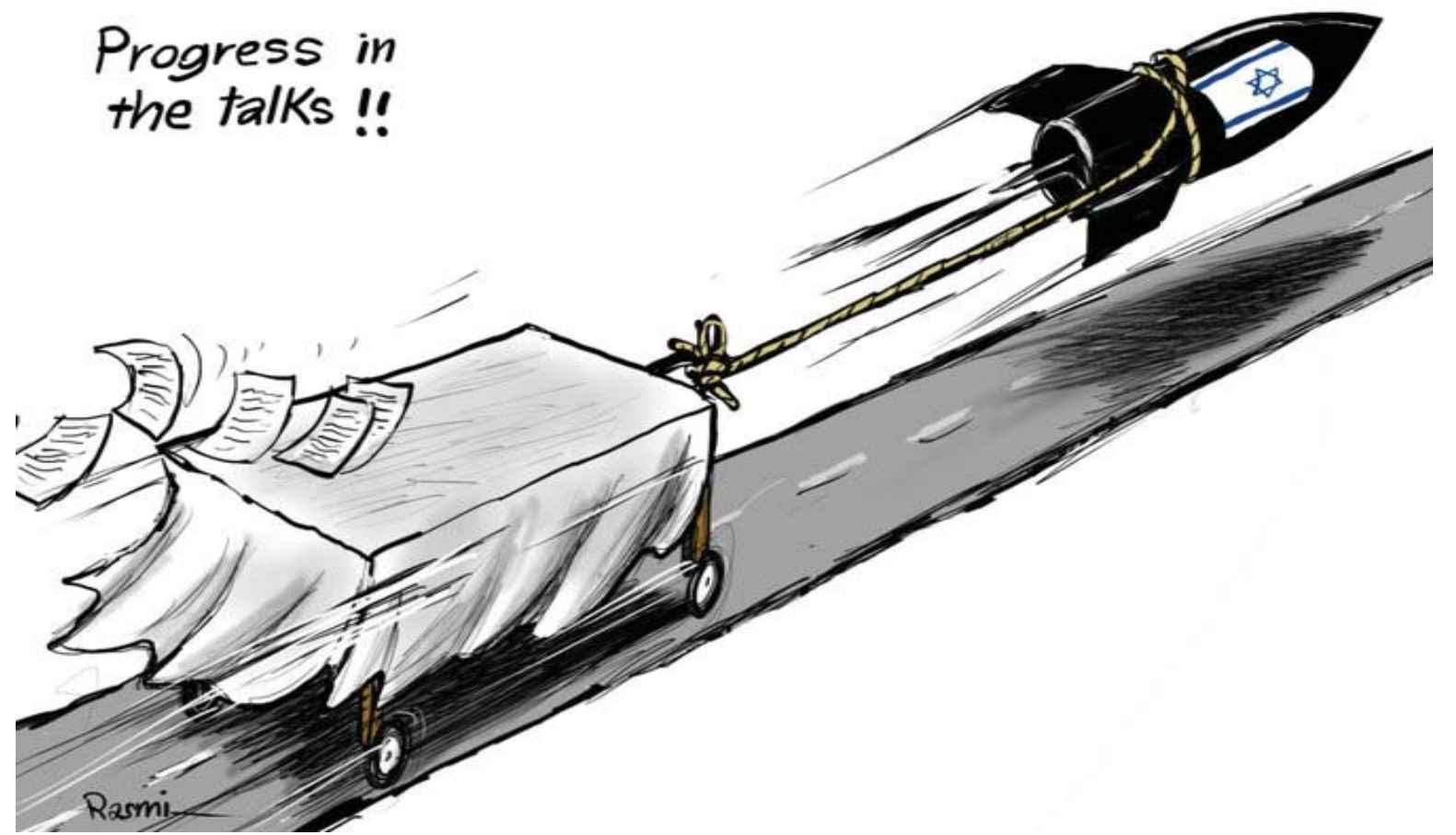
Despite the rigorous demands of pursuing a PhD, Aidah has still made impressive professional gains. She has completed two research papers and is diligently working on a third, with one of her papers currently under revision for publication in the Fish and Fisheries journal, CEN reported on Monday.

Her academic journey has taken her to numerous conferences, workshops and international events, such as the Marine Aquaculture International Training Program and the China International Agricultural Products Fair. "These experiences have not only enhanced my research but also provided valuable networking opportunities with professionals from institutions like Shanghai Ocean University," she shares.

Aidah's time in China has not only molded her academically but has also ignited her passion for advocating for education in Balochistan. She notes that many young men prioritize lower-level jobs over higher education, while women face societal barriers. "I encourage students from Balochistan who dream of studying in China to persist in their efforts to connect with professors and apply for scholarships," she stresses. "Education should be a top priority for the development of Balochistan and Pakistan."

As Aidah looks towards the future, she is eager to implement the policies and sustainable practices learned during her academic journey to improve the fishing industry in Gwadar and along the Balochistan coastline. "My experience at OUC has been transformative," she says. "I believe that with consistent struggle and perseverance, success is attainable."

Progress in the talks !!



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

## The Unchecked Freedom of E-Newspaper Owners and the Concerns of Pak Citizens

What is an E-Newspaper? An E-Newspaper (Electronic Newspaper) is a digital version of a traditional print newspaper that is published and distributed online called E-Newspaper. It can be accessed through websites, mobile apps, or email subscriptions, offering the same content as a physical newspaper but in a digital format.

In Pakistan, the rise of e-newspapers has created a platform where digital publishers often operate without oversight or adherence to established laws. This lack of regulation has raised significant concerns among citizens, as many e-newspaper owners misuse their unchecked freedom to spread misinformation, conduct character assassination, and defame individuals or businesses. In every civilized country, legislation is enacted over time. In the United States, e-newspapers fall under copyright laws.

2. Ineffectiveness of PECA 2016: The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 (PECA) was designed to tackle cyber crimes such as hacking, harassment, and online fraud. However, its provisions do not adequately address issues related to the content published by e-newspapers, leaving victims of defamation or misinformation without proper recourse.

3. Lack of Accountability Mechanisms: Unlike traditional media, which is subject to the Press Council of Pakistan (PCP) and other regulatory frameworks, e-newspapers operate in a vacuum with no dedicated oversight body to monitor their content or actions.

Unregulated e-newspapers frequently publish unverified or baseless allegations, harming the reputations of individuals and businesses.

Without checks, e-newspapers can easily disseminate fake news, leading to public confusion and unrest. Some publishers misuse their platforms for blackmail or extortion, leveraging their content to coerce individuals or organizations.

In Pakistan, there is currently no specific law requiring No Objection Certificates (NOC) or declarations for the establishment and operation of E-Newspapers. While traditional print newspapers are regulated under the Press, Newspapers, News Agencies, and Books Registration Ordinance, 2002 (PNNABRO), this framework does not extend to digital publications or E-Newspapers. This legal gap has created a scenario where E-Newspapers can operate without any formal oversight, licensing, or accountability. Unlike print media, which requires approval from the relevant authorities and adherence to specific rules, E-Newspaper publishers face no obligation to register or seek permissions under any existing regulatory framework.

Additionally, while the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 (PECA) governs cybercrimes and digital content, it does not address the establishment, regulation, or accountability of E-Newspapers. This lack of legal structure raises concerns about the authenticity, reliability, and ethical standards of E-Newspapers in the country.

It is time for Regulations, Making it mandatory for E-Newspapers to register with a regulatory authority. NOC Requirements: Requiring publishers to obtain approval before launching an E-Newspaper. Accountability Mechanisms: Ensuring adherence to journalistic ethics and content accuracy. A comprehensive legal frame-

work is crucial to balance freedom of expression with In Pakistan, the unrestricted and unregulated freedom of e-newspapers on social media is becoming a serious issue. These so-called e-newspapers operate without any adherence to legal frameworks, including the Press, Newspapers, News Agencies, and Books Registration Ordinance, 2002, and without accountability. Through these platforms, the dignity and reputation of law-abiding citizens and the business community are being targeted, often with baseless accusations aimed at damaging their credibility.

In Pakistan many of these illegal publications are run by individuals or groups who operate beyond the reach of the law, using social media to engage in unlawful activities. These e-newspapers are exploited by such elements to interfere in the personal and professional lives of others, leading to societal unrest and increasing responsibility and accountability in the digital news domain.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan should direct the Ministry of Law, the Ministry of Information, and the Ministry of Interior to formulate laws for the issuance of NOCs and declarations for e-newspapers, in order to regulate and control the unchecked freedom of e-newspaper owners.

Unchecked freedom in the digital news sphere undermines the principles of responsible journalism and poses risks to the rights and reputations of Pakistani citizens. To address these challenges, it is essential for the government to introduce and enforce a robust legal framework, ensuring that e-newspaper publishers are held accountable for their actions while upholding the values of free speech and public trust.

*Zain ul Abideen Abid Senior Journalist, Great analysis on Current Political Scenario in Pakistan He can be reached at zakhankhultan@yahoo.com*

## Disconnected Minds

The current era is characterized by extraordinary access to new emerging technologies and various types of media including social media, it is puzzling to observe a

rising perception that kids are "dumber" than previous generations. Today, kids are highly exposed to the latest information and they have greater access to the latest learning tools that past generations could only dream of. Today, it is important to acknowledge the immense array of learning resources available at the fingertips of kids. Kids have access to a plethora of information archives, learning applications, online lessons, and interactive learning tools that have the capacity to enhance their learning experience. Alongside, social media platforms enable them to do instant communication and coordinate with their peers, which fosters a sense of mutual learning experience. However, many kids show lower levels of creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and little time span, despite the advantages of technology and media.

There is a lack of structured guidance. On one side there are parents embracing technology as a tool for education and learning, on the other side, they let excessive screen time without defining boundaries may unintentionally encourage screen dependency. This situation can result in unproductive habits and unusual behaviors among kids that deter their ability towards effective learning. Furthermore, kids are now under more pressure to perform well academically, students are expected to perform at a higher level than ever before as a result of having access to knowledge. Due to this pressure, kids may experience stress and feel overburdened. This may cause some kids to stop studying altogether or turn to shortcuts like copying homework rather than truly grasping the knowledge.

It is also a need of time to assess how well the educational system itself can adjust to new developments in technology. The needs of today's tech-savvy students could not be sufficiently satisfied by the traditional teaching approach. Many teachers find it complicated to observe a

educational system itself can adjust to new developments in technology. The needs of today's tech-savvy students could not be sufficiently satisfied by the traditional teaching approach. Many teachers find it complicated to observe a

porate technology into their classroom while still focusing on problem-solving and critical thinking. Students might not get the thorough education they need to succeed in a world that is becoming more complex if teaching strategies do not change by considering changing technological trends. Today, kids have even more access to the latest technology than the previous generations. This abundance does not always equate to improved cognitive skills or academic excellence. The scenario is caused by a number of factors, such as diminished interpersonal skills, cognitive overload from excessive information consumption, shorter attention spans, parental guidance issues, academic pressure, and antiquated teaching strategies.

We can successfully create an environment where kids thrive intellectually despite the distractions posed by modern technology, by putting strategies into place that support balanced technology use, the development of critical thinking skills, interpersonal interaction, physical activities integration, parental education on media and digital literacy, and adaptive teaching methods.

Overall, society, parents, teachers, and legislators must acknowledge that although technology has enormous potential to improve educational experiences, it must be used carefully and sensibly if we are to raise a capable and intellectual future generation.

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Dr. Ali Bhadur



# Grand Celebrations of Imam Ali (AS) Molaud-e-Kaaba in Sindh

Thousand Devotees Attend the Three-Day Festivities at Bibi Masooma-e-Sindh Shrine

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: In honor of the birth of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS), known as the Lion of God, the Conqueror of Khyber and Khandaq, and the Leader of the Pious, who was born inside the Holy Kaaba, grand and spiritually radiant gatherings took place across the four subdivisions of Hyderabad — City, Latifabad, Qasimabad, and Rural. The celebrations began on the night preceding 12th Rajab.

On Tuesday, after the Zuhr prayers, the ancient procession of Chadar Mubarak was taken out from Tando Wali Muhammad.

According to a statement issued by Zawar Abdul Sattar Dars, patron of the Azadari Rabita Committee,



celebrations, gatherings, and rallies Imam Ali (AS) were held in all marking the birth anniversary of Imambargahs, neighborhoods, and

streets of Hyderabad, with large-scale arrangements for food distribution (Nazr and Niyaz).

The concluding programs of the three-day celebrations at the shrine of Bibi Masooma-e-Sindh Bibi Maham Khadija (SA) in Agham Kot were attended by thousands of devotees from across Sindh.

In Hyderabad, after the Zuhr prayers on Tuesday, the central Chadar Mubarak procession began from Mehfil-e-Shah-e-Najaf in Tando Wali Muhammad, proceeded through various areas of the city, and concluded at Qadamgah Mola Ali (AS). The previous two days witnessed magnificent celebrations at most Imambargahs and various locations in the city in connection with Molaud-e-Kaaba.

## Freedom of Kashmir to Remain Pakistan's Top Priority: Masood Khan

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and renowned diplomat Sardar Masood Khan highlighted the socio-economic progress of AJK while emphasizing the need for further development to improve the lives of the region's people. He reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the Kashmir cause during an interactive session with the researchers from the Centre for International Strategic Studies Azad Jammu and Kashmir (CISS AJK).



Delivering the keynote address, Masood Khan remarked, "AJK has made remarkable strides in economic and social development since its liberation from the Dogra rulers in 1947. However, much remains to be done to enhance the quality of life for our people."

He lauded the efforts of AJK's founding leaders, stating, "Our elders built this state from scratch with honesty, dedication, and commitment. Today, we have transformed significantly from having only one college in Mirpur in 1947 to now boasting five universities with 11 regional campuses, three medical colleges, and over 100 colleges across the region." He also highlighted the educational achievements of AJK, noting that thousands of students from the region pursue higher education in institutions across Pakistan and abroad, with the literacy rate in District Poonch nearing an impressive 85%.

Touching on infrastructure development, Masood Khan observed, "In 1947, we had only a dirt road connecting Muzaffarabad to Srinagar. Now, a comprehensive network of roads connects even the smallest villages with major cities in AJK and Pakistan."

Masood Khan praised CISS AJK for its initiatives and commended its leadership under Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja. He acknowledged the institute's dedicated efforts in advocating for the Kashmir cause and its contributions to critical research areas.

The session began with welcoming remarks by the Executive Director of CISS AJK, who lauded Ambassador Masood Khan's distinguished career and expressed gratitude for his presence. A comprehensive presentation followed, showcasing the institute's achievements and academic endeavors.

The event concluded with Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja presenting a souvenir to Ambassador Masood Khan as a token of appreciation for his contributions and continued advocacy for the Kashmir cause.

## Haleon launches Pain Management Institute in Pakistan



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Haleon, a global leader in consumer health, announced the launch of the Haleon Pain Management Institute (HPMI) Program at a special event held at Faletti's Hotel in Lahore. This initiative marks Haleon's commitment to supporting healthcare professionals and leading the field of pain management.

Haleon's Pain Management Institute, part of the company's global mission to equip healthcare professionals, aims to elevate the standards of pain management care worldwide. The program in Lahore is the first step in this global effort.

The event was attended by health care professionals from across Pakistan and featured addresses from CEO Haleon Pakistan, Farhan Haroon, Global Business Lead for the Pain Portfolio & Systemics (Panadol and Advil) at Haleon, Charles Leslie, Area Expert Marketing Director at Haleon, Meltem Asim, along with a keynote address from Dr. Bart Morlion, Director of the Leuven Centre for Algology and Pain Management, where he talked about "Understanding & Accepting Pain at Every Stage of Life" exploring how pain manifests differently across various life stages.

"We are honored to host the launch of the Haleon Pain Management Institute in Pakistan," said Farhan Haroon, CEO of Haleon Pakistan. "This launch underscores our dedication to providing resources and expertise that will ultimately improve patient care. Together, we aim to create meaningful changes in how pain is understood and managed, leading to a better quality of life for many."

# President Tokayev Meets UAE President Ahead of Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week Summit

News Desk

ASTANA: Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) President, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, ahead of the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW) Summit on Jan. 13, reported Akorda.

Tokayev highlighted the UAE as a key partner in the Arab world, emphasizing the strategic partnership's growth in friendship, trust, and mutual respect. He expressed eagerness for Sheikh Mohamed's visit to Kazakhstan, viewing it as an important milestone in strengthening bilateral relations.

The UAE ranks among the top ten largest foreign investors in Kazakh-



stan. Tokayev noted that direct investment from the UAE more than doubled last year and discussed a new trade turnover goal of \$1 billion,

focusing on a specific economic agenda to enhance trade dynamics. He also emphasized the importance of implementing strategic investment projects in transport and logistics, energy, finance, and tourism.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan appreciated Kazakhstan's participation in the ADSW Summit and the ongoing effective cooperation between the two countries. He stressed the importance of expanding political dialogue and economic ties, expressing confidence that the Kazakh-Emirati relations would reach new heights, contributing to mutual development and prosperity. He also commended Astana's role in addressing international and regional security and sustainable development matters.

# AIOU celebrates 2nd anniversary of its facilitation-cum-call center

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University celebrated the second anniversary of its Facilitation Center, established on campus to address student issues under one roof, and its Call Center, set up to provide information online to students residing in remote areas. The event was presided over by Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood and was attended by the university's principal officers and staff.

The ceremony began with a cake-cutting, followed by the Vice Chancellor's address. Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood reiterated the university's commitment to enhancing educational standards, increasing enrollment, and maximizing student support



facilities using all available resources. He emphasized that students are the university's most valuable asset, and providing them with necessary support remains a top priority. The Vice Chancellor instructed the

of the Director of Student Advisory, the Vice Chancellor also directed the establishment of a mechanism for issuing reference letters to students.

The event was organized by the Directorate of Student Advisory and Counseling Services. Director Student Affairs, Syed Ghulam Kazim Ali gave a detailed presentation on the services of these centers. He shared that the both centers was established in October 2022, facilitation center has resolved issues for 466,872 students, while the Call Center has received 614,574 calls and provided them the required information.

The Vice Chancellor praised the efforts of the Directorate of Student Advisory and pledged to address their genuine

# ISSI and MEMO Co-host Webinar on "How are the Dynamics in Palestine Impacting the International and Regional System"

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Middle East Monitor (MEMO), hosted a webinar titled, "How are the Dynamics in Palestine Impacting the International and Regional System?"

The webinar was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. The speakers at the webinar included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO); Dr. Afaf Jabiri, Co-Director of the Centre for Social Justice and Change at the University of East London, UK; Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO); Dr. Moatmer Amin, Department of Political Science, University of Cairo, Egypt; Dr. Jafar Haghpanah,

Research Assistant at University of Tehran; Ambassador Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, Former South African Ambassador to Pakistan, and Dr. Ahmet Köroğlu, Distinguished faculty member, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Istanbul University.

DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the roots of the Palestinian issue in seven decades of illegal occupation, brutal repression, and denial of self-determination. He echoed UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' opinion, stressing that the events of 7 October 2023 did not happen in a vacuum and reflected a long history of marginalization and dispossession. He noted that the current dynamics in Palestine were having a profound impact on the international system, as reflected in: (i) contemptuous disrespect of international law, principles of UN Charter, and basic norms of state behaviour; (ii) virtual impunity for the perpetrator despite conducting

a genocide; (iii) inability of the UN Security Council to act in the face of the most grievous danger to world peace and an existential threat to the Palestinian people; and (iv) uncertainties in the wake of the incoming Trump Administration with its commitment to Abraham Accords and a new regional security architecture. Ms. Amina Khan highlighted the Palestinian refugee crisis caused by Israel's systematic occupation since 1948. She condemned the ongoing genocide in Gaza, which has displaced millions and questioned refugees' right of return, while commending Palestinians' resilience against oppression.

Dr. Afaf Jabiri highlighted the events of October 7, 2023 as a continuation of the 'Nakba', reflecting systemic denial of Palestinian freedom and growing global recognition of their struggle.

Dr. Daud Abdullah noted the re-emergence of the Palestinian



issue, previously overshadowed by global focus on Ukraine, and emphasized the need for stronger law enforcement.

Dr. Moatmer Amin analyzed the shifting dynamics in Pales-

tine and their broader implications for regional and global systems, particularly against the backdrop of Donald Trump's upcoming second inauguration.

Dr. Jafar Haghpanah high-

lighted the impact of the Palestine conflict on recent events in Syria, emphasizing how shared challenges like fragile governance, foreign intervention, and the role of non-state actors

link Syria's crisis to the broader regional instability.

Ambassador Mthuthuzeli Madikiza emphasized that peace depends on upholding human rights and safety. He noted how the Palestinian struggle has amplified their voice globally, shifting UN dynamics and uniting Middle Eastern nations.

Dr. Ahmet Köroğlu highlighted the Gaza Tribunal Initiative's role in amplifying victims' voices and shaping global opinion on injustices in Gaza. Despite its non-binding judgments, he emphasized its moral significance in promoting dialogue and advancing peace efforts.

During his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood highlighted global crises, including conflicts, terrorism, Islamophobia, and power rivalries. He described Gaza's atrocities as genocide, criticized Western complicity, and called the Arab world's response inadequate.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,804.16	114,230.06
Day's High	Day's Low
115,044.79	113,836.60
Index Value	Change
19,654,444,574	+574.10
Percentage	Time
+0.5%	14 Jan, 2025 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,201.54	-22.65
Percentage	Time
-0.28%	14 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
42,233.52	-63.60
Percentage	Time
-0.15%	14 Jan, 12:14 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,474.30	-716.10
Percentage	Time
-1.83%	14 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	172.75	175.50
Bahrain Dinar	738.60	746.60
Canadian Dollar	195.10	197.50
China Yuan	37.97	38.37
Danish Krone	37.76	38.16
Euro	286.75	289.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.47	35.82
Indian Rupee	3.12	3.21
Japanese Yen	1.78	1.84
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.30	905.80
Malaysian Ringgit	61.28	61.88
New Zealand \$	152.73	154.73
Norwegians Krone	23.97	24.27
Omani Riyal	723.00	731.50
Qatari Riyal	75.9	76.60
Saudi Riyal	74.05	74.60
Singapore Dollar	204.5	206.50
Swedish Korona	24.76	25.06
Swiss Franc	300.65	303.40
Thai Bhat	7.87	8.02
U.A.E Dirham	75.70	76.35
UK Pound Sterling	342.50	346
US Dollar	279.05	280.55

# Chairman PARC honored with Appreciation Certificate by Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A formal ceremony recognizing the distinguished contributions of Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), was held at the Governor House Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, extended his congratulations to Dr. Ali for his recent accolades, which include the prestigious Sitara-e-Imtiaz and the Korean Presidential Award. Governor emphasized that Dr. Ali serves as a source of inspiration for emerging agricultural scientists and researchers.

Highlighting the critical importance of agriculture as a cornerstone of Pakistan's economy, the Governor presented the recognition certificate to Dr. Ali and commended his significant contributions to advancing this vital sector. Governor KPK reiterated that innovation in science and technology can only be achieved through investments on research and development.

He also highlighted the agricultural



potential of the province and ensured enhanced collaboration with PARC and other agricultural departments to promote high value crops like fruits and vegetables, dry fruits etc.

In his address, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali affirmed PARC unwavering commitment to transforming the agricultural landscape through the integration of modern technologies and innovative practices. He asserted that research serves as a fundamental pillar for agricultural innovation, stating that without robust research initiatives, it would be impossible to address the increasing demands of a growing population.

Dr. Ali's exemplary contributions to agricultural research and innovation have been recognized through numerous prestigious awards, including the Sitara-e-Imtiaz conferred by the Government of Pakistan and the Korean Presidential Award from the Government of South Korea. As a preeminent figure in the fields of agriculture and molecular biology, Dr. Ali has driven transformative advancements in the field.

## New development

Syed Rafeo Bashir Shah, Chairman, Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) and Mr. Md. Abdul Khaleque, DG, Directorate General of Food, Bangladesh, signing the MOU for export of rice from Pakistan to Bangladesh. Syed Ahmed Maroof, High Commissioner for Pakistan, Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Mangnejo, Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan, and Mr. Md. Masudul Hasan, Secretary, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh are also present.



Photo: PID

# Pakistan signs MoU with Bangladesh for Rice Export

## Spokesman Report

DHAKA: Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) and the Directorate General of Food, Bangladesh, today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the export of rice from Pakistan to Bangladesh.

Syed Rafeo Bashir Shah, Chairman TCP and Mr. Md. Abdul Khaleque, DG, Directorate General of Food, Bangladesh, signed the MOU from their respective sides.

The signing ceremony was attended by Syed Ahmed Maroof, High Commissioner for Pakistan, Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Mangnejo,

Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan, and Mr. Md. Masudul Hasan, Secretary, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh. They congratulated both the delegations on this significant step toward strengthening trade and economic ties between the two countries.

Following the MoU signing, the High Commissioner paid a courtesy call on the Honorable Adviser for Food, Mr. Ali Imam Majumder and discussed bilateral trade ties. The High Commissioner also presented the Adviser with a gift of rice on behalf of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

# Bisconni's Wins 'Home Brand of the Year' FMCG Asia Awards 2024

## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Bisconni's premium biscuit range has been awarded the prestigious 'Home Brand of the Year - Pakistan' category title at the FMCG Asia Awards 2024 held in Singapore. Organized by Retail Asia, this award celebrates excellence in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector across the continent, highlighting brands that have shown exceptional innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Speaking on this milestone, Muhammad Sabir Godil, Chief Operating Officer of Bisconni, remarked, "Bisconni premium range has effectively carved out a unique space in Pakistan's competitive food industry, appealing to consumers who continue to spend on premium products as a form of self-care or indulgence. Bisconni has just not created a more diverse product portfolio that caters to different consumer segments, but also stabilized revenue streams during economic fluctuations. Winning the Home Brand of the Year-Pakistan award signifies that a brand has been recognized for its excellence and overall market presence within the home goods sector in Pakistan. We plan to continue to innovate and expand the product range based on consumer feedback and market trends."



# Bank Alfalah and TCF collaborate for rehabilitation under the flood relief programme

## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Bank Alfalah, a leading commercial bank in Pakistan, has extended support to The Citizens Foundation (TCF) as part of its Flood Relief Program with support of an additional PKR 177 million for rehabilitation of communities impacted by floods of 2022. This collaboration aims to rebuild and support flood-affected communities by establishing educational, health, and sustainable projects that would impact a progressive way forward for the communi-

ties. Atif Bajwa, President and CEO of Bank Alfalah, said, "Our partnership with The Citizens Foundation, one of our most trusted and impactful collaborators, reflects Bank Alfalah's deep commitment to uplifting flood-affected communities. Over the years, we have joined hands with TCF to rebuild lives, rehabilitate schools, and expand access to quality education in regions that need it the most. Literacy is not just a basic right; it is the foundation of empowerment and progress. By supporting sustain-

able projects like school construction, water filtration systems, solar panel installations and literacy centers, we aim to create opportunities that transform lives and pave the way for a brighter, more resilient future."

Mushtaq K. Chhapra, Co-Founder and Director of The Citizens Foundation, commented, "We are grateful to Bank Alfalah for their trust and support in this critical time of need. The devastating floods left countless families needing assistance, and through this collaboration, we are providing hope and oppor-



tunity. From building schools and clean water facilities to empowering women through literacy programs, these initiatives will have a far-reaching impact on the lives of individuals in flood-affected areas."

## Jubilee Life Insurance hosts Graduation Ceremony for its 2024 Batch of Tech Graduates



## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Jubilee Life Insurance, Pakistan's largest private sector insurance company, hosted its second graduation ceremony for the 2024 batch of 'Tech Graduates' at Beach Luxury Hotel Karachi. The event celebrated the achievements of the latest cohort of Tech Management Trainees, who have successfully completed their year-long journey of learning, innovation, and professional development within the organization.

Mr. Javed Ahmed, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of Jubilee Life Insurance, shared his thoughts on the occasion stating: "This program is a reflection of our commitment to nurturing young talent and promoting a culture of innovation. Our Tech Graduates stand as a prime example of our efforts to integrate technology into our core operations, ensuring that we continue to evolve and meet the challenges of an increasingly digital world."

Mr. Kashif Naqvi, Group Head Technology & Project Management at Jubilee Life Insurance, added: "The Tech Graduate Program embodies our vision for technological transformation by equipping fresh talent with the skills and opportunities to grow. The 2024 batch has demonstrated exceptional potential, and we are excited to see them contribute meaningfully to Jubilee Life's technological advancements." The graduation ceremony not only marks the start of a new journey for the Tech Graduates but also underscores Jubilee Life Insurance's ongoing efforts to remain at the forefront of innovation in Pakistan's insurance industry.

# Muhammad Hamayun Sajjad appointed as an Independent Director on the Board of I LINK



## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Muhammad Hamayun Sajjad has recently been appointed as an Independent Director on the Board of I LINK (Pvt.) Ltd. Muhammad is currently serving as the Chief Executive Officer at Mashreq Pakistan, part of Mashreq, leading financial institutions in the MENA region.

Speaking on the appointment, Muhammad Hamayun said, "I'm delighted and honoured to join the Board of I LINK in the capacity of an Independent

Director. I truly believe in I LINK vision for digital innovation and its ambition to boost Pakistan's economic prosperity. I look forward to bring my expertise and insights in digital financial services and next generation technologies to accelerate I LINK's growth momentum in the country."

Najeeb Agrawalla, CEO I LINK, said, "We are excited to welcome Muhammad Hamayun, CEO of Mashreq Pakistan, to the I LINK Board of Directors as an Independent Director. His extensive experience and commitment to innovation, combined with his expertise, will complement the strengths of our existing board as we shape the future of I LINK. In a rapidly evolving industry, his insights and input will enhance our ability to drive impactful changes and improve lives."



# PCB's 'Pakistan Strike Force' camp begins at NCA

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: A training camp to harness hard-hitting skills of the batsmen in line with the modern-day cricket, nurture skills under immense pressure, build core strengths, besides strategizing aggression and restraint in top flight cricket has started at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) under the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

As many as 25 hard-hitting batsmen including seven Pakistan capped cricketers have been shortlisted by the PCB who will train under supervision of former all-rounder Abdul Razzaq at the NCA between January 14-28 in the first leg. Abdul Razzaq earned a name for himself for his incredible ball-striking ability during a 17 year long international career.

Since these cricketers strike the ball hard, the PCB has named the group 'Pakistan Strike Force' and the training will continue throughout the year. Given the meticulous demands of the modern-day cricket, the players will be monitored closely in the camp and trained according to the upcoming challenges.

The camp will run at the Multan Cricket Stadium, Multan from 1-28 February in the second leg.

The Pakistan Strike Force camp will



also help add quality bench strength to the batting departments of the national set-up and domestic teams as Pakistan team is scheduled to play two ICC T20I World Cups, an ICC ODI Men's Cricket World Cup and a number of bilateral white-ball series till 2028 following the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in February - March this year.

Pakistan Strike Force squad included Abdul Samad (Faisalabad), Afaq Ahmed (Abbottabad), Ali Imran (Islamabad), Amad But (Sialkot), Ashir Mehmood (Sialkot), Haider Ali

(Rawalpindi), Hasan Nawaz (Islamabad), Jahandad Khan (Rawalpindi), Khawaja Mohammad Nafay (Karachi), Khayyam Khan (Abbottabad), Khushdil Shah (Peshawar), Mohammad Abbas Afridi (Peshawar), Mohammad Amir Barki (Peshawar), Mohammad Faiq (Lahore), Mohammad Faizan (Faisalabad), Mohammad Sarwar Afridi (FATA), Mubasir Khan (Rawalpindi), Muhammad Akhlaq (Lahore), Muhammad Imran Randhawa (Bahawalpur), Muhammad Irfan Khan (Faisalabad), Nasir Nawaz (Rawalpindi), Saad

Masood (Rawalpindi), Shawaiz Irfan (Lahore), Usman Khan (Karachi) and Yasir Khan (Rawalpindi).

Haider Ali, Jahandad Khan, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mubasir Khan, Muhammad Irfan Khan and Usman Khan are the seven Pakistan capped cricketers.

Abdul Razzaq will be assisted by an able team comprising Humayun Farhat (assistant coach), Kamran Sajid (assistant coach), Yasir Malik (trainer), Suliman Azhar (data analyst) and Shahbaz Aajiz (throwdown specialist).

# Multan gears up to host Pak-West Indies test series

**Sports Desk**

MULTAN: Known as the city of Saints, Multan is all set to host the much-anticipated test series between Pakistan and West Indies at Multan Cricket Stadium.

The local administration, led by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Muhammad Ali Bukhari, has made extensive arrangements to ensure a secure and enjoyable environment for players and cricket enthusiasts alike.

A central control room has been established at the Deputy Commissioner's Office to monitor security throughout the event.

During his visit to the control room on Tuesday, the DC was briefed on the arrangements by officials, including Additional Deputy Commissioner General Muhammad Saif, who provided insights into the security protocols and



logistical measures for the cricket teams.

To ensure the safety of the teams, over 400 CCTV cameras have been installed at key locations along the 28-kilometer route between the teams' accommoda-

tions and Multan Cricket Stadium. The route has been upgraded with enhanced lighting, advanced surveillance systems and patchwork to facilitate smooth transportation, the DC was informed during

briefing session.

The DC said that more than 5,000 personnel have been deployed to secure the stadium and surrounding areas. The comprehensive security measures aim to ensure the safety of players and spectators, creating a conducive atmosphere for the game, he added.

"Our priority is to provide an exemplary recreational experience to the cricket fans of Multan," said DC Muhammad Ali Bukhari, expressing his commitment to making the event memorable for the public.

This Test series promises to be a landmark event, showcasing Multan's ability to host international sports with world-class security and hospitality standards.

The city will host two test matches between Pakistan and West Indies starting from January 17 to 29.

# Azhar Ali, Shadab Khan join PCB's Level-2 coaching course

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Former test captain Azhar Ali and all-rounder Shadab Khan were prominent among the six test cricketers who joined the Level 2 coaching course by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) here on Tuesday.

The week-long Level 2 coaching course will conclude on January 19 (Sunday).

Eight Pakistan internationals (men and women) cricketers are among the 30 participants who are taking part in the Level 2 Coaching course.

Pakistan Test cricketers include Azhar Ali (97 Tests, 53 ODIs), Bilawal Bhatti (two Tests, 10 ODIs, 9 T20Is), Naved Latif (one Test, 11 ODIs), Shadab Khan (six Tests, 70 ODIs, 104 T20Is), Wahab Riaz (27 Tests, 91 ODIs, 36 T20Is) and Yasir Shah (48 Tests, 25 ODIs, two T20Is) are taking part in the six-day course, while Pakistan interna-



tional Asad Ali (four ODIs, two T20Is) and former Pakistan Women's captain Bismah Maroof (136 ODIs, 140 T20Is) are also taking part in the course.

The participants in the course will be taught advance coaching skills which include power hitting, modern technical and tactical aspects of the game.

The course will also include work on communications skills and work related to mental and physical strength on the players along with modern day game planning and how to execute it.

The course will be conducted by former Test cricketer - Saqlain Mushtaq and former international cricketer Dr

Imran Abbas alongside NCA coaches including Abdul Majeed, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mautashim Rashid, Rahat Abbas Asadi and Saboor Ahmed.

At the conclusion of the course, the participants will be given three months to complete their assignments. The successful participants will be awarded Level 2 coaching certificates.

Participants (in alphabetical order):

Abdul Nasir, Afaq Rahim, Akhlaq Ahmed, Ali Manzoor, Asad Ali, Azhar Ali, Badshah Hussain, Bilawal Bhatti, Bismah Maroof, Fahad-Ul-Haq, Gulraiz Sadaf, Hammad Ul Hassan, Imran, Irfan Anwar, Kashif Parwez, Khalid Usman, Mohammad Asif Hussain, Mohammad Kamran Hussain, Naveed Ahmad, Naveed Latif, Pervaiz Iqbal, Rameez Ahmed, Sajjad Ahmed, Shadab Khan, Syed Ali Raza Naqvi, Syed Hashmat Ali Shah, Taimor Khan, Umaid Asif, Wahab Riaz and Yasir Shah.

# Defence Ministry's lawyer submits more arguments in military trials case

*Continued from Page 1*

Addressing Haris, Justice Mandokhel remarked, "The way you are broadening the scope of the Army Act, it could cover anything."

Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi said that the FB Ali case dated back to a period when there was martial law in the country. "Late prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a civil martial law administrator then."

Haris said that those people who were tried in military courts in FB Ali case were retired army officers. "And the SC has declared in one of its verdicts in the past that retired army personnel are civilians," the counsel added.

Haris was of the view that even in

times of peace, there would be military trials of civilians in case they interfered in the discharge of functions by the army personnel.

The counsel went on to say that military trials were not a sudden development. "The law exists since 1967," he added.

Justice Rizvi asked whether any army officer was tried in a military court in connection with the May 9 cases.

Haris said, "No my lord, no army officer has been tried."

Justice Rizvi questioned, how did unarmed civilians manage to reach the core commander's house in Lahore on May 9?

The very fact, the judge added, that people entered the house was a secu-

city failure.

The lawyer said an army could not fight without 'discipline'. "And if somebody interferes in the discharge of functions by the army personnel, it will also amount to a violation of the discipline," Haris argued.

Justice Mandokhel remarked that the Anti-Terrorism Act was more stringent than the Army Act. "There is no leniency in the Act for terrorists."

What FB Ali had been accused of, the judge added, was that he had been in touch with the people in the institution who acted as partners in his crime. "Proving collaboration from within the army is necessary," he opined.

Then addressing Haris, Justice Mandokhel asked him to inform the

bench of the support May 9 convicts received from the people inside the institution.

"Khawaja sab, I and you are on good terms with each other. But that does not mean we have collaborated with each other in an offence."

"What you have to show is whether we both were involved in the crime committed or not. This is a very important point. Please note it down," Justice Mandokhel said to Haris.

Justice Hilali remarked that on May 9 people had no idea where they were heading.

The court then adjourned the case's hearing until tomorrow.

Khawaja Haris will continue his arguments even tomorrow.

## Sports Gala



ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick Chairperson Peace and Culture Organization and wife of Jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Mohammad Yasin Mullick confer medal to students during the prize distribution ceremony of annual Sports Gala of Private Educational Society as a Chinese woman also showers her interest, at Sports Complex in Federal Capital. ONLINE PHOTO by Sultan Bashir

## Premier Sports, Bilal Friends and Faisal Gymkhana win in Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Three More Matches were decided in the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Century by Muhammad Afzal.

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

Scores in Brief:

Premier Sports beat Al-Imran Cricket Club by 6 wickets at Student Ground. Al-Imran c.c 216/8 in 40 overs. Umair Ahmed 77 9x4, Fareed Kasi 32. Sarim Iqbal 2/26, M. Iqbal 2/33, Anas Khalid 2/43.

Premier Sports 217/8 in 30.1 overs. Jawwad Khan 70 9x4 1x6 not out, Farhan Khan 51 4x4 3x6, Ishaq Asim 39, Awais Khan 36.

In the 2nd Match Bilal Friends beat Shalimar Cricket Club by 7 Wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Shalimar CC 117 all out in 31.2 overs. Shahzar Khan 30, M. Sami 20. Junaid Khan 2/13, Daniyal Ahmed 2/25.

Bilal Friends 120/3 in 15 4 overs. Junaid Khan 26, Shahzad Khan 23, Watan Dost 22, Owais Qarni 21.

In the 3rd Match Faisal Gymkhana beat Gulzar Cricket Club by 164 runs at Pak Star Ground. Faisal Gymkhana 329/3 in 40 overs. Muhammad Afzal 111 12x4 5x6, Fayyaz Hussain 57 6x4 3x6, Abdullah Rafai 53 4x4 1x6, Aun Abbas 23.

Gulzar CC 165 all out in 31.1 overs. Hasan Ansari 44, M. Sarosh 33. Abdul Moid 4/22, Muhammad Afzal 3/10.

## Pakistan Kho Kho Teams Denied Visas for World Cup in India

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Pakistan's Kho Kho teams will miss the World Cup in New Delhi after being denied visas at the eleventh hour, prompting strong criticism from Pakistani sports officials. Despite complete preparations and support from the India Kho Kho Federation, Pakistani players and officials were left disappointed when visas were not issued. The Pakistan Kho Kho Federation had announced a 34-member squad, and Pakistan was initially included in the World Cup draws. "The organizers had included Pakistan in the initial draws of the World Cup, but two days before the start of the event, the Pakistan Kho Kho Federation was informed of the non-availability of visas," a source said. Pakistan Kho Kho Federation officials condemned the "anti-sports attitude of the Indian government" and called it "another blow to Pak-India sports," stressing the importance of separating sports from politics. The World Cup will include teams from numerous other countries.

Pakistan Kho Kho Men's and Women's Team Captains Shahroz Alvi and Deedar Rani said that we were practicing hard and had been in a training camp for three months. Our preparations were complete and we were hoping to present a very good game and give a tough time to the rival teams, but due to not getting visas, there is great disappointment among the players.

## Pakistan U-19 women's team to face Australia in warm-up match



**Sports Desk**

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, JAN 14 (APP): The Pakistan Women's Under-19 cricket team is set to play a warm-up match against Australia on Wednesday.

The match will take place at the Slangor Turf Club Ground, starting at 2:30 PM local time.

Following this match, the team will travel to Johor on January 16 in preparation for the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup which kicks off in Malaysia on January 18.

Pakistan's first official match will be against the United States on January 18.

In their recent warm-up match, Pakistan secured a victory over Nigeria by 11 runs.



## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## In a major step, Govt. approves new power provision system to SEZs, Industrial Estates

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Energy chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday approved a new power provision system to the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Industrial Estates to accelerate the pace of industrial development.

The committee allowed provision of power supply to the Industrial Estates and Special Economic Zones at one point, allowed their management to give electricity connections, collect bills, and other

related matters themselves, under a summary moved by the Power Division.

The prime minister chaired a meeting of the cabinet committee on energy. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ishaq Dar, Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema, Sardar Owais Khan Leghari, Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik, Special Assistant Muhammad Ali, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ahsan Afzal, and other senior officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was told that the new system was a major step by the government under the prime minister's leadership for the industrial development.

Under this system, the intervention of power distribution companies officials in SEZs and Industrial Estates was ended. A specific operations and management mechanism was being developed in this regard. The Power Division and NEPRA would implement this mechanism within the next two to three months, it was told.

Under the new system, zone developers will not require

any additional license to supply electricity to industries within the zones. The system would facilitate competitiveness among industries, thereby boosting industrial development and exports.

The prime minister directed the implementation of this new system in all special economic zones.

The prime minister, in his remarks, said that the industrial development was crucial for the national progress. "With Allah's grace, we are swiftly moving towards fulfilling the promise of ease of doing business. The provi-

sion of uninterrupted power supply will accelerate the pace of industrial development in the country. With industries functioning, more job opportunities will be created, and exports would be enhanced," the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.

He expressed the hope that the improved electricity transmission system at SEZs would enable industries to play a pivotal role in the country's economic development.

The power division also presented with a report over the circular debt for July to November 2024.

## Bangladeshi PSO Lt Gen S M Kamr ul Hassan calls on CJCS



## City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General S M Kamr-ul-Hassan, Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of the Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh, along with his delegation called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) here at the Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ).

They held a detailed meeting with Chairman CJCS, said a press release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) here.

The discussions focused on matters of mutual strategic interest and explored avenues for enhancing bilateral defence cooperation between the two nations. Both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening mili-

tary ties and reaffirmed their commitment to insulating this partnership from any external disruptions.

General Mirza and Lieutenant General Kamr-ul-Hassan agreed on the critical need for continued collaboration in promoting regional peace, security, and stability.

The CJCS reiterated that both countries share a common vision for a secure and prosperous future, underpinned by robust defence cooperation.

Lieutenant General Kamr-ul-Hassan lauded the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and expressed deep admiration for their sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, recognizing the resilience and dedication displayed by the forces.

## Sindh CM writes letter to PM for Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway construction



## Abdul Ghafoor Sarhori

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has written a letter to Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif requesting him to issue directive to National Highway Authority (NHA) to start work on Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway.

In his letter on Tuesday, the Chief Minister wrote that M-6 is an important motorway connecting the country; however M-6 project is missing from the motorway schemes.

The Chief Minister further said in his letter that the NHA has spared recent schemes for Sindh. National Highways schemes

should be reviewed again, text of letter said.

The Chief Minister has also included details of the funds released in his letter.

Text of the letter said Rs78.43 billion were allocated for six schemes of Sindh while only Rs7 billion was released for them.

Syed Murad Ali Shah demanded that funds should be released for Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway without delay and priority should be given to the construction of highways in Sindh.

Earlier, the Sindh Chief Minister had also written a letter for Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway in March last year.

## Punjab cabinet approves 91 agenda points in landmark meeting

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The 22nd meeting of the provincial cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Tuesday addressed a record 91 agenda points, marking significant legislative and administrative advancements in the province.

Among the key decisions, the Punjab Hindu Marriage Act, Registration Rules 2024, was approved, marking a first in the province. The Chief Minister directed emergency measures to boost cotton production and ordered steps to mitigate the reduction in sugarcane production due to climate change.

The cabinet also approved a province-wide vehicle registration campaign, a speed



limit of 60 km/h for motorcycles, and an inspection and certification requirement for motorcycles after 12 months. The "Punjab Easy Business Finance" scheme and the CM Punjab Easy Business Card were launched to facilitate startups and small businesses, offering interest-free loans up to Rs. 3 crore and free land for businesses.

A comprehensive electric vehicles policy and the establishment of charging stations across Punjab were approved. The cabinet rejected a proposal to rename Gaddafi Stadium and celebrated the successful launch of the Honahar Scholarship, with directives to increase the number of laptops for students.

The Kisan Card initiative was expanded, benefiting farmers with increased cash limits and access to green tractors. The Punjab Chief Minister Special Initiative for Dialysis Program received additional funding, and a special court for property-related matters of Overseas Pakistanis was approved. Other notable approvals

included the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research Act 2024, an increase in financial assistance for indigent journalists, and recruitment in special education and forestry services. These initiatives aim to drive economic growth, support agriculture, enhance healthcare, and promote education in Punjab.

## Pakistan reports 71st polio case of 2024 amid rising concerns

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The continuous increase in polio cases in Pakistan has raised alarms as the 71st case of 2024 has been reported.

A child from Jacobabad district in Sindh was diagnosed with the virus after showing symptoms on December 27, officials confirmed.

Jacobabad has reported five polio cases this year, contributing to the 21 cases in Sindh. Balochistan remains the hardest-hit region with 27 cases, followed by 21 cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Punjab and Islamabad have reported one case each, highlighting the nationwide challenge in combating the disease.

## US Embassy Officials visit Competition Commission of Pakistan

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: U. S. Embassy representatives visited the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) to discuss matters related to competition law and foster bilateral cooperation between CCP and the U. S. Federal Trade Commission. Representatives of the U. S. Embassy's Economic Section met with Salman Amin, Member Office of Fair Trade and International Affairs and his team.

The discussion entailed the sectors that are vulnerable to international cartelization, risks of abuse of dominant position by global undertakings, challenges being posed at digital platforms by deceptive marketing, AI, and new dimension which have become important for regulators to consider while deciding matters related to Merger & Acquisitions. Certain recent decisions taken by both CCP and FTC in the respective domains were discussed and it was recognized that there are commonality of factors in various



aspects and collaboration and knowledge sharing between both the regulators will be mutually beneficial. During the meeting specific areas and avenues for enhancing bilateral and technical collaboration between the CCP and FTC (US) were discussed.

CCP officials briefed U. S. Embassy representatives on measures taken

recently to open competition in various sectors, induce FDI, and facilitate ease of doing business.

CCP representatives suggested, and the parties discussed the possibility of holding dedicated advocacy sessions on Competition Law for American businesses in Pakistan, in coordination with the American Business Council.

## PTI leadership calls £190 million and toshakhana cases politically motivated

## City desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership Tuesday criticized the judiciary and government for their alleged bias and manipulation in the 190 million Pounds case.

Addressing the media outside Adiala Jail after meeting with PTI founder Imran Khan, senior lawyer Shoaib Shaheen highlighted the former prime minister's concerns regarding the fairness of the judicial system.

Shaheen stated, "The Al-Qadir Trust case raises significant questions. Why has there been no accountability for the alleged 9 billion rupees in bribes taken by Nawaz Sharif from Malik Riaz?"

He condemned the early morning court proceedings, alleging that they were conducted to bypass due process.

"The hearing was scheduled for 11 a.m., but the judge concluded the matter at 8:30 am and left before our legal team arrived," he claimed.

Referring to the arrest of Imran Khan on August 5 under the orders of Judge Humayun Dilwar, Shaheen questioned the fairness of the proceedings, asking, "Was Imran Khan even present in court that day?"

Aleema Khan, sister of PTI Chairman Imran Khan, raised crit-



ical questions about the ongoing legal actions against the former prime minister.

She defended her brother, accusing the government of targeting him unfairly while ignoring genuine accountability of other political figures.

"Today, the Chairman has posed a crucial question: Why is he being punished in a case that lacks merit?"

Referring to the allegations of corruption, she pointed out that the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) had already declared that the funds in question were neither stolen money nor laundered.

"The NCA confirmed that the money in question was part of a deal with a property tycoon, who had given a bribe to Hassan Nawaz. Nawaz Sharif must answer why this bribe was accepted," she added.