



South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol arrested over insurrection

South Korean authorities arrested impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday over insurrection allegations, with the embattled leader saying he agreed to comply with what he called an illegal probe to avoid "bloodshed".



Punjab CM announces good news for students with above 65% marks

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif informed that the first batch of laptops has already arrived and she has selected the best laptops available in the market for these students. She said "All children with more than 65% marks will receive laptops. I will personally hand over the laptops to you very soon."

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Good News

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on Electric Vehicles Policy on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Rs30 per unit reduction in power tariff for EV sector to encourage investors: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday hailed the drastic reduction of Rs30 per unit in power tariff for electric vehicles (EVs) as a propitious step for the sector to boost the emission-less and eco-friendly vehicles in the country.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the promotion of Electric Vehicle Policy, appreciated the Power Minister Awais Ahmed Leghari and his team for working out a convincing

proposal aimed at facilitating the EV manufacturers in rolling out subsidized charge-based automobiles in the country.

"They (power minister and his team) have drastically reduced the tariff in this sector from Rs70 to Rs40 per unit. It will encourage the investors and industry partners to tap more investments into the EVs sector," he said.

He pointed out that the country was facing air pollution and climate change which was also a serious concern for the world. However, the country

had actively participated in the global climate forums of COP-27 and COP-29 to present its stance in state-level negotiations on addressing climate-induced disasters and catastrophes like air pollution and solutions to resolve the risks due to it, he added.

"EVs are the right step to address air pollution that needs to be scaled up to contain climate change as it will help reduce air pollution, the massive import bill of fuels and preserve the pristine environment," PM Shehbaz said. Commenting on the commercial aspect of the EVs, he said it was important to look into the electricity tariff offered to these industries that needed to be subsidized as the present Rs70 tariff was not viable for them to operate and continue their production.

The meeting highlighted that regulations for setting up EV charging stations and battery replacement points have been simplified to encourage investment. Under the new rules, particularly charging station registration and business licenses would be issued within 15 days,

safety measures and annual inspections for charging stations would be ensured by NEPRA and a competitive market environment would be fostered to attract direct investments.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar, and Federal Minister for Power Sardar Owais Ahmad Leghari, along with senior government officials.

Pakistan Army categorically rejects Indian Army Chief's baseless allegations

Naveed Ahmad Khan

Pakistan Army Wednesday categorically rejects the Indian Army Chief's baseless allegations terming it a classic case of extreme duplicity.

The military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement said: "Insinuating Pakistan as the epi-center of terrorism by the Indian Army Chief, is not only contrary to facts, but also an exercise in futility to beat the dead horse of India's default position—blaming Pakistan for indigenous reaction to state-sponsored brutality. It is a classic case of extreme duplicity.

"Remarks are an attempt to deflect the world's attention from India's brutality in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), repression of minorities internally, and India's trans-national repression. The General Officer, in his earlier stint in IOJK personally oversaw the most brutal repression of Kashmiris. Such politically motivated and fallacious statements reflect the extreme politicization of the Indian Army.

"The world is witness to India's hate-speech conclaves that provoke genocide against Muslims. International community is not oblivious to India's trans-national assassinations, and Indian Security Forces' oppressive use of force against innocent civilians and



gross human rights violations against unarmed Kashmiris. Such oppression has only served to strengthen the resolve of Kashmiris for their right of self-determination, enshrined in the UN Security Council Resolutions.

"Instead of trying to conjure up a non-existent terror infrastructure in Pakistan, it would be wise not to indulge in self-delusion, and appreciate the ground reality. The sobering fact that a senior serving Indian military officer is in Pakistan's custody, caught red-handed while orchestrating acts of terror against innocent civilians inside Pakistan, seems to have been conveniently ignored by the General.

"Pakistan takes strong exception to such baseless and unfounded statements. Empathizing with the victims of Indian Army's brutality, it is hoped that civility, professionalism, and norms of state-to-state behaviour would guide the conduct of Indian Army's leadership, rather than pandering to political exigencies."

4 terrorists killed in North Waziristan operation: ISPR



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On night 14/15 January 2025, Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Spinwam, North Waziristan District on reported presence of khwarji.

During conduct of the operation, own troops effectively engaged khwarji's location and after intense exchange of fire, four khwarji were sent to hell.

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed khwarji, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as target killing of innocent civilians.

Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other kharji found in the area, as security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Law Minister Tarar rules out 'executive order' for Imran Khan's release

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar has disclosed that the opposition party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), is demanding the release of its prisoners, including Founding Chairman Imran Khan, through an executive order.

The minister made this statement during his address to the Senate session on Wednesday.

Tarar highlighted that PTI, which previously claimed it would not grant NROs to opposition leaders while in power, is now seeking an executive release for its detainees.

The federal law minister firmly stated that Pakistan's constitution does not permit the release of prisoners through an executive order.

Earlier today, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan

labelled Imran Khan as a "political prisoner" during a media talk outside Islamabad district court.

He demanded the immediate release of the party's founder, asserting that this step is essential for democracy and political stability.

Barrister Gohar also confirmed that PTI will formally submit its demands in writing during the upcoming PTI-government negotiations chaired



by National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq.



Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: The United States has declared that Pakistan has played a pivotal role in the US counterterrorism efforts

over the years, but it has never been a formal ally bound by treaty obligations.

At a Washington briefing, White House National Security Communications Advisor

Pakistan was never a formal ally of US: White House

John Kirby candidly addressed the nature of the US-Pakistan relationship, highlighting the absence of any formal defence pact. "Pakistan was never a technical ally of the United States. I mean, there was no treaty of alliance with Pakistan," he stated in response to a question.

Despite this, Kirby emphasised the long history of cooperation between the two countries, particularly in combating

terrorism in the volatile Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. "Certainly, over many, many years in the last couple of decades, we partnered with Pakistan as appropriate to deal with the terrorist threat that still exists on that spine between Afghanistan and Pakistan," he elaborated.

Kirby also acknowledged the human cost of terrorism in Pakistan, recognising that its citizens continue to suffer from cross-

border violence. "We recognise that Pakistan is still — still the Pakistani people fall victim to terrorist violence coming from across that border. And we have, and for as long as we'll be in office here, remain committed to working with Pakistan to address those common threats and challenges. And that's not — that hasn't changed. It's not going to change," Kirby said during the briefing.

President, PM pay tribute to security forces for killing four terrorists in North Waziristan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday paid tribute to the security forces for eliminating four terrorists in an anti-terror operation in Spinwam area of North Waziristan.

The president and prime minister, in separately issued statements, lauded the bravery of the security forces for carrying out a successful intelligence-based operation. "The entire nation stands

united against terrorism. The anti-terror operations will continue till the elimination of terrorism as the security forces are carrying out the operations to achieve the objectives," President Zardari remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the people of Pakistan were proud of their brave security forces.

"We will continue to foil the evil designs of the enemies of the humanity. The government and the security forces are fully resolved to purge the country of terrorism," he added.

Pakistan Cleft Lip and Palate Association meeting held

Anwar Chohan

GUJRAT: The executive committee meeting of the Pakistan Cleft Lip and Palate Association, Gujrat, was held at the DC office under the chairmanship of the Association Chairman/Deputy Commissioner (DC) Safdar Hussain Virk. The meeting was attended by Patron-in-Chief Dr. Ijaz Bashir, Rizwan Dildar Chaudhry, Al-Khidmat Bhagwal's Bao Muhammad Afzal, Chairman of Al-Falah Scholarship Scheme Majeed Ahmed Chaudhry, President of Al-Khidmat Foundation District Gujrat Raja Sajid Sharif, Mirza Ashfaq Bashir, Hamza Ijaz, renowned educationist Khushnood of The Chenab School Gujrat, contractor Farhan, Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid, and others.

On this occasion, DC Gujrat Safdar Hussain Virk said that people who alleviate others' difficulties and bring smiles to distressed faces are truly great. He welcomed the new members joining the cleft team and appreciated the social work being done under the platforms of Al-Falah Scholarship, Al-Khidmat Foundation, and Al-Khidmat Welfare Society Bhagwal.

Chairman of Al-Falah Scholarship Scheme, Majeed Ahmed Chaudhry, stated that they have been serving in



the field of education since 1998 and will stand alongside the mission of the Cleft Hospital. President of Al-Khidmat Foundation District Gujrat, Raja Sajid Sharif, mentioned that they have been supporting the Cleft Hospital from day one. Bao Afzal of Al-Khidmat Bhagwal assured full cooperation with the Cleft Hospital

in their mission of serving humanity under the leadership of Malik Naveed Khalid.

He also presented sweets to DC Gujrat Safdar Virk, Dr. Ijaz Bashir, and the committee members on the occasion of the departure of Maham (whose treatment was completed free of cost at the Cleft Hospital).

During the meeting, a fundraising and fund collection committee led by Rizwan Dildar Chaudhry was announced, which will facilitate the collection of funds for the Cleft Hospital.

Pakistan Cleft Lip & Palate Association-CLAPA Cleft Hospital, Gujrat, PK Ijaz Bashir Sughra Sadaf DC Gujrat

Education Creates Awareness in Man: Aqeela Intkhab

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: According to details, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Education Toba Tek Singh Aqeela Intkhab talking to Daily The Spokesman said that getting education creates awareness in a person. Therefore, parents should educate their children and to train them well, because by getting education consciousness develops in a person as well as his thinking morals. There is an improvement in lifestyle and Getting education brightens their life. She further said that if a person does not have education, he becomes the owner of bad manners and negative thinking. Education only brings a person towards improvement and removes him from the darkness of ignorance. Aqeela Intkhab said that our effort is to give the highest level of education to children in all schools so that they can make their name, their parents and the country of Pakistan bright by getting education.

Gas Refilling do not Deserve Any Concession: Mehmood Gill

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: According to details, Civil Defense Officer (CDO) Toba Tek Singh Chaudhry Mehmood Hussain Gill talking to Daily The Spokesman said that gas refilling does not deserve any concession as they are playing with others' lives. He added that gas refilling Failure to do so may result in a cylinder burst accident resulting in loss of human life. Therefore, these people do not deserve any concession. Mehmood Gill said that I warn the gas refilling not to refill gas, if anyone is caught refilling gas, strict action will be taken against him and an FIR will also be registered.



"No Parking" sign installed at the entrance and exit of People's Colony on Kamra Road

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: On the suggestion of Municipal Committee Attock's Chief Officer, Sardar Aftab, Deputy Commissioner Attock, Rao Atif Raza, installed a "No Parking" sign at the entrance and exit of People's Colony on Kamra Road, winning the hearts of the local residents. Previously, wagon drivers would park their vehicles at this spot to pick up passengers instead of using the designated stop a few steps away. This illegal practice led to numerous accidents, causing injuries and disabilities among the public. In consultation with the DC and Chief Officer of the Municipal Committee, the "No Parking" sign was installed at the intersection. The residents of People's Colony expressed their gratitude, acknowledging that this step would help prevent accidents and protect them from physical harm. In this regard, the media also requested DSP Traffic Chaudhry Tahir Abbas to strictly instruct the wagon drivers and contractors that if they are found parking in the no-parking zone, they would face heavy fines. The DSP assured the media of full cooperation. It is worth mentioning that in our society, imposing heavy fines on those who violate the law is essential to promote understanding and compliance with regulations. There should be no political influence in such matters. Crime is crime, and the media, being the eyes, ears, and hands of society, plays a vital role in conveying the true message of the authorities. The media is impartial and not influenced by any department.

Sujawal fisherman nabbed by Indian Border Security Forces

Kamran Khamiso Khawaja

SUJAWAL: Indian Border Security forces arrested a Pakistani fisherman, Babu son of Umer Malah, from within Pakistan's territorial limits late Tuesday night. According to reports from the coastal area of Jati Taluka, district Sujawal, Babu was fishing near Harami creek when Indian forces attacked and took him away. As the sole breadwinner of his family, Babu had been a fisherman for many years.

Noor Muhammad Themore, representative of the Pakistan Fishermen's Forum, condemned the Indian forces and government for violating international humanitarian and sea laws. "The Indian forces committed an offense by invading Pakistan's territorial limits and arresting innocent fishermen," he said. The More expressed surprise at the international community's inaction on this human rights issue. According to official data from the Foreign Ministry, around 81 Pakistani fishermen are currently imprisoned in Indian jails, including 56 who have completed their sentences. Of these, 20 are from Jati Taluka, district Sujawal.

Sardar Attique expressed deep sorrow over the death of Dr. Khadija Mushtaq

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan expressed deep sorrow and grief over the death of Dr. Khadija Mushtaq, Executive Director of Roots School System, niece of former government minister Dr. Najeeb Naqi and granddaughter of former minister Col. (retd.) Naqi Khan. He said that Dr. Khadija Mushtaq had invaluable services in the field of education which cannot be forgotten under any circumstances. The deceased rendered excellent services as Executive Director of Roots School and was always ready to improve the education system and maintain discipline. The services of the deceased have caused an irreparable loss to the education sector. He prayed that Allah Almighty may grant the deceased a high place in Paradise and grant patience to the bereaved family. Meanwhile Secretary General Muslim Conference Madm Mehr-un-Nisa Chairperson Students Wing Madm Memoona Kayani and



PMLN AJK meeting of central office bearers and ticket holders held

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting of central office bearers and ticket holders was held under the chairmanship of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Azad Kashmir Minister Shah Ghulam Qadir. In the meeting, party President Shah Ghulam Qadir and former Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan announced their separation from the government as a member of the Anwar ul Haq Government. In the meeting, it was decided to suspend Hafiz Ahmed Raza Qadri as a member of the executive council, including the vice-president, and suspend Colonel (retd.) Waqar Ahmed Noor, Sardar Aamir Altaf Khan, Raja Muhammad Siddique and Nisara Abbasi from the executive council. Under the powers granted in the party constitution, party President Shah Ghulam Qadir approved the establishment of a five-member disciplinary committee and an important decision was also made to issue show-cause notices to the government ministers within seven days. Earlier, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had directed the PML-N Azad Kashmir to immediately separate from the government.

Pollution

RAWALPINDI: Massive smoke rise from a burning garbage at roadside garbage drum that is creating air pollution and harmful for the health of area residents showing negligence of concerned authority, at Bagh Sardaran area, in the city.



Photo: Online

Prize distribution ceremony held at College of Nursing Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock, Rao Atif Raza, stated that the nursing profession holds revolutionary significance in Pakistan. He expressed these views while attending the prize distribution ceremony at the College of Nursing Attock as the chief guest. The event was also attended by CEO Health Dr. Asad Ismail, MS Asfandiyar Bukhari District Hospital Dr. Jawad

Elahi, and Principal College of Nursing Naveda Iqbal. During the event, the college's annual academic report was presented, highlighting that the college achieved 100% results in curricular and extracurricular activities.

Additionally, it was shared that the graduates of the College of Nursing are serving both within Pakistan and abroad with excellence. Deputy Commissioner Attock was briefed about the reconstruction of the College

of Nursing and other related matters. In his speech, Rao Atif Raza emphasized that the nursing profession holds special importance globally and is the backbone of the healthcare system. He said that individuals associated with nursing render national service, which is truly a form of worship, earning the pleasure of Allah. He announced that the IT lab of the College of Nursing would be upgraded soon and urged the students to pursue skill-based

education alongside their nursing studies. This includes courses in AI, IT, graphic designing, freelancing, and other significant fields. He encouraged the students to advance in the IT sector and bring glory to the country. Rao Atif Raza acknowledged the challenging nature of the nursing profession and highlighted its potential for exemplary public service. At the end of the ceremony, he distributed prizes among the successful students.

Meeting of District Polio Eradication Committee Held in Jamshoro

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A meeting of the District Polio Eradication Committee for the control of polio was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Jamshoro, Ghaznifar Ali Qadri, at the Darbar Hall, Jamshoro. The meeting reviewed the preparations for the upcoming national polio eradication campaign, which will run from February 3 to February 7, 2025.

Deputy Commissioner Ghaznifar Ali Qadri addressed the meeting, emphasizing that the upcoming national polio campaign would be the first of 2025. He highlighted the need for a coordinated strategy and effective communication, taking into account the obstacles and challenges faced in previous campaigns, to ensure the success of the mission and the complete eradication of polio. He further stressed the importance of administering polio drops to chil-




dren up to five years old throughout the district to ensure that no child is left without vaccination.

The meeting was attended by Addi-

tional Deputy Commissioner One Nooruddin Hangorjo, District Health Officer Dr. Abdul Hamid Konharo, N-Staff Officer Dr. Kaleem Shaikh, Dr.

Pir Manzoor, Dr. Raza Pahore, Assistant Commissioners of the respective talukas, and representatives from other relevant departments.


 Islamabad
 30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:45 am
 Zohr12:17 pm
 Asr3:44 pm
 Maghrib5:22 pm
 Isha6:50 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
 Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
 PIA Flight Info 114
 PIA Cargo9280979
 Railway Inquiry117
 Railway Exchange9270831-5
 WASA Rawalpindi5555489
 CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
 MH561116
 MH561116
 Cantt Hospital9270907-11
 DHQ5556311-4
 RGH9290301-7
 Holy Family9290322-7
 PIMS9261070-79
 Polyclinic9218300-09
 Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Japan funded solar powered irrigation project inaugurated in Narowal

Faisal Khawar Butt

SIALKOT: H. E. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on Wednesday, 15th January 2025, inaugurated a project for installation of solar powered irrigation system in Tehsil Shakar Garh, District Narowal being managed by Rural Aid Pakistan, a non-governmental organization, working at grassroots level in rural areas of Pakistan to fight against poverty and empowering the vulnerable rural communities for sustainable development.

The Government of Japan, under its

Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Program, had provided financial assistance of 65,617 USD under this project, for provision of seven(7) solar powered irrigation pumps and facilities to enhance agricultural productivity in the region by providing sustainable and efficient irrigation system in District Narowal. The inauguration ceremony was attended by the NGO Board Members, local government officials, community leaders and local farmers.

It is pertinent to mention here that Rural Aid Pakistan has been working for more than thirty years with farmers



in rural areas, implementing many projects in collaboration with government departments and different donors.

The grant of 65,617 USD provided by the Government of Japan is utilized to improve the environment for agricultural activities, increase the production and harvest of agricultural products in the area, and increase the income of local

farmers. H. E. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, while speaking at the inaugural ceremony, congratulated the representatives of the NGO for successful completion of this important project. Mr. Akamatsu expressed his hope that this initiative would empower farmers and ensure to increase their agricultural productivity,

improve their livelihoods, and contribute to the local economy. He also stressed that the Government of Japan would continue to support the people of Pakistan, to improve their living standards and represented his sincere wish that this project would certainly strengthen the existing relations between the people of Japan and Pakistan.

Negligence of CDA

ISLAMABAD: A view of the massive garbage dump along the Lehtrar Road, which is the open sign of the negligence of Capital Development Authority and also the nearby residence, in Federal Capital.

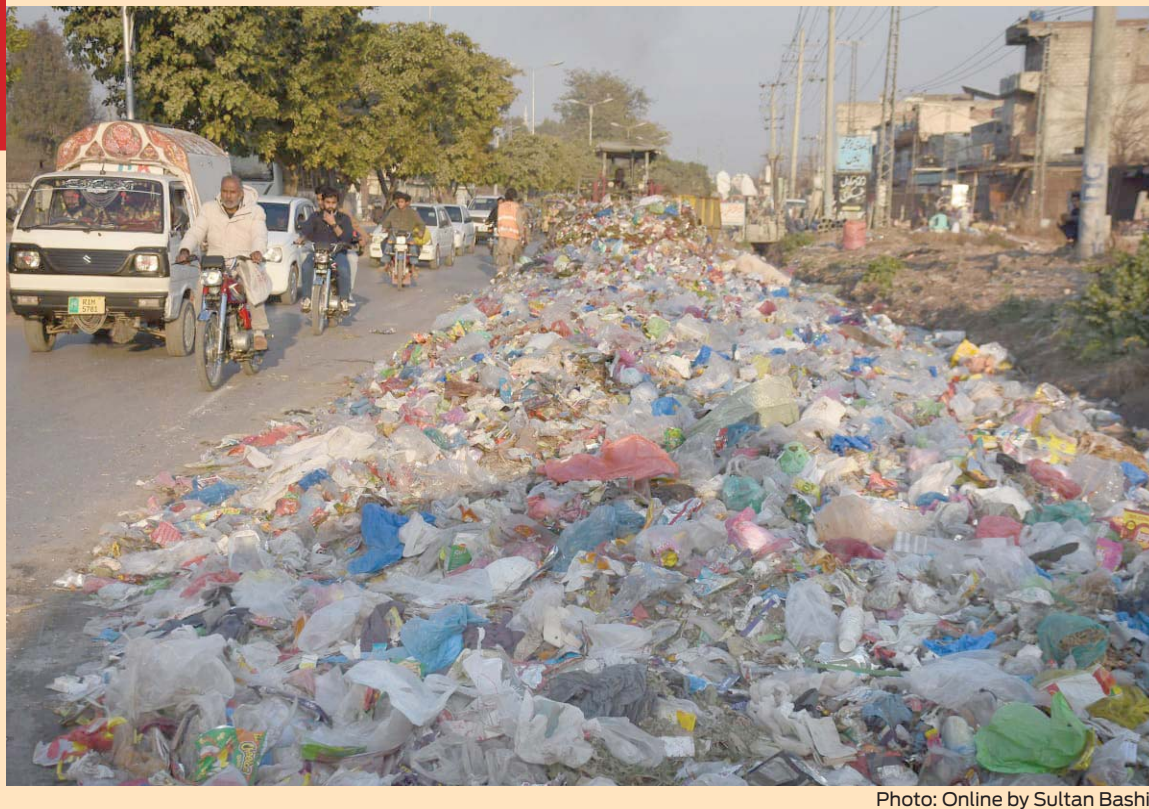


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Commissioner Orders Upgradation of Office Branches

Zain Khan

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division, Aamir Kareem Khan, has ordered the upgradation of various branches within the Commissioner's Office. He has tasked the staff with improving record management and emphasized the need for better facilities and effective service delivery for citizens visiting government offices.

During an unannounced visit to various branches, Commissioner Aamir Kareem Khan stated that providing a respectful and comfortable environment for both staff and citizens is a top priority. He highlighted the importance of taking special measures to restore public trust in government institutions.

The Commissioner instructed the Buildings Department to prepare a comprehensive plan for upgrading the Commissioner Complex. He also directed steps to auction obsolete and outdated furniture and equipment.

Additional Commissioner Coordination Abdul Jabbar provided a detailed briefing, while Deputy Director Information, PRO to Commissioner, Iram Saleemi, briefed about media on complaints and news management.

Additional Commissioner Arshad Gopang, Assistant Commissioner General Hafiz Khurshed, PSO Shahid Mahmood, and Nazir Allah Ditta were also present during the visit.

Open Courts Organized Across Punjab to Ensure Public Justice

Special Correspondent

MULTAN: Director General Anti-Corruption Punjab, Sohail Zafar Chattha, has ordered the organization of open courts across Punjab. Acting on this directive, Regional Director Anti-Corruption Multan, Basharat Nabi, held an open court at his office today. During the session, public grievances were heard, and Anti-Corruption officers were instructed to address applicants' complaints promptly while ensuring justice. The purpose of these open courts is to provide easy access to justice, thereby alleviating people's difficulties.

At the Anti-Corruption Office in Khaneval, Deputy



Director Rao Abdul Ghaffar, along with Circle Officer Muhammad Sajid, conducted an open court to address public concerns and provide relief. Similarly, an open court was

held in Vehari, where Deputy Director Anwar Khan Baloch, Assistant Director Investigations Rao Faisal Rehman, and Circle Officer Mansoor Munir Khan listened to public issues

and provided resolutions.

In Lodhran, Deputy Director Imran Arif Sial and Circle Officer Ali Hassan Gillani assured citizens of timely justice after hearing their concerns. The Director Anti-Corruption Multan Region emphasized that these open courts allow the immediate resolution of public complaints.

Anti-Corruption Multan spokesperson, Wazir Khan Lashari, remarked that the public has welcomed the initiative of holding open courts in the department. He further stated that the department strictly adheres to the Punjab government's zero-tolerance policy and the vision of the Director General Punjab.

Public private partnership crucial for rehabilitation of natural calamities: Provincial Minister

City Desk

KARACHI: Provincial Tourism and Culture Minister Syed Zulfiqar Shah has said public-private partnership is very crucial to deal with natural calamities and ensuing rehabilitation drive to rebuild the nation.

He was speaking at a ceremony organized by Muslim Aid in a local hotel recently regarding the completion of construction of houses for flood victims in Sanghar and Mirpur Khas districts of Sindh.

The provincial minister further said that Muslim Aid played an important role in the construction of houses for the flood victims in Sindh as well as providing medicines and rations which is commendable.

He extended his full support to Muslim Aid for charitable activities in the province.

Head of Operations Asif Chishti said that 257 one-unit houses have been constructed so far for the flood victims in Mirpur Khas and Sanghar, while one house has cost one million rupees. In addition to houses, 20 solar water plants have been installed in Umarmot and Mirpur Khas to provide clean drinking water to the local population.

Country Director of Muslim Aid Pakistan Dr. Asif Malik and others

A New Chapter in Hospitality: The Townhouse Hotel Debuts in Islamabad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Townhouse Hotel, Islamabad's newest luxury landmark is now welcoming guests. Nestled in Islamabad's F-7 district, the hotel presents sophistication, timeless elegance and modern allure. Designed for discerning travelers, this boutique property offers a refined service-driven and personalized journey.

A proud member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World™ (SLH), The Townhouse Hotel has been exclusively handpicked as Pakistan's first member property of SLH, a community of independently minded travelers and independently spirited hotels in the world that features 580 hotels in more than 90 countries – each offering a unique experience focused on individual character and personalized service.

Moiz Varind of Devsinc Meets U. S. Ambassador Donald Blome

City Desk

LAHORE: Mr. Moiz S. Varind, Devsinc's Senior Director of Global Marketing, had the honor of meeting H. E. Donald A. Blome, the U. S. Ambassador to Pakistan, during a recent corporate gathering. The exclusive event brought together key industry leaders, defense personnel, and Parliamentarians to explore opportunities for strengthening ties and expanding collaborative efforts between Pakistan and the United States.

As Devsinc continues its global expansion, the U. S. market remains a key focus for growth due to its prominence in the worldwide tech industry. This interaction was not only meaningful but also a valuable opportunity to discuss Pakistan's IT landscape, reinforcing Devsinc's commitment to building international partnerships and driving innovation in the tech sector.

No DISCO handed over to ISI; Leghari

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Wednesday informed the National Assembly (NA) that no Power Distribution Company (DISCO) was handed over to Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), however special intelligence units comprising provincial officials, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and others were helping to reduce the losses and electricity theft in the power sector.

Replying to supplementary questions during the Question Hour of the 12th session of the NA, he said contracts have been reviewed with over 28 Independent Power Producers (IPPs), benefiting the national exchequer to the tune of 1457 billion rupees.

He said since June last year, the per unit electricity tariff for industries has been reduced by Rs 11 and for the rest of the country by Rs 4.

Leghari added that the government will not purchase electricity after March this year as permission had been given for the creation of an Independent Electricity Market.

He said that the independent electricity market will enable consumers to purchase electricity from multiple suppliers.

AKU's 10th Annual Surgical Conference Focuses on Innovations in Surgical Care and Patient Safety

City Desk

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University (AKU), Department of Surgery, proudly celebrated a milestone with its 10th Annual Surgical Conference, marking a decade of leadership and innovation in the surgical field. The two-day event, brought together a distinguished lineup of both international and national experts who engaged in discussions on transformative advancements in surgical care.

Held under the theme, "Beyond the Scalpel: Quality Care and Patient Safety," this year's conference highlighted a strong focus on improving surgical outcomes and ensuring patient safety. As surgical practices continue to evolve, it is essential for healthcare professionals to stay updated on the latest advancements that can positively impact patient outcomes. The event's sessions delved into surgical innovation, patient-centered care, and the integration of

cutting-edge technologies.

Global experts from prestigious institutions such as University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin engaged with attendees through interactive sessions that promoted collaboration and networking, creating an invaluable forum for surgical professionals, researchers, and educators to exchange knowledge and ideas.

Dr Saleem Islam, Chair of the

Department of Surgery, emphasized the significance of this milestone, stating, "Every year, we strive to make the Conference bigger and better. This year's theme reflects our department's commitment to providing cutting-edge, high-quality patient care. This conference has not only benefited our patients but has also contributed immensely to the education of our students and residents by disseminating the latest research in the field of surgery."

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

Remarkable Efforts of the Pakistan Army in Eliminating Terrorism

Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, the situation has grown more complex, with accusations that the Taliban is sheltering and supporting groups like the TTP. Pakistan has continued diplomatic efforts, urging the Taliban to act against militant groups operating from Afghan soil. Additionally, Pakistan has worked closely with international partners, such as the United States, China, and the United Nations, to address the threat of terrorism from Afghanistan. Pakistan has sought international support for its counterterrorism efforts and called on the global community to pressure the new Afghan government to sever ties with terrorist organizations, including the TTP and others. Pakistan has also requested assistance to enhance its border security and intelligence capabilities to combat cross-border terrorism effectively.

rebuild trust between the government and the civilian population in areas affected by terrorism. Protecting civilians was critical to undermining the appeal of militant groups and their extremist ideologies. The operation employed a multi-faceted military strategy, including intelligence-based operations (IBOs), aerial surveillance, ground offensives, and aerial operations involving the Pakistan Army and paramilitary forces. It targeted regions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and former tribal areas, which were long considered strongholds of various militant groups. A key aspect of the operation was the use of intelligence to track and neutralize terrorist networks. Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies collaborated to gather actionable intelligence to locate and eliminate militant commanders and their hideouts. Operation Azm-e-Istehkam also highlighted the importance of coordination among various military branches and law enforcement agencies. The Army, Frontier Corps, and police forces worked together to execute synchronized raids and attacks on militant positions. In areas where militant hideouts were difficult to access, airstrikes and artillery were deployed to target terrorist positions. These aerial strikes played a crucial role in diminishing the capabilities of militant groups and disrupting their operations. The operation not only aimed at combating militants directly but also sought to dismantle the infrastructure supporting terrorism, such as

weapons stockpiles, training camps, and communication networks. This strategy aimed to reduce the operational capabilities of terrorist groups in the region. To prevent militants from crossing the border, Pakistan reinforced its border security by deploying additional troops along the Durand Line. The operation also involved building more security posts and enhancing surveillance along key routes frequently used by militants. Since its initiation, Operation Azm-e-Istehkam has achieved several significant milestones in Pakistan's battle against terrorism. One notable success has been the elimination or capture of several high-ranking militants, including commanders of the TTP and other terrorist factions. These leaders were responsible for orchestrating major attacks in Pakistan, and their removal has disrupted the operational strength of these groups. Through intelligence-based operations, the Pakistani military has dismantled numerous terrorist cells in the country's tribal areas. These efforts have also resulted in the recovery of large amounts of weapons, explosives, and other materials used by terrorists. While terrorism has not been fully eradicated, the operation has led to a marked decrease in the frequency of large-scale attacks. It has disrupted terrorist groups' ability to carry out major assaults, providing some respite for the civilian population. In regions heavily impacted by terrorism, Operation Azm-e-Istehkam has been instrumental in restoring law and order.

Areas once controlled by militant groups are now under the control of the Pakistani state, and civilians are gradually returning to their homes in areas once devastated by conflict. Enhanced security measures along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border have also reduced cross-border militant infiltrations. While challenges remain, the security improvements introduced during the operation have significantly limited the movement of militants between the two countries.

Under the leadership of Army Chief General Asim Munir, Pakistan and its military have made significant progress in counterterrorism operations. According to security sources, 59,775 successful intelligence-based operations were conducted in 2024, resulting in the deaths of 925 terrorists and the arrest of hundreds more. Security sources further report that Pakistani forces, intelligence agencies, police, and law enforcement are carrying out more than 169 operations daily. During these operations in 2024, 73 of the country's most wanted terrorists were killed. Additionally, 14 wanted terrorists were reintegrated into the national mainstream, and two suicide bombers were arrested, averting a major disaster. The army chief's unwavering stance against terrorists, Khawarjis, and their facilitators has been widely praised, including by foreign media, which commended his powerful voice in the fight against terrorism.

The efforts of the Pakistani government and military to eliminate terrorism have been commendable and are fully supported by the people of Pakistan, who appreciate these initiatives and the commitment to bringing peace and stability to the country.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Result-oriented

Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, has called the World Bank's first-ever 10-year Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Pakistan "result-oriented" and that it would greatly benefit the country.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the World Bank Group following CPF's approval by the World Bank Board, he said it defines the strategic World Bank-Pakistan collaboration.

"This is not only a result oriented but impact-oriented programme that would benefit the fifth most densely populated country in the world," Ambassador Sheikh added.

The reception was attended by the World Bank's Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser, Executive Director for Pakistan at the World Bank, Dr. Tauqeer Shah, officials from the Embassy of Pakistan and members of the World Bank South Asia region.

The Pakistani envoy said the framework was the result of extensive efforts and collective teamwork.

"A significant amount of effort was invested in the preparatory process of this framework, which emerged from an arduous effort on the part of both the World Bank and the relevant government departments in Pakistan."

Raiser, the World Bank's vice president for South Asia, congratulated Ambassador Sheikh and expressed his appreciation for the collaborative efforts of the World Bank, the Government of Pakistan, and other World Bank Group partners, such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), in successfully finalizing the framework.

The Country Partnership Framework (CPF) spanning 2025-34 focuses on six key areas and nine objectives of reduced child stunting through improved access to health, nutrition and population services, reduced learning poverty through improved access to quality schools and foundational learning, more resilience to climate change through increased resilience to scarcity, droughts, heatwaves and natural disasters, increased decarbonization through access to cleaner, more sustainable energy and reduced air pollution, increased fiscal space and better management and more progressive public expenditures for development and more inclusive economic opportunities through increased private sector investments and exports.

These objectives will be supported by increased digital development, stability and openness of the economy and social protection, it was pointed out.

The CPF builds upon core analytics conducted by the World Bank Group over recent years which identified the most acute development challenges facing Pakistan and offered suggestions for reforms.

The framework is proposed as a 10-year "rolling CPF", with regular annual reviews to assess progress towards the proposed objectives. A mid-term review will allow for the evaluation of achievements against objectives and appropriate adjustments to ensure continued support for the long-term strategy.

In the end, the ambassador thanked the World Bank management for its support in getting the CPF approved and assured full commitment of the government of Pakistan to the realization of objectives outlined in it.

Another key goal was to capture or eliminate high-ranking leaders of terrorist groups operating within Pakistan. These leaders were responsible for planning attacks and recruiting new members. The operation also aimed to restore law and order in the tribal areas, especially in North and South Waziristan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other regions heavily impacted by insurgency. By focusing on militants, the operation sought to provide security for local communities who had long endured violence and lawlessness.

Given the porous nature of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, Operation Azm-e-Istehkam placed significant emphasis on improving border security to prevent the movement of militants between the two countries. It also aimed to



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

Military Courts: Ongoing Debate in the Supreme Court

The war against terrorism in Pakistan has become a critical issue, with the role of military courts being central to the discussion.

Since the establishment of military courts in 2015, there has been continuous debate regarding their performance, necessity, and constitutional legitimacy. In a recent hearing at the Supreme Court, an important question was raised, which brings new perspectives to constitutional and legal analysis. Justice Jamal Mandokhel and Justice Ameenuddin raised a key question: "Why was the trial of the APS attack not conducted in military courts, despite the existence of the conspiracy and the Army Act?"

In 2015, a constitutional amendment was made that gave military courts the authority to try terrorists and extremist groups. At the time, the nature of the crime, particularly the impact of terrorism and its effects on society, prompted the 21st Amendment to the Constitution. The purpose of this amendment was to expedite legal proceedings against terrorists, as delays in civil court trials had become a major issue.

The 21st Amendment clearly outlined the role of military courts, stating that trials for certain crimes under the Army Act would be conducted in these courts. However, since this amendment, many questions have been raised, particularly

regarding whether there was a real need for such an expansion of military courts. Did it lead to improved legal justice, or did it compromise transparency?

In the ongoing intra-court appeal in the Supreme Court, several important questions have been raised. During the proceedings, justices Jamal Mandokhel and Ameenuddin pointed out a crucial issue: "Why was the case of the attack on GHQ and the Karachi airbase not transferred to military courts?" This question, along with others, brings forth an important constitutional and legal matter regarding the difference in performance between military and civil courts.

The lawyer representing the Ministry of Defense, Khwaja Haris, argued that if the crime is linked to the Army Act, the trial must take place in a military court. He emphasized that military courts are only responsible for crimes related to military officers or crimes involving the army. However, the Supreme Court's judgment has challenged this interpretation, with Justice Jamal Mandokhel asking, "What is meant by the link to the Army Act?" Khwaja Haris explained that this link refers to crimes directly associated with military activities or personnel, but the court questioned whether this definition is sufficient to justify military trials.

With the constitutional amendment and the establishment of military courts, the Supreme Court has questioned

whether such an amendment was necessary. Justice Jamal Mandokhel's query, "Why was the trial of the APS attack not conducted in military courts despite the conspiracy and Army Act?", brings into focus the need for constitutional analysis regarding the justification for military trials. The Ministry of Defense's lawyer stated that the amendment had broadened the scope to include several other crimes, which was considered necessary for quick and effective justice.

In addition to the constitutional amendment and the establishment of military courts, it is crucial to consider whether human rights are adequately protected. Are military courts always fair and transparent in their procedures? These are important questions that need to be answered to ensure that military courts do not overshadow the fundamental principles of justice and fairness in the legal system.

The constitutional amendment and the establishment of military courts represent a major shift in Pakistan's legal landscape. The ongoing Supreme Court debate and the questions raised highlight how military courts fit into the broader context of Pakistan's constitutional and legal framework. If military courts are to remain effective, it is essential to ensure that they work in harmony with civil courts and that they uphold the principles of justice and fairness.

Moving forward, it is clear that Pakistan needs a robust and balanced legal system, where the roles of military and civil courts are well-defined, ensuring that the process of justice remains intact at all levels.



Analysis

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

Balochistan at Crossroads

The real independence of Balochistan has indeed become a myth. As the largest province of Pakistan, Balochistan has struggled with numerous challenges since its inception, including political instability, economic marginalization, historical grievances, and terrorism. These issues have jeopardized the political, social, and economic development of Balochistan. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that goes beyond military solutions, incorporating civilians, Baloch nationalist groups, politicians, and other dignitaries.

The unrelenting political instability of the province stems from its controversial accession to Pakistan in 1947. After its inception, the exorbitant influx of military into the province enraged the people of Balochistan, leading to a sense of alienation. The indifferent governments, military coercion, unscrupulous bureaucracy, and multiple operations have compelled the Baloch people to take up arms against the state to assert their rights. The rigging of elections, military intervention in public affairs, and prohibition of the public from accessing resources have eroded the people's interest in the so-called democratic government.

The power of politicians and lawmakers in the province has become limited, and the people of Balochistan have very little say in matters related to their lives. Surprisingly, in every election, a new party emerges overnight and sweeps the polls, raising serious concerns. Terrorism has emerged as a major threat to Balochistan's prosperity and development. Last year, at least 170 militant attacks killed 150 civilians and 114 security personnel in Balochistan.

The people of Balochistan are demanding answers, but politicians and security forces merely condemn the incidents without taking action. The lack of trained security forces and the military reluctance to combat terrorism have created an atmosphere of fear and unrest. While the government blames external factors like the Indian intelligence agency RAW and the TTP, they must also acknowledge their own negligence and incompetence.

Despite being rich in natural resources, including gas, oil, copper, and gold, Balochistan lags behind in economic development. Although the 18th amendment to the 1973

constitution granted provincial autonomy, the province has limited control over the exploration and extraction of natural resources, leading to a sense of exploitation. The poor infrastructure, including roads, highways, educational institutions, schools, and hospitals, hinders economic growth in the province.

Ironically, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, agricultural stagnation, corruption, security concerns, and a lack of economic planning have entangled the province in a vicious cycle. The agricultural sector is Balochistan's economic backbone, accounting for 30% of GDP, 40% of labor force, and supporting 75% of the rural population. Despite its importance, the sector faces challenges like limited technology adoption, inadequate policies, and poor access to quality inputs, hindering economic growth and development.

Balochistan, a diverse province, faces numerous challenges that hinder its development. Linguistic and cultural differences between the Baloch and Pashtun communities have created divisions, while sectarian tensions between Sunni and Shiite communities simmer beneath the surface. Feudal lords exert significant influence, operating above the law and undermining justice. The people of Balochistan are denied basic rights, including the right to vote, education, healthcare, and freedom of speech.

Furthermore, the forced displacement of the Baloch people from Gawadar is a grave injustice and a clear violation of their human rights. To sum up, it's worth mentioning that external and internal issues require a political solution rather than a military one. A military solution to these issues can lead to the country's breakup, as evident from the separation of East Pakistan in 1971.

Pakistan should learn from this experience and adopt a more diplomatic approach. The government should focus on improving relations with neighboring countries and engaging Baloch separatist groups in negotiations. Furthermore, granting the people of Balochistan their basic rights, including education, freedom of speech, assembly, association, movement, and the freedom to pursue trade, business, or profession, is essential. The fatal issues confronting the people of Balochistan must be resolved; otherwise, they will prove to be the Achilles' heel that leads to the breakup of the Balochistan province.



Analysis

Khalil Rehman Gharshinan

Pak Russia Relations

Russian envoy emphasized Pak-Russia trade relations promotion

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Albert Khorev, stated that Russia is keen to enhance cooperation in various sectors to play a significant role in strengthening Pakistan's economy. He emphasized that the promotion of Pak-Russia trade relations will have a positive impact on the economies of both countries. Pakistan offers vast opportunities for investment, and Russian investors are eager to invest in various sectors.

He appreciated the investment-friendly measures taken by the Government of Pakistan, which are encouraging for foreign investors and will help further solidify the bilateral relations between the two countries.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the Secretary General of UBG Mr. Zafar Bakhtawari & Chairman of the Clean and Green Islamabad Movement, member of

the Central Core Committee of UBG, and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari who was also accompanied. The meeting included detailed discussions on enhancing Pak-Russia economic, trade, and cultural relations.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari stressed the importance of Pak-Russia relations and said that fostering trade and cultural cooperation between the two countries is the need of the hour.

He proposed the initiation of direct flights between Pakistan and Russia to enable businesspersons and investors from both countries to better benefit from each other's expertise and markets.

He further mentioned that Pakistan's IT sector holds immense potential, and collaboration with Russia could open a new chapter of progress in this field.

Zafar Bakhtawari added that promoting cultural ties between the

two countries would have a positive impact on public relations and strengthen mutual ties further. He also highlighted that Pakistan's ongoing development projects and business environment offer excellent opportunities for foreign investors.

It was also agreed during the meeting that the exchange of cultural delegations between Pakistan and Russia would not only improve relations at the public level but also promote the cultures of both nations. Furthermore, discussions were held on joint efforts to enhance the public recognition of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), fostering development in the IT sector, and advancing cooperation in modern technology exchange.

The Russian Ambassador, Albert Khorev, agreed with the proposals of Ahsan Bakhtawari and Zafar Bakhtawari and assured them that these suggestions would be seriously considered.



Trade Delegation to Bangladesh FTA or PTA Can Help Pave the Way for Exponential Growth: Atif Ikram Sheikh

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stressed that Pakistan and Bangladesh need to have a free trade agreement (FTA) or a preferential trade agreement (PTA) in order to achieve exponential growth in bilateral trade; as there is enormous untapped trade potential which can benefit both the economies.

It is pertinent to note that FPCCI-led Pakistani trade delegation had a flurry of high-profile meetings on the last day of visit with Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI); Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) and dinner with Syed Ahmed Maroof, High Commissioner of Pakistan in Bangladesh - which was also attended by Sheikh Bashiruddin, Advisor on Commerce to the Interim Government, Bangladesh.

FPCCI President highlighted that the visit has paved the way for



further easing of visa regimes from both sides; online visa processing; direct flights; business-to-business and chamber-to-chamber relations.

At DCCI, Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, maintained that bilateral trade volume between the two countries remained below \$800 million in 2023 - 24; which in no manner reflects any semblance to the real potential of the combined populations of Pakistan and Bangladesh; i.e. more than 450 million. The minimum we should aim for in next couple of years is \$ 2 - 3 billion; and, that is why the two government should negotiate and sign an FTA or a PTA, he added.

At DCCI, Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, stressed that joint ventures, industrial collaborations, bilateral investments; single-country exhibitions and regular exchange of multi-sectoral trade delegations are a must to foster trade and

economic relations. He expressed his pleasure at large import orders for sugar and raw fabric from Bangladesh.

Syed Ahmed Maroof, High Commissioner of Pakistan in Bangladesh, gathered top businessmen, industrialists and social elite of Bangladesh at a dinner hosted by him in the honor of the visiting delegation to create a conducive networking opportunity to forge new trade and corporate allowances.

Sheikh Bashiruddin, Commerce Advisor of the Interim Government of Bangladesh, also graced the occasion - and, reiterated that the government is willing to give preferential treatment to Pakistani exporters and Pakistani products.

At conclusion of the visit, Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh termed the environment as the dawn of a new era of cooperation, economic growth and prosperity for the two countries.

Main purpose of Lionism is only to serve the people: Chaudhry Altaf

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Altaf Shahid, Chairperson of Lions Club International District 305 N-1 Zone Mix B. While the special guest was Dr. Nisar Ahmed Chaudhry, First Vice District Governor, Lions Clubs International Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by the office bearers of the zone, former head of Lions Clubs International Pakistan, Muhammad Afzal Sipra, Fahim Sattar Sheikh, Usman Khan, Muhammad Hamza Sipra, Rao Jamshed Ali, Khalil-ur-Rehman, Dr. Zarina Ashraf, Muhammad Arsalan Alvi, Sohaib, Muhammad Huzaifa, Sawira, Manahil, Navera Ayub, Omar Rehman. While the special guest, Dr. Nisar Chaudhry, said that the main purpose of Lionism is only to serve the people, so to make this movement more effective and strong, we have to focus on quality membership. In



this regard, the membership of Lions Clubs should be increased.

The new members who have joined the Lions Clubs, by utilizing their skills, individually and collec-

tively, will contribute their energies to various projects for the betterment of the society and the upliftment of the deprived sections.

Chairperson of Zone Mix B,

Chaudhry Altaf Shahid, said that global environmental issues like desertification, deforestation, and expansion of urban areas are putting the earth in trouble.

SCO Establishes First-Ever Freelancing Hub of Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Commerce Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: Special Communications Organization (SCO) has taken a pioneering step in empowering differently abled individuals by launching its first-ever Freelancing Hub for Differently abled persons at Noble Foundation in Muzaffarabad. This groundbreaking initiative, inaugurated by Major General Umar Ahmad Shah, HI (M), Director General SCO, marks a significant milestone in promoting inclusivity and providing equal opportunities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K).

The Freelancing Hub is specifically designed to promote skill development and entrepreneurship among differently abled youth. It



features 15 state-of-the-art computer systems with high-speed internet and 24/7 power backup, providing a

professional, uninterrupted environment. The hub also offers specialized training programs to equip users with

essential skills for the digital economy.

During the inauguration, DG SCO Major General

Umar Ahmad Shah HI(M) emphasized SCO's dedication to building a robust digital ecosystem in AJ&K and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), in line with SCO Vision 2025. He stated, "This Freelancing Hub is not just about technology; it's about breaking barriers and creating opportunities for differently abled community. SCO is committed to promoting inclusivity, empowering individuals, and enabling them to make valuable contributions to the economy." He also highlighted the organization's ongoing support for the exceptional children at the Independent Living Center (ILC) in Gilgit-Baltistan, where SCO has fostered an inclusive environment that nurtures and empowers these remarkable individuals.

A special prayer held for the repose of the soul of Shujaat Ali



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A special prayer was held at Rawalpindi Press Club for the repose of the soul of Chairman All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation Shujaat Ali (deceased) under the supervision of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation President Asma Ismail Butt. Where special arrangements were made for reciting the Quran and praying for late Shujaat Ali. Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Youth Wing District President Naeem Gul Pasha Mrs. Mumtaz Malik, including A large number of artists, journalists, political and social figures attended.

On this occasion, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) central leader and Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed highly appreciated the services rendered by the late Shujaat Ali and President Asma Ismail Butt to the federation and he said that he is with them in the Federation's initiatives for promotion of culture, education and welfare of the young generation between Pakistan and China.

CTD arrested 23 terrorists of banned organizations

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Punjab province foiled a major terrorist plan by arresting 23 terrorists belonging to a banned organization during operations in different areas of Punjab. 7 extremely dangerous terrorists of Fitna-ul-Khawarij arrested from Lahore along with explosives and a map of an important educational institution

According to the spokesperson, CTD Punjab conducted 200 intelligence-based operations in different districts of the province to effectively deal with any untoward incident of terrorism, in which 200 suspects were questioned and 23 terrorists were arrested along with weapons, explosives and other prohibited materials.

The arrested terrorists include Abdul Razaq, Muhammad Ismail, Wajahat Ali, Yousuf Raza, Nazrullah, Abu Bakr, Tariq, Naseem Zaban, Shahid, etc. He added that the terrorists are affiliated with Fitna Khawarij and other organizations.

He said that these terrorists were arrested during intelligence-based operations in Lahore, Jhelum, Sialkot, Rawalpindi, Gujarat, Mianwali, Sardogha, and Faisalabad.

Explosives 15491 grams, Detonators 4, Safety fuse wire 74 feet, IED bombs 4, Pamphlets of banned organization 75, Magazine.36110 rupees cash Have been recovered from the possession of terrorists

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,495.70	114,804.16
Day's High	Day's Low
115,773.39	114,298.29
Index Value	Change
24,081,522,941	-308.46
Percentage	Time
-0.27%	15 Jan, 2025 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,301.13	+99.59
Percentage	Time
+ 1.21%	15 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
43,136.91	+618.63
Percentage	Time
+ 1.45%	15 Jan, 12:07 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,444.58	-29.72
Percentage	Time
-0.077%	15 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	173.50	175.75
Bahrain Dinar	738.60	746.60
Canadian Dollar	195.35	197.75
China Yuan	37.97	38.37
Danish Krone	37.76	38.16
Euro	287.75	290.50
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	74.10	74.65
Singapore Dollar	204.5	206.50
Swedish Korona	24.76	25.06
Swiss Franc	303.71	306.51
Thai Bhat	7.87	8.02
U.A.E Dirham	75.75	76.40
UK Pound Sterling	341.50	345
US Dollar	279.20	280.70

Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary appointed CEO of Mobilink Bank

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Mobilink Bank has announced the appointment of Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary as the new Chief Executive Officer of Mobilink Bank, marking a significant milestone in the Bank's mission to drive financial inclusion, digital banking, and innovation.

"Haaris has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, strategic foresight, and a deep commitment to Mobilink Bank's values," said Aamir Ibrahim, Chairman of Mobilink Bank and CEO of Jazz. "I am confident that under his guidance, Mobilink Bank will continue to empower

millions of Pakistanis with cutting-edge digital financial solutions, expand digital banking services, and solidify its position as a leader in the financial services sector."

Haaris joined Mobilink Bank as Chief Operating Officer in 2023 and served as Interim CEO, where he played a pivotal role in driving strategic initiatives, including securing VEON's \$15 million investment as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for Pakistan to accelerate financial inclusion. During his tenure, the Bank achieved notable milestones, such as being named the Best Microfinance Bank at the Pakistan Banking Awards 2024 and topping the State Bank of Paki-

stan's Banking on Equality Scorecard for two consecutive years.

With over two decades of leadership experience, Haaris has worked with organizations such as the Universal Service Fund (USF) Pakistan, Citibank New York, Barclays Capital Dubai, Clariden Leu Asset Management (part of Credit Suisse) Dubai, and ABN AMRO Pakistan. His diverse expertise strengthens Mobilink Bank's leadership as it continues its journey to expand digital banking, support a cashless and digital economy, and grow digital services through platforms like JazzCash.

"As a future-ready digital bank, Mobilink Bank remains steadfast



in its mission to provide innovative, customer-centric solutions," Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary commented. "I am excited to lead this exceptional team and further strengthen our position as a market leader. Together, we will continue to drive inclusive economic growth, support a cashless economy, and redefine digital financial services for millions across Pakistan."

Zong 4G partnered with Park View City

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Huo Junli, Chairman & CEO of Zong and Mr. Omer Farooq Manan, CEO of Park View City inked for provide seamless connectivity to residents & advanced connectivity solutions to businesses.



Photo: Spokesman

Shell Pakistan Limited renamed Wafi Energy Pakistan Limited

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Shell Pakistan Limited has officially changed its name to 'Wafi Energy Pakistan Limited', effective January 13, 2025. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has approved the Company's name change request and has issued an updated Certificate of Incorporation reflecting the new name.

The Shell brand will remain in Pakistan through retail and brand licensing agreements, with Wafi Energy as the exclusive brand



licensee. Wafi Energy, an established Saudi company and affiliate of the Asyad Group, now holds approximately 87.78% of the total issued share capital of the organization.

SECP Seeks Stakeholder Consultation on Cost Audit Regime in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has published a consultation paper on the Cost Audit Regime in Pakistan. This paper aims to assess the effectiveness of the Companies (Maintenance and Audit of Cost Accounts) Regulations, 2020, and explore potential improvements in light of prevailing practices and industry needs.

The consultation paper highlights the role of cost audits in enhancing transparency, operational efficiency, and accountability within the corporate sector. It reviews the existing regulatory



framework, international practices, and the current use of cost audit reports in Pakistan. The paper also outlines several key considerations and poses

targeted questions to stakeholders for feedback.

Currently, Cost Audit requirement is limited to only 5 industries, the stakeholder consultation seeks feedback on expansion or restriction to specific industries, challenges and potential solutions, implementation of cost accounting standards and audit framework, as well as public disclosure or confidentiality of cost audit reports.

The SECP invites all stakeholders, industry experts, and relevant parties to share their valuable feedback and recommendations. Responses can be submitted via email to fozia.perveen@secp.gov.pk by 31st January 2025.

Shocking Smartphone Market Trends in Pakistan: Who was Leading in 2024?

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The latest report from StatCounter Global Stats highlights the market share of leading smartphone brands in Pakistan for the period 2023-2024, shedding light on consumer preferences and the competitive dynamics among manufacturers. While the market remains highly competitive, Infinix has managed to stand out by capturing the largest share in Pakistan. This success is driven by Infinix's focus on delivering innovative features, cutting-edge technology, and stylish designs that resonate with modern consumers. Coupled with impactful



marketing campaigns and a strong retail presence, Infinix has consistently positioned itself as the brand of choice for those seeking premium smartphone experiences. Infinix leads the market with

a share of 16.53%, reflecting its strong resonance with local consumers. The brand has focused on delivering smartphones packed with features that cater to the needs of a diverse audience. This strategic

approach has enabled Infinix to rise above its competitors and establish itself as the preferred choice for many in Pakistan.

Samsung follows closely with a market share of 15.66%, leveraging its established reputation and a wide range of offerings to maintain a strong foothold. Vivo takes the third spot with 13.46%, demonstrating consistent growth and appeal, while OPPO holds 11.16%, known for its emphasis on camera technology and sleek designs. Tecno and Xiaomi complete the top six, with shares of 10.57% and 9.24%, respectively, each carving their own niches through value-oriented devices.

KE requests November FCA as relief of PKR 4.98 per kWh

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: NEPRA concluded its hearing on K-Electric's petition of provisional monthly fuel charge adjustments (FCA) for November 2024, as a relief of PKR 4.98 per unit. Following the public hearing the regulator will issue a decision clarifying the FCA amount to be passed on to customer bills and the period for which they will be applicable.

It is pertinent to note that this is the third consecutive FCA being passed on as a benefit to KE customers, with September FCA as relief of 0.16 paise, and NEPRA recently passed judgement for October 2024 FCA, indicating a relief of PKR 0.492 per kWh which will be passed on to

customers in their January 2025 bills.

KE has also submitted the required partial load, open cycle and degradation curves along with startup cost for approval and accordingly pending for adjustment, based on NEPRA's decision on the matter of KE's Generation Tariff on October 22, 2024.

Speaking on the electricity supply situation, Muhammad Aamir Ghaziani, CFO K-Electric, reiterated that industries are exempt from loadshedding. Furthermore, 70% of KE's network remains load shed free, and the schedule is uploaded on KE website. In winters, scheduled preventative maintenance shutdowns are essential for the upkeep of the network for continued reliable supply of power.

Central Asian States need trade with Pakistan



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan's strategic geographical position offers a vital gateway to landlocked Central Asian states, a cost-effective and strategically advantageous trading partner for Pakistan.

Speaking to a delegation of Pak exporters Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq here Wednesday said the trade potential between these regions, requires overcoming policy, technical, and regional challenges through collaboration and visionary strategies. He said that this strategic advantage provides Pakistan an unparalleled opportunity to become a hub of regional connectivity. "To realise this potential, there is a need for not just visionary strategies but consistent policy implementation and proactive regional collaboration as well. Comprehensive integration strategies and foresight are essential to achieve meaningful regional connectivity and national benefit," he said.

He underscored that connectivity is the cornerstone of regional integration, where Pakistan's strategic location connects landlocked Central Asian states to global markets. Be that while the trade potential between Pakistan and Central Asian countries is immense, achieving this requires overcoming a multitude of challenges. In addition to exploring routes, it is important to ensure policy implementation and translate agreements into action.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq highlighted Pakistan's efforts following the disintegration of the USSR to strengthen these ties, referencing initiatives such as TAPI, CASA-1000, and the Trans-Afghan Railway, he concluded.

Bilateral trade between Pakistan and UAE has potential to triple to the tune of

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Convener Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry regional committee on Food Shahid Imran Wednesday said that bilateral trade between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has the potential to triple to the tune of \$24 billion.

Speaking here today to a delegation of exporters led by Mian Zahid Iqbal Arain he expressed optimism that our exporters can play a more effective role in fostering trade and business ties between Pakistan and the UAE. It is noteworthy that the current bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and the UAE stands at approximately \$8 billion. He emphasised that future

trade between the two nations would be aligned with modern economic demands, giving startups a significant and central role in this endeavour. He called for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to enhance trade between Pakistan and the UAE.

Shahid Imran highlighted that such agreement could reduce tariffs on Made-in-Pakistan products and boost Pakistani exports. He stressed the need for organising series of informative awareness sessions in Dubai for Pakistani entrepreneurs.

These sessions must aim to educate business owners about the tax system and provide guidance for those planning to start new ventures, he concluded.

We will try to give our best performance against West Indies cricket series: Spinner Noman Ali

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistani left-arm spinner Noman Ali says we will try to give his best performance against West Indies Cricket Series. The management's decision in South Africa has had positive effects.

The training sessions of Pakistan and West Indies cricket teams will be held at Multan Cricket Stadium on Wednesday and tomorrow, Thursday, January 16. The trophy will be unveiled along with the captains' press conference.

Both teams participated in batting, bowling and fielding sessions under the supervision of coaches.

The first match of the two-Test series between Pakistan and West Indies will be played at Multan Cricket Stadium from January 17.

Talking to reporters at Multan Stadium, the spinner said that he will try to repeat his previous performance. The preparation is very good and the performance in the previous match

was also very good. The management's decision in South Africa improved the situation and led to success. Similarly, this time too, we will try to give a better performance. There was a lot of spin situation here in the last series against England, and this time too, we will try to perform well. My fitness is better, and it has already improved a lot. He appreciated the appointment of Abdul Rahman and said that Rahman Bhai has a lot of experience in first-class, we will try to benefit from him. "The pacers we have, their performance is very impressive. Only when the match starts and the ball falls, will we know how we perform for the team's victory. This is the last series of the Test Championship and we will try to give better performances in the series ahead.

West Indies head coach claims that it is time to show what they have learned in 2024, I am happy that security is good and the pitches are also safe

West Indies cricket team head coach Andre Cooley, while talking to the



media at the Multan Cricket Stadium, said that "Our plan regarding scores is very clear. "We have learned a lot since 2024, and during this time we have seen both good and bad performances. Now it is time to show the world what we have learned. Andre Cooley also emphasized that "I am always learning as a coach." "How much the target is to be given, this can be known only on the day of the game. I prefer to live in the present situation rather than the past." Expressing satisfaction over the security situation in Pakistan, he said, "The pitches here are safe, and all institutions are providing the best security.

Match officials have been announced for the two-Test series between Pakistan and the West Indies.

Sri Lanka's Ranjan Madugalle, a member of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, will lead the playing control teams for these two Test matches of the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25.

Both Tests will be played in Multan from January 17 to 29.

RWFL: Empowering Pakistan's youth through combat sports

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Real World Fight League (RWFL), Pakistan's premier white-collar fighting platform, hosted electrifying combat competitions at Brave Gym at Lahore. The event brought together young adults from the nation's leading schools and universities, inspiring participants to build resilience, confidence, and life skills through combat sports.

RWFL Co-founder Qaim Abbas, a student of University of Debrecen Hungary, highlighted the league's mission. "Real World is South Asia's largest Gen Z movement, providing an accessible platform for kids and adults to train in combat sports. It equips them with skills and a mindset to conquer life's challenges, improving both physical fitness and mental health. This is for everyone."

Former participant and med school graduate Sameer Mahmood, a graduate from King Edward Medical University, shared his journey of transformation: "Real World taught me to overcome challenges both in and out of the ring. From losing my first fight to becoming a champion, I've learned grit, resilience, and hard work. Combat sports have also strengthened me academically and physically, helping me face life's hurdles with a



solid mindset."

Adil Azhar, from LUMS, praised RWFL for breaking stigmas around MMA. "The league has made MMA accessible for recreation, offering a safe and inspiring environment where participants grow in confidence and embrace empowerment. It's about far more than fighting—it's about personal development."

Speaking to the media, Pakistan MMA

Federation President Omar Ahmed drew parallels with cricket's evolution. "Just as tape-ball cricket popularized the sport, RWFL serves as an entry point for MMA enthusiasts. It transforms perceptions, promoting MMA as a tool for physical and mental growth rather than a violent endeavor. This grassroots initiative ensures that MMA thrives as a sport for all."

He said we are breaking barriers and positioning MMA as a sport that fosters character development, mental resilience, and leadership skills.

"Our vision is to create a lasting legacy for combat sports in Pakistan and our aim to this dual focus allows us to inspire individuals to realize their potential both in and out of the ring," Omar Ahmed concluded.

Team to stay focused as per strategies, says Andre Coley

Sports Desk

MULTAN: As the West Indies cricket team prepares to face Pakistan in the highly-anticipated Test series at Multan Cricket Stadium, Head Coach Andre Coley, shared his thoughts on the team's strategy, lessons from the past and the overall environment in Multan.

Talking to the media at Multan Cricket Stadium on Wednesday, Andre Coley said the team's clarity in planning, particularly when it comes to setting targets during the match. "Our plan regarding scores was clear, but the actual target can only be determined on the game day itself," he explained.

He highlighted the importance of adaptability and staying focused on the present rather than dwelling on past performances. Talking about team's journey, Coley admitted that the year 2024 brought a mix of successes and challenges for the West Indies. "We have learned a great deal from last year, both from our good performances and the areas where we fell short," he said.

He said that every experience has contributed to the team's growth and



he remains committed to continuous learning as a coach. "As a coach, my

learning never stops he said and added that each matches and every situation

provide valuable lessons".

Coley expressed confidence in the arrangements and conditions in Multan, describing the pitches as "safe and conducive for good cricket." He also commended the efforts of local authorities and security teams for ensuring a safe and comfortable environment for the players and staff. Looking ahead to the series, Coley reiterated his preference for staying grounded in the present. "I prefer to focus on the current situation rather than the past adding, every match was a new opportunity, where our focus lies,"

The West Indies team, under Coley's leadership, was gearing up to take on Pakistan in what promises to be an exciting Test series.

With lessons from 2024 and a clear focus on execution, the team was determined to make an impact and challenge the hosts in their own backyard. As the cricketing world turns its attention to Multan, fans can expect a thrilling contest between two competitive sides, both eager to showcase their skills and secure victory in the Test Championship.

Match officials announced for Test Series Pakistan vs West Indies

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Sri Lanka's Ranjan Madugalle, who is a member of ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, will lead the playing control teams for the two ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 fixtures between hosts Pakistan and West Indies.

The two Tests are set to be played in Multan from 17-29 January. For the first Test, Australia's Rodney Tucker and England's Richard Kettleborough – both ICC Elite Panel Umpires, will be the on-field umpires. Paul Reiffel, also from Australia and member of ICC Elite Panel of Umpires will be the third umpire, while Pakistan's Faisal Khan Aafreedi – an ICC International Panel Umpire, will act as the fourth umpire.

In the second Test, starting from Saturday, 25 January, Paul Reiffel will join Rodney Tucker to perform the on-field duties while Richard Kettleborough will be the third umpire, Pakistan's Rashid Riaz Waqar, part of the ICC International Panel of Umpires will be the fourth umpire.

Exciting competitions of Karakoram Winterlude Season Seven continue in Hunza



Sports Desk

GILGIT: The ice hockey matches of Karakoram Winterlude Season Seven being held at the scenic tourist destination of Hunza in Gilgit-Baltistan, have become a center of attraction for spectators. On the third day of the event, two matches were played, delighting sports enthusiasts.

In the first match the Old Hunza team displayed an impressive performance, defeating the Serena team by 2 goals to 1. The second match, played between the women's teams of Allied Bank and HBL, ended in a goalless draw.

The upcoming stages of the event include more thrilling activities such as ice climbing in Khayber Gojal, mountain cycling at the famous tourist spot Duikar, and glacier hiking in Passu Gojal.

The vibrant competitions of Karakoram Winterlude are providing a memorable experience not only for the players but also for the spectators. Both tourists and locals are thoroughly enjoying the activities.

Ticket prices for ICC Champions Trophy 2025 unveiled: sources

LAHORE: The ticket prices for the Pakistan leg of the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025 have been finalised, ARY News reported on Wednesday, citing sources.

According to reliable sources, ticket prices for the Champions Trophy 2025 matches in Pakistan will range from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 25,000.

The chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has finalized this pricing structure, balancing affordability for fans with premium seating options for those looking for a more exclusive experience.

After extensive discussions, the final ticket prices have been locked in, with variations across the three host cities—Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi—based on venues and seating categories.

The minimum prices of the tickets start at just Rs. 1,000, while the top-tier VIP and hospitality packages go up to Rs. 25,000.

Fans can choose from several categories, including General Enclosure, First Class, Premium, VIP, and VVIP. Semi-final tickets, expected to be in high demand, will have a higher base price, starting at Rs. 2,500.

It's worth noting that the ninth edition of the ICC Champions Trophy will kick off on 19 February with host and defending champions Pakistan taking on New Zealand in the curtain-raiser in Karachi's National Bank Stadium.

The eight-team tournament will consist of 15 matches over 19 days and will take place in Pakistan and Dubai.

In Pakistan, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will be the three venues to host tournament play. Each Pakistan venue will feature three group games apiece, with Lahore hosting the second semi-final. Lahore will also host the final on 9 March, unless India qualify, in which case it will be played in Dubai. Both the semi-finals and the final will have reserve days. The three group matches involving India, as well as the first semi-final, will be played in Dubai.

Theekshana attains career-best third position in ICC Men's ODI Bowling Rankings

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sri Lanka spinner Maheesh Theekshana has attained a career-best third position in the ICC Men's ODI Bowling Rankings after grabbing seven wickets in the last two matches of their three-ODI series against New Zealand that the home side won 2-1.

Theekshana gained four slots after finishing with four for 44 in the second match in Hamilton that New Zealand won by 113 runs and three for 35 in the third match in Auckland that Sri Lanka won by 140 runs.



Theekshana's 663 rating points are just six less than top-ranked Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan (669) in a pack of four at the top who are within seven points of each other. Indian Kuldeep Yadav is second with 665 points while Pakistan's Shaheen Shah Afridi follows the three spinners with 662 points.

New Zealand seam bowler Matt Henry returns to the top 10 after winning the Player of the Series award for taking nine wickets in the series while left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner is up two places to

15th with three wickets in the last two matches.

Sri Lanka fast bowler Asitha Fernando's Player of the Match effort of three for 26 in the final match has lifted him into the top 100.

In the Men's ODI Batting Rankings, left-hander Rachin Ravindra of New Zealand is up 11 places to 39th after scoring 79 in the second match and Janith Liyanage has progressed 11 places to 57th after getting a half-century in the final match. New Zealand's Mark Chapman moves into the top 100 after scores of 62 and 81.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah called on the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, on Wednesday. He was accompanied by MNA Syed Naveed Qamar as well as Sindh Planning Minister, Chief Secretary Sindh, Chairman P&D Sindh and Finance Secretary Sindh.



Photo: PID

DPM/FM Dar assures Sindh CM of federal govt's commitment to ensure release of funds

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday assured Sindh Chief Minister of the Federal Government's commitment to ensure full and timely release of funds for all the approved projects in the province.

Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah called on

the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister in his office. He was accompanied by MNA, Syed Naveed Qamar as well as Sindh planning minister, chief secretary Sindh, chairman P&D Sindh and finance secretary Sindh.

The meeting was also attended by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb as well as secretaries of relevant federal divisions, Office of the

DPM said in a press release.

DPM/FM Dar assures Sindh CM of federal govt's commitment to ensure release of funds DPM/FM Dar assures Sindh CM of federal govt's commitment to ensure release of funds DPM/FM Dar assures Sindh CM of federal govt's commitment to ensure release of funds

During the meeting, they reviewed in detail the ongoing

development projects included in Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) of Sindh.

The meeting also deliberated upon the issues related to allocations, implementation and approvals of the reviewed projects, particularly pertaining to road connectivity, water storage, schools infrastructure and housing.

They discussed in detail the approval and implemen-

tation status of such projects and agreed that timely completion of projects within approved cost was imperative for the development of Sindh province and the betterment of the population.

The DPM/FM further assured that any increase in the cost of ongoing projects would be expeditiously considered by CDWP and ECNEC for decision.

Chairperson BISP Senator Rubina Khalid visits ZABTech in Azam Town Karachi

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

KARACHI: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid today visited the ZABTech office in Azam Town Karachi. Executive Director of ZABTech Waheeda Mahesar and staff welcomed the Chairperson BISP on her arrival.

During the visit, Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized on providing technical and vocational skills training to deserving women and their children. She said that we want to empower the poor and backward classes economically through skill training so that not only there is significant development in the country's industry and crafts but also skilled youth can get job opportunities at home and abroad.

Senator Rubina Khalid, while interacting with the



students undergoing training in beautician, fashion designing, culinary art, kitchen making, industrial stitching, welding, and electrician courses, said that we hope that you will start your

own business by getting education in various technical and artistic skills and improve the economic conditions of your families.

Chairperson BISP further said that Shaheed Benazir

Bhutto had said that skill is your capital which no one can take away from you. Therefore, we have to equip our people with modern technical skills. She stressed the importance of introducing innovations in the

sectors related to the fashion industry and producing products according to the requirements of the market. She also proposed to adopt innovation by inviting various dress designers in the country to improve the boutique industry.

Executive Director ZABTech Waheeda Mahesar, while informing the Chairperson BISP about the various programs being conducted in the institution, said that ZABTech Azam Town Karachi Center is providing training in 14 different technical and vocational skills to the underprivileged and poor children.

Senator Rubina Khalid said that career counseling sessions should also be started for those who are learning skills in different fields at the ZABTech Center so that those who are getting training from ZABTech can also be assured of employment in the market according to their skills.

Imran Riaz, Gill booked in Maryam-UAE president's fake picture case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) nominated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shahbaz Gill and journalist Imran Riaz Khan in a case pertaining AI-generated social media content involving Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, citing sources.

According to details, the FIA has already arrested three individuals from Lahore, Muzaffargarh, and Faisalabad for running a social media campaign against the Punjab chief minister and UAE President.

The FIA Cybercrime Wing has also nominated Shahbaz Gul and Imran Riaz in the case, and efforts are being made to arrest them soon.

Pakistan trashes provocative statements by Indian minister, army chief

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly rejected the baseless accusations and unfounded assertions made by Indian defence minister and army chief during the past two days regarding situation in Occupied Kashmir.

In a statement issued in Islamabad on Wednesday, newly-appointed Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafiqat Ali Khan said Jammu and Kashmir remained an internationally-recognized disputed territory, whose final status is to be determined in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Shafiqat Khan said in this context,



India has no legal or moral grounds to assert fictitious claims over the territories of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The FO spokesperson said such rhetoric from Indian leadership cannot divert international attention from the grave human rights

violations and oppressive measures being carried out in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

He said these actions suppress the legitimate and just struggle of the Kashmiri people for their inalienable right to self-determination.

The spokesperson said Pakistan also underscores that provocative statements of this nature are counterproductive to regional peace and stability.

Shafiqat Khan said instead of levelling baseless allegations against others, India must introspect and address its own documented involvement in orchestrating targeted assassinations, acts of subversion, and state-sponsored terrorism in foreign territories.

PM for an active role of all institutions to curb human smuggling



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed all the relevant institutions to play an active role in curbing human smuggling and take strict legal action against the perpetrators defaming the country through their heinous business.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the measures against human smuggling, instructed to address the shortage of manpower in the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and ensure effective screening of those traveling abroad at the airports.

The prime minister directed the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to run an awareness campaign on illegal foreign travel and human smuggling. He also called for seeking Interpol's support for the extradition of most wanted criminals involved in human smuggling.

During the briefing, the prime minister was told that several human smugglers had been arrested from June 2023 to December 2024. Many government officials have been dismissed for facilitating the crime while several others face disciplinary proceedings.

The prime minister was apprised of the punitive measures being taken against the government officials involved in human smuggling. Besides the assets of human smugglers worth Rs500 million had been confiscated and a process was underway for more such confiscations.

It was also told that special prosecutors had been appointed to prosecute the human smugglers.

Federal Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

AJK PM, president concerned at worsening political, HR situation in IIOJ&K



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President Azad Kashmir President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry and Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq held a detailed one on one meeting here today.

During the meeting the duo discussed in detail the issues of mutual concern and prevailing political and human rights situation in Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Voicing their grave concern over the continued blood-

shed and state repression in the held territory, they said that India was violating human rights on a large scale in occupied Kashmir. They reiterated the government's resolve to promote Kashmir cause globally and expose Indian barbarism and brutalities in the occupied territory.

The AJK president Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry stressed on intensifying efforts to establish good governance in Azad Kashmir to usher a new era of prosperity and development and improve lives of a common people.

PTI seeks appointment of new chief election commissioner

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PTI-backed Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omer Ayub Khan and Senate Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz have written letters to Speaker Ayaz Sadiq and Chairman Yousaf Raza Gilani, respectively, calling for swift action on the appointment of a new Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), as well as members from Sindh and Balochistan.

According to the 24NewsHD TV channel, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed opposition leader Omer Ayub stated in his letter to the NA Speaker that under the Constitution, Sikandar Sultan Raja's tenure as CEC will end on January 26.

Omar Ayub Khan urged the formation of a parliamentary committee of the National Assembly to initiate the appointment process for a new CEC.

In his letter, Omer Ayub highlighted that the parliamentary committee is essential to proceeding with the selection of the next election commissioner.

Separately, Senate Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz addressed a letter to the Senate Chairman, also



emphasising the need for forming a parliamentary committee to handle the matter of appointing new CEC and Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) members for Sindh and Balochistan.

Senator Shibli Faraz stated in his letter that under Article 215 of the Constitution of Pakistan, Sikandar Sultan Raja's term as CEC will conclude on January 26.

Shibli added that the Sindh and Balochistan members of the Election Commission are also set to retire on the same date, necessitating the fulfillment of constitutional requirements under Article 213 by forming a parliamentary committee.