

Daily The Spokesman

RAWALPINDI



Choudhary Rahmat Ali's death anniversary observed

Choudhary Rahmat Ali, the man who created the word "Pakistan" and made the demand for Pakistan. Choudhary Rahmat Ali had floated the idea of a free Muslim state in Basm-e-Shibli in 1915. In his popular magazine "Now or Never", he made the demand for Pakistan in 1933. Later, he floated the ideas of other Muslim states.



TikTok king Khaby Lame joins UNICEF as goodwill ambassador

The 24-year-old holds the top spot on the TikTok app, with 162.8 million followers, and has risen to fame for his short silent videos mocking the convoluted tutorials of tips that abound on the internet. Lame's punctuates his videos with his trademark gesture -- palms turned towards the sky, accompanied by a knowing smile and wide eyes -- as he offers his own simple remedies.

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Anti-polio Campaign 2025

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif administers polio vaccine to children at the inaugural ceremony of the National Polio Campaign 2025, on Sunday.



Photo: PID

PM launches anti-polio drive for year 2025; vows to eradicate polio

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday launched a nationwide anti-polio campaign for the year 2025 (Feb 3-9) by administering polio drops to children under the age of five.

Addressing the launching ceremony, the prime minister reaffirmed his government's determination to eliminate the polio disease from Pakistan.

He said that the national polio vaccination drive would target millions of children in the country to save their future and health.

He hoped that the dedicated teams would work day and night to eradicate the disease, and would reach the far-flung areas and villages, adding these teams would successfully meet the huge national responsibility by utilizing their

complete energies.

The prime minister said that unfortunately, during the last year, a total of 77 polio cases were reported in the country which emerged as a huge challenge, besides posing a setback.

This year, only one case was reported, he said, and expressed the resolve to eradicate polio at all costs; with dedicated team work and support from the international partners.

The prime minister also expressed the hope that with international coordination and support, the crippling disease in the neighbouring brotherly country Afghanistan would end.

He appreciated all the international partners including WHO, UNICEF, Bill Gates Foundation and the brotherly country Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their commitment and efforts to the government in its efforts to eliminate

polio.

Speaking on the occasion, PM Coordinator on National Health Services Dr Mukhtar Bharat said that they had highlighted the number of polio cases which were reported last year and did not hide it from the international community.

He said that positive outcome was being felt with concerted efforts by all the quarters and only one case was reported this year.

He also appreciated the prime minister for his supervision without which they would not be able to get the desired results.

PM's Focal Person on Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq said that the polio vaccination was a public campaign in which all segments of society have to take part and urged the parents to coordinate and save their children from polio.

Transfer of three high court judges to IHC notified

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The government on Sunday notified the transfer of three high court judges to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) following the approval of President Asif Ali Zardari.

As per the notification, Justice Sarfaraz Muhammad Dogar of the Lahore High Court (LHC) was transferred to the Islamabad High Court (IHC), Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro was transferred from the Sindh High Court (SHC) to the IHC and Justice Muhammad Asif was transferred from the Balochistan High Court (BHC) to the IHC.

On Saturday, three judges from different high courts of the country were transferred to the IHC amid speculations that the capital court's next chief justice would be a "transferred judge".

Now Justice Dogar will be the senior-most judge in the IHC after Chief Justice Amir Farooq.

Justice Muhammad Asif, who came from the Balochistan High Court, had become an additional judge recently, while Justice Soomro, a judge of the Sindh High Court, had become a judge of the high court two years ago.

The development came a day after five IHC judges expressed their concern over media reports claiming that a "transferred judge" would be considered for the capital high court's top slot.

The letter, signed by Justices Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Babar Sattar, Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan and Saman Rafat Imtiaz, was addressed to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi, IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, LHC Chief Justice Aalia Neelum and SHC Chief Justice Mohammad Shafi Siddiqui.

Iran unveils new ballistic missile called Etemad



IRNA

TEHRAN: Iran has unveiled a new ballistic missile named Etemad, meaning "trust" in Persian, capable of traveling 1,700 kilometers.

The missile was unveiled during a ceremony in Tehran on Sunday, attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Etemad is the latest ballistic missile developed by the Iranian Defense Ministry. It measures 16 meters in length and has a diameter of 1.25 meters. It has a guided warhead that can steer the missile until impact.

In a televised address, President Pezeshkian hailed Iran's defense capabilities, saying the country's military power is intended for self-defense and poses no threat to other nations.

"The development of Iran's defense and space capabilities is not for waging war or invading [any country], but for deterrence, and to ensure that no country dares to invade Iranian territory," he told reporters.

Iran says its ballistic missiles are an important deterrent against the United States and Israel, and that its missile program is non-negotiable.

Mohsin Naqvi commends NA speaker's role for govt-PTI talks

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday praised National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his efforts to bring the government and the PTI closer to each other through dialogue.

Talking to the speaker in Lahore, the minister said that Ayaz's efforts to bring both sides to the negotiating table were praiseworthy.

Matters of mutual interest and the country's overall situation came under discussion at the meeting.

There was also an exchange of views over the PTI's decision to boycott the talks.

Both expressed satisfaction over the improving economic situation of the country.

Likewise, the steps taken by the government for the resolution of the people's issues were also discussed.

Pakistan has always progressed in PML-N govt: Atta Tarar

City Desk

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has said that Pakistan's economy is improving, emerging from the risk of default, and moving towards development.

Addressing workers in his constituency, he said Pinky Gogi and the Captain looted Pakistan and fabricated false narratives when held accountable. He assured that promises made during the 22-day campaign would be fulfilled, highlighting improvements in the country's economic situation, declining inflation, and the Prime Minister's efforts to drive development. Positive economic news continues to emerge, he added.

Tarar said that Pinky Gogi and the Captain harmed Pakistan and resorted to religious narratives when the Al-Qadir case verdict was announced. However, he said, with their influence gone, the country is back on the path to progress.

قدرت نے ذائقہ دیا احمد نے محفوظ کیا!

Four-week training program concluded at Women University Multan

Quratul Ain

MULTAN: A four-week training program titled as "National Outreach Program of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in collaboration with Women University Multan and National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) has concluded at Women University Multan.

According to the spokesperson, this program was funded by the National Academy of Higher Education, a subsidiary of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The aim of this program is to promote training of teachers on modern lines and raise the standard of education so that they can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

The chief guest of the closing ceremony was Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Kalsoom Pracha, while the special guest was Managing Director National Academy of Higher Education Dr. Noor Amna Malik.

Vice Chancellor, while addressing the gathering, said that such policies and measures of HEC are commendable which are contributing to various



sustainable development goals.

She said HEC and NAHE should prioritize UGs in future, which are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote world-class educational practices. She directed the training course participants to utilize this opportunity for networking, exchange ideas, and adopt modern practices in their respective fields. VC, Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha applauded NAHE and her team for their dedication and efforts, which were instrumental in the program's

success.

She emphasized on the promotion of a learning-based environment and advised participants to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) The focal person, Registrar Prof. Dr. Mamoona Khan, said that this initiative of HEC is commendable and will yield far-reaching results.

This program aimed to equip faculty members with the skills to serve as Trainers of Trainers (TOT), enabling them to enhance their roles as professional educators and trainers across

Pakistan. The faculty has learned a lot from this workshop that will serve the university.

During the closing ceremony, participants shared their feedback, highlighting the program's effectiveness in promoting professional development. At the end of the ceremony, the chief guest Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha and Dr. Noor Amna Malik distributed certificates among the participants of the training program. The participants of NFC University also attended the ceremony.

Thousands March against corporate land grabs and water theft

Qayoom Sarohi

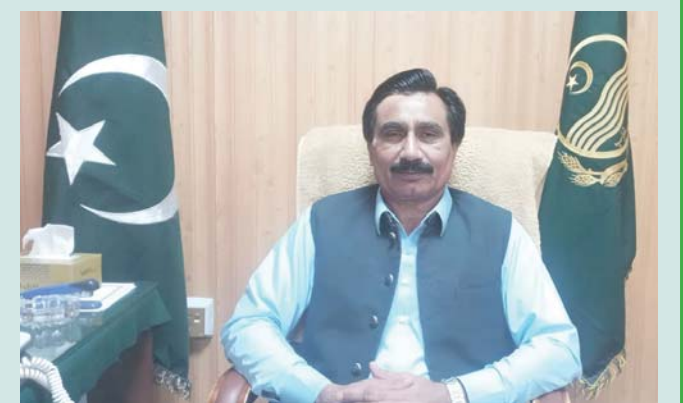
MALIR: Thousands marched with Awami Tehreek Malir from Ghaghar Phattak to Gulshan-e-Hadeed, condemning the PPP-led government's betrayal of Sindh through corporate land grabs, the construction of new canals on the Indus River, and the federalization of historic heritages and wetlands. Protesters under Banner of Short March accused the government of prioritizing corporate farming over local communities, threatening the very foundation of Sindh.

Advocate Wasand Thari, Central President declared, "The government's approval of new canals is a death warrant for Sindh. Corporate farming is stealing our land and jeopardizing our future." She vowed to escalate protests if the government continues to ignore these pressing issues.

Advocate Pirh Soomro, District President of Awami Tahreek, emphasised, "The government must revoke decisions like corporate farming and the construction of new canals. These projects are a direct assault on the country, worsening droughts and displacing millions of Sindhi farmers."

Leaders of AT, ST and SST, Advocate Khalid Tunio, Rustam Mirani, Ali Muhammad Kalmati and Naveed Abbas were among participants. Protesters condemned the PPP for amending the IRSA Act to enable the construction of six canals from the Indus River, accusing the government of depriving Sindh of its water supply. "This is an act of terrorism against our people," they stated.

CO Anwar Baig Sial Performance is Commendable: Media Reports



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: According to reports by Media, the Performance of Chief Officer District Council Toba Tek Singh, Mahar Anwar Baig Sial is Commendable. Because Mahar Anwar Baig Sial is honest, good and hardworking officer.

He has taken actions against the Illegal Housing Scheme and Markets of the entire district. Apart from this, Illegal housing society, Commercial Markets and Buildings, which was without a map, he sealed them and received the map fee and submitted it to the Treasury of the Government of Punjab. Which benefited the government of crores of rupees. According to the report, He is an officer who does not compromise in terms of work. It is the good fortune of Toba Tek Singh, who has good officer. He also treats his staff and people coming to the office in a happy manner.

Abro donated a large collection of books to Institute of Sindhology University, Jamshoro

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The son of renowned Sindhi writer, intellectual, judge and fearless journalist Comrade Taj Muhammad Abro, Deputy Director of Anti-Corruption Police Mir Nadir Ali Abro, has donated a large collection of rare books from his father's personal library to the Institute of Sindhology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.

Committed to continuing his father's social and literary mission, Mir Nadir Ali Abro presented these valuable books to the research library of the Institute of Sindhology as a gift. The addition of these books will greatly benefit scholars conducting research at the already established Comrade Taj Muhammad Abro Corner in Sindhology.

Regarding this donation, Mir Nadir Ali Abro stated that special attention is being given to research in the Sindhology research library, where scholars visit to find references for their research papers. This motivated him to donate his father's rare and invaluable books to Sindhology.

He further added that more items belonging to his late father will also be donated to the Comrade Taj Muhammad Abro Corner at Sindhology, along with additional rare books in the future.

Crime review meeting held in Wana, DPO orders crackdown

A-K Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: District Police Officer (DPO) Asif Bahader chaired a crucial crime review meeting with circle officers and station house officers (SHOs) in Wana on Sunday. The meeting focused on reviewing last month's progress and devising strategies to enhance crime control measures in the region.

The DPO emphasized that any increase in criminal activities would be considered negligence and incompetence on the part of the concerned officers. He directed an intensified crackdown on drug dealers, labeling it a top priority. "We will not tolerate any laxity in our efforts to curb crime," the DPO asserted.

The meeting concluded with a firm resolve to continue unbiased operations against criminal elements and dismantle organized gangs operating in the region. The police officers have vowed to work tirelessly to ensure that justice is served and the rule of law is upheld.

Two wanted members of bike lifter gang held in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Kohsar team has arrested two wanted members of a notorious bike lifter gang involved in numerous motorcycle thefts and recovered two stolen motorbikes from their possession on Sunday.

A public relation officer told APP that the Kohsar police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending a wanted member of a notorious bike lifter gang involved in numerous bikes lifting activities in various areas of Kohsar police station.

He said the accused were identified as Sajjad Ali and Shan Ali. Police team also recovered two stolen motorbikes from their possession. The cases have already been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

DIG Muhammad Jawad Tariq also directed officers for an effective crackdown against the accused involved in criminal activities and to take all possible measures to protect the life and property of the citizens.

DIG further said that no criminal element will be allowed to disturb the peace of the people.

Protest

MUZAFFRABAD: Women activists of Jamaat-e-Islami hold placards during Kashmir March protest rally at Azadi Chowk, to showing solidarity with the people of Kashmir.



Photo: Online

PECA Act: A Blow to Free Press and Suppression of Truth: PTI Leader

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Nazish Fatima Bhatti, PTI Sindh's Deputy General Secretary and ticket holder for NA-216 Matiari, presided over an important district meeting at a private hotel. The meeting was attended by Matiari District President Advocate Gulzar Ali Khaskheli, General Secretary Advocate Riaz Ali, Advocate Kashif Abro, Irshad Mughal, and various local office bearers.

Following the meeting, PTI Sindh's



Deputy General Secretary Nazish

Fatima Bhatti and Matiari District President Gulzar Ali Khaskheli spoke to the media, condemning the current government as a "Form 47 product" that has unjustly imprisoned the leader of the Muslim Ummah, Imran Khan, and his wife, Bushra Bibi, by stealing their mandate. In response, as per the directives of PTI Sindh leader Haleem Adil Sheikh, a peaceful protest will be held in Matiari district on February 8.

Speaking on the Sanghar incident, the PTI leaders strongly condemned

PPP leader Shazia Marri's derogatory remarks towards the poor during a protest, emphasizing that every individual, regardless of economic status, deserves respect and the right to live with dignity.

The PTI leaders urged the conscious people of Sindh to join their peaceful protest against oppression and to demand the release of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi, whom they described as the true leaders of the Muslim Ummah.

SSP Operations Peshawar called on senior trader leaders

City Desk

PESHAWAR: A significant meeting was held between SSP Operations Peshawar, Masood Ahmed Bangash, and a delegation led by senior trader leader and social activist, President of All Pakistan Car Dealers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Chairman of Peshawar Chamber Law & Order Committee, Ghulam Bilal Javid. Ghulam Bilal Javid congratulated the newly appointed SSP on his posting in Peshawar and discussed the issues faced by the business community in detail.

During the meeting,



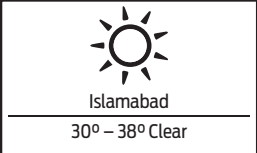
Ghulam Bilal Javid proposed holding a large-scale meeting with the traders of Peshawar

to openly discuss law and order concerns.

The SSP Operations agreed to this proposal and assured that all senior trader representatives would be invited next week.

Taking immediate notice, SSP Operations issued directives to the SHO Hayatabad to take effective measures to curb crime and ensure increased police patrolling in the area.

Other members of the delegation included Vice Chairman of Cantt Board Kohat, Mohsin Atiq Awan, and Senior Vice President of Peshawar Traders Chamber, Abdul Haseeb Chughtai.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:38 am
Zohr	12:21 pm
Asr	4:02 pm
Maghrib	5:40 pm
Isha	7:05 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	92766044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Solving the basic problems of the people, need of the hour: Chaudhry Inam

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Awaam Pakistan Party Central Leader Chaudhry Inam Zafar said that the purpose of our politics is to serve the people. Solving the basic problems of the people is the need of the time. Nothing can be hidden from the people. No political leader can be qualified to be the leader of the Nation, unless he solves the problems of the people on a priority basis. He said this on the occasion of holding an organizational meeting of App. Along with him on this occasion, Samina Shoaib, organizer of Rawalpindi Metropolitan Women's Wing, Zunaira Malik, organizer of Islamabad Wing, Sardar Nazir Ahmed Kashmiri, organizer of Men's Wing Rawalpindi, Sardar Irfan Yusuf, Azhar Ali Qadri, Javed Qureshi, Majeed Abbasi, Daultana Kausar, Maleeha Hussain, Syeda Begum, Razia Sultana, Nadia Iqbal and others were present with them. Chaudhry Inam Zafar sought details from the members regarding membership and the inauguration ceremony of the Public Secretariat.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif introduces Special Projects for Special Children's Welfare

Bureau Report

LAHORE: "Special children are our special heroes," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif while taking stock of different special projects for the welfare of special children. She added, "We will definitely achieve the goal of improving special education centers and systems." She highlighted, "The establishment of Pakistan's first government autism school in Lahore will reduce financial burden on parents." Madam Chief Minister said, "The aim of rehabilitation of special children is to make them useful and productive citizens of the society." She added, "Free treatment of children with autism will be provided in Pakistan's first government autism school, whose construction is in the final stages of completion." She noted, "The autism school project will be completed in a record time period of one year." Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "10 autism units have been established in various special educational institutions of Punjab." She added, "Provision

of special educational facilities, required for children with autism, has begun." She assigned SACM Samia Ashiq to monitor the construction of an autism school project. Madam Chief Minister was briefed by the authorities concerned, "9,206 assistive devices have been provided to the special students. These devices include 7,702 hearing aids, 360 wheelchairs, 300 walkers, 344 crutches and 500 white canes." They also apprised Madam Chief Minister, "35 schools have been upgraded from middle to secondary level, and primary schools have been upgraded to middle level to improve the special education system in Punjab." Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif noted, "586 students from special education centres have been admitted to regular schools." She added, "We are introducing the first-ever grand sports gala for special education students." She flagged, "The construction of 8 new special school buildings has been completed, and approval has been given for the construction of 9 more buildings." She highlighted, "Screening tool has been introduced for the slow learners in special education centers."



Solidarity

ISLAMABAD: A view of panaflex installed on a greenbelt at Constitution Avenue in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day to be held on 5th February all over the World.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Ethiopian Embassy Pavilion attracts impressive influx of visitors at PTM2025

City Desk

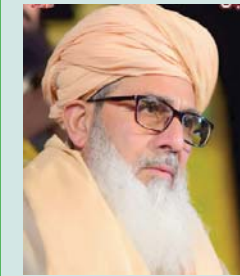
KARACHI: A large number of people of the Islamic Republic have visited the Tourism Pavilion of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) at the three-day Pakistan Travel Mart 2025 which concluded here in Karachi on Sunday. The Ethiopian Embassy pavilion was inaugurated by Minister of Sindh for Culture, Tourism, Antiquities and Archives H. E. Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, while H. E. Muhammad Kamran Tessori has the honor to formally open the Ethiopian traditional coffee ceremony on the occasion. During the three-day PTM, the exquisite tourism and diverse culture of the FDR Ethiopia especially its coffee ceremony remained the center of attraction, attracting the people from all walks of the life including the government officials, Parliamentarians, Ambassadors, Consul Generals, business and religious community, youth, students, media and civil society.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Birth anniversary of Imam Husain (A. S.)

City Desk



RAWALPINDI: Hazrat Imam Husain (A. S.), the Master of Martyrs, is the Sultan of all saints. His blessed birth took place on the 3rd of Sha'ban. Imam Hussain (A. S.) was born in 4 Hijri in Madinah Munawwarah. He was the grandson of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the son of Hazrat Ali Al-Murtaza (Karam Allah Wajhahu) and Hazrat Syeda Fatima Zahra (S. A.), and one of the most honored members of Ahlul Bayt. These thoughts were expressed by Sheikh-ul-Mashaikh Hazrat Khwaja Diwan Syed Aal Habib Ali Khan Madzillah Al-Aali, the Sajjada Nashreen of Ajmer Sharif, while addressing a gathering at the sacred shrine of Gulshan-e-Sultan-ul-Hind Ajmeri. He further stated that expressing joy on the birth of Imam Hussain (A. S.) is the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) has mentioned numerous hadiths about his grandeur and status.

Attock admin ramps up anti encroachment drive across district

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The district administration on the instructions of the provincial government launched a vigorous drive against encroachments across the district in which over one hundred illegally erected structures were demolished by utilizing heavy machinery while over twenty truck loads of encroached material, especially merchandise, were confiscated. This was stated by deputy commissioner Rao Atif Raza while briefing newsmen about the anti encroachment drive launched in all six tehsils of the district Attock on Sunday. He emphasized that the anti-encroachment drive will continue without discrimination until encroachments are completely eliminated. Responding to a question, he said that elimination of encroachments is inevitable in order to remove obstacles in the smooth traffic flow. He maintained that encroachments in most of the places and areas cause traffic congestion. He revealed that next operation would be carried out to retrieve illegally grabbed state land from land grabbers and in this connection all the key points were identified by the official of the revenue department. The DC also urged all relevant agencies to work in coordination for the successful removal of illegal structures and vendors across the city. In Attock city, assistant commissioner Shahgufta Jabeen led the anti encroachment drive launched by officials of municipal committee, district council and Rawalpindi solid waste management. Paved encroachments illegally extended on public paths especially in Meena bazaar, Katchery bazaar and Sarafa bazaar were demolished by utilizing heavy machinery. On this occasion, the anti encroachment staffed by Chief officer Sardar Aftab Ahmed Khan faced tough resistance and clashes between anti encroachment staff and traders were reported. Later after successful negotiation led by additional deputy commissioner Anil Saeed and traders' representatives, the operation was resumed and all extended portions of the shops, markets and makeshift stall were removed without any discrimination.

Int'l conference to address Neglected Tropical Diseases to be held in February

ISLAMABAD: The International Conference on health, titled "Transforming Global Health: Tackling Neglected Diseases Through Training and Research," will be held here from February 17-19.

The conference is being organized by COMSTTECH in collaboration with ICESCO and supported by leading partners including the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases (UK), Centre de Virologie de Maladies Infectieuses et Tropicales (CVMIT), and the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APNA). According to an official of COMSTTECH, the event is aimed at tackling the growing burden of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) through innovative approaches, training, and international collaboration. NTDs, including leishmaniasis, schistosomiasis, and trachoma, disproportionately affect impoverished and marginalized populations, especially in tropical and subtropical regions. These diseases, often overlooked in global health priorities, pose severe health, social, and economic challenges. In South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions, the prevalence of these diseases is exacerbated by overcrowded refugee camps, poor sanitation, water scarcity, urban slums, and underfunded healthcare systems. The conference aims to address these challenges by equipping participants with state-of-the-art tools and methodologies to combat health inequities. The three-day event will feature expert-led panel discussions, hands-on training sessions, and keynote speeches from renowned scientists, healthcare professionals, and policymakers. Fifty participants, including 25 international attendees from North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya) and other ICESCO member states, alongside 25 local participants, will engage in knowledge-sharing sessions.

AEO Study Abroad Expo 2025 Kicks Off Successfully in Lahore

City Desk

LAHORE: AEO Pakistan proudly launched the highly anticipated AEO Study Abroad Expo 2025 today at Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore, marking the beginning of an exciting journey for students aspiring to study at top-ranked international universities. The event witnessed an overwhelming turnout, with large numbers of enthusiastic students and parents engaging with representatives from prestigious institutions across Australia, the UK, the USA, Canada, Malaysia, and the UAE.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

The expo provided a one-stop platform for students to explore study options, scholarships, admission requirements, and visa guidelines directly from university representatives. Attendees had the exclusive opportunity to gain firsthand insights into academic programs, career prospects, and student life abroad. The interactive sessions and personalized counselling proved invaluable for students keen on pursuing higher education globally. Speaking about the success of the event, Mr. Saad Mahmood, Resident Director of AEO Pakistan, stated, "We are thrilled by the incredible response from students and parents. AEO Pakistan has always been committed to guiding students towards world-class educational opportunities, and the AEO Study Abroad Expo serves as the perfect platform to facilitate this journey." For more information about upcoming expo dates and venues, visit www.aeo.com.pk or follow AEO Pakistan's official social media pages.

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Balochistan's War Within: A Nation's Failure or Fate?

The latest ISPR press release, announcing the killing of 23 alleged terrorists and the loss of 18 Frontier Corps personnel, is deeply distressing. These are not just numbers; they represent 41 shattered families, each bearing an unimaginable grief that will last a lifetime. Behind every fallen soldier and every slain insurgent are grieving parents, siblings, spouses, and children, struggling to fill the void left by their loss. What makes this tragedy even more painful is that these lives were lost not in defense against an external enemy but in an internal conflict, one that pits fellow Pakistanis against each other. Every loss on both sides is ultimately a loss for the nation.

For any Pakistani who values human life and dignity, the relentless cycle of violence and extremism is deeply unsettling. This conflict has become an endless spiral of bloodshed, with security forces and alienated Baloch elements locked in a battle that offers no real resolution—only more suffering, more funerals, and more hatred. These individuals, regardless of which side they are on, belong to the same nation. Yet, their deaths only deepen existing divisions rather than resolve the underlying tensions.

There are only two possible paths forward. One is built on peace, respect, and the acknowledgment that these communities have the right to live with dignity, preserving their tribal traditions and culture while being made stakeholders in Pakistan's progress. The other is one of continued repression, subjugation, and state violence, which will only fuel further

bloodshed, deepen resistance, and ultimately undermine national unity. The logical and humane choice is clear: Pakistan must respect the dignity and honor of these communities, recognize their unique identity, and treat them as valuable citizens, not as problems to be "handled."

Every loss in this conflict—whether a Baloch fighter, a civilian, or an army jawan—is a loss for Pakistan. We are not fighting an external enemy; we are fighting our own people.

The grief of a mother in Quetta or Gwadar is no different from that of a mother in Rawalpindi or Lahore. The pain of losing a son, a brother, or a father transcends geography, ethnicity, or political beliefs. Yet, this tragedy unfolds because decision-making has been taken away from genuine civilian leaders—those who understand governance, dialogue, and compromise—and handed over to unaccountable forces whose primary tool is military might. These elements, operating without a public mandate, view every problem through the lens of armed conflict rather than reconciliation. Violence breeds more violence, deepens hatred, and creates generational wounds that may never heal.

For every insurgent killed, more rise in defiance. Why? Because force alone has never been a solution to political grievances. The state must ask itself: why are these young men taking up arms? Why do they feel they have no stake in Pakistan's future? The answer lies in decades of

economic exploitation, political exclusion, and a lack of basic human rights.

Had Pakistan's civilian leadership been genuinely empowered, many peaceful solutions could have been explored. Instead of plundering Balochistan's resources for the benefit of central authorities, the region should be given its fair share of revenue from minerals, gas, and ports. Balochistan contributes over \$1 billion annually in natural gas revenues alone, yet remains Pakistan's most underdeveloped province. Investment in industries, infrastructure, healthcare, and quality education could uplift the region instead of fueling resentment. With over 71% of Balochistan's population living in poverty, these are urgent needs. Empowering local leadership to govern their own affairs, rather than imposing decisions from Islamabad or Rawalpindi, would foster trust and engagement. A structured economic reform to curb smuggling and the illicit arms trade could also weaken extremist factions by cutting off their financial and logistical support.

Nothing radicalizes a population more than the disappearance of its youth. Reports indicate that thousands of Baloch men have vanished, only for their bodies to be found later, igniting further anger. A transparent judicial process, rather than extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances, is the way forward. When people lose faith in the justice system, they

resort to desperate measures. The cycle of oppression and retaliation continues because the state has refused to address grievances through democratic means.

Balochistan does not need more military operations; it needs justice, respect, and development. The only way to win back hearts and minds is to treat the people of Balochistan as equal Pakistanis, with the same rights, opportunities, and representation as any other citizen. Balochistan must not be treated as a colony from which resources are extracted while its people remain impoverished and disenfranchised. The region must be developed with the same urgency and commitment as Punjab or Sindh.

It is time to break this destructive cycle. Pakistan must move beyond a militarized response and address the real, underlying causes of this conflict—political representation, economic equity, and social justice. Only through meaningful dialogue, empowerment, and respect for the dignity of these communities can a sustainable and peaceful resolution be achieved.

This is a moment of reckoning for Pakistan. Will we continue down the path of military oppression and bloodshed, repeating the mistakes of 1971? Or will we finally choose wisdom over force, justice over repression, and dialogue over violence? The choice is ours. The consequences will be ours as well.

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



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

10th International Military Quran Memorization Competition kicks off in Makkah

The 10th International Military Quran Memorization Competition has commenced in Makkah, bringing together 179 participants from 32 countries the other day.

The competition, organized by the General Administration of Religious Affairs of the Armed Forces under the patronage of Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman, aims to promote the significance of the Quran, encourage its memorization, and underscore Saudi Arabia's role as the custodian of Islam's holiest sites.

The event features six categories: full Quran memorization, as well as 20-part, 10-part, five-part, and three-part memorization, along with a special category dedicated to recitation and Tajweed (proper pronunciation).

Alongside the competition, a Quranic forum for religious affairs directors and Imams is being held, highlighting Saudi Arabia's contributions to Quran printing, translation, and distribution. Discussions at the forum focus on the moral values derived from the Quran, the Kingdom's religious initiatives, and the significance of Tajweed in deepening understanding of the holy book.

The General Administration of Religious Affairs is also conducting specialized training programs for religious affairs personnel within the armed forces, with a focus on Quranic teaching methodologies and skill enhancement for instructors and competition judges.

Maj. Gen. Mesfer Al-Issa, director of the General Administration of Religious Affairs and competition supervisor, described the event as a major initiative to honor the Quran. He emphasized Saudi Arabia's commitment to fostering Quranic learning among military personnel, reinforcing the leadership's dedication to religious education.

Al-Issa underscored the profound impact of the competition, particularly given its setting in the sacred cities of Makkah and Madinah. He noted that the Quran plays a vital role in shaping the character of soldiers, instilling psychological, behavioral, and spiritual stability.

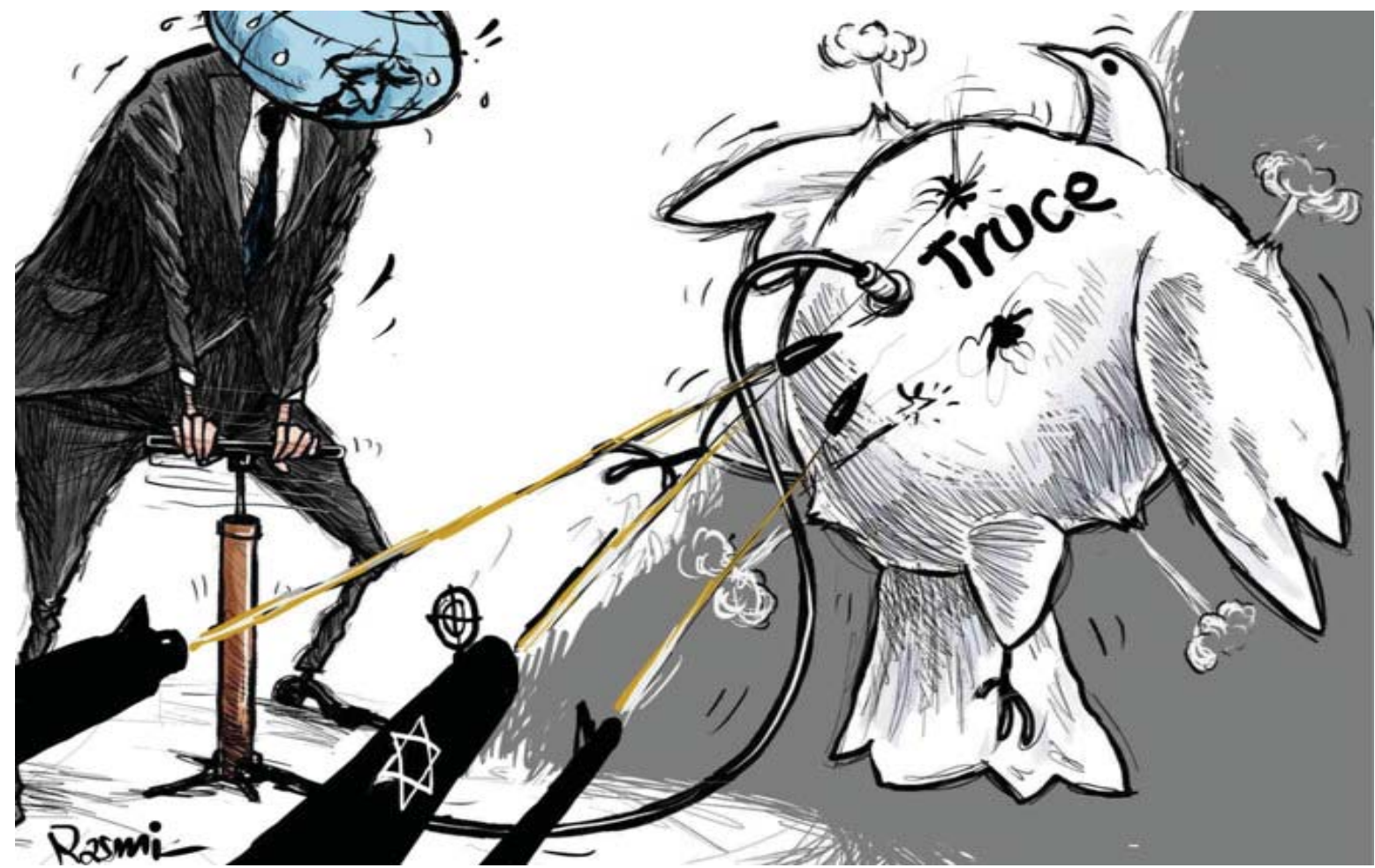
The 14-day event will be held over two phases: the first 10 days in Makkah, followed by four days in Madinah, where participants will visit the Prophet's Mosque and other significant Islamic landmarks.

An advanced electronic evaluation system, 'Insaf' (Fairness), is being employed to ensure transparency in scoring. Judges, including imams from the Two Holy Mosques and renowned Quranic scholars, provide immediate feedback to contestants on memorization, pronunciation, Tajweed, and accuracy.

Al-Issa highlighted that the participants are selected through rigorous national competitions conducted throughout the year to identify top military memorizers.

Beyond fostering memorization, the competition serves as a platform for military personnel from Islamic nations to engage in scholarly discussions, promoting moderate Islamic values and a deeper understanding of the Quran.

Al-Issa emphasized that the initiative strengthens the integration of Quranic teachings within Islamic armed forces, nurturing a generation of soldiers rooted in Islamic knowledge and guided by moral and spiritual principles.



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

Writ of the State

The authority of the state is a cornerstone of any well-functioning society. It ensures the enforcement of laws, maintains public order, provides essential services, and protects citizens' rights. When a state loses or fails to assert its authority, the effects are often deep and far-reaching. A weakened state authority leads to chaos, instability, and widespread suffering, creating an environment ripe for corruption, violence, and economic deterioration. By examining real-world examples, we can better understand the critical importance of state authority in upholding peace, prosperity, and justice.

Somalia serves as a notable example of a nation with weak state authority. Since the collapse of its central government in 1991, Somalia has struggled with warlordism, clan militias, and a lack of effective governance. Although the Somali Federal Government (SFG) has made some progress in recent years, the country remains highly fragmented. The absence of strong state authority has enabled groups like the militant Islamist group al-Shabaab to gain significant power. Al-Shabaab frequently conducts violent attacks, including bombings and kidnappings, targeting civilians, military personnel, and aid workers. Somalia's weak government has been unable to meet the country's urgent humanitarian needs. Millions face food insecurity, lack access to clean water, and endure inadequate healthcare, leading to a prolonged crisis of displacement and suffering. Without a functioning government, Somalia's economy remains informal and heavily reliant on remittances from the Somali diaspora. Poverty and unemployment persist, further destabilizing the country. In Somalia, the lack of effective governance and strong state authority perpetuates a cycle of violence, lawlessness, and poverty, hindering any meaningful path toward

peace and prosperity.

Protests have long been an essential aspect of democratic societies, providing a platform for citizens to voice discontent with government policies, social inequalities, or injustices. From the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. to anti-colonial movements globally, protests have driven significant social and political transformations. However, when protests turn violent or when violence becomes a norm for demanding change, the consequences can be profound and detrimental to both society and the cause itself. Violent protests are not a productive way to demand change. While it's important for citizens to express grievances and seek

justice, violence only escalates tensions and creates more problems than it resolves. One immediate consequence of violent protests is the way they undermine the legitimacy of the cause being promoted. As protests spiral into chaos, public attention often shifts from the original issue to the violence and destruction. This shift in focus weakens the moral and ethical standing of the protesters. For example, if a protest is aimed at addressing police brutality or advocating for civil rights, the violence distracts from these crucial issues and shifts the narrative toward the actions of a few individuals engaging in destructive behavior. As a result, public support for the cause can quickly diminish, with people associating the protest more with disorder than the demand for justice. The message becomes blurred, and those who might have supported the cause peacefully may distance themselves due to the violence.

Violent protests often create deep divisions within society. What could have been a moment of unity around a shared cause may quickly evolve into a polarized issue. Some people may support the cause but reject the violent methods used, while others might oppose the cause alto-

gether due to the disruption and fear violence causes. This division can fuel broader societal instability. When protests are associated with violence, those who may have been sympathetic become alienated, fearing for their safety or daily lives. The violence can push people to view the protesters as adversaries, strengthening opposition and making productive dialogue even more challenging.

Violence breeds further violence. Once protests become violent, the likelihood of escalation increases, especially if the government or law enforcement responds with force. Authorities may resort to excessive measures to control the crowds, triggering a cycle of retaliation and aggression. This escalation can lead to peaceful protesters becoming caught in the turmoil, and innocent bystanders may fall victim to the violence. The result is often a vicious cycle where the original demands for justice or change are overshadowed by the destruction, injury, or loss of life caused by the protests. Instead of addressing the core issues, such protests may provoke stronger government opposition, leading to stricter policies, crackdowns, or even authoritarian measures that suppress the very causes the protesters aimed to highlight.

In the context of Pakistan, the culture of demanding change through mobs and repeated protests is detrimental to the country. The mindset of "might is right" and pressuring the government and institutions through mob action is neither constructive nor commendable. While the government has its responsibilities, people, political parties, and leaders also have duties and must show maturity. The examples of Yemen, Somalia, Haiti, and the recent case of Syria clearly illustrate the consequences of anarchy and chaos. The general public is suffering due to these ongoing protests, and the country is facing economic hardship. The state must enforce its authority, and citizens need to recognize the forces that are creating chaos, anarchy, and division for personal gain, rather than for the common good.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Press Freedom or Personal Interests? The Reality Behind the PECA Protests

For the past several days, certain individuals who call themselves journalists have been protesting in Islamabad and Lahore against the PECA Amendment Act 2025. Their stance is that this law imposes restrictions on press freedom and will subject journalists to undue limitations. However, it is essential to understand what the PECA Amendment Act 2025, actually is and what its objectives are: Insertion of new section 26A, Act XL of 2016. In the said Act, after section 26, the following new section 26A shall be inserted, namely:—"26A. Punishment for false and fake information. Whoever intentionally disseminates, publicly exhibits, or transmits any information through any information system, that he knows or has reason to believe to be false or fake and likely to cause or create a sense of fear, panic or disorder or unrest in general public or society shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend upto three years or with fine which may extend to two million rupees or with both."

These persons create fake journalist organizations to influence government institutions, causing severe damage to the credibility of journalism and undermining public trust in the media. The time has come for the government to take strict action against this fraudulent practice and ensure the protection of the rights of genuine and professional journalists.

Currently, a few specific groups have taken control of press clubs and journalistic organizations across the country, prioritizing personal business interests over the welfare of journalists. As a result, inexperienced, minimally educated,

or even unqualified individuals (sometimes those who have failed their matriculation exams) are being inducted as members of press clubs and journalistic organizations. They are then manipulated under the banner of press freedom to serve the interests of these groups. Every year, the government allocates millions of rupees for the welfare of journalists, yet there is no accountability regarding how these funds are spent. For instance, last year, the Multan Press Club received a grant of 3 million rupees, but no details have surfaced about its transparent utilization. An audit of this grant is essential for transparency and merit.

A crucial question arises: why don't our governments conduct audits of the grants given to journalistic institutions Press Clubs? If journalism is to be transparent and based on merit, it is essential to ensure the accountability of press clubs and journalistic organizations regarding their financial dealings, including funds received from both government and private sectors. Until these organizations undergo proper audits, protests in the name of journalists' rights will continue to serve personal interests rather than addressing the real issues facing the profession.

Given these circumstances we appeal through this column to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Chief Minister of Punjab, and the Chief Secretary of Punjab to launch an investigation into the issuance of bogus press accreditation cards by the Multan Regional Public Relations Office. Legal action should be taken against those responsible for verifying and issuing these cards based on fraudulent documents.

Zain ul Abideen Abid Senior analyst. He can be reached at zakhanmultan@yahoo.com



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

JI Ameer Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman called on President AJK Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan led by its Ameer Engineer Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here today. During the meeting issues of mutual interest and prevailing political situation in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir were discussed in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, Barrister Chaudhry appreciated the JI significant contribution to Kashmir cause and expressed the hope that the party under the leadership of Eng. Rehman would continue to play its role in highlighting the Kashmir cause domestically and internationally.

The AJK president also presented a shield of honour to the JI chief for his and his party's peerless contribution and services in promoting the Kashmir issue. On this occasion, the JI chief assured the president of his party's continued support to Kashmir cause.



He said that the JI would observe Kashmir Day all across the country including AJK and Gilgit Baltistan to express solidarity with the Kashmiri people. Engineer Rehman, on the occasion, lauded the President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry's pivotal

role to highlight the Kashmir issue at the global level.

The JI delegation was comprised of former Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Kashmir Abdul Rashid Turabi, Secretary General Raja Jahangir, Sagheer Qamar and others. Islam-

abad: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has expressed his profound grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of 18 security forces personnel who embraced Shahadat while fighting terrorists in Kalat and Harnai areas. Denouncing the heinous acts of state terrorism by miscreants, the AJK president commended the Pakistani armed forces' significant contribution and sacrifices in defending the homeland.

He said that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan army in its epic struggle to weed out terrorism and terrorists acting on foreign agenda.

Paying eulogizing tributes to the martyrs, he expressed the optimism that the Pak army would thwart the enemy's nefarious designs aimed at fomenting trouble in the country. The president Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry also extended his heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the martyrs' families.

Rwanda is emerging business hub for Africa



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Rwanda is poised to become the business hub of Africa, said Hussnain Kazmi, Member Advisory Board and Head of Strategy & Transformation of "The SK Hub", United Kingdom, after his meeting with Her Excellency Fatou Hareimana, Ambassador of Rwanda in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Mr. Kazmi was called on by Her Excellency Ms. Fatou Hareimana during his visit to Pakistan. Discussions centered around a wide range of opportunities spanning education, technology, real estate, healthcare, and the establishment of Africa House to facilitate import and export activities. Her Excellency highlighted that within just a few months of establishing the Rwanda High Commission in Pakistan, significant potential for collaboration across various business sectors has already been observed.

With a population of approximately 14 million and one of Africa's fastest-growing economies, Rwanda has been experiencing an impressive GDP growth rate, averaging around 7-8% annually. This economic momentum positions Rwanda as an attractive destination for investment and trade partnerships.

Mr. Kazmi expressed keen interest in visiting Rwanda to explore ways to enhance trade relations and strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries. As a former Pakistan federal government technocrat, he sees immense potential not only for collaboration between Pakistan and Rwanda but also for engaging stakeholders from Europe.

His recent visit to Pakistan focused on exploring opportunities in youth development, higher education, IT, healthcare, research, and trade. Mr. Kazmi assured Her Excellency of his commitment to visiting Rwanda to further explore and formalize avenues for mutual business and developmental benefits.

Muslim Heritage Month celebrated in New Jersey; Pakistani activists' input recognized

NEW YORK: The Assembly of US state of New Jersey marked Muslim Heritage Month with a ceremony at the Statehouse in Trenton, recognizing the contributions of Muslim-Americans to the states cultural and social fabric.

The event brought together lawmakers and community members to highlight the role of Muslim communities in fostering diversity, education, and interfaith engagement. New Jersey is home to around 320,000 Muslims, which is about 3.5% of the state's population.

As part of the event, Assembly woman Shama Haider honoured two young Pakistani-American leaders, Hannan Arshad and Rizwan Ali, for their commitment to civic engagement and interfaith dialogue. Before migrating to the United States, Ms. Haider served as secretary to former Pakistani First Lady, Begum Nusrat Bhutto.

Hannan Arshad, a Rutgers University graduate currently pursuing a Masters in Healthcare Administration at Ne York University and working at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, was recognized for his involvement in interfaith initiatives and community service. He has been an active participant in the New Jersey Pakistan Day Parade and local political efforts.

Rizwan Ali, serving as the Religious Chairman of Darul Islah Mosque and Community Center in Teaneck, New Jersey, was acknowledged for his role in promoting interfaith dialogue and organizing community events, including Teanecks Muslim Heritage Month celebration. He is also the author of MetalGhost, a novel centered on a Muslim superhero.

Muslim Heritage Month, now in its second year in New Jersey, serves as a platform to highlight the contributions of Muslim Americans in various fields while promoting cultural understanding and unity.

Meanwhile, the Consulate General of Pakistan, New York, reaffirmed its commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at the development and empowerment of the Pakistani and Muslim communities in New Jersey and other states under its consular jurisdiction in the United States.

Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan meet with Prime Minister AJK Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Engineer Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman called on Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq here on Sunday. During the meeting, the duo discussed the issues of mutual interest with particular focus on Kashmir issue.

The duo agreed on accelerating efforts to strengthen Kashmir freedom movement and highlight the plight of Kashmiri people both at national as well as international level. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister Haq said that the Kashmiris' ongoing freedom movement was a legitimate struggle in accordance with international laws and UN resolutions.

He said that Kashmiris have been fighting since decades against India's illegal occupation and to achieve their legitimate political and democratic rights. The Indian government, he said, had deprived Kashmiris of their



basic human rights. Denouncing the Indian state terrorism in occupied Kashmir, the PM stated that India was using every inhuman tactic to crush Kashmiris' struggle for right to self determination.

Hailing Pakistan's consistent support to Kashmiris' just cause, he said that the county's unwavering support has always been a morale

booster for the people of the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir. "Pakistan and its people have supported the people of Azad Kashmir and occupied Kashmir in every difficult time", the PM remarked.

The Prime Minister, on the occasion, appreciated the JI's significant contribution to Kashmir freedom movement saying that the party has

actively participated in the freedom struggle, resettlement of Kashmiri refugees and other welfare works in the liberated territory."

The JI has always played a positive role, be it the resettlement of refugees from Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir or helping quake survivors or disaster affectees in Azad Kashmiris", the PM maintained.

Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq also hosted a dinner in honor of the JI chief, which was attended by government ministers including, Law Minister Mian Abdul Waheed, Minister Local Government Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, former Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Abdul Rashid Turabi, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Kashmir Gilgit-Baltistan Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq Khan, Convener All Parties Hurriyat Conference Ghulam Muhammad Safi and others. On this occasion, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman thanked the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir for his hospitality.

JI chief to address rally in AJK today

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, the emir of Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan, will address a rally here on Sunday in connection with the upcoming Kashmir Solidarity Day.

It will mark his first public appearance in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) since his elevation to the religio-political party's top office in April last year.

The "Kashmir March" is being organised by Rehman, the emir of Jamaat AJK and will be held on a major intersection outside the district headquarters complex, commonly known as Burhan



Wani Chowk.

JI AJK spokesperson Raja Zakir claimed that it would be the largest march in the region's history.

He said the event would also feature speeches by AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, JI AJK emir Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq and leaders from various political parties.

"Hafiz Naeemur Rehman will not only convey the message of solidarity on behalf of the 250 million people of Pakistan to the struggling people of Kashmir but also announce the future course of action for the Kashmir freedom movement," Mr Zakir said.

PM AJK says Kashmir day would be observed with traditional zest and zeal at national level

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that Kashmir day would be observed with traditional zest and zeal at national level to express complete solidarity with the people of Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of Pakistan Peoples Party Azad Kashmir and local government representatives that called on him separately on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that

Kashmiris will never compromise on their fundamental right, the right to self determination. Pakistan, he said, has always been a strong proponent and a fearless advocate of Kashmiris' rights at every international forum.

He said that the incumbent government had defeated India in narrative warfare. Lauding the local government's role in development at grassroots level, he said, the local bodies role was crucial for sustainable development.

He said that funds worth one billion rupees have been given to local government represent-

atives. "Steps are being taken to remove sense of deprivations amongst the masses", he added. He said that steps have been taken to improve road infrastructure across the State.

Terming electricity theft as a major challenge, he said, there was dire need to stop this shameful practice that causes huge loss to the national kitty.

He said that there was no rationale behind providing a uniform subsidy (three rupees per unit) to a consumer who uses less than a hundred units and the one who consumes limitless electricity.

Urging citizens to avoid

misuse of electricity, the PM said that technical defects were arising in the electricity feeders due to illegal use of electricity. He said that steps have been taken for the storage of drinking water in the capital city and improving infrastructure.

Of those who were part of the delegations included Deputy Mayor Municipal Corporation Muzaffarabad Khalid Awan, Member Municipal Corporation Muzaffarabad Asim Naqvi Zaheer Bukhari, Umar Abbasi. Whereas as PPP delegation was comprised of Deputy General Secretary PPP Sheikh Azhar, Shaukat Rathore Khaksar,



Tariq Hameed Qureshi, Sunny Mir, Zaheer Sheikh and Naseem Shah. Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and Minister for Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Mian Abdul Waheed were also present on the occasion.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,255.72	113,206.40
Day's High	Day's Low
115,106.99	113,692.87
Index Value	Change
18,777,403,886	+ 1049.32
Percentage	Time
+0.93%	31 Jan, 2025 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,673.96	+27.08
Percentage	Time
+0.31%	31 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
44,865.63	-16.50
Percentage	Time
+0.037%	31 Jan, 11:48 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,572.49	+58.52
Percentage	Time
+0.15%	31 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	174.75	177.00
Bahrain Dinar	738.60	746.60
Canadian Dollar	193.60	196.00
China Yuan	37.59	37.99
Danish Krone	38.48	38.88
Euro	289.75	292.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.41	35.76
Indian Rupee	3.14	3.23
Japanese Yen	1.82	1.88
Kuwaiti Dinar	898.60	908.10
Malaysian Ringgit	63.04	63.64
New Zealand \$	156.31	158.31
Norwegians Krone	24.46	24.76
Omani Riyal	722.90	731.40
Qatari Riyal	75.84	76.54
Saudi Riyal	74.20	74.75
Singapore Dollar	207.5	209.50
Swedish Korona	25.01	25.31
Swiss Franc	303.71	306.51
Thai Bhat	8.09	8.24
U.A.E Dirham	75.85	76.50
UK Pound Sterling	346.50	350
US Dollar	279.50	281.00

Head of Italian trade agency, Dr. Salvatore Parano visits UBG Secretariat Islamabad

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Italian Trade Agency is determined to revive Pakistan's Industrial sector and Play its due role to promote business climate in Pakistan through financial, technical and Eco-friendly technologies for economic stability and sustainable growth.

This was stated by Dr. Salvatore Parano, Director, Ufficio ICE, Italian Embassy, Islamabad in a corporate meeting held at United Business Group (UBG) Secretariat, Islamabad.

During the meeting a wide range of Italian brands and International business trends came under discussion.

Dr. Salvatore Parano said Climate change is affecting business around the world but Pakistan is a potential country for production of Buffalo Mozzarella (cheez) which is an important ingredient in the world



pizza industry including olive cultivation and food processing.

He added that Olive farming is also ideal because of the sunny climate and soil in Balochistan and Pothawar region in Punjab Province, because the environment in these regions are quite suitable for Olive cultivation,

while export of Olive oil can bring millions of foreign exchange for Pakistan.

Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General (UBG) said that high cost of doing business including exorbitant electricity and gas tariff coupled with heavy taxation are affecting busi-

ness climate in Pakistan.

He also lauded that the Italian economy remained one of the strongest in the world despite COVID-19 pandemic ranking 8th in world top economies for its exports in automobiles, vehicles, pharmaceuticals and electrical machinery

to Germany, France, and the United States.

Waqar Bakhtawari, former President, Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged Dr Salvatore Parano to join hands with United Business Group for market research in Pakistan and exploration of cooperation for the promotion of Italian Brands in Pakistani market including cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

Meanwhile, elaborating the role of Italian business cooperation in Pakistan, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, former President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry showed interest for collaboration with the Italian Trade Agency in textiles, surgical, rice and sports industries.

Dr Salvatore Parano introduced Italian companies to enhance cooperation between Pakistan and Italy to further improve the innovative economic sector in Pakistan.

Lunch

ISLAMABAD: Convenor FPCCI Heritage & Hospitality Committee, Mr. Naveed Ahmad Khan hosted an informal lunch. Secretary General UBG, Zafar Bakhtawari, H. E Mohd Syafik Firdaus Bin Hasbullah DHM, HC Malaysia, H. E Ammad Rasheed, Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Tunisia KPK Chapter, Mr. Almass Ayoub Sabir, Chairman AIMS Education Systems, Mr. Salah Uddin Ayoubi, CEO Burj-ul-Zaki and others also attended the lunch.



Photo: Imtiaz Faizi

MoU signed between FPCCI, Mashhad Chamber to boost bilateral trade

LAHORE: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and the Mashhad Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Mines, and Agriculture.

The signing ceremony took place at the Governor's House Lahore, with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and Governor General of Khorasan Razavi Iran Gholam Hussein Muzaffari, in attendance, said a handout issued here on Sunday.

The MoU was signed by Zaki Ijaz, Regional Chairman and Vice President of FPCCI, on behalf of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and Mohammad Reza Tawaklizadi, President of Mashhad Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, on behalf of his organization. The primary goal of the agreement is to facilitate a bilateral trade target of \$10 billion in exports between Pakistan and Iran.

Later, Governor Saleem Haider Khan and Governor Gholam Hussein Muzaffari inaugurated a one-day shopping festival organised by the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Expo Center Lahore. The event showcased a wide range of products made in Pakistan, further promoting trade between the two countries.

Talking to the media, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan highlighted the significance of the three-day visit by Governor Gholam Hussein Muzaffari, during which several agreements and MoUs were signed to boost bilateral exports and imports. He noted that the Governor General of Khorasan Razavi expressed great interest in Pakistani products, stressing that both countries, being close Islamic neighbors, should focus on expanding trade relations in the region rather than looking further afield. He also mentioned plans for an upcoming visit to Iran with a delegation of traders to assess the implementation of these agreements.

The Governor added that Governor Gholam Hussein Muzaffari had assured to consider reducing tourist and business visa fees and improving facilities for easier travel and trade.

Pakistan is increasingly being recognized globally for its business potential: Maria Tauqir



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: With the positive feedback from the recent Davos summit, it is clear that Pakistan is increasingly being recognized globally for its business potential, innovative spirit, and the resilience of its people.

Ms. Maria Tauqir a Pakistani host of the two day Davos summit held last week at Switzerland speaking here Sunday to a delegation of women entrepreneurs said this mega event not only enhances the visibility of Pak private sector but also strengthens the global perception of Pakistan

as a country brimming with opportunities for investment and collaboration.

She further explained that the summit was a testament to the growing importance of Pakistan in the global business community, highlighting its readiness to contribute to international development and trade. She said the summit also included a key visit to the World Economic Forum, where discussions centered around global economic trends, sustainable growth, and transformative ideas.

Ms Maria, who is also General Manager Interiors Pakistan, in the summit, highlighted the importance of showcasing Pakistan's positive image on the global stage and reiterated ChenOne's commitment to empowering women in Pakistan, creating opportunities for them to lead and succeed in the business world.

A delegation of Pakistani food exporters from south Punjab Sunday left for Saudi Arabia

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: A 14-member delegation of Pakistani food exporters from south Punjab Sunday left for Saudi Arabia on a ten-day visit to explore export avenues and strengthen trade relations.

Abdul Rehman, leader of the delegation prior to departure, said the visit aligns with Pakistan's broader strategy to diversify exports and enhance trade with Gulf countries, reinforcing its position as a reliable supplier of quality food products.

He said the delegation will engage in a



series of result-oriented meetings with their Saudi counterparts to explore new business prospects and enhance bilateral trade. Pakistan's food industry has been witnessing steady growth, with Saudi Arabia emerging

as a key market for various food products, including snacks and processed food. The delegation's visit is part of ongoing efforts to boost exports, capitalize on Saudi Arabia's high demand for quality food products, and strengthen trade ties between the two countries, he added.

Abdul Rehman said we anticipate positive outcomes including potential agreements and partnerships that will benefit both countries. He said we are optimistic about securing long-term contracts and increasing their market share in Saudi Arabia's booming food sector.

President Zardari appreciated the extraordinary performance of FTO

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: President Asif Ali Zardari has expressed great satisfaction and appreciated the extraordinary performance of FTO Dr Asif Mahmood Jan and emphasized to further facilitate the Taxpayers for the redressal of their grievances against Federal Board of Revenue maladministration.

Speaking here Sunday to an awareness session with business community, FTO Coordinator Saif Ur Rehman said Dr Mahmood Jah apprised president about the achievements of the year 2024 which reflects that a record number of 13506 complaints were registered with the FTO against the tax functionaries of which a total of 12914 complaints were decided, thereby surpassing all previous records that reposes the confidence of taxpayers in FTO for immediate redressal of grievances against FBR officials at their door-



steps in line with the policy of the government. Among landmark decisions in the year 2024, FTO provided substantial relief to the often-overlooked demographic of low-paid contractual employees, teachers

and Art students across Pakistan.

Saif Ur Rehman said President Asif Ali Zardari congratulated FTO Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah and his team for such an extraordinary performance.

Pakistan Furniture Council Sunday called for lowering the interest rate to a single digit



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Furniture Council Sunday called for lowering the interest rate to a single digit, an essential factor for reviving the economy that will greatly help ease of doing business to compete with the global market by boosting exports.

Chairing a Board of Directors meeting here today CEO PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq, highlighted that high interest rates have stifled economic growth with increasing the cost of doing business and due to absence of investors

interest. He argued that a lower interest rate would encourage businesses to borrow, invest, and expand their operations, ultimately leading to job creation and economic development. He said that industry is struggling due to rising production costs, limited access to affordable financing, and an bleak economic conditions.

Kashif Ashfaq also stressed the importance of reducing reliance on foreign loans and enhancing domestic revenue generation to ensure long-term economic stability. He called for bold reforms and effective policymaking to restore investor confidence, stimulate economic activity, and place Pakistan on a sustainable path of growth and prosperity.

'A Nutrition Gala' organized at the Nursing College Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A Nutrition Gala" was organized at the Nursing College Attock, where trainee nurses and lady health visitors set up stalls to highlight the importance of nutrition. These stalls focused on balanced diets for diabetes, blood pressure, pregnant women, and kidney health. People from various walks of life showed great interest in the event. Medical Superintendent of the District Headquarters Hospital Attock,

Dr. Jawad Ilahi, visited the stalls at the Nutrition Gala. He appreciated the efforts of Principal Naveeda Iqbal and the students, praising their dedication and confidence in their profession. He encouraged the students to continue working hard to make their parents and institution proud. On this occasion, Principal Naveeda Iqbal expressed her satisfaction with the students' confidence and expertise in their field. She urged them to maintain their dedication and hard work.

ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is on Tour in Pakistan

The Champions Trophy unveiling ceremony held at the Multan Cricket Stadium

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD/MULTAN: ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is on tour in Pakistan, and after starting tomorrow, it will travel from Multan to Bahawalpur and then to other cities. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) held the trophy unveiling at two locations in Multan, with the Multan Cricket Stadium becoming the center of attention in the afternoon.

The morning event seemed primarily arranged for PCB and ICC's digital media presence, as the local media remained somewhat unaware. Though they followed the event, they couldn't capture much until the activities at Multan Cricket Stadium later in the day.

Nevertheless, the PCB is showcasing the ICC Champions Trophy across the country to raise awareness that Pakistan is both the defending champion and the host of the tournament. The aim is to build excitement and engage the public with cricket ahead of the tournament's official start on February 19, 2025.

The last edition of the Champions Trophy was held in 2017 where under



Sarfraz Ahmed's captaincy, Pakistan defeated India in the final to win the title. This time, the Indian team will play its matches in Dubai and Pakistan will also travel to Dubai for its match on February 23, 2025.

Criticism continues over the selection for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Cricket fans are disappointed that batsmen Iftikhar Ahmed and Mohammad Asif were not included

in the Pakistan squad. Meanwhile, Wasim Akram has strongly criticized the inclusion of Faheem Ashraf in the World Championship squad.

Wasim Akram questioned the selection policy, saying: "For such a big event, which you are playing in your home conditions, I don't understand why you are going with just one opener and one specialist spinner. Are you planning to bowl with part-time



spinners? This squad should have had at least two specialist spinners. Instead of Faheem Ashraf, you should have included a top-quality spinner. I checked Faheem's last 20 ODI batting average, which is only 9. You need to enter the field with three fast bowlers and two top spinners. Your competition is against strong teams like India, New Zealand, and Bangladesh. You must reconsider your decision cricket

is not played based on blind faith alone. Former Test cricketer Basit Ali has also criticized the selection, calling two players a product of the "parchi system" (favoritism) and alleging that friendship played a role in their inclusion. Similarly, Ahmed Shehzad and other cricketers have expressed strong reactions. Cricket fans are shocked at the inclusion of Faheem Ashraf, who hasn't played an ODI in the last one and a half

years. Many believe that better players could have been selected in his place, and the team could have been stronger without him. Another major concern is that out of the 15-member squad, only one opener has been picked, which is considered a disappointing decision. It is expected that Babar Azam will open the innings.

Meanwhile, the ticketing system for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 has been launched, and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has provided details on where fans can purchase tickets. Physical ticket sales start on February 3, 2025, and tickets for matches in Pakistan will be available at TCS-designated outlets across 26 cities. The pricing for general stand tickets starts at PKR 1,000, while premium seating in Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi will begin at PKR 1,500. The tournament will kick off on February 19 in Karachi, where Pakistan will face New Zealand in the opening match. Ticket details for India's matches in Dubai (February 20, 23, and March 2) will be announced later. The final will be held on March 9, with tickets becoming available after the first semi-final in Dubai.

2nd Student Games

ISLAMABAD: Participants compete during the Archery Recurve Mixed during the 2nd Students Games 2025 at Liaquat Gymnasium in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Hamid Ismail Foundation organizes football tournament

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The aim of the Challenge Cup is to bring together youth from different communities on one platform, Hamid Ismail

Karachi: The grand football tournament Challenge Cup is being organized in Karachi under the Hamid Ismail Foundation at the Kukri Ground in Karachi. 32 teams from all over Karachi are participating in this tournament, which has been going on since January 27, showcasing the incredible talent and dedication of local footballers.

All matches under the Challenge Cup tournament are being played in a thrilling Eliminator Format. The final of the tournament will be held on February 14, in which the winning team will be awarded a grand cash prize of one hundred thousand Pakistani rupees (Rs.100,000/-), while the runner-up will get fifty thousand rupees (Rs.50,000/-).

Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Faisal Gymkhana, Agha Khan Gymkhana and United Sports moved into Pre Quarter Finals

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Faisal Gymkhana, Agha Khan Gymkhana and United Sports moved into Pre Quarter Finals after beating their opponents at various cricket grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Muhammad Afzal 177, Waqab Johar 144 and Deadly bowling by Nabeel Rehmat 5/42.

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

Scores in Brief: Faisal Gymkhana defeated Bilal Friends by 39 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Faisal Gymkhana 300 all out in 35 overs. Muhammad Afzal 177 16x4 4x6, Arsalan Farzand 62 8x4, Aun Abbas 20. Saifullah (ob) 4/70, Ali Butt 3/67.

Bilal Friends 261/9 in 40 overs. Ali Butt 47, Owais Qarni 43, Moazam Malik 24, Watan Dost 22. Hamza Qureshi 3/42, M. Afzal 2/29.

In the 2nd Match Agha Khan Gymkhana beat Pak Korangi by 99 runs at Agha Khan Gymkhana Ground. Agha Khan Gymkhana 343/5 in 40 overs. Waqab Johar 144 18x4 3x6, Javed Mansoor 98 7x4 4x6, Meer Afzal 28 not out, Pervez Ali 24, Saleem A. Raheem 20, Usama Basharat 3/50.

Pak Korangi 244 all out in 34.2 overs. Waseem Ahmed 73 9x4 1x6, Nabeel Wahid 68 9x4 1x6, Ashar Qureshi 31, Syed Runail 20. Nabeel Rehmat 5/42, Shayan Ali 2/36, Pervez Ali 2/41.

In the 3rd Match United Sports beat Landhi Friends by 7 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Landhi Friends 157 all out in 34.2 overs. Muhammad Khan 27, Zohaib Hanif 26, Hanif Malik 23. Abdul Aziz 4/36, Ahmed Aleem 2/21, Qazi Nasir 2/35.

United Sports 160/3 in 24.3 overs. Hasan Jaffri 70 12x4, Faaz ullah 34 not out, Qazi Nasir 24. Muhammad Khan 2/43.

Tickets of ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 to go on Sale from today



Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Tickets Of World Champions Trophy 2025 for matches in Pakistan including group stage fixtures and the second semi-final will be available at 108 TCS outlets across the country.

Tickets for India matches in the UAE will be announced shortly, fans can register their interest for tickets here

ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 schedule available here.

Following the online sale of tickets available here for the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 this week, physical tickets for the eight-team competition will go on sale from Monday, 3 February at 15h00 Gulf Standard Time (GST) / 16h00 Pakistan Standard Time (PST).

The physical tickets will be available to fans across 108 TCS centres in 26 cities of Pakistan (infographic attached).

As announced previously, general stand ticket prices will start from 1,000 Pakistan Rupees, while premium seating will be available from 1,500 Pakistan Rupees across different categories for the 10 matches taking place in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi.

Hosts Pakistan will take on New Zealand in the opening match of the event at the National Stadium in Karachi on 19 February.

Ticket information for the India matches to be played in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 20 and 23 February and 2 March, will be released in due course. In the meantime, fans can register their interest in tickets here.

ICC Men's Champions Trophy Final tickets - to be played on Sunday, 9 March - will be available for purchase following the conclusion of the first semi-final in Dubai.

Opening match of the Dining Sports Festival was won by Dining to beat Zeebai University

Tahir Amin Malik

ISLAMABAD: The second Dining Sports Festival, organized by the Dining Sports Society in collaboration with the Dining Sports Department, kicked off with a colorful and prestigious opening ceremony of the cricket tournament.

Jameel Ahmed, President of the Regional Cricket Association Karachi Zone Two, inaugurated the tournament by hitting the ball. In the opening match, Dining A defeated Zeebai University by 126 runs, marking a victorious start to the event.

According to Sports Director Ibrahim Hussain, the opening ceremony, held at Ino Bhai Park Nazimabad Gymkhana Ground, was attended by special guest Jameel Ahmed, who congratulated Dining University management, the heads of the Sports Department, and Regional Sports Coordinator Kashif Ahmed Farooqi for



organizing such a well-structured and splendid event.

He expressed hope that this event would help uncover new talent at the Karachi level. In the opening match, Dining A scored 223 runs while batting first, and Zeebai University's entire team was dismissed for 145 runs in reply.

The sponsors of the Dining Sports Festival include Master Face Mask, MT Merchani Travels, Temla, Alghani Motors, Saad Heights, MMY Associates, Fay Company, Just Dry, Mian, Ahson Kanwal, and Quiz.

The second Dining Sports Festival features seven sports: Badminton, Table

Tennis, Cricket, Futsal, Rowing, Basketball, and Throwball.

According to Dining University's Regional Sports Coordinator Kashif Ahmed Farooqi, the opening ceremony was also attended by several notable figures including Ahmed Ali Rajpoot, Secretary of the Sindh Olympic Association, Director Abdul Qadir, M Naseem, Ayaz Manshi, Saeed Alam, Umar Shaheen, Shahzada Moeen, Mirhan Akram, Rashid Ahmed, Asghar Baloch, Asif Zaheer, and other sports personalities. The festival will continue until February 10.

On this occasion Ahmed Ali Rajput, Secretary SOA, Asif Zaheer Sports Advisor Dir Syed Unuvesity, and Regional Sports Coordinator of Dining University K Ahmed Farooqi were present. While RCA Zone Two President Jameel Ahmed inaugurated the Dining Sports Super Cricket League Tournament after hitting the ball.

Faisal, Agha Khan Gymkhana and United Sports moved into pre-quarter finals

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Faisal Gymkhana, Agha Khan Gymkhana and United Sports moved into pre-quarter finals after beating their opponents at various cricket grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant centuries by Muhammad Afzal 177, Waqab Johar 144 and deadly bowling by Nabeel Rehmat 5/42.

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

Scores in Brief:

Faisal Gymkhana defeated Bilal Friends by 39 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Faisal Gymkhana 300 all out in 35 overs. Muhammad Afzal 177 16x4 4x6, Arsalan Farzand 62 8x4, Aun Abbas 20. Saifullah (ob) 4/70, Ali Butt 3/67.



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Fighter Ground. Landhi Friends 157 all out in 34.2 overs. Muhammad Khan 27, Zohaib Hanif 26, Hanif Malik 23. Abdul Aziz 4/36, Ahmed Aleem 2/21, Qazi Nasir 2/35.

United Sports 160/3 in 24.3 overs. Hasan Jaffri 70 12x4, Faaz ullah 34 not out, Qazi Nasir 24. Muhammad Khan 2/43.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired an Inter-Ministerial meeting to review the preparation for the second round of Pak-Qatar Bilateral Political Consultations scheduled to be held in Doha at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Sunday.



Photo: PID

DPM reviews preparation for Pak-Qatar Bilateral Political Consultations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired an Inter-Ministerial meeting to review the preparation for the second round of Pak-Qatar Bilateral Political Consultations scheduled to be held in Doha.

Ishaq Dar was briefed about Pak-Qatar bilateral relations and the status of various initiatives in various fields.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister underscored that preparations should be made for substantive, productive and result oriented discussions in Doha.

Islamabad lawyers announce strike on Feb 3 over judicial appointments

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Bar Council, Islamabad High Court Bar Association, and Islamabad District Bar Association have announced their decision to observe a strike on Monday (tomorrow) in protest against the judicial appointments in the federal capital's high court from other courts.

In a joint press conference and statement, they said that it was unanimously decided that the legal community would not accept these transfers.

The reaction comes after the law ministry transferred three judges from the high courts of Sindh, Lahore, and Balochistan to the Islamabad High Court on Saturday amid concerns raised by five judges in the federal capital.

The three judges who are transferred to IHC are: Lahore High Court judge Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, Sindh High Court judge Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro, and Balochistan High Court judge Justice Muhammad Asif.

Earlier, five judges from the IHC sent a letter to the chief justices of the Supreme Court and various high courts, urging them to oppose reports suggesting that a transferred judge

could be appointed to lead the IHC.

Islamabad High Court Bar Association Chairman Aleem Abbasi described the transfers as "malicious and an attempt to create division within the judiciary." They opposed the decision and declared their intention to protest vigorously against the move.

He announced that a nationwide lawyers' convention would take place on Monday at 11am at the District Court in G-11. Abbasi urged lawyers across the country to join the protest, warning that if such transfers were not reversed, the demonstrations would escalate.

The IHCBA chairman also labelled the promotions of judges to the Supreme Court as "malicious, claiming that both government and opposition parties are taking such measures to undermine the independence of the judiciary."

Lawyers alleged that such actions were politically motivated and would adversely affect the freedom and autonomy of the judiciary.

They demanded that the Judicial Commission of Pakistan meeting scheduled for February 10 be postponed to prevent further division and malicious actions within the judiciary.

Govt tightening noose around drug mafia: Naqvi

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said that government has managed to bring back poor family from Saudi Arabia's jail which was implicated in drug case after the government shared the facts with Saudi government.

Talking to media along with DG Anti-Narcotics Force Abdul Moeed and victim family, Naqvi said that when this poor family was going to Saudi Arabia for Umra, 2kg ice was placed in their bag by drug dealers.

When the family reached Saudi Arabia and shifted to their temporary residence they were taken into custody by the Saudi Authorities as drug was found in their bag. When this case came in the notice of



Director General Anti-Narcotics Force and Lahore Air Port officials they probed the incident and arrested the nine members of the drug gang. Later Interior Ministry and ANF officials briefed Saudi officials about the case and the victim family was released and sent back to Pakistan. He said ANF have arrested 9 culprits of the gang which placed ice

in the bag of the victim family.

On the occasion, Naqvi said the government was committed to control drug mafia. Interior Minister said the government was working to increase the strength of ANF as only three thousands force cannot curb drug mafia. Naqvi said that government was working to improve security system at the airports and its cargoes. He advised locals not to believe free Umra packages. On the occasion, victim family thanked for the special efforts of ANF, Interior Ministry and ASF.

Interior Minister said the government was trying improve security at airports. He said government and ANF was working in and around schools, colleges and universities to curb drug dealers.

Romina Khurshid highlights Wetlands' role in biodiversity, climate mitigation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam has called for urgent action to safeguard the world's wetlands, emphasizing their significant role in environmental preservation, biodiversity, and combating impacts of climate change.

In her message on World Wetland Day being observed under the theme "wetlands and water", Romina Khurshid highlighted the indispensable role wetlands play in ensuring environmental sustainability, supporting biodiversity, and mitigating the impacts of climate change. She called for strengthened global and



national efforts to safeguard these vital ecosystems. The United Nations has designated February 2 as World Wetland Day to commemorate the adoption of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in 1971. As part of Pakistan's commitment to the Ramsar Convention, the country has designated 19 wetlands of international importance, including

the famous Keenjhar Lake, Rann of Kutch, and the Haleji Lake, which support a wide variety of wildlife, especially for around 2 million migratory birds from countries in Central Asia, Siberia, and northern parts of Europe.

PM's aide stated that although the country contributes only 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, has been ranked as the 5th most climate-vulnerable nation. This stark disparity highlights the country's heightened risk to the effects of climate change, such as extreme weather events, floods, droughts, and rising temperatures, which pose significant threats to its population, economy, and place additional pressure on its wetland resources.

Sindh Governor Tessori urges people not to make memes, fun of American woman

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori has urged people to not make memes and fun of a distraught American woman, who has been in Karachi since October for her alleged lover.

"I ask all Pakistani nation to not make memes on this and not make fun of the situation as the God would not like it," he told to media.

"I myself said a thing in a lighter mode, which I should not have said. I said in a fun way, as an example which I think I should not have said."

Onijah Robinson, a 33-year-old American citizen, travelled to Karachi in October to meet her "online



friend". But the 19-year-old boy allegedly abandoned her, citing his family's disapproval of their marriage, and has since gone missing, reports said.

Robinson reportedly left her family in the United States to be with the boy. The situation gained public attention when Zaffar Abbas, founder of the Jafriya Disaster Management Cell Welfare Organisation, shared her story on social media. In response, Tessori intervened to extend Robinson's expired visa and arrange a flight home.

Despite these efforts, Robinson refused to return to the US, reports said. Instead, she took a taxi to Memon's apartment complex, where she spent nearly 30 hours in the parking lot before moving to a Chhipa charity shelter. She is expected to stay there until her eventual return to the United States.

PTI Will Raise Voice against PECA Act, 26th Amendment on February 8: Asad Qaiser



Correspondent

SWABI: Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former Speaker of the National Assembly, Asad Qaiser, stated that on February 8, the mandate of the Pakistani people was stolen. He emphasized that the people had voted for Imran Khan, but through rigging, Shehbaz Sharif—who holds only 17

seats—was imposed as Prime Minister, undermining the public's will.

He added that the true Prime Minister of Pakistan is Imran Khan and assured that PTI would not rest until the party's mandate, which was forcefully taken away, was reclaimed. He reaffirmed that the people of Pakistan continue to stand with Imran Khan.

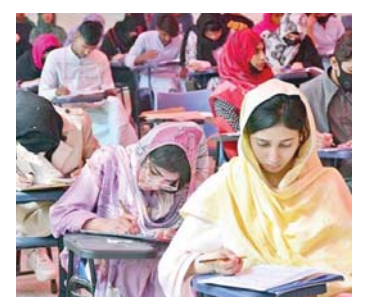
Candidates fail to prove grace marking in MDCAT's retest

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The complainants could not prove grace marking in the National Medical and Dental College Admission Test's (NMDCAT) reexamination held in the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZBMU), Islamabad, reveal the findings of an inquiry report.

It was on the court orders that the university had conducted the reexamination followed by an inquiry into the examination by a nine-member special Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) committee, which met on January 27.

The complainants had also attended the meeting in which they conveyed to the committee members



their reservations.

The report will now be submitted to the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

As many as 12,500 candidates from across the country had taken the retest held on December 30, 2024.

Earlier, the test had been held on September 22, 2024.