

# Independent

Member APNS &amp; CPNE

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## Level-playing field a must for free and fair elections: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday emphasized that for the future of the country, free, fair and credible elections should be held in which all the political parties be given a level-playing field to contest.

In an interview with a private TV (Geo News) talk show, the president said different quarters were talking about ensuring level-playing field to all the political parties in the country.

He said the basic norm should be the democracy and all the political leaders should be given equal opportunities to contest the upcoming elections. To a question, the president maintained that he had condemned 9th May incidents as he was always against such acts of damaged and destruction.

To another query, he

said that the constitution provided that a president might continue in the office till election of his successor and as the electoral requirement could not be met in the absence of assemblies, so leaving his office in vacuum was not good for him. In the parliamentary system, changes could take place to governments, he said adding, in the past, unconstitutional elements had derailed the democratic system in the country.

The president expressed that despite difficult times, the country was moving on the path to democracy and there was a path to move forward. Appreciating former premier Benazir Bhutto, the president recalled that during 2001 when he was arrested and sent to jail, he was told by the jail authorities that contrary to dictatorship era, the environment in jails had

been changed under the PPP government.

He said credit should be given to the PPP as a political party that was the standard bearer of democracy and women's rights. The president also lauded former president Asif Ali Zardari for raising the slogan of 'Pakistan Khappy'.

To a question, the president said the people had the confidence in the superior courts and appreciated incumbent Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Isa as 'highly respectable personality', adding that the CJP had unified the court.

The nation had great expectations from Justice Qazi Faez Isa, he said and expressed the optimism that the CJP would deliver.

The president also re-

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QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Mutual civility, respect to difference of opinion & acceptance of each other can bridge gap among masses: Governor

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that democracy is actually name of rule of people in which mutual civility and respect to difference of opinion and acceptance of each other are compulsory elements. These can help bridge the gaps between the masses and that by promoting the environment of dialogue, honoring mutual respect and by sharing the

grief and sorrow of one another.

These views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to different delegations who called on him here on Wednesday.

He said that we have to take benefit from the ever changing world, human consciousness and the modern technology and development.

He noted with concern that we have just been away from the big objectives and

high human values after falling prey to the meaningless differences and unnecessary hatred.

He said that majority of the conscious and educated personalities have also kept them disassociated from the high values, public interests and human development in lust of greed and money.

As a result, as a whole selfishness and favoritism has increased our backwardness, adding he regretfully pointed out.

## CS directs DCs to complete election preparations, improve service delivery

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has directed all the deputy commissioners to complete the preparations for general elections

implementing the directives issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

He also directed all the officers to expedite the

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QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over meeting of Secretaries Committee

## APNS expresses great shock over PM statement against print media

ISLAMABAD (PR): APNS has expressed great shock at a statement made by the Prime Minister, Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar against the print media wherein he has stated that the business model of print media is flawed and it should not depend on government for financial support.

The All Pakistan Newspapers Society in its statement expressed great disappointment at these remarks of the caretaker Prime Minister against print media while speaking to the media at Islamabad.

The Prime Minister while answering a question on the pending summary of

the Ministry of Information for an increase in the government advertisement rates, stated that the print media should change its flawed business model and instead of depending on government funding should generate revenue through its own resources. It appears that the Prime Minister is ill-informed about the summary as the print media is not seeking any grant or subsidy from the government but on the contrary, newspapers publish government ads at subsidized rates. Government advertising rates are far lower, at about one fourth of commercial rates.

The outgoing prime minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif had announced a long pending increase in the government advertisement rates, the summary of which is still lying with the Finance Ministry. It may also be noted that alarmingly the Federal Government owes almost Rs.2 billion to newspapers towards payment of long outstanding bills. If the respected Prime Minister thinks this business model is flawed, then the print media is prepared to correct the flawed model by withdrawing these subsidized rates being offered to the Government by newspapers.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a review meeting regarding the Anti-Power Theft Campaign 2023.

## Ultimatum to return home country for all foreigners, not for Afghans only: Sarfraz Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday clarified that the ultimatum for returning home before November 1 is for all foreigners and not just for Afghan refugees.

Briefing the Senate's Standing Committee on Interior, he said the impression was wrong that only Afghan citizens were being evacuated and after the deadline only passports and visa would be allowed to enter Pakistan.

The minister further apprised the committee that the government had talked about illegal residents, but the wrong message was sent however, its message was not only for Afghan citizens, but for all illegal residents.

He said that no country in the world allowed any nonimmigrant to settle as permanent citizen and start businesses without documentation.

The minister said, the government owned only as a guest if someone had a

refugee card or a valid visa but the impression was given that this was an ethnic issue whereas the government clearly talked about eviction of all illegal residents.

Bugti said that he was not aware of the issue of Biharis living illegally in the country, but the matter would be investigated.

The minister said that the other countries in the world forcefully deport illegal immigrants in accordance with the international and national laws of immigration and citizenship.

Speaking to the media person after the meeting, Bugti said that no extension had been proposed for the date of November 1 given to the people residing illegally in the country.

From November 1, it had to be ensured that anyone coming into the country would bring a passport and those living without visa would be deported with force to their country of origin, he added.



CHAMAN: Caretaker Information Minister of Balochistan Jan Achakzai talking with mediemen

## Jan appeals to political parties to act as bridge between government & masses

**Independent Report**

working to resolve all the genuine issues.

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai to play role of bridge between the government and masses so as to find best solution to their problems.

The Chief Minister said that the interim provincial government is determined to resolve the public issues effectively under the leadership of Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki.

He said that the issues of the masses being confronted in education, health and others would be resolved on priority basis.

Moreover, the issues related to the governance, passport, NADRA and medicines would be resolved at the earliest.

The caretaker Provincial Minister was speaking during meeting with participants of protest dharna in Chaman on Wednesday.

Jan Achakzai maintained that peaceful protest is democratic right of every one, and we are actively

He assured that the provision of basic human requirements would be ensured.

He said that it is second round of the dialogue with participants of dharna, in which the Provincial Minister assured of his wholehearted cooperation for resolving their genuine demands, and agreed to continue the negotiations.

The incumbent government desires to promote trade with its neighbouring countries. The markets would be established at the border so as to promote the trade activities, the Minister said. Moreover, the illegal immigrants would be repatriated to their homeland, however, the people meeting the legal requirements would not be bothered at all, he asserted.

Jan Achakzai also said that the Chief Minister has also constituted a committee for the comprehensive and effective solution to their issues.



QUETTA: Members of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Quetta press club.

## PM for accelerated efforts to curb power theft in AJK, Sindh, Quetta

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to accelerate their efforts to curb electricity theft in Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Sindh and Quetta.

The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on the anti-power theft campaign, also instructed to speed up the solarisation of agriculture tube-wells.

He also sought a comprehensive report on the resistance faced during the anti-power theft drive in Balochistan and other allied issues.

The prime minister told the participants of the meeting that it was the caretaker government's responsibility to leave behind an established system for the next democratic government concerning the steps like anti-power theft campaign.

The prime minister was briefed on the outcomes of the campaign since its launch. He was told that the process was going

on successfully in collaboration with the provincial governments.

It was informed that under the campaign, a total of 19,415 power thieves were arrested and 39,836 First Information Reports were registered against power theft since September. Around 189 government officials had also been suspended over their involvement in the electricity theft.

The meeting was told that the campaign against the electricity theft remained the most successful in Mardan where the power theft ratio declined from 43 percent to 13 percent.

The participants were told that Rs 14 billion had been recovered under the campaign till September 30.

Prime Minister Kakar lauded the performance of the Energy Ministry, power distribution companies, and relevant federal and provincial authorities for the successes achieved in the campaign.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif, and Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi addressing Press Conference.

## Dr Saif highlights govt's revolutionary initiatives for boosting IT exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Dr Umar Saif on Wednesday highlighted the revolutionary initiatives undertaken by the ministry in the last two months to bolster exports of the IT and telecom sectors.

Addressing a press conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, he said the government would provide interest-free loans to free-lancers for establishing e-working centers.

He said each freelancer would receive financial assistance of Rs 100,000 to set up their own e-working center. The initiative was aimed at addressing the challenge of lack of suitable workplaces for freelancers

so that they could work in a conducive and peaceful environment, he added.

Dr Saif asserted that each freelancer could earn upto \$30,000 annually which would significantly contribute to the national economy.

He projected that the measures could increase IT sector's exports by \$3 billion.

The minister said the government was also working for easy access to loans and investments for IT startups, with the expectation of attracting external investments of upto \$1 billion within the next six months.

Referring to the skill gap within the IT workforce, Dr Saif said the Pakistani universities cur-

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QUETTA: Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Sports and Culture Jamal Khan Raisani addressing a press conference at Civil Secretariat.

**REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS**

DAYS REMAINING

**05**

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## Two robbers killed in police encounter

QUETTA (INP): Two robbers were killed, another injured and held after exchange of fire with police in the provincial capital on Tuesday-Wednesday midnight.

The police engaged a three-member gang of robbers fleeing after committing robbery and an encounter took place near Eastern Bypass Bakra Mandi, Quetta.

In cross firing, two robbers were killed and another injured and arrested. The police recovered arms and looted valuables from possession of the killed robbers.

Police said that the killed robbers were involved in robberies, motorcycle and mobile snatching incidents.



Positive Economic Development in past few months due to change in economic policies

ISLAMABAD: Positive Economic Development in past few months due to change in economic policies. Recent changes in economic policies have resulted in positive economic developments, as revealed by key insights gleaned from the provided data.

Increasing Foreign Exchange Reserves : The foreign exchange reserves increased by \$67 million per week, reaching \$7.7 billion in total. In September, this was accompanied by a substantial influx of funds through the Roshan Digital Account (RDA), which exceeded \$6.75 billion.

Investing Inflows : Significant Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) and Chinese investments, comprising \$72.7 million in September 2023 and \$126.3 million in the first three months of fiscal year 2023-24, were attracted to the economy.

Surge in Bank Deposits : Despite negative campaigns, total bank deposits increased by 15.33% year-over-year in September 2023, reaching Rs26.32 trillion compared to Rs22.82 trillion the previous year.

The CPI-based inflation rate is anticipated to decline from 31.4% in September to 26.4% in October, indicating progress in inflation management.

Project Carbon Trading : A recent Carbon Trading (CT) initiative in Sindh's coastal belt generated \$40 million in revenue. This initiative also resulted in the creation of 21,000 positions and had a positive impact on the employment and economic security of 49,000 people.

This analysis reveals a positive trend in the economic landscape, including an increase in foreign exchange reserves, investments, and decrease in inflation. In addition, innovative projects such as the Carbon Trading initiative contribute to the creation of jobs and the improvement of socioeconomic conditions. These recent developments indicate an optimistic economic outlook for the coming months.

Visit of Iranian delegation would deepen cooperation in auto mobile sector between the two sides

ISLAMABAD (PR): H.E. Muhammad Mudassar Tipu, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Iran received a delegation of Iran Union of Automobile Spare Parts Manufacturers & Sellers at the Embassy of Pakistan, Tehran. A 22-member delegation of the Union is visiting Pakistan. This is the first-ever organized visit of representatives of auto parts industry from Iran to Pakistan.



The delegation is visiting Pakistan to attend 'Pakistan Auto Show 2023' being held at Karachi from 27th - 29th October, 2023.

The Ambassador explained the conducive investment regime of Pakistan and urged the delegation to consider entering into joint-ventures with Pakistani companies. He expressed the hope that the visit of the Iranian delegation would result in enhancement of exports of Pakistani auto parts to Iran; imports of cheaper replacements from Iran; and the technology-transfer oriented joint-ventures between the two sides.

He assured the delegation of the complete support of the Embassy of Pakistan Tehran to make their maiden visit to Pakistan successful and productive.

Mr. Afshin Asgharzadeh, the Secretary General of the Union, Dr. Reza Mallaki, Mr. Hamidreza Khakbaz, Mr. Amir Reza Baqalini and Dr. Amir Husain, Trade & Investment Counsellor were present on the occasion.

PTA conducts raid against illegal internet service provider in Layyah

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Office Multan, in close collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), conducted a successful raid against an illegal internet service provider at Layyah.

During the raid, operational internet setup and allied equipment were confiscated, and two people were apprehended by FIA on the spot.

The successful efforts against illegal internet service providers were made possible because of continuous monitoring, commitment, and persistent efforts by the PTA in curbing the menace of illegal internet services, thus curtailing the loss to the national exchequer in terms of tax evasion and misreporting of revenues.

The public is cautioned to avail telecom services from only PTA-licensed operators to avoid sudden discontinuation of service. A list of licensed operators is available at: https://pta.gov.pk/en/industry-support/home/list-of-operators

Dr Saif highlights govt's... Continued from page 1

iterated that he had not sent reference against Justice Isa, as he had received it from the office of former prime minister who also maintained that he was not willing to send it.

Elaborating his viewpoint, the president said that the democratic system in the country was continuing but there was always a danger from a lobby that had been working to project that the democratic system in the country had failed.

"There is need to unite the country. Pardoning and forbearing are the qualities that can build nations," he added.

In the religion of Islam, he said, consultation and public opinion were given due importance and with regard to the democratic system, the Islamic traditions were marvelous, he opined.

About holding of elections in the country, the president said that the matter was subjective before the

courts that would decide the issue. President Alvi termed the number of out of school children, mental health, malnutrition and stunting issues as the grave ones which could not be resolved if they continued their political wrangling.

The president reiterated that two-state was the only solution to Palestine issue, adding on March 23, 1943 two resolutions were passed, one for Pakistan and other for Palestine. Pakistan pursued a policy over Palestine as pronounced by its founder Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he maintained.

Feeling immense grief over a video clip showing a Palestinian child, identifying the bodies of his parents, the president decried it as huge cruelty to the Palestinian people and stressed that no one could accept such inhuman acts. The president said in the Islamic teachings, sanctity was accorded to a human life.

Australia beats Netherlands by 309-run margin in World Cup Sports Desk

NEW DELHI: Continuing their fantastic form, Australia trounced Netherlands, beating them by a whopping 309-runs margin in the 24th match of the ICC World Cup 2023 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi, India, on Wednesday.

Glenn Maxwell smashed the fastest hundred in the history of the 50-overs World Cup as the Aussies thrashed the Dutch in what was their third successive win of the tournament.

Eighteen days after South Africa's Aiden Markram smashed a 49-ball hundred at the same Arun Jaitley Stadium against Sri Lanka, Maxwell took nine balls fewer to bring up his century.

The all-rounder produced a blistering 106 off 44 balls and opener David Warner made 104 as Australia racked up 399-8 after electing to bat.

The five-time champions then returned to bundle out their opponents for 90 in 21 overs, subjecting the Dutch to the biggest defeat in the tournament's history.

Earlier with Travis Head continuing his recovery from a fractured hand, Mitchell Marsh retained his place as Warner's opening partner but did not last long.

The Netherlands began with spin from both ends and Warner smashed Aryan Dutt for four fours in a row to signal his intention early. The feisty left-hander raced to a 91-ball hundred, his second successive ton in the tournament, and took off his helmet and leapt in his trademark celebration.



BEIJING: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and his delegation in a meeting with Mr. Lu Zhaohui, Chairman China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA).

ISSI, Korean Embassy celebrate four decades of Pak-Korea friendship

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea (ROK), here on Wednesday held a Seminar on '40 Years of Friendship-Past, Present and Future between Republic of Korea and Pakistan', where the speakers expressed their admiration of the four decades' long journey of cordial bilateral relations between the two friendly nations.

Minister for Energy, Power & Petroleum, Muhammad Ali was the chief guest on the occasion.

Speakers in the inaugural session included Director of China Pakistan Study Centre ISSI Dr. Talat Shabbir, Korean Ambassador Park Kijun, and ISSI Director General Sohail Mahmood, a news release said. They celebrated Pakistan-Republic of Korea 40-year diplomatic relationship, while highlighting the myriad facets of the strong partnership in various fields, including economic, educational, cultural cooperation, and 'Gandhara connection.'

Dr Talat Shabbir, in his introductory remarks, said that the enduring friendship and collaboration between Pakistan and South Korea, nurtured over four decades, had led to significant progress in bilateral relations. Ambassador Park Kijun, in his remarks, emphasized the historic nature of the occasion, underscoring the robust and amicable ties existing between the two nations. He highlighted the vast potential for mutually beneficial collaboration in diverse fields.

DG ISSI Sohail Mahmood was of the view

that the completion of four decades of Pakistan-Republic of Korea diplomatic ties was, truly, a matter of celebration. He emphasized the extremely friendly and cordial nature of bilateral ties; the steady upward trajectory of the partnership since its inception; and its comprehensive scope, en-

The Working Session I was held to reflect on the 40-year friendship between Korea and Pakistan. The speakers included: Pakistan's Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Nabeel Munir, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, and former ambassador to RoK Shaukat

(Hurry, Hurry), he informed the audience of the work ethic of Korean people that was premised on hard work and fast work.

He noted that Pakistan deeply valued economic development cooperation with Korea. Raja Amer Iqbal discussed Korea's ru-



comprising high-level political and diplomatic exchanges, trade, investments, education, science & technology, defence, cultural cooperation, and people-to-people interactions.

The growth in bilateral trade and investments and the increase in Pakistani students studying in South Korea were also noted. Both nations shared an interest in a peaceful and prosperous South Asia and had collaborated in multilateral forums. While celebrating the progress made thus far, Sohail Mahmood stressed, it was essential to craft a vision for a robust economic partnership centred essentially on enhanced trade, investments, technology, and green transition.

Minister for Energy, Power & Petroleum Muhammad Ali, in his keynote address, emphasized the importance of sustainable energy solutions, research, innovation, and human resource development in advancing shared goals. He highlighted Pakistan's intrinsic strengths and economic growth potential. The minister also stressed that, looking ahead, the next 40 years held great promise with new initiatives on the horizon and a steadfast commitment to sustainable solutions, as both nations were driven by a shared vision of prosperity, sustainability and development.

Mukadam, and former President of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry Raja Amer Iqbal.

Ambassador Nabeel Munir highlighted how the two countries shared family values, a deep sense of community, and a millennia-old bond manifested through the Buddhist tradition and Gandhara civilization. He also emphasized the extensive cooperation between Pakistan and Korea, including in the fields of trade, defence, IT, human resources, and infrastructure.

FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch focused on the historical roots of Pakistan-Korea relations, that dated back to the 5th Century. She commended the contributions of Korean peacekeeping troops in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan believed the two countries could work together to reinforce peace and security in South Asia as well as contribute to understandings that develop peace in the Asia-Pacific.

"There is a lot we can learn from each other due to our mutual experience of hostile neighbours," she concluded. Ambassador Shaukat Mukadam termed economic diplomacy as the bedrock of bilateral relations, with both countries working on hydropower, thermal power, and canal irrigation systems. Quoting an expression from the Korean language 'Pali, Pali'

ral development model, focusing on education, skilled education, and developing a knowledge-based and skilled-based economy. The Working Session II focused on 'Future Initiatives for Further Cooperation.' The speakers included former Korean Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Song Jong-Hwan; Chairman of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed; Director of Archaeology Department, University of Peshawar Dr. Abdul Samad; Vice Chancellor, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad Dr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan; and former ambassador to South Korea Tariq Osman Hyder.

Dr. Samad stressed the need to further the bilateral cultural relations and Gandhara track and to re-establish the missing link that existed before 9/11 between the people of Korea and Pakistan. Dr. Song Jong-Hwan highlighted the increase in positive interactions between the two countries, particularly in trade, investment, and economic cooperation and outlined many areas and specific projects for injecting more content to the relationship. Dr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan suggested that Pakistan needed to invest in high-end technology and make the best use of national and regional markets to become a food-secure country.



NASEERABAD: View of humanitarian aid camp established by Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI-F) for the people of Palestine, at Dera Murad Jamali in Naseerabad.

Dr Saif highlights govt's... Continued from page 1

recently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, but only 2,000 of them managed to secure employment.

The IT Ministry would introduce a standardized quality test in all the universities across Pakistan to ensure job opportunities for fresh graduates, he added.

"We have made significant decisions to revamp IT education in universities in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, the National Computing Accreditation Council, the Examination Testing Council, the Pakistan Software Export Board, and the Pakistan Software Houses Association," Dr. Umar Saif said while emphasizing that students who passed the test would be offered job opportunities through the Industry Placement Programme.

"We will allocate funds to support special industry courses in universities, designed to prepare students in accordance with current industry trends and needs." The minister further explained that the National Computing Accreditation Council would consider the passing rate of students to determine a university's rating.

He stressed the importance of aligning educational

CS directs DCs... Continued from page 1

steps for bringing improvement in the service delivery in their respective departments.

He said that the officers are deputed for the public service and as such they should take steps for provision of the basic facilities to masses at their doorstep.

The Chief Secretary was presiding over the meeting of divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners conference here on Wednesday. The meeting reviewed the situation and matters related to prevention of smuggling of oil, provision of facilities in education and health sectors, price control committee, repatriation of illegal immigrants and action against the electricity pilferers. Those who were present in the meeting were included Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Secretary Industries, Dr Muhammad Akbar Harifal, senior Member Board of Revenue, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Secretary Health, Asfandyar Kakar, Secretary Law, Kalimullah Babar, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafqat, Director General, Levies, Naseebullah Kakar.

The Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners participated in the meeting through video link.

PAKISTAN SPORTS BOARD REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

1. Applications are invited on quality cum cost based selection (QCBS) from well reputed/experienced consultants/firms having registration as Consultant with PEC with upto date renewal to carry out the detailed designing and supervision for the project 'REHABILITATION / UP-GRADATION OF EXISTING FACILITIES AT PSB COACHING CENTRE AT QUETTA'.

2. The RFP documents can be purchased from the office of the undersigned on the payment of fee Rs.7,000/- (non refundable) in the shape of bank draft/pay order in favour of the Director General, Pakistan Sports Board on any working day during office hours till 10-11-2023. Interested parties are required to furnish their applications along with the following information:-

- Name, Address, Telephone / Fax No., Email address & branches office, if any.
National Tax Number / Documentary Proof of firm on ATL.
List of major similar assignments in the each relevant fields undertaken during the last 10 years.
Affidavit to the effect that the firm has not been blacklisted by any Government / Autonomous entities etc.
Registration with professional bodies i.e. PEC/PCATP etc.
Names & CVs of key staff.
Bidding process will be carried out by adopting "Single Stage Two Envelope" procedure of PPR. The proposals complete in all respects, in accordance with the instructions provided in the RFP documents, should reach in sealed envelopes on 13-11-2023 till 1430 hours and Technical Proposals will be opened on the same day at 1500 hours. If bids cannot be opened due to any reasons, then the same will be received and opened on alternative days i.e. 17-11-2023 at 1430 & 1500 hours and 21-11-2023 at 1430 & 1500 hours respectively. While other terms and conditions will remain the same.

3. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids as per PPR Rules 33.

(Muhammad Arshad Javid) PID (I) No. 2507/23
Assistant Engineer
Pakistan Sports Board, Sri Nagar Highway, Aabpara, Islamabad.
Phone: 051-9249027 Fax: 051-9249007

آسامیان خالی ہیں
گورنر ہاؤس کوٹہ، بلوچستان اسلام آباد یا دیگر کراچی میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
مطلوبہ ہیں۔
کراچی (1) ایس کی ایس (B-11)
1
کراچی (2) ایس کی ایس (B-7)
2
موزن (B-5)
3
جوبلی (B-5)
4
نائب قاضی (B-1)
5
اسسٹنٹ ڈپٹی (B-1)
6
غلامی (B-1)
7
غلامی (Fixed) B-1)
8
فرش (B-1)
9
معاونی (B-1)
10
سٹیج (B-1)
11
فرمان (1) ایس کی ایس (B-11) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
کے روئے کے مطابق (2) ایس کی ایس (B-7) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
آزادی چھٹی کارڈ (3) ایس کی ایس (B-5) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
محل درخانی، اشتیاق کے نام سے، گورنر ہاؤس کوٹہ، بلوچستان اسلام آباد یا دیگر کراچی میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
ہے۔ (4) ایس کی ایس (B-5) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
کوٹی ایس کی ایس (B-1) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
درج ہوا ہے۔ (7) صرف ایس کی ایس (B-1) سے 18 سال اور زیادہ سے 30 سال کے درمیان میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
نوش کوٹہ، بلوچستان اسلام آباد یا دیگر کراچی میں سرحدی زون کے آسامیوں کیلئے مستقل بنیادوں پر درخواستیں
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کے لئے درخواستیں کی جائیں۔
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گورنر ہاؤس کوٹہ
PRQ NO.826 / 25-10-2023



## Pakistan has great potentials in solar, wind energy: Ali

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali on Wednesday said that Pakistan had a great potential in solar and wind energy that could reap further benefits. Addressing an event of "40 Years of Friendship-Past, Present and Future between Republic of Korea and Pakistan" as chief guest here, he said Pakistan was going towards digital metering and transmission sector was going through major revamp to attract tremendous investments in the future.

"Pakistan is offering a great opportunity in exploration front and will be looking at gas pipelines and storage facilities," he said.

He mentioned that exploration in Pakistan could be a keen interest of Korea. He expressed his gratitude to the Embassy of Republic of Korea and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI).

The minister said that the remarkable journey of diplomatic collaboration between the two countries that was formally established on November 7,

1983 had touched every facet of the society.

He highlighted the key projects in the energy sector done with the collaboration of South Korea.

Muhammad Ali said that 215 MW Asrit-Kedam Hydropower Project on the Swat River in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) expected to be commissioned in 2028, was being developed by the Korea South-East Power.

Further appreciating the collaboration in energy sector, he highlighted the establishment of Mira Power Limited, a subsidiary of Korea Energy (KOEN), to oversee the design, construction, operation and maintenance of 102MW Gulpur Hydropower plant.

He said the partnership between the two countries was beyond diplomacy as in 2019 South Korea signed a framework agreement with Pakistan to provide \$500 million in Economic Development Co-operation Fund loans for infrastructure development.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the 12th All Pakistan Camp of Pakistan Girl Guides Association (PGGA).

## Every person should get basic know-how of first aid, CPR to save lives: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Wednesday said every person needs to get basic knowledge about first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) to cope with situations in medical emergencies, thus saving lives. Addressing the 12th All Pakistan Camp of Pakistan Girl Guides Association (PGGA) here at its National Headquarters, he said emergency aid on disaster management, first aid, and CPR

could increase the survival rate of a person.

The president stressed that the message of the emergency response plan, which was an integral part of girl guiding, needed to be spread at the levels of schools and colleges.

President Alvi said by being able to provide basic aid, one could stabilize a patient or injured person in case of accidents, earthquakes, or other medical emergencies such as cardiac

arrest, until the medical services arrive. He lauded the vision of the girl guides for positively contributing to society by being ready to offer help to others.

He advised them to also play their role in creating awareness among communities on breast cancer, mainstreaming persons with disabilities, environmental protection, and physical and mental well-being.

He expressed satisfaction that the Pakistan Girl

Guides Association was focusing on the character-building of girls to become useful members of society. However, he pointed out that the number of 140,000 girl guides across the country needed to be increased to expand its scope. Terming women as a strong anchor in a family stressed that educated and healthy women not only raised good generations but also played a vital role in the progress of the country.

## Foundation stone of Pak-China Joint Research Centre laid down at QAU

ISLAMABAD (APP): The foundation stone of the Pak-China Joint Research Center in Earth Sciences was laid at Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) here on Wednesday.

The centre will provide opportunities for research on the top three mountain ranges of the country i.e. the Himalayas, the Hindu Kush and the Karakoram.

On the occasion, the International Conference on Climate Change and Disaster Risk was also started in the university.

In this regard, caretaker Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture Kaiser Abdullah Malik, caretaker Education Minister KP Dr. Qasim Jan, Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, Vice President of Chinese Academy of Sciences Zhang Yaping, Director General Sui Ping and Chairman Higher Education

Commission of Pakistan Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad were participated.

Vice-Chancellor Quaid-e-Azam University Prof. Dr. Niaz Akhtar and President of Pakistan Academy of Sciences

Prof. Dr. Khalid M. Khan were also participated. President Pakistan Academy of Sciences welcomed the participants in the welcome address.

The Government of Pakistan will provide Rs seven billion for the construction of the research centre, while the Chinese government will provide Rs seven billion for the equipment and other needs.

The research centre will provide opportunities for research on all top three mountain ranges in the CPEC route. Chinese and Pakistani scientists will work together in the research centre.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Mushal Husseyn Mullick, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment addressing during Mehfil-e-Milad in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) at Roots International Schools and Colleges.

## Chinese Academy of Sciences, HEC to enhance collaboration

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) on Wednesday visited Higher Education Commission (HEC) to forge collaboration aimed at fostering research, academic excellence and international cooperation.

The CAS delegation was led by its Vice President Prof. ZHANG Yaping and included key representatives from the academy and its affiliates as well as representatives from the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS) and the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC).

In his opening remarks, Chairman HEC Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed focused on four-point agenda including Research and Academic Collaboration, Scholarship Offers to Pakistani Students, Placement of Postdoctoral Students, and Training Programmes.

He emphasised the significance of strong and enduring relationship between China and Pakistan and appreciated Chinese support in economic and political spheres.

He expressed strong enthusiasm for deepening collaboration and maximizing impact from the joint academic ventures.

## Problems of newspaper industry to be resolved on priority: PIO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Principal Information Officer (PIO) Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan has assured a delegation of Rawalpindi Islamabad Bureau Journalists Association (RIBJA) that the problems faced by the newspaper industry would be resolved on priority basis.

The delegation of RIBJA led by its President Sardar Shah Hameed met Principal Information Officer Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan here on Wednesday. The delegation congratulated the PIO on assuming the charge and briefed him on the problems faced by the regional newspapers.

The delegation included Qurban Satti, Syed Asif Hamdani, Rana Zahid Hussain, Nisar Ahmed, Shamim Ara, Raziq Bhatti, Sardar Nisar Tabasum, Muhammad Parvez, Naveed Malik, Sardar Fayyaz and others. On the occasion, the PIO assured the delegation of fair distribution of advertisements among the newspapers.



ISLAMABAD: EDG/PIO Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan in a meeting with a delegation of Rawalpindi Islamabad Bureau Journalists Association (RIBJA) at PID Headquarters.

## President PAL stresses on the power of literature to improve Pakistan's soft image

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) President Dr. Najiba Arif on Wednesday said that at an international level, talent is the positive face of any nation and through literature, we can improve Pakistan's soft image in the global community.

She expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of students from the Department of Pakistan Studies of Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad. She said that literature is the mirror to a society, reflecting its aspirations, challenges, and hopes. It is also a powerful tool for promoting cross-cultural understanding and building bridges between people.

Recognizing the importance of literature in the nation-building process, Dr. Najiba Arif urged students to develop an interest in literature and explore its power to transform lives. Dr. Najeeba Arif emphasized the importance of literature in bridging the gap between the mind and the pen, exploring the complexities of human existence, and bringing to the fore the realities of human.

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik unveiling the plaque to inaugurate the China Pak Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences at Quaid-e-Azam University.

## BISP stands as an exemplary social safety program serving 10 m families : Chairperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib Wednesday said that BISP was an exemplary social safety program serving nearly one million needy families across the country.

He said that BISP was tirelessly caring for its needy beneficiaries with limited resources, embodying the essence of a welfare

state. He expressed these views during his visit to Jamia Masjid Mian Umar Din in Gujranwala, where he addressed gathering of dedicated BISP staff representing districts of Gujranwala, Gujrat, Hafizabad, and Sialkot, said a news release.

Dr. Amjad Saqib emphasized the significance of the cash assistance provided by BISP to the needy families.

## Delegation of Quaid-e-Azam University students visits Safe City Islamabad

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, on special directives of the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer

hub unit, modern technology-equipped cameras, and the police operations center hall. They were fully briefed about the proce-



(ICCPO), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the CPO Safe City/Traffic welcomed the delegation of Quaid-e-Azam University students at the Safe City Islamabad, a public relations officer said. He said that the delegation visits the command and control center, the data

dures and benefits. Furthermore, the delegation was informed that Safe City Islamabad is playing a significant role in various departments through modern techniques, including the Police Operations Center, Emergency Control Center, Data Hub Unit.

## Islamabad Police launch ten-day special campaign with remarkable results

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: In a concerted effort to tackle pending cases and bolster law enforcement, the Islamabad Police, under the guidance of the City Police Officer, initiated a comprehensive ten-day campaign that yielded commendable outcomes.

During the campaign period, the focus was on expediting pending cases, ensuring the completion of prosecutions, and the successful apprehension of wanted criminals, showcasing the department's commitment to maintaining law and order. The latest statistics

revealed a significant headway, with a substantial 979 cases filed in authorized courts over the course of the previous year.

Moreover, the swift action of the authorities led to the arrest of 113 individuals involved in illicit advertisements and the successful capture of 66 absconders from the judicial system. Highlighting the department's consistent efforts, data showed that from 2018 to 2022, a total of 986 pending cases were effectively prosecuted, underscoring the sustained dedication of the Islamabad Police in addressing legal concerns.

## 'World AIDS Day' to be observed with full zeal: Dr Nadeem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan on Wednesday said that the 'World AIDS Day' would be observed on December 1 with full zeal and zest.

He was chairing a preparatory meeting in that regard, which was attended by representatives from Common Management Unit, APLHIV, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO.

The minister said HIV outbreaks typically occurred due to factors like unsafe injection practices, unprotected sexual activity, or the sharing of contaminated needles.

"It is essential to address these issues through education, prevention, and healthcare interventions," he added.

Dr Nadeem said, "We do not want to see another outbreak of HIV like Larkana, Ratodero (Sindh) in 2019," adding the government was committed towards controlling AIDS.

"Our work will ensure that people of all ages, genders, and population groups have equitable access to life-saving HIV prevention and treatment services based on the most up-to-date science," the minister said.

He said that World AIDS Day was a time to show support and solidarity for individuals living with HIV.

"This can include providing information on available resources, support groups, and advocating for the rights and well-being of people with HIV," he added.

## PMA body discusses doctors' issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) Islamabad chapter on Wednesday discussed the problems being faced by the medical practitioners.

The meeting of the executive body of PMA was chaired by President PMA Islamabad chapter Professor Dr. Akhtar Ali Bandisha.

General Secretary PMA Islamabad Dr. Mubashar Mushtaq Dahi and other members of PMA also participated.

It was decided that PMA Islamabad chapter will raise voice for doctors for early address of their outstanding issues by using all relevant forums.

The participants of the meeting agreed that they will take all issues in an appropriate manner and in a democratic way.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Tourism Syed Wasi Ahmad Fatimi meeting with Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IT Professionals at PTDC Head Office.

## Lok Virsa to host fundraiser exhibition for Palestine's victims

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a compassionate display of solidarity, Lok Virsa is set to host a special fundraiser exhibition, uniting Pakistani and international artists in support of Palestinian families. As the world's thoughts and prayers turn towards the afflicted in Palestine, this event is aptly themed 'In the Pursuit of Freedom.'

Citizens are urged to mark their calendars for the fundraiser exhibition, commencing on Saturday, October 28th, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Lok Virsa Gallery in Islamabad. This art showcase will feature the exquisite works of renowned artists such as Alefia Abbas Ali, Nabahat Amin, Faziela Shah, Hanane Kai, Hanis Qayyum, Javeria Ahmed, Javeria Ali, Minna Haroon, Rabia Aijaz, Sakina Akber, Sara Qaed.

## Residents welcome CDA's user-friendly online payment service

ISLAMABAD (APP): The residents of the federal capital have welcomed the initiative of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to introduce a user-friendly online payment service for utility bills as a part of the digitalization process, ensuring customers' convenience.

"The online payment service is set to simplify the payment process for all utility bills to offer a more convenient and efficient way for customers to fulfill their financial responsibilities," said a resident Fatch Muhammad.

He said the advantages of the digital payment service go beyond convenience as allowing residents to pay their utility bills online minimizes the environmen-

tal hazards caused by paper billing and physical transactions.

Another resident, Naseem Begum said that it is a direly needed step towards reducing the use of cash and promoting a more secure and efficient financial system. Such steps bring ease and comfort in the lives of the general public and ensure a safe and secure payment system which are important at a time when societies are becoming cashless. Another user of this online facility, Shagufta Mehmood who is a working woman said that today is the era of digitalization and all institutions and departments must adopt digital.

## NCRC arranges meeting on child rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Commission on Rights of Child (NCRC) Wednesday arranged a significant consultative meeting of "Working Group of Religious Scholars on Child Rights."

The NCRC, an independent statutory body, was established by the government to advocate and protect the rights of children, in accordance with the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017.

The primary objective of this working group is to deliberate on issues pertaining to child rights, drawing upon the collective wisdom and expertise of esteemed religious scholars.

The formation of the working group of religious scholars on child rights is a significant step forward in the mission to safeguard the rights and welfare of children.

The meeting deliberated on critical intersection of religious teachings and child rights.

The scholars emphasized the protection of children's rights, fostering a shared vision for a brighter future for the nation's children.

The religious scholars highlighted the role of religious education for promoting child rights. They discussed strategies to disseminate awareness and engage in community-based initiatives that advocated for the rights and well-being of children.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of the Police personals are deployed around the U.S Embassy during Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba Pakistan rally toward U.S Embassy from Aabpara chowk against Israeli airstrikes on Gaza and to show solidarity with the Palestinian people, in Federal Capital.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Thursday October 26, 2023

## Military courts

With a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court unanimously ruling that all civilians accused of involvement in "events arising from and out of" May 9 and 10 be tried by criminal courts instead of under the Army Act, the state would be better off honouring the verdict instead of finding new ways to work around it.

The superior judiciary has taken a rather dim view of the security forces' decision to court-martial civilians, whose crimes involved rioting and vandalism of state property — including military infrastructure.

This measure had seemed quite excessive even when it was first announced, but has now been deemed unlawful as well.

Not only that, the majority of the bench has held that the provisions of the Army Act which allowed for it to be applied to civilians, in certain cases, are ultra vires the Constitution, and, therefore, without any legal effect. Thus, a solid legal line has been drawn between the civilian and military domains.

Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan has said that the federal government will appeal the decision under the recently validated Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023. Before proceeding, the government should be asked: to what end?

Separately, some experts believe that the cases being tried under military courts will now end up in special courts instead of ordinary courts because the accused may be charged with violating the Official Secrets Act. This will ensure that proceedings remain opaque and the accused are tried under charges much more serious than their alleged crimes appear to be.

Again: why, and to what end? There is no question that some overzealous individuals took political agitation against the arrest of their leader much too far, crossing lines that should never have been crossed.

But does this mean they ought to be treated on a par with actual traitors, enemy combatants, and foreign spies? Do the convictions being sought really fit their crimes?

There are laws aplenty to deal with those involved in rioting and vandalism; there is no need for an intervention by elements outside the civilian domain. If any wrong has been committed against any state institution, the matter should be taken to the country's judiciary for redress.

The massive imbalance of power between ordinary citizens and the establishment would have worsened if the latter was allowed to sit in judgement over the former. It is encouraging to see the Supreme Court take a firm stance on the matter. One hopes that the cases of those who have been languishing behind bars for the last many months will be resolved by the civil courts soon. Meanwhile, bigger issues need our attention, the most important one being what is to be done regarding those who have made a mockery of the Constitution over the past few months.



**Zahid Hussain**

Call it a game of chess, or musical chairs. It has long been played on the country's political stage. The pawn is interchangeable, and so is the occupant of the chair. Nawaz Sharif's return after four years of self-exile seems very much a part of the plot.

It was certainly not the homecoming of the dissenter that the former prime minister appeared to be when he was allowed by the court to go abroad for medical treatment under a pledge that he would return to the country to serve his sentence.

He has now returned four years later to VVIP protocol, signifying the changing sands of Pakistani politics. Proclaimed an absconder, Nawaz Sharif was already granted bail by the court before he landed at

Islamabad airport. Ahead of the elections, his supporters believe that a fourth term as prime minister is assured.

Predictably, his speech at Lahore's Minar-i-Pakistan lacked defiance and anti-establishment rhetoric. It was more about the personal grief he went through while in detention. There was no mention of 'vote ko izzat do' as long as he was back in the good books of the powers that be.

It was indeed an impressive show in terms of the crowd bussed in from across the province, but mass fervour was missing. It was not the kind of welcome usually given to popular leaders. He has returned to a country that has changed over the past few years. The stage for Sharif's return was set after the formation of the PML-N-led government, with his brother as prime minister following the ouster of the PTI government in April 2022.

It was a dramatic shift in Pakistani politics with the end of the hybrid rule under Imran Khan. It brought together the PML-N and the establishment in

a new power arrangement. Sharif waited for another 18 months to get all the legal hurdles removed before ending his self-exile and making a bid for another term in the top office. It was a done deal.

There was nothing unusual about this shifting alignment in Pakistan's political power game. The fall from grace of Imran Khan led to another round of hybrid rule, with the return of the PML-N as the establishment's partner.

While Shehbaz Sharif was the prime minister, it was the elder brother who ruled from London. Every important policy decision needed the approval of the elder Sharif. His closest confidant and a family member returned as the country's economic czar.

In an ironic twist of events, it was now the turn of the PTI and its leadership to face persecution. The ruthless crackdown on the opposition has few parallels in the country's chequered political history. Now, Imran Khan is incarcerated and facing a litany of charges, including sedition, which may bar him from taking part in the elections. The en-

forced disappearances and illegal detentions have resulted in the virtual disintegration of arguably the most popular party in the country, which is also the PML-N's main rival.

It is evident that the planned decimation of the PTI has the blessing of the PML-N, so it was not surprising that there was no mention in Nawaz Sharif's speech about democracy and civilian supremacy.

Soon after his return, a special court indicted Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi under the Official Secrets Act in the cipher case. The removal from the electoral scene of his most powerful adversary has cleared the way for Sharif's planned return to power.

One thing is clear: the three-time prime minister, who was never allowed to complete his full term in office in the past, seems to have not learnt any lesson from his own history and is happy to accept a helping hand from the establishment. Pre-election manipulation may provide the PML-N with a clear field. But it

will also further weaken the democratic process as well as strengthen non-elected forces. History is repeating itself — more as a farce.

Despite his favourable situation, Sharif still has many hurdles to overcome. There is a long way to go before he can get the coveted post for a fourth term. There are some legal questions about his eligibility to contest in elections so long as his conviction remains. A recent Supreme Court ruling closed the window for a review petition regarding his conviction. It is going to be a long legal battle for him to be cleared.

Nawaz Sharif's return will certainly help restore some confidence to the party rank and file. But it is not clear whether he would be able to mobilise mass support in the changing political and social environment, despite the establishment's tacit support and the planned elimination of the PTI from the electoral scene. The prospect appears even bleaker with the disastrous performance of the PML-N-led

coalition government that stepped down in August to make way for the caretaker set-up.

It will be difficult for the party to go into elections without fresh ideas or a concrete programme to help it win back the support of its erstwhile political power base. Nawaz Sharif's speech on his return was full of rhetoric, extolling his previous government's performance, which remains questionable. Moreover, he cannot disassociate himself and his party from the failed policies of the PML-N-led coalition government that worsened the financial and economic crises as well as the soaring inflation.

What the PML-N leadership has not realised is that the young generation and the urban middle classes are looking for a change in the status quo. Nawaz Sharif's speech did not give any indication of his willingness to change course. The party can come to power with the support of the establishment through dubious elections. But it cannot bring political stability to the country. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Trying for a fourth term

## How do we navigate Generative AI?



**Dr Muhammad Usman Ilyas**

The trickster and Titan Prometheus stole fire from the gods of Olympus and gifted it, together with the skills to use it, to humans. In this tale, fire is a metaphor for technology, art, and knowledge — all the things that enabled the development of human civilization.

Angered by yet another transgression, Zeus had Prometheus captured and chained to a rock in a desolate mountainous area and, after some years, tormented daily by sending an eagle that ate his liver which would regrow overnight, only to be eaten again the next day. For good measure, Zeus also punished humans by sending them Pandora, the first woman, along with a box — Pandora's box — filled with all the troubles and woes that ail the world today and instructions to never open it, which she

famously disobeyed.

We are soon coming upon the one-year mark when, like Prometheus, OpenAI released ChatGPT 3.5 and put the capabilities of a sophisticated Large Language Model (LLM) — which heretofore were the almost exclusive domain of big-tech companies, AI researchers and hobbyists — into the hands of everyone with an Internet connection and a computer or smartphone. LLMs take a string of text as input and produce an appropriate series of words as output. They are one of a broader category of AI models called Generative AI (GenAI) models that can take text, audio, images, or videos as input and produce output in one of those forms. LLMs are GenAI models that take text (a prompt message) as input and produce text as output.

While the world can enjoy Prometheus' gift and the ease it brings, the challenge of closing the Pandora's box that came with it has fallen largely on academics. The realization that the price for a world with better-composed emails and blog posts would be paid by the education sector — schools, colleges,

and universities — was immediate. Ubiquitous access to LLMs — first OpenAI's ChatGPT 3.5, followed by its improved version 4.0 (available by subscription and soon to be integrated with DALL-E 3, its text-to-image generator), Google's Bard AI, Microsoft's new Bing and Microsoft 365 Copilot — has, for those seeking shortcuts, reduced the formerly intimidating task of essay writing that students work on for weeks to a matter of recursively crafting a good input prompt. A job that may take a student hours or days can be reduced to mere minutes.

Educational institutes of all levels are now left with the task of figuring out how to adapt their teaching and assessment of student learning in a post-ChatGPT world. Should students be permitted unfettered use of LLMs like ChatGPT or should it be banned or something in between? These and other questions have been occupying academia for all of this year.

Flare-ups of technophobia in education are not new. The invention of the typewriter brought fears that students would no longer bother learning to

write. Pocket calculators were feared because they would leave students incapable of performing arithmetic calculations. Gel and ball pens would ruin students' handwriting scripts. Scientific calculators would deprive them of the ability to use slide rules and log tables. Computers and the Internet would kill library skills. Spell checkers would make students forget correct spelling and punctuation rules. Like in eras past, the world is not about to put a blanket ban on LLMs while there are so many positive use cases for them because they pose a challenge to educators.

While some countries are trying to develop a national policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like LLMs in government, education and other sectors, there are others where universities are understood to be autonomous, and the decision of how to deal with their availability is being left to them.

In the UK, universities of the Russell Group — an association of the UK's 24 leading universities that include Oxford, Cambridge, the University of Birmingham, Edinburgh, Imperial College London, King's

College, the London School of Economics and Political Science, etc — have developed a common set of guidelines for 'Generative AI and its role within teaching, learning, and assessment' (GenAI Guidelines, for short). These guidelines are not the result of reflexive action but were developed after much deliberation. These are worth paying attention to because of the reputations and number of the universities that contributed to their development means they are likely to inform and influence policies and guidelines other countries and universities will adopt for their own use.

The Russell Group's GAI guidelines are based on five principles. First, universities 'will support students and staff to become AI-literate.' This means being aware of the fact that information passed to an AI tool as input could possibly be retained and used to further fine-tune its operation. All AI systems are trained on data which means biases and lack of diversity in the training data will reflect in the output produced by GenAI tools. In addition to being biased, the output produced can be factually

wrong, what is also called a 'hallucination', as many have demonstrated on the latest wave of LLMs.

AI systems are also unaware of any ethics codes that their users operate under. While LLMs usually do not perform something as crude as a copy-paste, the outputs they produce are a very complex, almost unexplainable, function of the training data they were fed in training phases. That means that there remains a risk of plagiarism. In any case, the output produced by a GenAI tool is not considered the work product of the user giving input prompts. Finally, universities 'will work collaboratively to share best practices as the technology and its application in education evolves'. Experience sharing for the sake of gradual and continuous improvement is a common practice in education, even when there are no new disruptive technologies to adapt to.

Together, these five principles add up to a clear-eyed approach that neither declares an outright prohibition in education nor an unconditional surrender granting blanket permission to use Prometheus' gift. -- Courtesy TheNews

## The anti-colonialist



**Rafia Zakaria**

The history of South Asia and most other outposts of the British (or the Dutch or French) is replete with the struggles of the ancestors of contemporary populations against colonisers who occupied the subcontinent for over two centuries.

The sum total of post-colonial history taught in most of the countries created as the sun set on the British Empire are, in fact, a compendium of the struggles of heroic fighters and thinkers who paved the way for independence.

Generations of people educated in these post-colonial nations have grown up with a consciousness of a once-glorious past that was interrupted by the machinations of colonial powers, who inveigled their way into South Asia or Africa or any of the many other places that were 'discovered' by white explorers in their quest to find resources to monopolise, people to subjugate, and lands to occupy.

The advent of the British East India Company or the Dutch East India Company saw the deployment of 'trade' interests that sought to amass raw material that the future colonisers set about gathering up.

Everyone knows what happened next: trade gave way to administration, and doddering monarchies or tribal kingdoms were converted into colonies that were administered and then ruled by the white men who had first presented their presence and their intentions as benign.

The history of colonialism and the fact that it led to the looting of vast portions of the world for the benefit of white and Western home populations is thus well known by those who suffered under the yoke of colonial occupation. It is, however, markedly less well known by the populations of colonising nations.

In the UK, many still insist that the British colonisers were 'benevolent' and brought only good things to the subcontinent, notwithstanding the compelling evidence of carnage or pillage of former colonies. There is still less awareness of the hobbling of long-existing systems of law, administration and cultural production that followed colonisation.

Academic departments in the UK and US have attempted to correct this incorrect recollection of the past. In the American context, post-colonial historians have focused on the lie behind the much-popularised premise that the explorer Christopher Columbus 'discovered' America as an example of how the presence of Native Americans has been erased in American history to give the impression that America was somehow less real until the white colonisers arrived.

They have also focused on the systematic annihilation of Native Americans by white settler-colonialists so that a vast continent would become their own.

For all the good intentions of post-colonial historians, their efforts of the past half century have seemed mostly futile. Why, many readers of post-colonial history wondered, would anyone care about how the white and Western world had amassed its cultural, historical and material wealth when they did not have to.

Several demographic and racial transformations

of the Western world have occurred over the years. In the UK, British Muslim populations — the progeny of labourers who had migrated from Pakistan, entered a third generation. The children of the formerly colonised are now a part of the former colonial power.

In the US, the efforts of Black Americans, whose ancestors had been forced onto ships as human cargo of the Atlantic slave trade, exposed how so much of the country had been built by the formerly enslaved. The exploitation of these slaves and the organised campaign against Native Americans took place simultaneously.

In the case of Native Americans, historians pointed out, entire tribes were decimated and their lands taken over and occupied, often through the use of despicable tactics such as distributing blankets infected with smallpox.

In the UK, the demographics of cities like London, which now have large Muslim populations, have also contributed to an otherwise unprecedented groundswell of support. Of course, other factors, such as the availability of Palestinian voices on social media, have bolstered sympathy for them too.

Similarly, American misadventures in Afghanistan and Iraq have made young people far more sceptical of occupation by colonialists than their ancestors might have been.

Even so, the change in world opinion and the willingness of protesters to denounce what Israel has done to promote an apartheid state, signal the possibility that the critique of history put forth by the formerly conquered and colonised may finally have seeped into the world's consciousness. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Past is prelude



**Mahir Ali**

Someone encountering the Middle East conflict for the first time in the current pages of the Western media could be excused for assuming that Palestinian-Israeli history began on Oct 7, 2023, with the spectacular Hamas breakout that led to unconscionable acts of violence in Kibbutzim adjacent to the Gaza Strip.

Some of the victims, murdered or abducted, were peace activists, with mentalities far removed from the belligerent attitudes of all too many illegal West Bank settlers. Primarily, though, they were human beings subjected to the kind of violence no one should have to endure. Much the same could be said about what Palestinians have been subjected to since 1948, with the effort redoubled in 1967.

But in reckoning with what became of Palestine, one should go back at least to the Balfour Declaration, 1917, wherein colonial Britain offered Zionists a homeland for European Jews, who suffered under outrageous anti-Semitism long before the Nazis emerged and adopted extermination as an exemplar of extreme misanthropy.

Before adopting the unspeakable concept of a 'final solution', however, the Nazis toyed with the idea of mass expulsion. Madagascar was once seen as a possible destination, and they weren't entirely averse to Palestine as an alternative. This led to a degree of Nazi-Zionist collaboration, which has been anathematised as a wicked lie despite historical evi-

dence. The campaign wasn't successful, because most German and other European Jews preferred the idea of emigrating elsewhere, including the US and UK. A possibly apocryphal anecdote from the 19<sup>th</sup> century mentions a couple of emissaries to the 'promised land' who reported to the rabbis in Vienna: "The bride is beautiful, but she is already married to another man."

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Zionists who leaned towards communism and fantasised about establishing a country where they would resist the depredations of both Jewish and Arab capitalists by teaming up with the Palestinian proletariat were opposed by other Jewish groups represented at the first few Comintern congresses.

More broadly, though, the backing for the establishment of Israel by its initial advocates in many cases had less to do with belated empathy for the Jews than with the wish they would go away. At the same time, Stalinist Soviet Union and its supporters in the West, especially the US, were enthusiastic about the Israeli project at its inception.

Some were able to look past their blind spots. Others, including the Anglo-Saxon Five Eyes nations and Germany and France, choose to let Israel get away with murder. The collective punishment being inflicted on Gaza, supposedly with the aim of obliterating Hamas, has many antecedents. The Nazis were particularly enthusiastic — Lidice on the outskirts of Prague, in what is now the Czech Republic, and Oradour-sur-Glane stand out as particularly egregious revanchist massacres — but it carried on despite the 'never again' vows, with the US and its allies establishing landmarks from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan. So it should come as no surprise that Israel's emergence as an

expert raises few hackles.

It does help to explain, though, why far-right groups and governments from the US and Europe to India and even the Middle East admire Israel's ruthless pursuit of ethno-nationalist fantasies, even though it can involve murky moral compromises. The mainstream Western media, for instance, is unlikely to delve too deeply into Israel's facilitation of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s as a counterweight to the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The success of this strategy led to Hamas, a Brother-hood offshoot, winning the 2006 Palestinian elections — and then being denied the democratic right to rule via the Palestinian Authority.

It took over Gaza from Fatah after Israel vacated the tiny territory in 2005 without ceding control of its borders. Given that Gaza was abandoned precisely because Ariel Sharon wanted to abandon negotiations over the West Bank, everything went according to plan. As recently as four years ago, Benjamin Netanyahu told his Likud associates: "Those who want to thwart the possibility of a Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas and the transfer of money to Hamas. This is part of our strategy." That strategy came undone earlier this month and, unlike his military and intelligence chiefs, Netanyahu has not apologised to his compatriots for his government's negligence. But when heads eventually roll for an unforgivable lack of foresight, the prime minister is unlikely to survive. Meanwhile, it would be interesting to see the reaction if Hamas were to throw back at Israel an amended version of Golda Meir's infamous words: "We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children." -- Courtesy Dawn



## Chief Minister says KP to extend all possible support to foreign investors

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has said that the provincial government will always welcome foreign investment for the development of the province and well-being of its people; and will extend all possible support to foreign investors willing to invest here.

He was talking to a delegation of US-based private investor firms, which called on him here

on Wednesday and discussed with him matters related to investment in various sectors in the province. Caretaker Provincial Minister for ST & IT, Dr. Najebullah and other relevant authorities were also present on the occasion. He said that since the province has suffered a lot due to regional issues prevailing for the last so many decades, and as such it needs more and more investment, especially in the field of Science & Technology and

Information Technology and there is a lot of scope for foreign investment in these sectors in the province adding that the overall environment for foreign investment is also conducive in the province.

It was informed on the occasion that TRAM- a US-based investment firm has agreed to invest in a fund worth 100 million US dollars for the development and growth of startups and growing companies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; and an MoU to this effect has

already been signed between the department of ST & IT and TRAM.

It was further told that the investment will be across a range of sectors including Information Technology, Fin-Tech, Bio-Tech and Artificial Intelligence.

Similarly, the department of ST&IT has inked an MoU with another US-based company with the aim of rolling out its proven business model in the region and accelerating digital transformation.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tesori presiding over the meeting of the vice chancellors of the government universities of the province at Governor House.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman inspecting different projects at Pak Water & Energy Expo at Expo Center Lahore.

## Sindh governor lauds contributions of Jamia-Tur-Rasheed

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday visited Jamia-tur-Rasheed, a renowned educational institution headed by Mufti Abdul Raheem.

The governor while addressing on the occasion said that he was indebted for the love, affection and prayers of Mufti Abdul Raheem who has always been very kind.

"All my welfare projects during the last year as Governor, are due to the guidance of Mufti Abdul Raheem, who motivated me to serve the masses without any discrimination", he added. He said that Mufti Abdul Raheem has established this unique

institution, where religious and contemporary education is being imparted under one roof.

The governor said that he was very proud that the charter of Al-Ghazali University was granted by his signatures. "I am positive that Al-Ghazali University would turn out to be a remarkable place of learning like Jamia-tur-Rasheed.

He said that Pakistan currently facing economic hardship and "we must all unite on a one-point agenda of reviving our economy".

The governor assured that he would extend all possible help and assistance to Jamia-tur-Rasheed and Al-Ghazali University.

## In collaboration with all stakeholders SFA committed to improve health status through better nutrition in Sindh: Agha

KARACHI: Annual Progress Review Meeting - Large Scale Food Fortification Program was held at a local hotel. Meeting was presided by Agha Fakhur Hussain,

progress, address the challenges, and make necessary course corrections for effective implementation of the food fortification program, particularly Wheat Flour Fortification Program in



General Sindh Food Authority, Government of Sindh while other stakeholders Nutrition International, Pakistan Flour Mills Association, Sindh Chakki Association, Innovita Nutrition, DSM Human Nutrition and Health, Sunridge Flour Mills.

Dated also attended the meeting. The objectives of the meeting were to review

Sindh province, to sensitize and advocate enabling policies for smooth implementation of Sindh Food Fortification Act and to do advocacy for allocation of adequate resources for effective enforcement and Quality Assurance and Quality Control. All the stakeholders presented their progress on nutrition interventions in Sindh and in Pakistan.

## Physical fitness very important in stressful times: Dr. Javed

LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Health Ministers Professor Dr. Javed Akram and Dr. Jamal Nasir attended the annual sports day ceremony of Fatima Jinnah Medical University as special guests. Vice Chancellor King Edward Medical University Prof. Dr. Mahmood Ayaz, Vice Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Medical University Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Pro Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Kamran Khalid, Registrar Prof. Dr. Nadeem,

Principal Prof. Dr. Noreen Akmal and a large number of students including faculty members of FPMU. Provincial Health Ministers Prof. Dr. Javed Akram and Dr. Jamal Nasir also distributed trophies and cash prizes among the children who won the first, second and third positions in the annual sports day of Fatima Jinnah Medical University.

In his address to the participants of the event, the caretaker provincial health minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram said.

## CM Punjab directs to complete safe city projects within stipulated time

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi while issuing directions to complete the Safe City projects of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala within stipulated period of time stated that the process of purchasing necessary equipment along with construction of buildings should be timely completed.

Communication & Works Department should ensure completion of the construction of building within stipulated time. CM directed the RPOs of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala to personally oversee the projects. CM stated that all cameras of Lahore Safe City Project will be made functional at the earliest. CM presided over an important meeting at the Punjab Safe City

Authority Office in which progress was reviewed on the Safe City projects of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala. The proposals to bring improvements in the Emergency Services 15 and making paperless working of the Punjab Safe City Authority were reviewed during the meeting. CM was informed during the briefing that 2000 cameras will be made functional by the first week of November in Lahore. IG Police gave a briefing with regard to progress being made in the Safe City Projects of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala. Chief Secretary, IG Police, Addl IG Special Branch, Secretary Regulations, CCPO, Secretary Finance, Secretary C&W, MD Punjab Safe City Authority and concerned officers attended the meeting.

## PFA stops production of five bakeries in Lahore.

LAHORE: The enforcement teams of the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) on Wednesday stopped the production of five well-known bakeries on quality parameters and violations of the labelling laws during different raids in the provincial metropolis. On the directions of PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar, food safety teams

launched an inspection drive against bakeries in Lahore to ensure the provision of adulteration-free food. The teams thoroughly inspected the hygiene, food quality and safety standards during a daylong operation.

Raja Jahangir Anwar said that the authority shut down the production units of five bakeries on Dil Muhammad Road, Defence Road.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hajji Ghulam Ali condoling with Afghan Consul General Hafiz Mohibullah Shakir over deaths caused by earthquake in Afghanistan.

## Governor visits Afghan Consulate to condole over deaths in earthquake

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Hajji Ghulam Ali here on Wednesday visited the Afghan Consulate and met with Consul General, Hafiz Muhib Ullah Shakir.

A statement from the Governor's House, said the Governor expressed heartfelt sympathies over the deaths and destruction of over 50000 homes and buildings due to an earthquake in the Herat province of Afghanistan.

The Governor on his behalf and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa extended condolences to the Afghan Consul General and said we equally share the grief of Afghan people and government at this critical hour.

The Governor said Afghanistan was our brotherly neighboring country and both the people share the common moments of grief and happiness.

The Afghan Consul General thanked the Governor for visiting the consulate and said we were thankful to the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for sharing our grief and providing services and respect to the people of Afghanistan.

The Afghan Consul General also shared his suggestions about repatriation of the Afghan people from Pakistan, upon which, the Governor assured to convey the same to the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

## Governor Punjab says Conducive environment for business community vital to development of the country

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended the opening ceremony of Pak Water and Energy Expo at Expo Center Lahore on Wednesday as a special guest.

Addressing the ceremony, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said a conducive environment for the business community is vital to the development of the country.

He said that such exhibitions create opportunities for the business community to show case their products, which contribute positively to the economy. He said that such activities give opportunities to business community and institutions to foster opportunities for exchange of technology and innovative solutions.

Governor Punjab said that in this exhibition, national and international

companies are exhibiting their products and offering innovative solutions, new technology in water, energy, and environment sectors. He said that water plays a very important role in our lives. He said that provision of clean water reduces the burden on the health sector. Governor Punjab said that the sewage water should also be put in the rivers after cleaning. He said that it is a matter of great honour that the products of Pakistani.

## Drug control officials for inspection of medical stores in Kohat

KOHAT (APP): Drug Inspector Kohat Muhammad Irfan Wazir, along with the officials of Drug Control Kohat, conducted a detailed inspection of medical stores here in Kohat on Wednesday. According to the DC office, on the instruction of Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir, Drug Inspector Kohat Muhammad Irfan Wazir, along with the officials of the Drug Control Team, conducted a detailed inspection of medical stores in Behramabad.



MOHENJO DARO: A delegation of US and Canada tourists are visiting and expressed keen interest in the historical ruins of the World Heritage Monuments of Mohenjo Daro.

## Caretaker CM Sindh pays surprise visit to Civil Hospital Khairpur

SUKKUR (APP): The Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Rtd) Maqbool Baqer on Wednesday visited the Khairpur Medical College Hospital and inspected its Emergency Ward.

The chief minister expressed anger over the hospital administration and stated that despite of annual budget of Rs 430 million of the Hospital, there was no oxygen. There are monitors, stretchers lying in disarray, not even a bed sheet on a stretcher, he said.

The chief minister also examined the nebulizer, suction machine

which was lying on the floor. All the machines are dirty and in bad condition, while the film unit of the X-ray machine of Khairpur Civil Hospital has been also found to be very dirty, said the CM.

The staff told the chief minister that the MRI and CT scan machines had not arrived and said that food was prepared for 300 people daily in the Hospital.

The chief minister directed for immediate transfer of MS Civil Hospital Khairpur and the suspension of its Director Finance.



MUZZAFFERABAD: Students are attending the classes at open air schools in the different areas of the Azad Kashmir, as after millions rupees of education fund, students are studying with building.

## CM's aide Dr. Riaz Anwar advocates thalassemia awareness at RMI event

PESHAWAR: Rahman Medical Institute (RMI) on Wednesday held Thalassemia Awareness event to educate the community about this devastating genetic blood disorder. Dr. Riaz Anwar, Special Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister on Health, graced the event as guest of honour.

Addressing the gathering, he emphasized the critical need to raise public awareness about thalassemia as a means of combating the disease's prevalence. He urged the public to undergo thalassemia screenings, particularly before marriage, to safeguard the future generations from its devastating consequences.

Shafiq ur Rahman, Chief Executive Officer of RMI, highlighted his institute's ongoing efforts in thalassemia prevention and awareness. He informed that RMI is committed to screening more than two thousand children, and later they will work as ambassadors to bolster the campaign against thalassemia.

Dr. Shah Taj Khan, Head of Pathology at RMI, drew attention to the lack of government-level data on thalassemia, despite its prevalence. She pointed out that by venturing into every district in the province, children affected by thalassemia can be identified. Dr. Khan expressed concern over the higher incidence of thalassemia in Peshawar,

## RDA issues notices to 13 illegal housing societies

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG), Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa has issued notices to 13 illegal housing societies.

According to a RDA spokesman, the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA had issued notices to the owners of 13 illegal private housing schemes namely the Royal Garden City, Chakri road.



KARACHI: Women activists of Jamaat-i-Islami take part in a rally to express solidarity with Palestinians.



## Chief Manager SBP says Immediate steps being taken to strengthen economy, facilitate business community

FAISALABAD (APP): Economy has been put on the revival track while State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will take immediate practical and result-oriented steps in consultation with Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) to further strengthen the economy and facilitate the business community, said Waqas Kashif Bajwa Chief Manager SBP Faisalabad.

Addressing a meeting at FCCI, he said that the bank-related complaints are resolved expeditiously while the office of Banking Ombudsman is also operational in Faisalabad. However, industrial and commercial sectors must be given awareness about this institution so that they could avail from its presence.

He said that Islamic banks are earning more profit as compared to the conventional banks.

“However, the market forces may play its role in equitable distribution of profit after all banks are switched over to the Islamic banking by the year 2027”, he said and added that the SBP has fined many banks on unethical practices and its amount has been deposited in the charity head.

He said that the SBP is encouraging Islamic banking and in this connection, he could arrange a meeting of Sharia experts with FCCI members in order to dispel their apprehensions.

He stressed the need to enhance linkages and connectivity with the business community and said that FCCI is the right forum to cultivate cordial relations between SBP and business community.

Regarding delayed opening of LCs, he requested President FCCI to pinpoint a specific case so that the action could be

initiated instantly. “The complaints beyond their mandate could be forwarded to the head office for necessary action”, he opined.

President FCCI Dr. Khurram Tariq explained in detail the prevailing economic situation and said that improvement is imminent which is expected to be consolidated in the second half of 2024.

He said that smuggling has been plugged which would generate economic activity within the country. “The balance of payment is also expected to further improve”, he said and added that marked difference in gas prices between Punjab and Sindh would also be trimmed to minimum. He said that the SBP should focus on the early refund of DLT cases. “Due to the shortage of dollars, the government has banned unnecessary imports which may trigger smuggling”.



ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Australia H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkins called on Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad.

## Canadian firm expresses interest to invest in KP mining sector

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: A high-level delegation of Canadian Mineral Sector Investment Company “TYTAN COPPER”, called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamir Abdullah, here in his office, at Civil Secretariat Peshawar and expressed their interest in investing in the mineral sector of the province.

The delegation was headed by chairman of the company, David Michael Thompson, while Secretary of Mines and Mineral Development,

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Hamidullah Shah, Director Exploration Muhammad Amir, and other relevant officers were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Canadian company informed the caretaker minister about its activities in various sectors of minerals and expressed its desire to invest in the mineral sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially related to copper deposits.

The delegation told the caretaker minister that the same company wants to invest in the province in mineral exploration and safe mining of Cooper precious natural resources

in accordance with international standards in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and desirous to work with province in exploration and mining of this mineral.

During the meeting, the delegation indicated that the company can also invest in marble and granite in the province.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister welcomed the Canadian investor delegation to invest in the province and said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government values foreign investment in the province and assured them that investing here would be beneficial for the economic prosperity of the province.



PESHAWAR: Members of All Pakistan CNG Association are holding protest demonstration against CNG Tariff hike, at University road in Peshawar

## KP Secretary Livestock chairs meeting on digitizing livestock records in public sector

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Dr. Muhammad Israr, Secretary of the Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperative Department, presided over a meeting in Peshawar to deliberate on the digitalization of public sector livestock management.

The discussion encompassed topics such as animal records, production, nutrition, disease prevention, health, management, and farm assets, drawing inspiration from the Tele farming model implemented by the Agriculture Extension Department.

Attendees included Dr. Muhammad Ijaz Ali, the Director General of Livestock Research, Asghar Khan, Additional Secretary of Livestock, Farhan Khan, Registrar of Cooperative, and officers from the livestock, fisheries, and agriculture departments. Secretary Dr. Israr underscored the necessity of transitioning

from paper-based record-keeping to a real-time database that offers swift access to comprehensive livestock and farm information. In pursuit of this digitalization endeavour, experts from the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) and the Agriculture Department were invited for their subject matter expertise.

Dr. Asim Ijaz, Director General of BISP, presented the features of a digital services platform system and offered suggestions for enhancing existing modules. He committed to cooperating in the digitization of livestock farms, aligning them with the BISP database model as required.

Additional Secretary Asghar Khan, responsible for the proposed digitization project, briefed the gathering on various aspects and the work plan within the Annual Development Program (ADP).

## Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, Maersk Detroit, MSC Yukta-X, Ardmore Chippewa, SinarMalahayati, Leader and Kanha, carrying Containers, Palm oil, Chemicals, Mogas and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal, FOTCO Terminal and Sui Southern Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile two more ships, Amalia and Marangas Kalymnos carrying Gasoline and LNG are also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port on today morning. A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Serene Amelia, SinarMalahayati and Maersk Detroit are expected to sail on today.

Cargo volume of 114,670 tonnes, comprising 92,761 tonnes imports cargo and 21,909 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 4,304 Containers (3,383 TEUs Imports and 921 TEUs export).

## Omani CG congratulates Star Chef for organizing “Pak Culinary Summit”

KARACHI (APP): The Consul General of the Sultanate of Oman in Karachi, Sami Abdullah Saleem AlKhanjari has said that the award ceremony organized by “Star Chef” was a good effort and he came here to see different Pakistani food, that was tasty, in Oman.

Talking to the media on the occasion of Pakistan Culinary Summit 2023 here Wednesday, the Consul General of Oman congratulated the organizers for organizing such a conference and award ceremony.

He said Pakistani food is also available in some hotels in Oman. The Consul General said “Chef is a profession in which men and women can earn a decent living and provide for their families. Seeing that people are adopting the cooking sector in large

numbers. Director General Sindh Food Authority Agha Fakhar Hussain said that the main objective of organizing this award was to promote the image of Pakistan and to show that Pakistan was a country of peaceful, friendly, creative and talented people on the planet and to showcase their exceptional talent, they appreciated the talent of the contestants and judges as well.

He also thanked the organizers of the event that such a wonderful event was possible due to their dedication, hard work, and sincere efforts.

Sindh Food Authority Head Chef Muqim Soomro, Rescue Commissioner Tahir Sheikh and others also participated in the event. Awards and certificates were distributed among the attendees.

## MCCI demands 400 acre land for Jalalpur Pirwala industrial estate

MULTAN (APP): The Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) has demanded 400 acres piece of land for Jalalpur Pirwala Industrial Estate as both phases of Multan Industrial Estate have been occupied with no more space.

The demand was made during the visit of a special team of the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) at MCCI here Wednesday. The team included Project Manager North Asif Amin, Manager Coordination North Asif Aftab and Site Supervisor Zaheer Abbas Cheema. They were called on President MCCI Mian Rashid Iqbal and Senior Vice President MCCI Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh besides other office bearers.

## Pakistani handicrafts enterprise aiming to increase offline presence in China

BEIJING (APP): “We have many partnerships, and people enjoy using our products. We foresee an increase in the number of our physical stores in China,” said Yang Han, sales manager of a China-based Pakistani art enterprise said on Wednesday.

The Pakistani brand, specializing in premium hand-made scarves and carpets from Pakistan, and Iran, boasts nine offline stores in major Chinese cities including Beijing, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Xi’an, Nanjing, and Tianjin, the sales manager told CEN in an interview at 2023 Beijing International Cultural and Tourism Consumption Expo.

With an effective distribution network based in Hangzhou, Asia has become increasingly popular in China.

“Our products from Pakistan, India and Iran normally arrive in Hangzhou first, and then they are distributed to offline shops in other cities,” Yang informed, adding that the handicrafts have the potential to penetrate smaller markets as well. To this end, the company has formed a dedicated expo team to promote its products at various exhibitions in China.

“This year, we also participated in the China International Fair For Trade In Service (CIFTIS),” said Yang.

“We plan to distribute our products from Hangzhou to various other cities, leveraging our established relationships,” he concluded.

Held from October 20 to 22 in Beijing, the tourism expo spanned 20,000 square metres.

## Rice exports demonstrate 0.98% growth in first quarter

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country’s rice exports during the first quarter of the ongoing financial year demonstrated a positive growth of 0.98 percent when compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

During the period from July to September 2023, the rice export figures have reached an impressive 559,557 metric tons, amounting to a total value of \$406.387 million. This marks a commendable achievement when compared to the corresponding period in the previous year, where 724,082 metric tons of rice, valued at \$402.461 million, were exported, as per data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

Over the past three months, the Basmati rice exports registered a growth of 20.48 per cent as 134,839 metric tons of Basmati rice, valued at \$131.611 million were exported against the exports of 130,054 metric tons costing \$131.611 million of the same period in the previous year.

Meanwhile, the country earned 460,718 metric tons of rice other than basmati rice worth \$247.817 million exported as compared to the exports of 594,028 metric tons.

## Pak- CARs trade increase in first quarter of current FY, 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trade between Pakistan and Central Asia Republics (CARs) has increased in the first quarter of the current Fiscal Year 2023-24, as compared to last year 2022-23 in the same period, which will further strengthen regional integration.

The trade between regional countries including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan with Pakistan has reached an all-time high. Pakistan and Uzbekistan signed a memorandum of understanding for a Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment in May 2020 to encourage trade between the two countries.

Pakistan and Uzbekistan also signed a Transit Trade Agreement among other agreements to improve transit trade in 2021.

This agreement covers commerce and transit of

commodities by road and rail as well as customs processes and will shift Uzbekistan’s entire trade from Iran’s Port Bandar Abbas to Pakistani seaports. It will also connect Pakistan seaports to the CARs.

A Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) was signed in March 2022 between Pakistan and Uzbekistan covering a total of thirty-four goods and the PTA aims to lower duties on these products which currently range from 20 percent to 100 percent.

Non-tariff barriers are to be minimized by mutual recognition of standards and easing procedural requirements for goods covered under the PTA.

President Federal Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Irfan Iqbal Sheikh told APP that there is huge potential for Pakistan to increase its exports to the Central Asia region.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister welcomed the Canadian investor delegation to invest in the province and said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government values foreign investment in the province and assured them that investing here would be beneficial for the economic prosperity of the province.



QUETTA: People selecting and purchasing cloths from roadside vendor stall.

## LCCI President suggests formation of industry-led Skill Council

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar has suggested formation of an industry-led skill council.

He was talking to TEVTA (Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority) Chairman Muhammad Sajid Khokhar, who called on him here at Lahore Chamber on Wednesday. LCCI Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt was also present.

The LCCI President and TEVTA Chairman were agreed on a point that there is a dire need of strong liaison between TEVTA and the chambers.

Kashif Anwar also spoke about rupee

devaluation, need of skilled human resources, current account deficit and importance of raw materials availability.

Sajid Khokhar said that TEVTA is now focusing to fill the skill gap, terming TEVTA as the nursery of industry. “The linkage between TEVTA and industry are of utmost importance so that the efforts could be synchronized and the TEVTA could produce what the industry needed,” he observed.

He said that TEVTA has 41 colleges in Punjab, and an Institute Advisory Committee comprising people from the industry and it evaluate inputs from the industry.

## PR all set to upgrade Rawalpindi Railway Station

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is all set to upgrade and commercialize the Victoria-era Rawalpindi Railway Station aimed at facilitating the passengers and making it the business hub, considering its location in the centre of business activities.

“The Railway Station is built a century ago in a British style, the value addition to station and its surroundings would make it commercially viable and would generate significant revenues for all the stakeholders involved”, an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said the upgradation was already decided in a meeting that reviewed the upgradation as well as

commercialization plan of Rawalpindi Railway Station, and observed that the railway stations will remain important commercial hub in the future, earning substantial revenue and generating economic opportunities at a large scale.

The official said that besides improving passenger facilitation, the redevelopment of Rawalpindi Railway Station can become a business hub.

As per the plan, he said around 100-kanal space available adjacent to Jinnah Road (City Saddar Road) would be commercialized, besides uplifting the railway station. However, the Victorian-era building depicting ‘Indo-Saracenic’



PESHAWAR: A view of rush on fruit mandi.

## Rupee sheds 46 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday witnessed a 46 paise devaluation against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 279.88 against the previous day’s closing of Rs 279.42.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 280.4 and Rs 283 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 87 paise to close at Rs 296.56 against

the last day’s closing of Rs 297.43, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.86, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.54 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 339.98 as compared to the last closing of Rs 342.52.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 12 paise each to close at Rs 76.19 and Rs 74.60 respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.



# Turkey's Erdogan says Hamas is not terrorist organisation, cancels trip to Israel

**Monitoring Desk**  
ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, in his strongest comments yet on the Gaza conflict, said on Wednesday the Palestinian militant group Hamas was not a terrorist organisation but a liberation group fighting to protect Palestinian lands.

NATO member Turkey condemned the civilian deaths caused by Hamas's Oct. 7 rampage in southern Israel, but also urged Israeli forces to act with restraint in their response. Ankara has strongly criticised Israel's bombardment of Gaza.

“Hamas is not a terrorist organisation, it is a liberation group, ‘mujahideen’ waging a battle to protect its lands and people,” he told lawmakers from his ruling AK Party, using an Arabic word denoting those who fight for their faith.

Unlike many of its NATO allies and the European Union, Turkey does not consider Hamas a terrorist organisation and hosts members of the group on its territory. Ankara backs a two-state solution to the decades-old Israel-Palestinian conflict.



Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan attends a meeting with members of parliament from his ruling AK Party (AKP) at the Turkish parliament in Ankara, Turkey.

# Record 114 million people now displaced worldwide: UN

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: The number of people worldwide living in forced displacement from their homes is estimated to have exceeded 114 million, the United Nations said Wednesday — a record figure.

“The number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence and human rights violations globally is likely to have exceeded 114 million at the end of September,” UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, said in a statement.

The main drivers in the first half of 2023 were the conflicts in Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of

Congo; a prolonged humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan; and a combination of drought, floods and insecurity in Somalia, UNHCR said. “The world’s focus now is — rightly — on the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. But globally, far too many conflicts are proliferating or escalating, shattering innocent lives and uprooting people,” said UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi.

“The international community’s inability to solve conflicts or prevent new ones is driving displacement and misery. We must look within, work together to end conflicts and allow refugees and other displaced people to return home or restart their lives,” he said in a statement.

In its Mid-Year Trends Report, which analyses forced displacement during the first six months of 2023, UNHCR said that by the end of June, 110 million people had been forcibly displaced worldwide.

That figure was up 1.6 million from the end of 2022. A UNHCR spokesman confirmed to AFP that the new figure was a record since the agency began collecting data in 1975. Since Israel launched withering strikes on Gaza in response to the October 7 Hamas attack, the number of people internally displaced within Gaza is estimated at about 1.4 million.

# California governor Newsom meets China's President Xi

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: California governor Gavin Newsom met Chinese president Xi Jinping on Wednesday to discuss climate change, raising hopes that China and the United States can find common ground ahead of an APEC summit and COP28 climate meeting next month.

Xi and U.S. President Joe Biden are expected to meet at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco in November, although the meeting has not been confirmed.

Newsom told reporters after the meeting that he had an opportunity to focus more deeply and sub-

stantively on the issue of climate with Xi, while they also discussed Israel and the deadly drug fentanyl.

“We’re not going to move the needle on climate change unless the United States and China collaborate together,” he said.

There were “strategic red lines” in the relationship between the world’s top two greenhouse gas emitters, but both sides were capable of managing them, he added.

During their meeting, Xi told Newsom that there was “huge potential” for the two countries to cooperate on green development and addressing climate change, state broadcaster CCTV said.



Lebanon's Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah meets Jihad Secretary General Ziyad al-Nakhleh and deputy leader of Hamas, Sheikh Saleh al-Arouri at an unidentified location in this handout image released.

# Hezbollah holds talks with Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad leadership

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIRUT: The leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah group held talks on Wednesday in Beirut with senior Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad figures in a key meeting of three top anti-Israel militant groups amid the war raging in Gaza.

In neighboring Syria, meanwhile, state media said an Israeli airstrike hit the northern city of Aleppo on Wednesday, damaging its runway and putting it out of service.

There was no immediate comment from Israel on the reported strike.

Following the meeting in Lebanon, a brief statement said Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah agreed with Hamas' Saleh al-Arouri and Islamic Jihad's leader Ziad al-Nakhleh on the next steps that the three — along with

other Iran-backed militants — should take at this “sensitive stage” in the Middle East.

“Our goal, according to the statement carried on Hezbollah-run and Lebanese state media, was to achieve “a real victory for the resistance in Gaza and Palestine” and halt Israel’s “treacherous and brutal aggression against our oppressed and steadfast people in Gaza and the West Bank”.

No other details were provided. The meeting came as the war between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that rules the Gaza Strip, is now in its third week. The fighting, triggered by Hamas’ deadly incursion into Israel on Oct. 7 that killed more than 1,400 people in Israel, has killed more than 5,700 Palestinians in Gaza.

# Republicans pick majority whip to be new House speaker nominee

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Republicans nominated Majority Whip Tom Emmer to replace the ousted speaker of the US House of Representatives on Tuesday, pinning their hopes on the establishment favorite to lead them out of weeks of chaos that have paralysed Washington.

Congress has been at a standstill and unable to address multiple global crises, as well as the fast approaching threat of a government shutdown, after the historic dismissal of Kevin McCarthy in a right wing rebellion on Oct. 3.

Emmer emerged victorious from a series of secret ballots in a crowded field that began with nine candidates — but the House number three will still need to convince almost all of his colleagues to back him in a vote on the House floor.

The 62-year-old is very much the party's Plan D, with McCarthy still popular among the majority of House Republicans, who sidelined his expected replacement and humiliated the third choice nominee by failing to back him in the House.

And he will be the least experienced speaker in more than a century, having never chaired a committee or held a senior leadership role for more than a few months — although he led the Republican campaign arm for two terms.

Emmer could find himself presiding over a government shutdown unless he can cut a 2024 budget deal, favorable to his party, with much more seasoned negotiators, from Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to President Joe Biden.

# Lula approval falls on perception Brazil economy slipping -Genial/Quaest poll

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRASILIA: Approval of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's performance has fallen in the last two months as Brazilians worry that Latin America's largest economy is worsening, a new Genial/Quaest poll showed on Wednesday.

Approval of his way of governing has fallen to 54% in October from 60% in August, while 42% of those polled say he is doing a bad job, up from 35% in the previous survey.

Positive approval of his 10-month-old government has also slipped to 38% from 42% of respondents in August, and negative views rose 5 percentage points to 29%, the poll found.

The number of Brazilians who see the economy deteriorating has risen to 32% from 23% in August, as optimism dipped to 33% from 34% of those who see the economy improving.

# Seven die as fog causes 158 crashes in US

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: A large cloud of fog enveloping a highway led to at least 158 car crashes and seven deaths in the southern US state of Louisiana, authorities said on Monday. The so-called “super fog,” which US media reported was caused by a mixture of marsh fires and dense fog, led to a massive pileup on Interstate 55, about 30 miles (48 kilometres) outside of New Orleans, the Louisiana State Police said in a statement.

Photos posted by the police showed both lanes of

the highway bridge where the incident occurred blocked off by the wreckage, which included dozens of charred vehicles. A fire had erupted on the highway, police said. One vehicle appeared to have driven off the bridge and into the water below.

More than 25 people were taken to hospital, not counting the “many victims (who) sought medical assistance on their own.” Super fogs form “when a mixture of smoke and moisture released from damp smoldering organic material such as brush, leaves and trees.

# China's defence ministry blasts Pentagon's annual report

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's defence ministry on Wednesday denounced the U.S. Defense Department's annual report on China, saying it distorts the country's security policy and military strategy.

Over the next decade, the People's Republic of China will rapidly modernise, diversify, and expand its nuclear forces, the Pentagon said in its report to U.S. Congress, laying out China's national ambitions.

# Trump, ex-confidant Cohen set for showdown in New York trial

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: Former US President Donald Trump arrived at his New York civil fraud trial on Tuesday blasting his former right-hand man Michael Cohen as a “liar”, ahead of testimony by the disgraced lawyer that could expose his old boss's intimate business secrets.

Meanwhile, compounding his legal woes, a third former Trump's lawyer who worked on his 2020 presidential campaign pleaded guilty in the Georgia case. Jenna Ellis's plea deal could see her testify for the prosecution in future trials.

Cohen has become one of the Trump's — and leading Republican 2024 candidate's — most vocal critics. He delivered searing testimony to Congress while Trump was still president. His appearance now as a witness in the New York trial, delayed last week for health reasons, is hotly anticipated.

Having served Trump

as his lawyer and general fixer for years, Cohen has been privy to many of the scandal-embroidered populist's private and business dealings.

Ahead of their possible courtroom confrontation, Trump amped up the feud, telling reporters: “He’s a liar. He’s trying to get a better deal for himself but it’s not going to work.” He added, “We did nothing wrong.”

Trump also faces racketeering charges in Georgia for allegedly conspiring to upend the election results in the southern state after his 2020 defeat.

Jenna Ellis's plea deal on Tuesday could see her testify for the prosecution in future trials, turning up the pressure on the former president as his legal woes grow.

“If I knew then what I know now, I would have declined to represent Donald Trump in these post-election challenges,” Ellis, 38, told the court in Atlanta on Tuesday.

# Iran bans 12 women actors including Taraneh Alidoosti over hijab violations

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Twelve female actors have been banned from working by Iranian authorities for violating the country's strict dress code, which includes wearing a headscarf at all times, an official said on Wednesday.

“Those who do not follow the law, will not be allowed to work,” Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mohammad Mehdi Esmaili told reporters after the weekly cabinet meeting.

On Tuesday, Iranian media reported that a dozen actresses who were found to be violating the hijab law — among them Taraneh Alidoosti, Katayoun Riahi and Fatemeh Motamed-Aria — “will not be allowed to play roles in movies”.

# New Zealand opens inquest into Christchurch mosques attack

**Monitoring Desk**  
WELLINGTON: An inquest into New Zealand's 2019 mosque killings opened Tuesday, with relatives of the 51 people who died in the massacre hoping to discover if any lives could have been saved.

White supremacist Brenton Tarrant shot and killed 51 Muslim worshippers at two Christchurch mosques on March 15, 2019, in New Zealand's deadliest modern-day mass shooting. Deputy chief coroner

Brigitte Windley opened the inquiry in Christchurch, saying it would “look at what we may learn from this atrocity and speak for those who have lost their lives in an effort to protect the living”.

Maha Galal, spokesperson for the “15 March Whanau Trust” representing some of the victims' relatives, said there was an “urgent need for answers”. “Our paramount concern is to comprehend the truth,” Galal said in a statement before the inquiry began.

# One dead, two rescued after North Sea ship collision - authority

**Monitoring Desk**  
BERLIN: One body has been recovered and two people have been rescued in a search and rescue mission after two freighters collided in the North Sea off the coast of Germany, the maritime emergency authority said on Tuesday.

The Verity, which the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies said had sunk, had been on its way from Bremen to the English town of Inmingham. The Polesie was sailing from Hamburg to La Coruna.

# Hong Kong leader focuses on property and security in policy address

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: Hong Kong's leader focused on bolstering the property market and stabilising the ailing economy in his annual policy blueprint on Wednesday, while confirming new national security laws would be enacted next year to counter meddling by “external forces”.

Chief Executive John Lee said Hong Kong's economy, which contracted 3.5% last year, would “resume growth this year” as inbound tourism and consumption improved, but he noted high interest rates elsewhere in the world posed a challenge. Hong Kong's economy grew 2.2% in the first half of the

year, and is expected to grow between 4.0% and 5.0% this year.

Lee, who was sanctioned by the U.S. government for his role in cracking down on freedoms after mass pro-democracy protests in 2019, also emphasized the need to further bolster national security. “External forces continue to meddle in Hong Kong affairs,” he said, without giving specifics or naming any country.

Despite Hong Kong's attempts to restore the city's international reputation and lure more capital, further security legislation including anti-espionage laws, known as Article 23, would be enacted by the end of 2024, Lee said.

# US steps up Guatemala sanctions threat over election dispute

**Monitoring Desk**  
GUATEMALA CITY: The U.S. could apply sector-based sanctions against Guatemala if democratic processes there are not respected, a top U.S. official said, stepping up warnings over a dispute centering on the country's recent presidential election. The U.S. is among a number of countries that have blamed the current Guatemalan authorities for trying to block the accession of president-elect Bernardo Arévalo, a controversy that has sparked nationwide protests. In a radio interview late Tuesday during a visit to Central America, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Brian Nichols

# Russia passes law pulling ratification of nuclear test ban treaty

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's parliament completed the passage of a law on Wednesday withdrawing ratification of the global treaty banning nuclear weapons tests, evidence of the deep chill in relations with the United States as Moscow pursues its war in Ukraine.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Russia was not prepared to resume discussing nuclear issues with the U.S. unless Washington dropped its “hostile” policy.

The bill to derogate the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was approved by 156 votes to zero in the upper house after the lower house also passed it unanimously. It now goes to President Vladimir Putin for signing.

Putin had requested the change to “mirror” the position of the United States, which signed the CTBT in 1996 but never ratified it.

Though it has never formally come into force, the CTBT has made nuclear testing a taboo — no country except North Korea has conducted a test involving a nuclear explosion this century.

Russia says it will not resume testing unless Washington does, but arms control experts say a test by either Russia or the United States could trigger a new arms race — and more testing by other countries — at a moment of acute tension, with wars raging in Ukraine and the Middle East.

CNN published satellite images last month showing that Russia, the United States and China have all expanded their nuclear test sites in recent years.

The U.S. Energy Department said last week it had conducted a chemical explosion at its test site in Nevada “to improve the United States' ability to detect low-yield nuclear explosions around the world”.

Speaking to Russian lawmakers before Wednesday's vote, deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov said the Nevada blast was “undoubtedly a political signal”.

“As our president said, we must be on alert, and if the United States moves towards the start of nuclear tests, we will have to respond here in the same way,” he said.



Displaced families, who returned from Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip to the north due to the dangers and difficulties they faced there under Israeli bombardment, take shelter at Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City.



# Stop war, open urgent aid corridor to Gaza, Pakistan tells UNSC

UNITED NATIONS (APP): At a tense U.N. Security Council meeting on Tuesday, Pakistan reiterated its strong condemnation of Israeli air strikes and military action in Gaza, warning that further massive civilian casualties in the Palestinian enclave could trigger a "wider and more dangerous" conflict.

"Pakistan calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire," Ambassador Munir Akram said during a 15-member Council's high-level debate on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

"Continuation of the Israeli campaign in the Gaza will lead to further massive civilian casualties and could trigger a wider and more dangerous conflict," the Pakistani envoy told the meeting addressed

by a total of 86 speakers from countries and regional groups - including more than twenty ministers - that pushed the conflict to the centre of world geopolitics.

Opening the debate, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the situation "is growing more dire by the hour" as he repeated his call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.

Referring to the Hamas attacks against Israelis in border towns on Oct. 7, Guterres said they "did not happen in a vacuum", with the Palestinian people being subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation, during which they saw their land devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced; their homes demol-

ished, and their hopes for a political solution vanishing. However, he said, Hamas' attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Those pointed words from the secretary-general drew a hostile reaction from Israel's diplomats. Israeli ambassador to the UN Gilad Erdan called on him to "resign immediately" in a tweet, and at the stakeout outside the Security Council. Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen also tweeted that he would not be meeting with the UN chief today for a scheduled bilateral.

Ambassador Erdan told reporters at the stakeout that in noting the Hamas attacks "did not happen in a vacuum" in his address to the Council, the UN chief was "justifying terrorism".

In response to ques-

tions concerning the Israeli Foreign Minister's tweet, UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said that the Secretary-General would be meeting family representatives of hostages being held by Hamas in Gaza, adding they would be accompanied by a representative of the Israel's Permanent Mission to the UN.

In his speech to the Security Council, Ambassador Akram conveyed Pakistan's full support and solidarity with Palestinian brothers and sisters in these tragic and challenging times.

Israel's relentless and indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza over the last 17 days has killed more than 5,000 people and injured another 15,000, the Pakistani envoy said, "strongly and unequivocally" condemning Israel's airstrikes and military actions in Gaza, particularly attacks on schools, residential buildings and hospitals.

"These Israeli attacks on civilians, civilian objects and infrastructure, blockade of water, food and fuel as well as the forced transfer of people from the occupied territory, are flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes," he said, adding, "Those responsible for these atrocity crimes must be held accountable."

Ambassador Akram regretted the Security Council has been unable to issue a call for a ceasefire. In this regard, a heavy responsibility rests on those who contribute to the prolongation of this conflict, he said.

Envoy award to Xie Peng, the producer of the film. While trade and commerce under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have great economic importance, Jamal Shah noted that building bridges through art and culture is equally or even more significant. The minister also noted that the film reflects the growing cultural and collaborative ties between Pakistan and China.

"I think the culture corridor should be the strongest corridor, not because I'm an artist myself, but because art and culture is the best possible means of communication. It is the most effective one," Jamal Shah said.

The friendship between Pakistan and China is higher than mountains, sweeter than honey and stronger than steel. And today we are going to see such friendship through film, Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said ahead of the screening of the film Ba'Tie Girl.

The film Ba'Tie Girl is the first major co-production by Pakistani and Chinese producers. Translating to "Dost Larki" in Urdu, the title means "the girl from ironclad brother Pakistan." It embodies the essence of friendship between the peoples of China and Pakistan.



BEIJING: Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, along with the Pakistani Delegation, witnessed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signing ceremony between T Good, a leading Chinese Company, and the REC group of Pakistan.

## Pak-China cooperation in art, culture important for stronger friendship: Jamal Shah

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Syed Jamal Shah has said that building bridges through art and culture between Pakistan and China is important and significant.

"The opportunity for us to work with our Chinese brothers and sisters and express our bonds through people-to-people contacts and bridges in the form of art such as film will make our friendship more resilient and more lasting," the minister told the Global Times. Jamal Shah also attended the screening of Ba'Tie Girl in Beijing and awarded the Pakistan-China Cultural Exchange

Envoy award to Xie Peng, the producer of the film. While trade and commerce under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have great economic importance, Jamal Shah noted that building bridges through art and culture is equally or even more significant. The minister also noted that the film reflects the growing cultural and collaborative ties between Pakistan and China.

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RAWALPINDI: Secretary Defence, Lt Gen (Retd) Hamood uz Zaman Khan and Brunei Permanent Secretary Defence, Brig Gen (Retd) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Alirupendi Bin Haji Perudin signing MoM, in Ministry of Defence.

## 6th Round of Pakistan-Brunei Joint Defence Working Committee concludes

RAWALPINDI (APP): The 6th Round of Pakistan-Brunei Joint Defence Working Committee (JDWC) concluded on Wednesday at the Ministry of Defence, which was held from October 23-25.

Secretary Defence, Lt Gen Hamood uz Zaman Khan led the Pakistan delegation while Brunei delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence Brunei Daussalam, Brig Gen Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Alirupendi Bin Haji Perudin, a news release said.

During the JDWC meeting, matters of mutual interest including whole spectrum of bilateral defence cooperation, were

discussed. Both sides showed satisfaction over various areas of common interest, including security, counter-terrorism and prevailing regional environment. Further, matters related to training, exchange visits and co-production of defence equipment, were also deliberated upon.

Talks were held in a most cordial and congenial environment. Delegation leaders resolved to work together for enhanced cooperation in defence and security related fields. It was agreed that 7th Round of Pakistan-Brunei JDWC meeting will be held in Brunei on mutually agreed dates.

## Court declares 10 key PTI leaders as absconders

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Wednesday declared the ten leaders of PTI as absconder while issuing perpetual arrest warrants against them in case pertaining to the vandalizing at judicial complex.

The declared court absconder include Murad Saeed, Asad Umar, Ali Amin Gandapur, Shibli Faraz, Farukh Habib, Hamad Azhar, Omar Ayub Khan, Ali Nawaz Awan, Hassan Khan Niazi, Umar Sultan and Muhammad Asim.

ATC Judge Ahsanul Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain heard the aforesaid case and declared the accused absconder due to continuous absence from proceeding.

The court instructed the police to present the accused before it after arresting them.

It may be mentioned here that the capital police had registered case against the accused for protesting and vandalizing the public property during the appearance of chairman PTI in judicial complex.

## Ashrafi reiterates Pakistan's unequivocal stance on Palestine, urges global intervention

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Islamic Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's unequivocal stance on the Palestine issue, making it clear to the international community.

He extended his appreciation for the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, who reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering moral, political, and diplomatic support to the Palestinian people, emphasizing that this support would persist through all challenges.

Ashrafi, who also holds the position of Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman, highlighted the significance of a recent meeting between General Asim Munir and Palestinian Ambassador Ahmad Jawad Rabeel. He underscored that "this meeting serves as a testament to Pakistan's steadfast commitment to its policies on Palestine."

He firmly stated that the Pakistani government

and its armed forces were fully aligned on the issue of Palestine and categorically condemned any acts of terrorism against the Palestinian population. He emphasized Pakistan's support for an independent Palestinian state, with its capital in Al-Quds (Jerusalem).

He said General Asim Munir had rightly given the call to the international community to play an active role in compelling Israel to cease its continued atrocities against innocent Palestinian people. He condemned Israeli attacks on the civilian population, particularly on children, women, and hospitals, labelling these actions as war crimes.

In a message to the Palestinian people, Ashrafi assured them of Pakistan's solidarity, stating, "Although we are far away physically, our hearts beat with you."

He expressed optimism that Palestine would soon attain its long-awaited independence, emphasizing that the resilience of the Palestinian people would not be swayed by the current Israeli barbarism.

## Sindh Governor, Pir Pagaro discuss political situation of Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori and Pir Pagara Sibghatullah Shah Rashidi on Wednesday discussed the prevailing situation of the Sindh province.

The Sindh Governor visited the residence of Pir Sahib Pagaro here, according to a statement issued by the Governor's House.

Talking to Pir Pagaro, Kamran Khan Tessori said that all the stakeholders should unite on one platform for the prosperity and development of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan H.E. Jiang Zaidong calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Shania Khan promises to expand circle of services under BAEF further

Independent Report

SHAH AND DIRECTOR General, Tariq Javed Mengal and other concerned high ups. During the visit, Ms. Shania Khan met the patients being treated under BAEF at the two major hospitals of Karachi.

Meanwhile, she also met the administration of both the hospitals and discussed with them the medical services being provided to the patients there.

At the outset, she expressed satisfaction over the medical services being provided to the patients under BAEF, however, adding she talked with the management of the hospitals for brining more improvement in the facilities.

Earlier, Ms. Shania also inquired about the medical treatment from the patients in the Karachi hospitals.

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## Mushaal Malik appeal UN to put pressure on India release of detainees, resolve Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Human Rights Minister Mushaal Malik Wednesday expressed his concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leaders and activists and appealed to the United Nations to put pressure on India to release the detainees and resolve the Kashmir dispute as per Security Council resolutions.

"Kashmiri people must be granted an opportunity to decide their future by themselves", she said while talking to a Private news channel.

The Modi's government is using illegal and crude tactics to prevent Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders from the freedom movement, she added.

She urged the interna-

tional community and world human rights organizations to force India to stop its state terrorism in IIOJK and to give the Kashmiris their right to self-determination.

Minister said that the jail authorities were not only treating these detainees inhumanely but also intentionally prolonging their illegal detention by not presenting them in courts on the days of hearing of the false cases registered against them.

Kashmiris will not accept anything less than freedom from India, because they have rendered unprecedented sacrifices and are determined to continue their struggle till complete success, she added.

## Two terrorists killed in D I Khan operation

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police on Wednesday killed two most-wanted terrorists in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the limits of Parao Police Station.

According to a police spokesman, the operation was conducted on the information about the presence of terrorists Shoaib and Noman in the area who were killed in the exchange of fire.

The terrorists belonging to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Bali Khiana group, were wanted in several cases of attacks on police and other security forces, besides sectarian target killing, the spokesman said. The government had announced a bounty of Rs 1 million for Shoaib, he said, adding, that a passerby was also injured in the exchange of fire.



ISLAMABAD: EDG/PIO Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan in a Group Photo with a delegation of Regional Media Association at PID Headquarters.

## PIO assures fair distribution of advertisement to regional newspapers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Principal Information Officer (PIO) Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan on Wednesday said that all-out efforts would be made to ensure fair distribution of advertisements among the regional newspapers.

He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of the Regional Media Association, that included its Chairman Chaudhry Qurban Hussain, Vice Chairman Atiq Khan, President Faraz Khattak and others.

The delegation welcomed the initiative of the PIO regarding the distribution of advertisements.

On the occasion, the PIO said that measures were being taken to bring improvement in the regional newspapers and fair distribution of advertisements would be ensured for all newspapers.

## Sedition case: Wherever Shahbaz Gill is seen, he be arrested and presented in the court: Sessions court

ISLAMABAD (Online): Sessions Court Islamabad has once again issued non-bailable arrest warrants of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill in sedition case.

Sedition case came up for hearing in Sessions court Islamabad Wednesday.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra of Sessions Court remarked the non-bailable arrest warrants of Shahbaz Gill are issued again. Shahbaz Gill be arrested wherever he is seen and he be presented in the court.

It has been told the court has abolished trial of co-accused while issuing arrest warrants.

The judge said in this regard that Supreme Court (SC) has directed to end trial of co-accused. The trial is abolished in the case to the extent of co-accused.

The court has earlier declared Shahbaz Gill proclaimed offender. The court declared Shahbaz Gill pro-

claimed offender due to his persistent absence.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra remarked the proceedings of abscondment against Shahbaz Gill will be cancelled only when he appears in person before the court. Shahbaz Gill had gone outside the country for 4 weeks. He has started playing tricks. He was made to escape from country.

Upon it counsel for Shahbaz Gill told the court his client has gone outside the country due to ailment. He has not fled.

During the hearing of the case FIA and NADRA filed report regarding properties of Shahbaz Gill in the court.

The court rejected two applications of Shahbaz Gill. The court rejected the petitions of Shahbaz Gill seeking halting the proceedings of the case and his attendance in the court through video links.

## ECP invites foreign media, observers for coverage of election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has invited foreign media and observers for coverage of general election.

According to media reports ECP has maintained open door policy for the registration of foreign media and observers.

Every foreign journalist and observer will have to file all documents and particulars. No one who is affiliated with political party will be registered as observer.

## Over Rs. 1.23 bn recovered from defaulters, pilferers as QESCO drive continues

Independent Report

QUETTA: More than Rs. 1.23 billion have so far been recovered from the electricity utility bills defaulters and pilferers during the crackdown continued by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) all over the province including Quetta.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, over Rs. 1.7 billion have been recovered from the defaulters on account of the dues while over Rs. 0.16 billion have been recovered from those involved in pilferage of electricity, on account of the fine charged them. Meanwhile, 308

more power connections of the defaulters were disconnected and 10 transformers were removed during last 24 hours in different areas of the province including Quetta.

In addition to this, 53 shunt and tempered meters were also removed in the metropolises, the spokesman informed.

Moreover, a total of 1368 applications have been submitted in the police stations to file cases against the power pilferers.

However, 386 FIRs have so far been registered against the power pilferers in the province, QESCO spokesman maintained.



QUETTA: Baloch Human Rights Activist, Mama Qadeer addresses to media persons during press conference, at a protest camp in Quetta.

## Gas supply to remain suspended in parts of Quetta, Kalat, Ziarat, Mastung, other areas today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Sui Gas supply is scheduled to remain suspended in different areas of the Balochistan province including Kalat, Ziarat, Mastung, Mangochar, Pishin, Khad kocho, Huramzai and different other areas besides various parts of Quetta today (Thursday).

According to an official announcement made by the Sui Southern Gas Supply Company (SSGC) on Wednesday, the parts of Quetta where the gas supply would remain sus-

pended today are included Samungli, Killi Nauhisar, PAF base, Nawar Killi, Killi Painid Khan, Killi Barat, Killi Gul Muhammad, Sara Ghurgai, Survey 144, Chashma Achozai, Baleli, Garden Housing scheme, Darwaisahabad, Ghaza Band scouts, and their adjoining areas.

The SSGC has asked the gas consumers to make alternative arrangements of gas for energy.

However, the company has expressed regret over the inconvenience to be caused to the consumers.

## SC to take up case about general elections on Nov 2

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) will take up the case pertaining to the holding general elections within 90 days after dissolution of the assemblies for hearing on November 2. A three-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Amin ud Din Khan will hear the case.

In the last hearing, the court had sought replies from the Federation and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) and others have filed petitions for holding of general elections in 90 days of the assemblies' dissolution.



QUETTA: Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan Sharifullah listening demands of All Parties regarding local bodies elections