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dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

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PM Kakar dispels doubts about election on Feb 8

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq clarified there was no policy to stop the PTI from orga-Kakar Thursday said there should be no doubt about polls on February 8 as the election process had started with the candidates filing their nomination papers and the political parties busy in building narratives to attract voters.

said it was a constitutional requirement to hold elections which would be held on February 8 after which a new elected government would be formed.

To a question, he said the government would provide security to political leaders, including the three tration time prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Maryam Nawaz, Imran Khan, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and others.

Prominent political leaders could be targeted and the government would be blamed for any lapse in their security, he continued.

"It is the responsibility of the government to provide security to political leaders and voters of Paki-

He said the caretaker government would fulfill its

responsibility during the holding of elections.

It would be illegal to stop the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from taking part in the elections, he said and

nizing public meetings.
On the election day, the candidates of PTI would be

in the field and the voters would be voting for them, he

He said those who were involved in the incidents of In an interview with a private television channel, he May 9 were facing the law of the land. He was of the view that those involved in the May 9 incidents should

not be public office-holders. He said the Election Commission should look into complaints made by political parties about maladminis-

To a question, he said overall political circumstances triggered the actions against the PTI and lessons were arnt by the State.

He said, "It is not our job to tell overseas Pakistanis which political party they should support." However, the people should vote for a party which had an agenda for the economic revival of Pakistan, he opined. "I will vote for a party which has an agenda to revive the economy," he asserted

The prime minister said there was a wave of terrorism in the country and there were forces which wanted to cause disruption in Pakistan and the government would make all efforts to protect the lives of people.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in a group photo with the President, Directing Staff of National Defence University and graduating Civil Service officers of National Security Course-2024.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on health related issues and role of Mosques, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

SC approves bail pleas of PTI founder, Qureshi in Cipher case

ISLAMABAD (Online): approved bail plea of recorded statements of 12 fairs. If it has gone out then founder PTI and Shah witnesses in haste. Mehmood Qureshi against surety bonds of Rs 10 lac marked speedy trial is right Safdar said former Prime each in cipher case.

has remarked offence has not been proved against founder PTI and he is innocent.

Tariq Masood remarked Shah Mehmood was wise person. He saved himself the sensitive information questions on cipher case and asked founder PTI to could not go out to any remarked how the invesread cipher.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Acting CJP Sardar Tariq Masood took up the bail pleas for hearing Friday.

remarked foreign ministry not been said any where in Acting Chief Justice of cipher so that help could Pakistan (CJP) Sardar be sought in foreign policy. Objective of official secret act is only this

> Counsel Suleman wise. Justice Athar Minallah ance of Azam Khan.

Counsel for PTI remarked the original cipher Supreme Court (SC) has founder said trial court has is in ministry of foreign afit is offence of ministry of The acting CJP re- foreign affairs. Suleman of every accused. Why do Minister (PM) had said in Justice Athar Minallah you want that trial is not a public meeting that the letter held by him is evi-Justice Athar Minallah dence of conspiracy. It has informs government about the public meeting that what is in cipher and it has

> come from where. Justice Minallah while raising tigator came to know meeting was held in Safdar said we have to see Banigala. Did the investithis sensitive information gation officer investigate has been shared or other- the matter of disappear-



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Solangi addresses the graduation ceremony of 38th MCMC Domain Specific Training and 40th Specialized Training Program at Information Service Academy Auditorium.

8th CPEC Media Forum calls for objective narrative of CPEC amid fruitful outcomes

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Media Forum was held in Beijing, Islamabad and Gwadar, both online and offline.

The Forum saw the unfolding of several key events, including the CPEC Golden Anchor Awarding Ceremony, the launch of the CPEC Media Forum Balochistan Initiative, and the Perceptions on CPEC in Pakistan research paper, and the unveiling of its Joint Statement.

The Forum commenced with Cui Jun, President of China Economic Net, reading out a congratulatory letter from Sun Weidong, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China.

letter stated, "Under the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries and the care and support of people from all sectors, China-Pakistan relations have grown in depth in recent years and

ous fields has yielded fruitful results.

To further strengthen friendship and collaboration, it added, media professionals of both countries were expected to undertake significant responsibilities and tasks.

The positive role of CPEC in Pakistan was echoed by Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, who stated that the economic corridor "has transformed Pakistan's socioeconomic landscape, addressing a dire energy crisis and crumbling infrastructure, has generated 236,000 jobs since 2013, and is set to create 1.2 million direct jobs, contributing

disparities" In response to the use of selective facts, emotions, and sometimes misleading notably and "the best of stories by the Western me-

to local workforce develop-

ment and reducing regional

BEIJING (APP): The 8th bilateral cooperation in vari- dia against CPEC, Solangi urged the media personnel of both countries to engage in the objective reporting of CPEC and disseminate accurate and unbiased narratives responsibly. Zheng Qingdong, President and Editor-in-Chief of Economic Daily, highlighted the constructive role of Chinese and Pakistani media in creating an enabling public atmosphere for CPEC.

He suggested that both sides should jointly navigate through challenges for more development opportunities, enhance exchanges for people-to-people bonds and connectivity, and conduct impartial, evidence-based news reporting. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Senate's Defence Committee and Pakistan-China Institute, noted that CPEC, featuring openness, inclusivity, and connectivity, had advanced

CPEC is vet to come'

Mosques can play role in preventing diseases: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): and senior officials. President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said that the mosques and pulpits could play an important role in preventing diseases.

Chairing a meeting regarding the importance of the mosques in creating awareness about health issues, the president said that during the corona virus, the religious scholars and Imams (prayer leaders) played an important role in preventing spread of the

The meeting was attended by Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan, Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmed, provincial representatives provinces.

President pointed out that the community participation could also reduce the burden of disease on the health sys-

It was agreed in the meeting that a policy draft on the role of mosques towards public health would be prepared in two weeks. The health minister

appreciated the president and the first lady for playing a role in creating awareness about certain

The provincial representatives informed the meeting about the measures taken for the health of the people in their respective

Full confidence in EC, elections will be held on time: Solangi

committee.

Balochistan.

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi has said that general elections will be held as per schedule. We have full confidence on Election Commission (EC). I cannot comment on internal matters of political parties.

PEMRA act provides job protection to journal-

While talking to media, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi said that legal steps will be taken to protect the employment of journalists.

The demands of protestors from Baluchistan are long standing. Women and children have been released. Most of the men have also been released. Committee is doing its work. Governor of Baluchistan also joined the on February 8, 2024.

Caretaker Federal Minister for Information has further said that today there is also meeting of this committee with Prime Minister. Security is being provided to women and children who have come from

APP adds: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Friday the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP extended the date for submission of nomination papers by two days on the

demand of various political parties. Talking to the "Dawn News", he said the ECP had not made any changes in the date of elections, which would be held

5 laborers killed, one injured in firing on under construction police station

PESHAWAR (APP): At least five laborers were killed and one sustained injuries in an armed attack on an under-construction police station in Wanna, district of South Waziristan, confirmed Farmanullah, District Police Officer

The DPO told media that the attack was carried out late Thursday night re-

jured were shifted to district hospital Wana he said adding that further details would be shared after the investigation.

from Punjab, were identified as Mohammad Uzair, Baqar Ali, Shehbaz Ahmed, and Shehzad

five lives, with one worker sustaining injuries. The bodies and the in-

> The victims, hailing Senator



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters from Balochistan Province are shouting slogans during protest in the favor of their demands outside National Press Club in Federal Capital.

PTI loses electoral symbol 'bat' as ECP voids intra-party polls

Barrister Gohar announces to knock at court's doors against ECP decision to take away 'bat' electoral symbol

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday declared the intra-party elections conducted by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) null and void, withdrawing the party's electoral symbol – bat.

The electoral watchdog ruled that the party did not hold the elections in line with its constitution, the Election Act, 2017, and the Election Rules, 2017, and was thus ineligible to obtain the election symbol of

A five-member bench, led by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, gave the decision on

Other members of the bench included ECP mem-

the petitions challenging PTI's intra-party elections.

and Justice ® Ikramullah The reserved verdict was announced a day after

the Peshawar High Court directed the ECP to decide the petitions filed against PTI's intra-party elections in accordance with the law. In its decision, the ECP

observed that "the PTI did not comply with the Commission's directions rendered therein order dated 23rd November, 2023 and failed to hold intra-party election in accordance with PTI prevailing Constitution, 2019

Therefore the certificate and Form-65 filed by the alleged Chairman, is hereby bers Nisar Ahmed Durrani,

Shah Muhammad Jatoi, cordingly. The provisions Babar Hassan Bharwana of Section 215 of the Election Act, 2017 are hereby invoked and PTI is hereby declared ineligible to obtain the Election Symbol, for which they have applied

> It may be noted that the ECP rendered the intraparty polls as invalidated hence, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, who became the the party's chairman, would no longer be the party's top

head. The development came shortly after the PTI held discussions with ECP authorities, prompted by the Supreme Court's directive and Election Act, 2017, and for the ECP to allay PTI's Election Rules, 2017. reservations regarding lack of a leve dated 4th December, 2023 per the PTI, the ECP assured its delegates that it would redress their griev-



ISLAMABAD: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar meeting talking with members of the committee formed led by the caretaker Federal Minister Fawad Hasan Fawad regarding the Baloch Yakjethi March

JUI-F chief submits nomination paper for NA-265 Pishin

QUETTA (APP): Nomination Papers of Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, Chief of the Jameet Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) were submitted on Friday for NA-265 Pishin for the upcoming general elections.

Provincial Ameer JUI-F Maulana Abdul Wasey, on behalf of the JUI-F central Ameer, submitted the nomination papers at Pishin district of Balochistan.

Kamran Murtaza, Asghar Tarin were prominent among other leadership of the party who accompanied the JUI-F provincial Ameer.

Global peace can be achieved by uniting people across all faiths ISLAMABAD (APP): gion. She said that during Special Assistant to Prime

Mushaal says:

Minister for Human Rights and Women Em-Hussein Mullick, has emphasized that true global peace can be achieved

Speaking at a Christmas cake-cutting ceremony arranged by the Nazriya Pakistan Council, she underscored the importance of fostering harmony and understanding among individuals of different religious backgrounds. Sabien Hussein Mullick (Focal Person to SAPM), Mian Javed (Chairman Nazriya Pakistan Council), Manzoor ber Nazriya Pakistan Council), Faisal Zahid (Former High Commis-United Kingdom), Ms. Nargis and Mr. Khalid Suleri were among the attendees. Mushaal highlighted

the universal values of love, sacrifice and peace embedded in every reli-

her meeting with Vatican pope she had emphasized fostering Multi-Faith powerment, Mushaal Harmony as a key driver for enduring global peace. Mushaal asserted

that the resolution of glothrough the unity of bal conflicts, including people from diverse those in Kashmir and Palestine, lies in the propagation of the messages of love, peace, and harmony embedded in all religions. She stressed the need to stand in solidarity with people who were oppressed. Mushaal underscored the unanimous condemnation from all segments of Pakistani society regarding the Jaranwala incident. She commended the measures taken by the Government in response Maseh (Executive Mem- to the situation. She also praised the peace rallies organized by civil society, Salahuddin noting the substantial participation of ordinary citisioner of Pakistan to zens in these gatherings. Mushaal voiced deep concern over the persecution of minorities in India carried out on daily basis. She attributed it to the influence of Hindutya-inspired policies within the Indian government.

Daily Aoice of Masse, Independent

Flies on the wall

For the past few years, dubiously recorded private conversations of public figures have been released to the media, or uploaded on social media, in an effort to sully reputations. Victims of this detestable practice have included people from the sporting world, judges and politicians including prime ministers, and even their relatives. The million-rupee question is: who is responsible?

The Islamabad High Court attempted to answer this query while hearing petitions related to illegal wiretapping. During Wednesday's hearing of former first lady Bushra Bibi's case, the attorney general told the court that the ISI, FIA and IB are "not allowed to record any conversations" adding that if any government agency was in

volved in this practice, "it is doing so illegally". Further, the IHC was reportedly told that the ISI cannot trace the source of the audio leaks. Other intelligence agencies like the IB and FIA. too, have previously denied knowledge of the source of similar leaks. So if the nation's top agencies cannot trace the culprits, then who can?

It is common practice the world over for intelligence agencies to monitor suspected hostile actors and foreign agents who intend to harm the country. To do so is no doubt necessary — while following SOPs to avoid violating the rights of innocent people. But to extend these powers to secretly record personal conversations of public figures and private citizens cannot be justified.

What national security objectives are served by illegally recording personal calls or messages, and then releasing these, initiating a frenzy in the media and cyberspace? In fact, the policy of electronic eavesdropping by powerful quarters is a continuation of the practice of maintaining 'files' on public figures, and releasing these as and when

As for those reacting gleefully to their opponents' dirty laundry being aired publicly through such means, they should remember that the same weapon can be deployed against them at some point. Both Imran Khan and Shehbaz Sharif can testify to this, as the conversations of both gentlemen were leaked from the time they were in the Prime Minister's Office.

The IHC has said it could appoint local and foreign experts in case the state failed to provide information about the leaks. The solution could lie in appointing an empowered commission to investigate the source of the

Forensic experts, as well as those familiar with the technology in question, can be brought on board to trace the culprits, and help end this vile practice. Illegally recording and releasing personal conversations has no place in a democratic polity, and is more suited to police states. If the state does not want to be seen as complicit in these shady activities, it must endeavour to unveil the source of the leaks

Healing wounds

vative thinker visited the

scenic but communally

tense Gilgit-Baltistan in the

backdrop of the recent ten-

sion caused by a reli-

giously sensitive issue.

The issue was thankfully

defused by efforts of the

government and saner

members of society. Meet-

ing communities to do

what we are talking about

here — 'the healing of

wounds' — following the

lowering of tensions was

a dire need to strengthen

peace. This, to me, was an

unusual act of generosity

in the true spirit of Islam

which advises: "The Be-

lievers are but a single

Brotherhood: So make

peace and reconciliation

between your two (con-

tion made a point of meet-

ing all major communities

and their representatives,

ulema and dignitaries.

From whatever I could

gather from the speeches

he made to the select gath-

erings he held (now on

YouTube) with different

communities. I summarise

a few key points from his

communities as an out-

reach step to foster broth-

erly feelings and remove

misunderstandings was it-

self a great 'healing' step.

He listened to them first be-

fore he spoke to them —

indeed, an important step

to better understand and

heal. This generous ges-

ture must have given a

was that he emphasised

on the commonalities of

faith, while at the same

time accepting differ-

ences of interpretations,

right from the early his-

tory of Islam. Differences

should not lead to con-

emphasised. Communal

interpretations need to

frontations,

The second point

feeling of healing.

First, meeting these

The leader in ques-

tending) brothers... .



Jan-e-Alam Khaki

Literally, 'healing wounds' is a laudable act, no matter in which context it is exercised. It means a lot metaphorically in the social context, where individuals or communities deeply 'hurt' each other because of one excuse or another. Probably, mental or psychological wounds cause greater pain than physical ones, and may sustain far longer than physical wounds.

Words, as the famous saying goes, hurt deeper than the strike of a sword. I call hurtful words weapons of mass destruction' when used in a communal context, while on the other hand, beautiful and inspiring words give fresh life to individuals and communities. Due to anger (regarded as fire) erupting for any reason, people get upset and cause harm physical or otherwise — to those who inflict it. Once this happens, someone, or some people, need to resort to 'therapeutic' treatment to heal and defuse the toxic situation between individuals or in communities.

The healing of wounds through building bridges among communities — whether faith-based or tribal-based - is one of the prime tasks of civil society and society in general. Meetings between leaders or general community members is a dire need to bridge gaps in relations and remove misunderstandings. That ours is a divided society is to state the obvious; what we can do to heal old wounds or recent injuries is not that obvious.

In this context, let me mention a case study in be restricted for internal which a certain faith leader attempted to build bridges consumption, while consensus should be develwhich a certain faith leader

and heal the hurt men- oped regarding the major tioned here. A prominent pillars of Islam on which religious scholar, a comthere is overall agreement mitted educator and inno-- and these examples are

plentiful, he pointed out. The third point worth highlighting from his speech was discouraging those who create discord by arousing the emotions of the members of other communities, and particularly those whose business it is to provoke the masses through emotional and polemical speeches. He argued not to leave the space vacant for them to exploit and encourage discord He suggested that

the elders in communities, like in the family, should ensure that such elements are discouraged and not given centre stage to cause trouble. Even if a person tends to create mischief, the other community members should not support them and take sides with the wrong person. The Quranic guidance (5:2), which says, "Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour" provides guidance regarding what we need to do. commentator

made a succinct remark about the talks referred to above and observed, "Each word is a golden word; my request is for visiting each district of Pakistan taking this message." Scholars and leaders of this stature, with this kind of highly articulated view in a modern idiom rooted in essential Islamic teachings, are in short supply Mawlana today. Jalaluddin Rumi rightly says, "Tu barai wasi kardan aamadi; ne barai fasal kardan aamadi" meaning, "O humans, you have been asked to unite, not divide." We

need more such inspir-

ing leaders with the ca-

pacity to heal wounds

through their efforts and

inspiring talks. -- Courtesy Dawn

Baloch question



Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

There is no single issue that clarifies one's political position in Pakistan than the Baloch question. This was made brutally clear this past Wednesday night when a caravan of peaceful, unarmed protesters who had made their way to Islamabad from Turbat were violently refused entry into the fed-

eral capital. In the preceding few weeks, the Baloch long march had literally made waves, mobilising thousands of Baloch women, men and children, along with progressive political workers, ethnic-nationalists hailing from other communities, as well as ordinary people.

Led young women, the caravan snaked through Balochistan and then the Seraiki, Pakhtun and Punjabi heartlands. It was the most meaningful expression of democratic aspirations and what a voluntary federation could look like in recent times. And then they reached the

outskirts of Islamabad. The demands of the marchers are simple enough, but it is precisely their simplicity that is unpalatable to those who rule us: to bring an end to the dastardly practice of enforced disappearances, as well as 'encounter killings', which is what triggered the initial protest in Turbat and accountability for those who are known to be complicit in all such practices. Simple demands, with earth-shattering implica-

such demands is so taboo? boo for Baloch youth to state what pretty much ev-

knows: that there are some functionaries of the state who do what they want and cannot be held to ac-

It is telling that while the long march was making its way through the country, mainstream parties were busy wooing Balochistan's proverbial electables. Sarfraz Bugti, the caretaker interior minister who resigned as soon as the Election Commission confirmed the Feb 8 poll date, was in particular demand. He eventually joined the PPP.

The caretaker prime minister also hails from Balochistan. In the aftermath of the violent crackdown on the long marchers, it was reported that he took urgent notice. As did the Islamabad High Court after a petition was filed on behalf of the hundreds who were detained. Which begs the question: why is it that the Baloch are repeatedly brutalised and nominal remedial action taken only after more salt is rubbed in their already gaping wounds?

Zubeida Mustafa wrote last week on these pages about the systemic and systematic oppression that steadily increased disaffection amongst the Bengalis and led to the eventual creation of Bangladesh.

presumably One writes such words in the hope that the lessons of history are learned, but the Baloch question makes clear not only that nothing has been learned but that the state is even more militarised now.

Indeed, the scenes on the outskirts of Islamabad this past week make it more difficult to convince the sceptics that a democratic federation in which ethnic nations like the Baloch enjoy genuine citizenship is still a possibility. To be sure, there is no other way Why is it that raising to describe the attitudes and actions of those who And why is it especially tarule us as old-fashioned colonial statecraft.

The marchers asked

eryone in Pakistan already to be let into the federal capital and be allowed to say their piece. Their language was not incendiary it was, in fact, a plea to be heard. They certainly did not come with the loftiest of expectations, given the historical track record.

This is precisely why the young women and mothers who came on foot to what is supposed to be the symbol of the federation, simply asking to be allowed to make their way to a peaceful protest camp, should not have baton-charged, been hosed with water cannons and bundled into police

Mainstream Pak-is--tan has been exposed to some of these tactics in recent months, especially those who continue to pledge their allegiance to the jailed former prime minister. Many of those who have now experienced the big stick ask rhetorically how and why they are being treated so

The truth is that they are only now being subiected to the treatment that many Baloch and those who have stood in solidarity with them suffered for a long time. To recognise this is to truly open up the possibility of a deeper democratic struggle in which the most oppressed is given cen-

Indeed, the solidarities that were expressed along the route of the long march should not be forgotten in the clamour of what happened when it actually entered Islamabad.

The establishment will not be held to account by bourgeois politicians who want to cosy up to it. The only hope is for all progressives — and the ordinary people who came out onto the streets to make clear their abhorrence for disappearances and 'encounter' killings — to recognise that that can maybe, just maybe, still lead to a just and democratic future. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Good to use natural elements to support agricultural activities

Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik has said using natural elements for supporting agricultural activities is most desirable approach.

He said this while addressing the 5th PlantwisePlus National Forum meeting at a local hotel on Friday. He said, "Climate

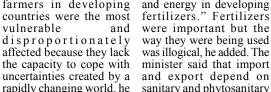
change and realisation to move away from fossil fuel technology are highly important.

He said anything related to bio was extremely important whether it was biocontrol, biopesticide, biofertilizer,

biostimulant, etc. He said that climate change was impacting agriculture in a number of ways, often exacerbating existing challenges to crop production. Smallholder farmers in developing countries were the most

vulnerable disproportionately affected because they lack the capacity to cope with rapidly changing world, he

quality and quantity of crops, or in some cases diversify into new forms of farming and livelihoods. He aware of SPS.



practices to climate hazards to maintain the



PESHAWAR: Chairperson, Intellectual Property of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan), Ambassador Farukh Amil addressing an awareness session on **Intellectual Property Rights.**

IPO Pak emphasis need for creating awareness on **Intellectual Property Rights**

PESHAWAR (INP): Ambassador Farukh Amil, Chair-Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan) here on Friday said Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) were very important for the promotion of genuine trade and underscored the need for the creation of awareness among manufacturers, people and industrialists on its registration, protection and enforcement for genuine

business development. views during an awareness session on 'Protection and enforcement of IPRs: Business development

opportunities industrialists' jointly organized by (IPO-Pakistan) and the Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) here.

Speaking as chief guest, Farukh Amil said that the workshop aimed to raise awareness among people, manufacturers and industrialists in Peshawai about IPRs related services including trademarks. copyrights and patent designs that were protected by his organization and He expressed these ensure their effective enforcement by law enforcement agencies to avoid counterfeiting and

piracy of their products.

important to look at soil health to obtain desired results. Dr Kausar said, "We

are consuming most important resources of gas and energy in developing fertilizers." Fertilizers were important but the way they were being used was illogical, he added. The minister said that import sanitary and phytosanitary measures as it was He said smallholders extremely important. He needed to adapt to farming suggested the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) to impart training to all our potential exporters and importers as they were not

Gold rates up by Rs.1,800

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 1,800 and was sold at Rs 219,800 on Friday against its sale at Rs 218,000 on the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1543 to Rs 188,443 from Rs 186,900 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 172,740 from Rs 171,325, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver witnessed no change and was sold at Rs.2,650 and Rs.2,271.94 respectively.

Shipping activity at **Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP) Shipping activity reported at the Port where five ships namely, Seaspan Ganges, SpilKartini, Kamome Vanauish. Victoria and Sheng Ping Hai carrying Container, Edible Gasoline and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Oil Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on 21st December. Meanwhile three more ships, Sheng De

Hai, Estia and Silver

Eleaner also arrived at

outer-anchorage of the Port

Qasim during last 24 hours.



Kauser Abdullah Malik addresses at CABI 5th Plant Wise Plus National Forum Lahore.

Senate body discusses financial challenges faced by PSM

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee Industry

Production Friday discussed multiple options to address the financial challenges of Pakistan Steel Mill. The meeting, chaired by Senator Khalida Ateeb, was held at the Parliament House to deliberate on critical issues concerning the industrial sector of the

During the meeting, the committee received a

comprehensive update on the progress regarding the previous recommendations concerning Pakistan Steel Mill, National Fertilizer Corporation, and Pakistan Industrial Technical Assistance Center.

The Chief Financial Officer of Pakistan Steel Mill highlighted a 25% increase in the temporary relief allowance for employees, effective since September 2023, initially emphasizing its one-year

Of profound concern for the committee was the alarming surge in theft incidents within Pakistan Steel Mill, resulting in substantial financial losses. Officials revealed that

since 2021, thefts have escalated, causing a loss of approximately 18 million rupees, with recoveries amounting to 4.9 million rupees. The theft of machinery and assets has significantly impacted the operations and stability o Pakistan Steel Mill.

Speakers discuss future opportunities in building IT talent ecosystem ISLAMABAD (APP)

Speakers at an event hosted by the University of Bahrain on the sidelines of the Huawei ICT Competition 2023-2024 regional final awards ceremony in Manama, delved into discussions about future opportunities in building the IT talent

ISLAMABAD (APP):

ecosystem and the significance of public-private partnerships in nurturing innovations. They called upon supplementing university curricula with practical skills and training, fostering

socio-economic growth in

The University of

Bahrain is a partner for the Huawei ICT (Information Communications Technology) Competition 2023-2024 regional final and hosted the official closing and awards ceremonies for the programme this year.

The forum panel discussion featured Dr Jassim Haji, President of the International Group of Artificial Intelligence; Dr Hessa Jassim Al-Junaid. Dean of the College of Information Technology, University of Bahrain; Dr

Zong announces special offer on Christmas

Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecom operator announced a special data roaming bundle for the United Kingdom to ensure seamless and uninterrupted connectivity at affordable rates this Christmas.

As an organization that believes in inclusivity, this bundle has been tailormade for those celebrating the festivities of the occasion said a news release.

This customized bundle is designed to ensure that you get access to the best data roaming services at affordable prices.

Pakistan's textile exports reach \$6.88bln in 5 months ISLAMABAD (APP): which grew by 253.10

Pakistan exported textile products worth \$6,883.615 million during the initial five months of the current financial year (2023-24), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The exports of the product however witnessed a decline of 6.50 percent during July-November (2023-24) when compared to the exports of \$7,361,914 million during July-November (2022-23).

The textile commodities witnessed positive growth in trade included raw

percent, from \$11.253 million last year to \$39.733 million this year.

Likewise, the exports of cotton yarn increased by 50.30 percent, from \$328.197 million last year to \$493.277 million this year, cotton carded or combed by 22.86 percent, from \$0.477 million to \$0.586 million and towels by 0.74 percent, from \$409.510 million to \$412.544 . The textile commodities that witnessed negative growth

include cotton cloth, the exports of which declined by 13.35 percent, from \$903.685 million to \$783.087 million, yarn other than cotton yarn by 11.47 percent.



Two new Carrefour supermarkets open their doors in DHA Lahore, graced by the presence of Umer Lodhi, the Country Manager of Carrefour Pakistan, who joyfully cut the ribbon at the inauguration ceremony.

Weekly inflation falls by 0.51%

weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed a decrease of 0.51 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on December 21, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week

under review in the abovementioned group was recorded at 310.00 points as compared to 311.58 points during the past week, according to the PBS data.

As compared to the group in the week under respectively.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The review witnessed an increase of 42.60 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 = 100covers 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the

lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, decreased by 0.39 percent and went down to 304.83 points from last week's 306.02 points. The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs corresponding week of last 44,175 it decreased by 0.40 year, the SPI for the percent, 0.39 percent, 0.44 combined consumption and 0.59 percent

were issued three days after

the tests. The CM warned

that hospitals found to be

causing delay in delivering

CT scans and MRI reports

would face administrative

CM inspected various

wards, interacted with

parents of children and inspected the medical

facilities. The CM also

inspected up-gradation

work, engaged with the

labourers and assessed

During his visit, the

CM orders 24/7

CT-Scan, MRI

reports facility

Independent Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister

Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has

directed the health secretary that all hospitals

must adhere to a 24/7

facility for providing CT

scans and MRI reports to

visit to Children's Hospital

on Friday where parents

raised concerns regarding

delayed issuance of CT

scans and MRI reports.

The CM was informed that

CT scans and MRI reports

He made a surprise

IPMG meeting urges Fortifying gender data collection to promote gender equality

Group (IPMG) discussed promote gender equality in empowerment in Pakistan.

The two-day 21st IPMG meeting, held under the auspices of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), and with support from UN Women and the United States, concluded here on Friday during which speakers construct a society where shared vision of a more every woman's voice inclusive society, where echoes, and her rights and

LAHORE (APP): The participants in the Inter-Provincial Ministerial IPMG was established in 2009 enhance to the use of data more coordination on gender effectively in efforts to equality and women's

Nilofar Bakhtiar, chairperson NCSW, said: "This assembly serves as a crucial platform, fostering collaboration and initiating positive change on the path to gender equality and empowermen of women in Pakistan Together, let's unite to construct a society where every woman can thrive contributions are valued.



KARACHI: PPP Senator Saleem Mandviwala talking to media persons after submission of nomination paper for NA 241 General Elections 2024 at **Assistant Commissioner office.**

Firdous says: Every political step of IPP will lead to the country's construction, development

SIALKOT (APP): Central Information Secretary Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and former Federal Minister Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan has said that every political step of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) will lead to the country's construction and development and to divert the resources of a strong and powerful Pakistan towards the development and prosperity of the people of NA-70, there must be sincere and honest leadership from the constituency.

In a statement issued here to the media on Friday, country.

Central Secretary Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and former Federal Minister said that the President of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Abdul Aleem Khan issued instructions to his candidates participating in the elections to receive nomination papers and submit them in time. Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan said that the the People's friendly manifesto of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and the implementation of ongoing struggle in the interest of the

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman in a group photo with during function organized in connection with the Quaid Day at the Governor House.

Christian community playing key role in Pak development, prosperity: Mushaal

RAWALPINDI (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, congratulating the Christian community on Christmas, has said that the Christian community was playing a key role in the development and prosperity of the

Saturday December 23, 2023

She said that the Christian community members were performing significant services while all the minorities including the Christian community had equal rights in

Addressing a ceremony organized by

RPO orders

foolproof

security

on Christmas

AISALABAD (APP):

Regional Police Officer

(RPO) Dr. Muhammad Abid

Khan has issued instructions

for ensuring foolproof

security arrangements on

Christmas. He directed the

capital police officer (CPO)

Faisalabad, district police officers (DPOs) of three

districts including Jhang,

Toba Tek Singh and Chiniot

to make foolproof security

arrangements in churches.

Christian settlements, special

markets and celebration

points on Christmas.

Rawalpindi Brig. Ahmad Nawaz, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leaders Chaudhry Tanveer, Daniyal, Barrister Chaudhry Osama, Malik Abrar, Ziaullah Shah and Rashid Khan, Pakistan Peoples Party's Sibt-ul-Hasan Bukhari, businessmanSheikh

Archbishop Rawalpindi-Islamabad Dr Joseph

Arshad in connection with

Christmas celebrations,

Mushaal said that atrocities

were being committed on

minorities in India and the

international community

should to take notice of that.

Station Commander

Sajid Amin Khokhar, Frayad Francis, Napoleon Gomez, Sanobar Gill, ambassadors of various countries, Hindu, Sikh and Christian leaders, Ulema Izhar Bukhari, Hafiz Iqbal Rizvi andPir Azmatullah, and administrative officers attended the ceremony. Archbishop Dr Joseph Arshad, in his remarks, said,"Christmas gives us the message of peace and brotherhood, and the Christian community will continue to strive for the development prosperity of the beloved country like before."

the peace committee, Babu

urged Christian community to remember their needy and deserving brothers in the festivities of Christmas and share them in their joy.

He congratulated the Christian community on Christmas, which, he said, was a message of peace, reconciliation and love. The community would continue its efforts for the promotion of love and affection. On this occasion, special guest Mushaal Mullicik lit the candle of peace along with Dr Joseph Arshad and other Arshad and other distinguished guests. A Christmas cake was also

his supporters at the Commissioner's office. Kristin Hawkins sees women become agents of change through sports

MULTAN: Senior Vice Chairman PPP, Syed Yousaf

Raza Gillani submitting his nomination papers with

LAHORE (APP): US Consul General in Lahore of empowering young Kristin Hawkins has said women become a source of positive change in societies through the life transforming skills and confidence gained from

Speaking at a four-day US funded sports workshop for women at University of Education (UoE) Township here on Friday, she said sports contribute to characterbuilding and help women become positive agents of change and reminded the workshop participants of their unique role as educators, coaches, and mentors in helping young women develop their leadership skills.

With the sole purpose women, the workshop was conducted by coaches, trainers, and educators from Baylor University and University of North Carolina, Wilmington, in partnership with the UoE, Township. Female sports educators, trainers, and

workshop. "Not everyone, who participates in sports, will on professionally, but the confidence, teamwork, and skills that we learn from sports can help us become a force for positive change, no matter what we do in life," Hawkins said.

coaches from 10 schools

and four universities

across Punjab attended the

KP Cabinet reiterated commitments to provide level playing field in Election PESHAWAR (APP): The government during daylight been mobilized for the

Caretaker Provincial Pakhtunkhwa on Friday reiterated its commitment to provide a level playing field to all political parties and has asked them to follow the Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) during their election campaigns.

Besides the directives Election the Commissions, these SOPs include holding large political gatherings in designated areas notified the provincial said that all resources have ramps at polling stations.

to ensure efficient security Cabinet of Khyber and safety of the participants.

The cabinet met under the Chairmanship of the Caretaker cabinet, Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Arshan Hussain Shah finalized preparations for the upcoming general elections in light of the directives of the Election Commission reiterating that every effort will be made to ensure free and fair elections in the province.

The Chief Minister

purpose and every effort is being made to ensure transparency and efficient utilization of the taxpayer's money. The Cabinet was briefed in detail about preparations for the upcoming general elections.It would ensure the availability and placement of human resources, mapping of missing facilities, and placement of IT staff and equipment. The Cabinet

assured that provision of

International News

More than 20 countries now part of US-led Red Sea coalition, Pentagon says

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: A total of more than 20 countries have agreed to participate in the new US-led coalition safe- countries, defer to them to Gaza's ruling Palestinian guarding commercial traffic in the Red Sea from attacks by Yemen's Houthi movement as more nations join the effort, the Pentagon said

on Thursday. Still, the new Pentagon total would suggest that at least eight of the countries who have signed up have also declined to be publicly named, in a sign of political sensitivities of the operation as regional tensions soar over the Israel-Hamas

nations now sign on to par- cases, it could include staff ticipate," Major General or other types of support,"

Patrick Ryder said, noting declarations by Greece and he told a news briefing.

The crisis in the Red declarations by Greece and Australia

talk about their participa-

launched Operation Prosperity Guardian two days ago, saying more than a dozen countries had agreed to participate in an effort that will involve joint patrols in Red Sea waters near

"coalition of the willing."
"In some cases that

Sea has grown out of the "We'll allow other war between Israel and

The war began on The United States Oct. 7 when Hamas fighters stormed across the Gaza border into southern Israel where Israeli authorities say the militants killed about 1,200 mostly civilian Israelis and for-

Islamist group Hamas.

Each country will con- bombardment and invasion tribute what they can, Ryder said, dubbing it a cials state is aimed at wiping out Hamas, has killed nearly 20,000 Palestinians, "We've had over 20 will include vessels. In other according to health officials in the densely populated, coastal enclave.

Diplomatic ties with US could break down over asset seizures

Jnited States if Washing-

The United States "must not act under an illusion... that Russia is clinging with both hands to diplomatic relations with that country,'

relations with the United States as "below zero" because of U.S. military and financial aid for Ukraine in the war now approaching the end of its

of factors



Czech Interior Minister Vit Rakusan and Police Chief Martin Vondrasek give a press conference in the Ministry of the Interior in Prague, Czech Republic.

Czech police seek motive in Prague mass shooting that killed 15

Monitoring Desk PRAGUE: Czech authorities sought a motive on Friday in a student's gun attack that killed 15 people at a Prague university, where tearful mourners have left a sea of candles to

grieve for the victims. The gunfire on Thursday at the Charles University's Faculty of Arts sparked frantic scenes of students running from the attack that was the Czech Republic's worst

shooting in decades. A makeshift memorial of hundreds of candles flickered outside the university on Friday as police pursued the investigation at the campus in Prague's historic centre.

The gunman, a 24year-old student, killed himself after the attack, shooting dead 15 people and wounding 25 others. 'We know all 14 dead

and their identity. It's 15 victims of the mad gunman and the gunman himself," Interior Minister Vit Rakusan told public broadcaster Czech TV, revising down a previous toll of 14 victims. He added that three of the wounded were for-

Japan prepares for missile shipments after easing arms export restrictions

Monitoring Desk

TOKYO: Japan said on Friday it would prepare to ship Patriot air defence missiles to the United States after revising its arms export guidelines earlier that day, in the pacifist nation's first major overhaul of such export curbs in nine years. The announcement comes as Japan, which had long adopted a stance of not allowing exports of deadly weapons, seeks to boost its defence industry amid an increasingly tense security environment in the Indo-Pacific.

"This holds significant meaning in terms of further strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance. It will contribute not only to Japan's security but also the peace and stability of the wider Indo-Pacific region," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said following the announcement. Although Japan's new export controls still prevent it from shipping weapons to countries that are at war, it may indirectly benefit Ukraine in its war with Russia as it gives the United States extra capacity.

No deal with Turkey on Swedish NATO bid: **Hungary's Orban**

Monitoring Desk BUDAPEST: There is no Hungarian-Turkish deal about the ratification of Sweden's bid for NATO membership as it will be up to the Hungarian parliament to decide when to vote on this, Prime Minister Viktor Orban told a news briefing on Thursday.

Orban said there was no great willingness among ruling party lawmakers in Budapest to approve Sweden's bid. Sweden's application has been held up by Turkey and Hungary's refusal to support it. Orban said in September that Hungary was in no rush to ratify Sweden's NATO accession.

Turkiye detains 304 over **Islamic State ties Monitoring Desk**

ANKARA: Turkish authorities have detained 304 people suspected of having ties to the militant group Islamic State in operations across 32 provinces, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya

said on Friday. The majority of the suspects were detained in Turkiye's three biggest cities of Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir. Yerlikaya said on social messaging platform X. He said the operation, "Op eration Heroes-34".

North Korea's Kim warns of 'nuclear attack'if 'provoked'

Monitoring Desk SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned Pyongyang will not hesitate to launch a nuclear attack if "provoked with nukes", state media said on Thursday, while Seoul and its allies called for "dialogue without preconditions"

Kim's warning follows a meeting between South Korea and the United States last week in Washington, where they discussed nuclear deterrence in the event of conflict with the North.

The meeting's agenda included "nuclear and strategic planning", and the alPyongyang on the United States or South Korea would result in the end of the North Korean regime.

But Kim told his military's missile bureau "not to hesitate (launching) even a nuclear attack when the enemy provokes it with nukes," Pyongyang's offi-cial Korean Central News Agency said.

Washington, Seoul and Tokyo released a statement shortly afterwards, urging the nuclear-armed country to "stop conducting further provocations and accept our call for engaging in substantive dialogue without lies reiterated that any preconditions"



Jazeera cameraman Samer Abu Daqqa during a demonstration in front of the broadcaster's office in Amman, Jordan.

US, China top military officials speak for first time in over a year

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: The top

U.S. military officer held a virtual meeting with his Chinese counterpart on Thursday, the Pentagon said, in the first such conversation in over a year amid hopes by U.S. officials that it could lead to a broader restoration of ties between the two militaries.

The video teleconference followed an agreement between U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping last month to resume military-to-military ties severed by Beijing after then-House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi vis-

ited self-ruled Taiwan in August 2022.

U.S. Air Force General Charles Q. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. and General Liu Zhenli of China's People's Liberation Army touched on "a number of global and regional security issues," Brown's office said. Liu is the chief of the Joint Staff Department of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the military body responsible for China's combat operations and planning. Pentagon officials say communication between the two militaries is crucial to preventing a miscalculation

from spiraling into conflict.

northern Gaza: WHO **Monitoring Desk**

Lai Ching-te, Taiwan's vice president and the rul-

ing Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) presi-

dential candidate gestures during an election cam-

No functional

hospitals left in

paign event in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

GENEVA: There are no longer any functional hospitals in the north of the Gaza Strip, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said Thursday, describing "unbea-rable" scenes of largely abandoned patients begging for food and water.

The UN health agency said it had led missions to two badly damaged hospitals, Al Shifa and Al Ahli, in the north of the Palestinian territory on Wednesday.

"Our staff are running out of words to describe the beyond catastrophic situation facing remaining pati-ents and health worksaid Richard Peeper-korn, the WHO representative for the occupied Palestinian territory.

His comment came amid increasingly frantic diploma-tic efforts to secure a pause in the war that Hamas says has already claimed 20,000 lives in Gaza, 70 per cent of them women and children.

Israel's retaliatory

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russia may cut diplomatic ties with the ton confiscates Russian assets frozen over the Ukrainian war, the Interfax news agency quoted Deputy oreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying on Fri-

Ryabkov said. Russia has described

second year. Ryabkov said Russia,

which sent forces into Ukraine in February 2022 in what it called a "special military operation", would not be the one to initiate a break in diplomatic ties, but such a rupture could be prompted by a variety

Speakers hail Pakistan's achievements at COP28

Demand futuristic approach to meet pledges

COP28 roundtable dialogue on Friday hailed the progress made by the country at the international climate moot and demanded the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmen-Coordination alongwith other stakeholders to workout a futuristic approach to meet global pledges.

The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC), organized a roundtable discussion on 'COP 28: An Analytical

at the event was Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental

Director, CSCCC, Aisha Khan; Director, Governance & Policy WWF, Pakistan, Dr. Imran Saqib Khalid; Head, of Resilient Development Program, SDPI, Dr. Shafqat Munir; Professor, QAU, Dr. Ilhan Niaz; World Bank, Ahsan Tehsin; Climate & Energy Attache at Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Nadeem Ahmad and Fatima Jinnah University, Rawalpindi,

In his keynote address, Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Asif Shah underscored the substantial progress achieved during COP28, positive outcomes and inmate finance. Notably, Pa-

ISLAMABAD (APP): Shah. Other panelists at the The Speakers at a post- event included: Executive Damage Fund, demonstrating its commitment to addressing the impacts of climate change. Additionally, Pakistan's representation on the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage (SNLD further solidifies its global engagement.

> dress, Shah acknowledged the competitive landscape for accessing the Green Climate Fund, highlighting the imperative for Pakistan to enhance its capacity to secure international fund-

rector of CSP, highlighted

PMDC clarifies

news on FIA

investigation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa-

kistan Medical and Dental

Council (PMDC) has taken

notice of the news appear-

ing in the media, creating

confusion amongst the

public regarding FIA's in-

vestigation into the council

According to

PMDC spokesperson, the

FIA has started an investi-

gation into corruption

charges against some of the

tor General FIA has ordered

the inquiry on the com-

plaint of the Ministry of

National Health Services,

He said that an inquiry

Regulations and Coordina-

has been started to investi-

gate the alleged extortion of

over 60 million rupees by

some PMDC officers

against outstanding pay-

ment of arrears of a federal

allowance to the council

employees, alleged irregu-

larities in recognition of

some medical and dental

colleges and alleged illegal

registration of some unrec-

ognized qualifications, etc.

Int'l workshop

on 'Control of

Infectious

Diseases'

from Dec 26

SLAMABAD (APP): A

three-day International Workshop titled "Outbreak

investigation and Control of

He said that the Direc-

officials of the PMDC.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Ministry of Information, Broadcasting Shahera Shahid addresses the graduation ceremony of 38th MCMC Domain Specific Training and 40th Specialized Training Program at Information Service Academy Auditorium.

Ministry renovates 2,377 houses, flats in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa- PWD has started sending kistan Works Department (PWD), Ministry of Housing and Works has upgraded and renovated as many as 2,385 houses and flats in various sectors of Islamabad during the last five and half years.

'The PWD has carried out EM works of as many ties in the relevant heads of as 1,365 flats and houses while around 1,012 civil utility bills of the residenwork is executed of differ- tial accommodation includent categories, an official in the ministry told APP.

The official said the ministry has owned as many as 5,253 houses and flats of categories-I to categories-V located in various sectors in the federal capital. He said the Capital Development Authority (CDA) was responsible for the maintenance and renovation of Pak Secretariat, Islamabad, therefore, no fund has been spent on ministry's renovation.

The official said the

notices to the allottees of government accommodation in Sector I-9/4 about payment of electric meter bills for water motors installed at residential blocks.

He said the Finance Division had allocated funds for payment of utiliaccounts of the users while ing hostels, rest houses and judicial residences should be paid by the users.

To a question, he said the Ministry of Housing and Works has allocated an amount of Rs 5.80 million in the current financial year 2023-2024 for electricity bills of Oasr-e-Naz Lodge South Zone Karachi due to financial constraints. "Out of the total Rs 5.80 million, only an amount of Rs 0.87 million have been released at the rate of 15 percent in this regard so far," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Anjum Ageel Khan arriving for the submission of his nomination papers to contest for the upcoming general elections at DC Office in Federal Capital.

EPA launches crackdown against illegal units in H-13 burning plastic waste

ISLAMABAD (APP): request of EPA had imposed The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) has launched a strin- of waste, stubble and any gent crackdown against the illegal units, established without formal approval of the authorities concerned in sector H-13 of the federal capital, burning plastic waste that was causing dark smoke and risk

of smog. Director General Pak-EPA, Farzana Altaf Shah told APP via telephonic conversation that there were videos that went viral of H-13 Naseerabad area where people had illegally rented and established mega units burning scrap material particularly plastics for recycling purposes that were creating dark smoke screens into the atmosphere that were highly injurious to health and environment.

tal Territory Administration (ICT Admin) on the

section 144 in the capital to ban all sorts of burning other material to curb smog risk, she added.

The EPA DG added that the Minister and Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination took serious notice of the matter. However, the EPA team, along with the ICT Admin and the area magistrate raided the illegal units burning plastic waste and

"As many as four individuals were arrested and five units were sealed in the area for burning plastic waste illegally. People are illegally setting up mega units in the sector, where burning of scrap material is being carried out in large cauldrons to melt plastic items for making pet plas-The Islamabad Capi- tic and substandard products of household use," she

Concluding his ad-

Dr. Neelum Nigar, Dithe significance of key decisions made during COP28. She underscored the necessity for a compre-The keynote speaker culminating in a host of hensive analysis of the outcomes and their impact on creased transparency in cli-stakeholders, providing valuable insights for



ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Secretary Election Commission of Pakistan Zafar Iqbal on Friday said that the Election Commis-

sion of Pakistan continued a media awareness drive among people with the overarching goal of motivating women and youth actively involved in the electoral process where youngsters of the country likely to double its voter turnout in upcoming elections. Talking to PTV news

channel he ensured that ECP will provide a level playing field for all politivouth and women to ensure inclusive in the electoral

He said that elections will be conducted with strict implementation of gender equality and all political parties also strive hard through their election campaigns to increase youth voter turnout.

He also mentioned that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued a comprehensive code of conduct for the upcoming general elections scheduled on February 8.

Additional Director cal parties and advocate the General Election Commisactive involvement of sion of Pakistan Sved

in upcoming polls: Zafar Iqbal Nadeem Haider said that any violation of the code will be treated seriously, and allegations made by one candidate against another will require confirmation from both sides before prosecution can com-

> To ensure the smooth functioning of the election process, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has complete powers to conduct general elections in a fair and freestyle while all the institutions, including military, judiciary and provincial governments are fully cooperating with us.

> > FM saddened over life loss

in tragic Prague

PMDC successfully conducts NRE exams

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has successfully conducted the National Registration Examination (NRE) step 2.

According to spokes-person PMDC, more than

50% of candidates passed

the examination as 367 candidates appeared for the These candidates were given the best possible facilities so that they were

able to take the exam in a good environment, he The exam was con-

ducted by the National University of Medical Sci-

ences, as per the schedule announced by the council. The exam was held at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) on the 10th of cember 2023.

The whole purpose of the NRE was to test the competency, knowledge, and skills of a graduate to ensure they are a 'safe doctor' as they would be granted a license to treat patients independently.

The NRE skills and clinical exam represent the basic skills that are mandatory for patient handling and management in the absence of which patients would be at severe risk.



ISLAMABAD: Director General (FDE) Tanveer Ahmad and Principal Prof. Fouzia Sheikh giving away 1st prize award to the winner of Quaid Day Declamation Contest organized by Federal Directorate of Education at Model College for Girls F-7/2.

PTA cautions public about deceptive links

Urges vigilance & use of official platforms for services

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has cautioned the public against phishing, and fraudulent links circulating Whatsapp, social media, and through text

and that the user should

check the number of

SIMs at the given link.

Alternatively, another

message warned that

the user's phone regis-

tration will be sus-

pended unless they visit

the provided link, ac-

cording to a news re-

tactics are designed to

trick individuals into

clicking on malicious

These deceptive

Infectious Diseases" will be kicked off at COMSTECH messages, falsely claim-Secretariat on December 26 ing to be associated with the presence of nawith PTA's Device Identional and international tification Registration speakers.
The COVID-19 pan-& Blocking System demic has caught the attention of the global commu-(DIRBS). The message making the rounds purnity and rekindled the deports to be an official bate about our ability to communication, stating prevent and manage outthat the user's SIM is breaks, epidemics, and found to be involved in "suspicious activities"

pandemics. To control infectious diseases, human, animal, and environmental factors need to be considered together, based on the One Health perspective.

Keeping in mind the immense importance of the subject, COMSTECH, in collaboration with Pasteur Institute of Iran is organizing this International workshop with several internationally renowned speakers and conveners

ISLAMABAD (APP): links, compromising their personal information. The public has been urged to refrain from clicking on links from unknown numbers/senders and report such phone numbers/links for blocking through PTA's complaint management system (toll-free number: 0800-55055, web link: h t t p s : / / complaint.pta.gov.pk/ RegisterComplaint.aspx and PTA CMS mobile

> To check the status of their device, users should only visit https:/ /dirbs.pta.gov.pk, SMS IMEIs to 8484 from device, or their through the official Device Verification App, available on both Google Play Store and Apple App Store. PTA has urged the

public to stay vigilant and prioritize the use of its official platforms/ shortcodes to protect their personal informa-

University shooting ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Friday expressed his condolence over the loss of life in a tragic shooting that took place at Charles University

of Prague on Thursday. As per media reports.

a student opened fire in a Charles University of Prague, killing at least 14 people and injuring more than 20.

Expressing heartfelt condolence to the families of the victims, the foreign minister also prayed for the recovery of all the injured.

IHC reserves verdict on PAC's powers ISLAMABAD (APP):

Гhe Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday reserved its verdict in cases pertaining to the powers of Public Accounts Committee to summon NAB officials in the Tayyaba Gul harass-

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq reserved the verdict after hearing arguments from the two sides.

During the course of proceedings, Additional Attorney General Munawar Dogal said that the committee had the authority to summon the officials as per the rules.

The chief justice inquired as to why Tayyaba Gul had approached the PAC instead of the Federal Investigation Authority (FIA) or anti-corruption department.

2-day Regional **Heads conference** ends at AIOU

ISLAMABAD (APP Vice Chancellor of AIOU Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Friday urged the Regional Heads of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) should create a "Reference Document Chart" in order to increase enrollment, strengthen student support system, improve examinations system and overall development of the university.

Addressing the closing session of a two-day Regional Heads Conference, he emphasized the need for transparency in all matters, including exams, and requested a report on the regional heads' success in meeting admission targets.

VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, said that any kind of irregularities or corruption would not be

ASEAN committee gathers Islamabad-based diplomats at family BBQ get-together

east Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee in Islamabad (ACI) organized an event themed 'Family Barbeque, Year-end get-to-gether' on Friday. Speaking on the occa-

sion, Malaysian High Commissioner in Pakistan Mohammad Azhar Mazlan in his capacity as the Chair of ACI said the aim of the event was to bring together the diplomats and families Islamabad-based ASEAN embassies to pro-

vide them with an opportunity to touch base with one another in an informal setting. He expressed the confidence that such a gathering would bring about a sense of togetherness and belonging among the ASEAN community in Pakistan

Considering the presence of more than 200 guests including the local officials and media personnel, High Commissioner Azhar expressed his happiness and hoped the event would be an annual feature.

He conveyed his well wishes to those celebrating

ISLAMABAD (APP): Christmas and a happy and The Association of South-prosperous new year 2024

to all present. During the event, the guests enjoyed a number of cuisines, specially prepared by each ASEAN embassies, savoring the unique spices, techniques, and cultural influences of the Southeast Asian region. The cuisines included Satav with peanut sauce, Padthai, Nasi Goreng, Bakso and

Sagudana, among others.
The ASEAN diplo mats and families exchanged warm greetings and cultural insights, while celebrating the diversity of ASEAN tradition in Pakistan, showcasing the rich tapestry of the region.

The event was not merely a social gathering but a celebration of the shared values and aspira-tions that unite the diverse nations of Southeast Asia.

It served as a testament to the enduring friendship and solidarity among the ASEAN nations and their commitment to fostering a prosperous and harmonious future together with the host nation, Paki-



ISLAMABAD: Former president Azad Kashmir Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob in a meeting with president Azad Jammmu Kashmir Barrister Sultan

Embracing Quaid's vision crucial for a strong Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): As championed by none other the nation would observe than Muhammad Ali Jinnah. the 147th birth anniversary of Pakistan's founder Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, on December 25, echoes of his ous challenges, Pakistan

tinent. Embracing his vision promises a path toward a genuine and democratic Pakistan, steering the nation through contemporary challenges with unwavering commitment.

The journey towards Pakistan's independence was nothing short of a revolution, marked by the Muslims' unwavering determination to carve out their sovereign state amidst a complex political landscape. This pursuit was

whose visionary outlook laid the foundation for an independent Pakistan. Despite facing numer

visionary ideals resonate. emerged as a distinct nation-The call to uphold his prin-state, guided by Quaid's ciples of democracy, equality, and unity remains perination's journey post-independence has been fraught with challenges that continue to shape its course. The inception of Pa-

kistan was the culmination of decades of struggle. The Lahore Resolution of March 1940, which advocated for a separate homeland based on the Two-Nation Theory, marked a turn-ing point. Jinnah's vision echoed the ideas of Allama Iqbal, emphasizing a separate state for Muslims to safeguard their identity and



ISLAMABAD: Leader of Pakistan People's Party Syed Fasih-ul-Hassan Shah Bukhari arriving for the submission of his nomination papers to contest for the upcoming general elections at DC Office in Federal Capital.

PNCA in collaboration with Saira Peter arranged special **Christmas celebrations** ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa- Peter performed songs

the Arts (PNCA) in collaboration with Saira Peter arranged special Christmas celebrations here at PNCA, Auditorium on Friday titled 'Bethlehem's Christmas''. Federal Minister for

National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah was the chief guest on the occasion, with Adviser and Culture Expert Muhammad Kashif Irshad and Director General PNCA Muhammad Ayuob Jamali also in attendance and Zafar Francis moderated the overall programme. The event began with

a video message by a Palestinian pastor explaining how Palestinian churches are not celebrating Christmas this year due to the horrific bloodshed and tragedy befalling Palestine's children

Accompanied by a backdrop of powerful images, Sufi opera singer Saira

kistan National Council of themed around Palestine's suffering children, calling for interfaith harmony and an end to violence. The programme also featured video messages of peace from around the world. In his remarks, Federal

Minister Jamal Shah highly praised Saira Peter for collaborating with PNCA to mark Christmas in a befitting manner. He said that the role of the Christian community is of key importance in the prosperity of the country. The Federal Minister

commended Saira Peter's demonstration that music is much more than entertainment, remarking on the power of the Arts to communicate society's issues. He cited her moving depiction of the Palestinian genocide through a potent combination of songs, carols and images which could not be ignored.

ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan-Ul-Haque Siddiqui, Chairman Senate Standing Committee On Federal



Mr. Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani **Chairman Senate**



The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) have consistently championed the economic growth and advancement of our beloved nation through its determination and hard work. Its commitment to nurturing businesses, promoting commerce, and upholding the highest standards of industry excellence is unparalleled. The year 2022 stands as a testament to the resilience and prowess of our business community. Through challenges and changing landscapes, our industrious professionals have not only adapted but thrived, marking significant milestones in the socio-economic development of Pakistan. Their efforts are not just of national significance,

ternational markets, making us all immensely proud. It is with great respect and admiration that we acknowledge the high achievers of this year. The FPCCI Achievement Awards are not mere accolades but a recognition of the remarkable journeys, relentless determination, and innovative ventures that have set these individuals and organisations apart. Earning this prestigious award underscores their exemplary contributions and places them among the elite in both Pakistan and abroad. Such recognitions are pivotal. They not only celebrate success but also motivate the broader business community to aspire, innovate, and contribute more profoundly to the socio-economic fabric of Pakistan. It is through these accomplishments and the continuous encouragement from platforms like FPCCI that we pave the way for a more prosperous and progressive future for our nation. May the laurels of today inspire many more success stories tomorrow. and may the FPCCI continue its commendable work in spearheading Pakistan's

but have resounded in in-

Dr. Umar Saif Federal Minister for IT & **Telecom, Science & Technology**

economic journey.



I am delighted that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry is organizing its 11th Achievement Awards ceremony this year in recognition of the services of talented people and reputed organizations and, as usual, is bringing out an informative Achievement Award Souvenir on the occasion.

I am very happy to note that the aims of this award is to give recognition to individuals and organizations whose achievement has contributed significantly in the growth and development of Pakistan. The Awards promote healthy competition among people and encourage them to strive harder to push the boundaries of excellence. The Award recipient would have demonstrated past accomplishments and forward thinking to advance the notions of sustainability in every possible way.

We all know that Pakistan has unique location and talented people, but the platforms to recognize the services of these people are organizing of achievement award is really praiseworthy. Such important Award ceremonies play a major role in motivating the corporate sector of any country to reach out to new heights of excellence. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, Apex trade bodies play a vital role in both national and international affairs and make significant contributions that benefit society at large, from spurring economic growth to promot-

ing good governance. On this joyous occasion, allow me to congratulate FPCCI on its devotion and sincere efforts to promote talent of the country I also felicitate all Award Winners on their performance and hope that the business community will continue its efforts for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan. I hope that the award winner will not only maintain the record of their best performance but also become role models for other people to compete for this coveted accomplishment.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh **President FPCCI**



The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry being the apex representative body of the business community of Pakistan taking pride of initiative to acknowledge the outstanding performances of business entities and individuals in their respective fields through Achievement

Awards. After successful organization of the previous events, FPCCI is holding the 11th Edition of "Achievement Awards", as a flagship event which is regularly organized to honor the achievements of enterprises in their respective fields, acclaiming as symbol of prestige and recognition at national and international level. The FPCCI Achievement Awards helps Award Winners, in the elevation of their profile and reputation among all circles.

The performances of award winners and their achievements despite the challenges faced by the business community in Pakistan are highly commendable. This speaks of their dedication, devotion and commitment to their business interests and valuable contribution towards Pakistan's

I thank my team, Convener and Members of the Awards Committee, the Senior Vice President, Vice Presidents, Coordinators, the Secretary General of FPCCI and his team for their dedication and hard work put in organizing this event. I am confident the Achievement Award will motivate and encourage others to put in more efforts into their respective areas of interest and come out with outstanding achievements which will not only reward them but will also serve trade and economic interests of the Pakistan. I congratulate all the Award Winners and wish them a continued suc-

cess in their endeavors, with

Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh



The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) is organizing the 11th FPCCI Achievement Awards to recognize the outstanding performance of individuals and firms for enhancing the insignia of Pakistan. As we know that, in knowledge drive global culture and human development, progressive nations atheistically search for new ideas, people, talents creative plans innovative methods to renovate the old and obsolete systems and infrastructure with new passion and ambitions for a better future. In the era of globalization and economic integration the issues of socioeconomic development is one of the category of FPCCI's achievements

Despite all challenges like infrastructure, lack of knowledge creating activities and educational and health backwardness, our people are still competitive organizers for the success in marketing their talent in of the ceremony.

reaching international mar-

Saturday December 23, 2023

kets and I commend them on this achievement. On this occasion, I also applaud the role of FPCCI in promoting technology, export, economic growth, and prosperity and assisting traders and industrialist in addressing the new challenges being faced in the sphere of international market.

I believe that this event will play a role to boost the confidence of people in marketing their activities. Every successful nation always wants the quick convergence of the country which is possible only in that condition when countries adopt export led growth and investment-led growth policies for competitiveness, diversification and value addition. 1 am confident that this event will open up a new vista of fresh opportunities and greatly help in promoting true image of Pakistan which need bareness at sig-

nificant level. I congratulate to all valiant winners for their dedicated efforts which are highly admirable and it is my conviction that our people will perform better in future too to accelerate the progress of Pakistan's economy which is the need of the time. I congratulate all the awardees, and convey my best wishes to the

Mr. Ahmed Irfan Aslam **Federal Minister for Climate Change** and Environmental coordination



am pleased to know that following its past tradition, the FPCCI is organizing the 11th FPCCI Achievement Awards to confer awards to the leading entrepreneurs of Pakistan in recognition of their exceptional performance this year.

The organization of Achievement Awards is a commendable step because they recognize the achievements of exporters and service sector who dare to venture in new areas and succeed. By learning from the example of successful achievers, new entrepreneurs will also encourage to take bold initiatives and win a seal of approval from the apex body. On this occasion, I would also like to appreciate the contribution of the private entrepreneurs

thering the trade and industry interests of the country. In the wake of the numerous crises confronting our country, strong exports are the need of the hour Despite the problems of law and order and power crisis, Pakistan's business community has remained

ity products.

FPCCI is making vig-

orous efforts to promote

our businesses, and the

Awards represent but one

facet of the complex role played by FPCCI in fur-

exports I also wish to reiterate the Government's resolve to facilitate the business community in their efforts to boost Pakistan's trade and playing greater role in the development of

steadfast to increase the

exports potential of Paki-

stan and exploiting the new

market for diversification of

country's economy. I commend the endeavors of Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI and his entire team on holding the Awards ceremony for recognizing the efforts of entrepreneurs and also congratulate the award winners and wish them for promoting the image of the country through qual-

Mr. Rizwan Ahmed Bhatti CEO, Pakistan Industrial **Development Corporation**



I am glad to know that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) is organizing its 11th Achievement Awards in order to honor the business houses who have made an outstanding contribution towards Pakistan's business performance.

Pakistan's strategic location offers our manufacturers a great opportunity to serve the markets in the region, provided they have exportable surplus of manufactures. We should, therefore, adopt innovative methods and the public private partnership model for increasing both quality and quantity of our manufac-

On this occasion FPCCI pays due tribute to all those entrepreneurs who have achieved highest level of performance. FPCCI is undoubtedly playing a crucial role in promoting export-oriented industry in Pakistan, and the Achievement Awards motivate businesspersons to achieve ambitious business

In these circumstances due recognition of exportoriented industry through events such as the Achievement Awards provides industrialists with the encouragement to continue their efforts to put Pakistan on the road to growth and prosperity.

l congratulate President FPCCI and all FPCCI Achievement Award Winners on their excellent performance, and look forward to their continued success in the future.

Haji Ghulam Ali Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



It is heartening to know that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) is organizing the 11th FPCCI Achievement Awards, to strengthen the confidence of Pakistani individuals and organizations who performed exceptionally in their respective fields and

I am pleased to learn that FPCCl's Achievement Award has generated fair competition amongst individuals and organizations and boosts their dynamism, which will lead Pakistan to the road of self-reliance. Economic development, open trade and social emancipation always take place in those countries where creativity, freedom of

tion is given to the individuals who participate actively in attaining the objectives. The industrial sector plays vital role in the

economy by creating jobs,

welcomed and due recogni-

providing goods services, and stimulating economic growth. It is also an important source of tax revenue for governments. Indeed the individuals and organizations of industrial sector not only collaborate with governments to gain access to resources and develop new products but also enable government to invest in infrastructure and other important projects. Congratulate all award winners for their dedicated efforts. It is my firm belief that our individuals and organizations will perform even better future to accelerate the pace of Pakistan's economy.

I would like to convey my best wishes to the President of FPCCI, Mr. Irfan Igbal Sheikh and his entire team for organizing the Award successfully with this hope that FPCCI will continue its efforts by way of providing marketing opportunities to individuals and organizations both thoughts and actions are at home and abroad.

Mr. Aneeq Ahmed Minister for Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony



I am glad to learn that the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) is organizing the 11th FPCCI Achievement Awards to pay tribute to the proficient and bright people and organization who have performed well in the field of trade, industry, economic, science, academia, research and development, commercial and socio-economic development. The institution of Achievement Awards is one of the praiseworthy contributions of FPCCI towards the promotion of merit and expertise and serves to provide recognition to the unfaltering mem-

Pakistani Community. In this era of competition, there is a dire need that we recognize the motivate the services of individuals

bers and organization of the

of interest to boost the economy by devising strategies that give us an edge over our competitors. These bright people are not only in other nations to the prosperity and development of the nation.

I anticipate that the FPCCI's Awards will generate new fair competition amongst organization and individual and boost their dvnamism, which will lead Pakistan to the road of selfreliance. I hope that the Achievement Awards will further encourage the country's people to perform outstanding to improve the status of country in industries, commercial and socioeconomic activities and to enhance the progress of Pakistan in national and inter national market. I extend my warm fe-

licitations to the president FPCCI and his team for organizing such a prestigious event and also on bringing out an impressive souvenir on this occasion. I also extend my felicitations to the FPCCI Achievement Awards Winners on their excellent performance and hope that they will conand organization whose are tinue their efforts for the performing well in their area prosperity of our country.

ture and services are increas-

ingly exposed to serious

challenges of competitive-

ness. In order to improve the

competitiveness, there is

immediate need to work on

relevant indicators as with

current performance, Paki-

stan cannot ideally compete

and fetch a good share in the

international market. Com-

petitiveness is key for

Pakistan's Industry. In to-

day era, it is impossible to

compete in global market

without being productive and efficient. I hope that

the export awards would

serve to encourage a healthy

competition in all sectors of

economy improving produc-

tivity, harnessing new mar-

kets and meeting the inter-

its devotion and sincere ef-

forts to promote entrepre-

neurship in the country.

also extend my heartiest

felicitations to all Awards

Winners on their outstand-

ing performance and contri-

bution in economic devel-

opment of country. Their

achievements and contribu-

tions to our business land-

scape have indeed set a high

bar for the entrepreneurs of

I congratulate FPCCI on

national challenges.

Mr. Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry **CEO**, National Productivity **Organization**



It gives me immense pleasure to know that FPCCI is organizing the 11th Achievement Awards in the honor of the leading entrepreneurs of Pakistan whose performance is outstanding in bringing the much-needed foreign exchange to build the reserve of the country. Through hard work and

dedication these individuals have built efficient & commercial organizations that contribute to the economic growth and development of the communities in which they serve. The instituting of FPCCI Achievement Awards is a great initiative of FPCCI to further motivate the star performers under the prevailing conditions when global economy is slow down and affecting our

economic progress. Pakistan economy, particularly industry, agricul-

I am pleased to know that the Federation of Pakistan

and Industry (FPCCI) is organizing a prestigious event of the 11th FPCCI Achievement Awards, to leading individuals and organizations in lieu of their outstanding performance. These awards have great significance in the present competitiveness environment and they provide an opportunity to the individuals and organization to identify challenges, analyze emerging trends and devise new strategies for recognizing the talent of the coun-

Syed Mehdi Shah Governor Gilgit-Baltistan



Chambers of Commerce

The FPCC Achievement Awards encourage those who have done well during the previous year, and also act as a catalyst in generating fresh efforts to meet upcoming challenges to improve the image of country. I hope that the FPCCI Achievement Awards will recognize the individuals and organizations that have contributed extraordinary in the fields of trade, industry, social sector, science, research and others and reveal the highest values of their pro-

I believe that FPCCI Achievement Awards will motivate the individuals and organizations to vigorously play their crucial role in the growth and economic development of the country. I extend my warm felicitations to Irfan Iqbal Sheikh President of FPCCI, and his entire team on organizing this splendid Award ceremony in Pakistan. I also wish all award winners to continue good fortune and success for the future

Mr. Mohamed Karmoune Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco, Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps



I am pleased be part of FPCCl's 11th Achievement Awards which has a widespread recognition at national and international level and considered as an occasion of pride and gratification for the distinguished

As we all are well aware

winners.

that the private sector plays a pivotal role in the country's economic growth and helps ensuring the policies are broad-based and are being followed by business sector. I truly admire FPCCI's contributions to promote activities in the field of trade, industry and business sector of Pakistan while organizing such events and honouring companies and individuals who are making life easier by providing quality products and services

FPCCI Achievement Awards certainly encour-

ages the entrepreneurs not only to play more vibrant role in the socio-economic development but also provides an opportunity for organisations and individuals to gain fresh ideas to improve their performance by learning the best practices of finalists and winners

quite optimistic that FPCCI will continue to support commendable activities of recognizing and admiring high achievers, which surely motivates and encourages individuals and organizations to further explore creativity and skills that propel them to achieve even higher goals.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of FPCCI, its President Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Office Bearers and the Executive Committee Members, for holding this extraordinary event. Your support allows the winners to gain the recognition they de-

I congratulate all the award winners on their achievements and wish them continued success in future. It is a pleasure to be in the company of so many high-achieving organisations and individuals.

Dr. Saifuddin Junejo **Chairman Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA)**



It is a well known fact that export is one of the important pillars of economic development and plays incredibly important role to strengthen the national economy as it offers people and firms many more markets for their goods. In modern times one of the core functions of diplomacy and foreign policy between governments is to foster economic trade, encourage exports and imports for the

benefit of all trading parties. Innovation, technological advancement and policy framework have historically proven to be the primary reason behind the enhancement of export. Unfortunately, Pakistan is behind the other countries in innovation, technological advancement and consistent Policies during the recent decades. Despite above handicaps, Export Process-Zones Authority (EPZA) has taken measures

to boost exports and facilitate Foreign Direct Investment (FDIs) in its established Zones in the country, hence achieved export growth in the FY 2019-20 US\$ 638.022 million, FY 2020-21 US\$ 974.600 million and FY 2021-22 US\$ 934.997 through manufacturing Sector. EPZA is trying its best to enhance its share in the national exports. EPZA efforts have resulted in the cumulative exports of US\$ 11,875.00 million till

the end of FY 2022-23. There is a dire need to pursue an integrated approached wherein public and private sector work as partners to facilitate and promote an innovative and modern culture for promoting exports. FPCCI being an apex body of trade and industry is undoubtedly playing a crucial role in promoting trade and industry in Pakistan. The Achievement Awards are one of the major activities which encourage the business community and the exporters of Pakistan who are working tirelessly to promote Pakistani products in the International market and earn precious foreign exchange for

the country.

4. Last but not least, I congratulate all the award winners for their commendable performance and wish them success in future.

Evaluating the viability of trade agreements

11th FPCCI Achievement Awards

Saturday December 23, 2023

Creating employment through entrepreneurship



Mr. Irfan Igbal Sheikh, President FPCCI

Unemployment is one of the major driving forces behind social unrest, rising crime rate, mental health issues and even terrorist activities in Pakistan. Being an entrepreneur, I strongly believe that entrepreneurship spurs economic growth in several ways. The most obvious one is generating employment opportunities for skilled/unskilled and educated youth of the country. Entrepreneurs, at even the most basic scale, employ people, providing them with incomes that they can spend, initiating earn money programs, which fuel the movement of the national economy and also encourage people to do their own business and cre-

ate more jobs. The entrepreneurs are responsible for creating jobs with varying qualification requirements. For example, smaller entrepreneurs are more willing to hire employees with limited or no education, thus providing opportunities to people from all sections of society. Entrepreneurs also tend to hire locally, which reinforces the social fabric of their surrounding communities and is instrumental in promoting social change. Establishing and running a business encourages the people, while the resultant

households, thus reducing of generational improvecrime rates related to unemployment. It has proven with time that employees employment, the country's in entrepreneurial ventures middle class will grow, setget access to mentorship ting it on the path of from the entrepreneur and hands-on work experience, both of which empower them with skills they can use to further their ambitions in life. Countries in the world with better entrepreneurial infrastructure such as readily available finance, conducive governmental

Islamabad

ments in quality of life. As more and more people gain transitioning from a developing country to a developed one.

The retail sector is the third largest contributor to Pakistan's economy, contributing about 18-20% of the GDP and the employer of millions of people engaged by the industry. Re-

Year	Number of female business directors	Number of male business directors	Share of female business directors	Share of male business directors	
2014	2,259	9,968	18.5%	81.5%	
2015	2,167	11,757	15.6%	84.4%	
2016	2,705	13,839	16.4%	83.6%	
2017	3,440	18,613	15.6%	84.4%	
2018	3,950	23,572	14.4%	85.6%	
2019	4,554	28,293	13.9%	86.1%	
2020	5,612	34,619	13.9%	86.1%	

policies, and healthy indus- tail, one of the principal sectrial infrastructure boast a tors of entrepreneurship, is better quality of life and prosperity.

Entrepreneurship is not only a solution to unemployment; it can be a road map to a better life. is engaged mainly in urban Generating employment on a micro-level is a key to national economics on a macro level. It is a universal truth that employed people will spend more, thus, giving a boost to the country's gross domestic product. They will also contribute to national exchequer by paying taxes, and by doing so, contribute to a country's national income, are more likely to save asset purchases in the fu-

going through a transition phase in Pakistan and the world over. Most of the structured retailing in Pakistan has started recently and

The retail sector likely touches you as a citizen every day, possibly multiple times a day. From prominent fashion brands to footwear and groceries and food and fuel, retail transactions are what an average individual goes through every day. Pakistan has around 2 million retailers, of which 0.8 million represent the and invest to make larger FMCG modern trade and general trade channels, inture. The people on a more cluding kiryanas, general stable financial footing are stores, medical stores, sualso more likely to send their permarkets, hypermarkets, creating a more balanced and allows other people to supchildren to educational instietc. and expected to show

port themselves and their tutions, setting off a chain an annual growth rate households, thus reducing of generational improve- (CAGR 2023-2028) of 16.58%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$300.80m by 2028. In Pakistan developing the retail sector as entrepreneurship can be a key driver of job creation and employment growth, and for good reason. Starting a business is not an easy task, but it can lead to significant benefits, both for the individual entrepreneur and the economy as a whole. By providing new products, services, and innovations to the market, entrepreneurs can stimulate economic growth and create new job opportunities. Entrepreneurship can create more and more jobs both directly and indirectly and can affect employment growth overall depending on the facilities provided by the government declaring the retail sector as an industry. In developing entrepreneurship in the country, it is necessary to promote technical education rather than conventional education. To extend entrepreneurship to all fields of study in vocational education it should be linked with practical training in specific fields of study with the objective of entrepreneurship, and provide support for students

> Trade bodies and business associations should take steps to promote partnerships between Technical Vocational Institutions and enterprises and motivate more business people to get involved in entrepreneurship education to promote economic diversification in Pakistan. By encouraging the establishment of businesses in different sectors. entrepreneurs reduce reliance on a single industry,

many restrictive policies

are still in place. After the

passing of three decades,

fully implemented in Paki-

stan due to complex rela-

tions with neighbouring

countries but other SAFTA

member countries have in-

tegrated their economies

and benefitted greatly from

this collaboration. Same as

the Economic Cooperation

Organization Trade Agree-

ment (ECOTA) was signed

in 2003, but after passing

of many years, it has yet to

become fruitful for Paki-

stan. While other countries

interested in starting up a

Regional Trade: a tool for economic development



By Mian Anjum Nisar Vice President SAARC CCI

In the civilized world, different forms of trade have existed for thousands of vears Whether or not analyzing the trade routes of antiquity or modern times. trade and commerce have played a vital role in business expansion, developing national economies and nation building. In the modern times have witnessed the birth of a global economy and Regional trading blocs provide countries with the ability to exchange goods with member countries with minimal or no tariffs or cumbersome trade regulations countries today engage in some form of global trade.

We witness that over the last three decades, the intensification of regional trade has played a powerful role in economic and political integration. For example, the EU's original free trade area evolved into a customs union, which later became an economic and monetary union. Almost two thirds of the EU's trade is conducted between members. Similarly, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). which was created 30 years ago to expand trade between the US, Canada, and Mexico, has been a great success. Trade between NAFTA members has grown by over 500 percent. Similarly, since the formation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area in 1992, many ASEAN economies have registered miraculous growth rates and their intra-regional trade is now over 25 percent.

Regional trade has been an important factor in the economic success of many countries. Within most trading blocs, intra-regional trade comprises 40 percent or more of each member country's individual trade. However, for the regional arrangements of which Pakistan is a member, intraregional trade accounts for less than 5 per cent.

PAKISTAN							
Adult Population	Year	Number of new Limited Liability Companies	New business density rate				
92,399,584	2006	4,117	0.04				
95,241,842	2007	3,356	0.04				
98,165,302	2008	3,458	0.04				
101,152,817	2009	2,414	0.02				
104,187,043	2010	2,868	0.03				
107,101,806	2011	3,367	0.03				
110,060,746	2012	3,928	0.04				
113,060,252	2013	3,937	0.03				
116,096,389	2014	4,680	0.04				
119,164,298	2015	5,385	0.05				
122,150,863	2016	6,716	0.05				
125,175,221	2017	9,624	0.08				
128,222,837	2018	12,991	0.10				
131,288,856	2019	15,958	0.12				
134,372,752	2020	19,791	0.15				
World B	ank Entrer	reneurshin Data	hace				

Pakistan's strategic location has not leveraged this to its advantage. Although Pakistan was a relatively forward-looking country until the mid-1960s its policies have not been favorable to nomic development since then. While other successful developing countries have espoused liberal trade regimes since the 1980s resorting to protectionism only on a selective basis— Pakistan continues to rely on import substitution policies. Clearly, the country needs to revisit its regional and global trade poli-

The studies and data reflect that until the 1960s, Pakistan was a relatively forward-looking country and its economic activity more integrated with the rest of the world. Its volume of manufactured exports exceeded those of the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia combined and many other counties of the world. Today, however, Pakistan's total exports are only a fraction of the exports of any of these individual countries.

Despite its strategic

country straddles a key is its greatest asset, but it trade route between the energy-rich countries of western and central Asia and those in South Asia with a high demand for energy. Pakistan's three seaports i e Karachi Port Oasim promoting trade and eco- and Gwadar provide the shortest routes linking Afghanistan. China. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to the rest of the world. At present. however, hardly any transit trade passes through

> greatly from lower trade and transportation costs.

Pakistan is a signatory to two very important regional trade agreements the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and the Economic Cooperation Organization Trade Agreement (ECOTA). However, both are of little service to Pakistan as any normal trading arrangements with the members of these blocs have vet to be established. The SAFTA was signed in 2006 but unfortunately, Pakistan allowed only a limited number of trade items under its positive list. geographical location, Paki- In March 2012, the coun-

these Pakistani ports despite the fact that all these countries would benefit markets. The regional trade agreements (RTAs) are experiencing unprecedented rapid development in terms of economic growth of the countries. With the increase in the depth of RTA provisions, as an important form

in the region have allowed the movement of goods by acceding to the TIR Convention (which works under an international guarantee system and facilitates the movement of trucks and containers), Pakistan has yet to follow suit. Similar setback to Pakistan's integration with regional trade blocs has been its failure to put into effect the various regional transit agreements to which it is a signatory. The only operational agreement is the Afghanistan Pakistan Transit and Trade Agreement, but since its implementation in 2011, most of Afghanistan's transit trade (which was previously routed through Pakistan) has been diverted to Iranian ports because of the complex provisions and procedures outlined in the agreement. This is unfortunate, given that Pakistan's ports could provide Central Asia the shortest overland route to sea, and there is tremendous export potential among the Central Asian

		PAKISTAN			
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By Suleman Chawla Senior Vice President,

FPCCI Pakistan has signed 12 trade agreements, some of them are PTAs, FTAs, Transit Trade and Trade in Goods Agreements. Pakistan singed Transit Trade Agreement with Afghanistan and Tajikistan, Pak-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement, Pak-China Free Trade Agreement, Pak-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, Pak-Mauritius Free Trade Agreement, Pakistan Pak -Iran Preferential Trade Agreement. Pakistan-Uzbekistan Preferential Trade Agreement Pakistan-Türkiye ance of trade has become irpreferential rates. It included relevant under the new edible palm oil products, phase of global trade but sugar confectionary, cocoa equilibrium in trade has significance when economy is facing contraction. However, during expansion of the economy industrial demand for input material need to be satisfied. One of the major impediments has been the concerns of the domestic industry in Pakistan that feels threatened from the competition of Chinese products.

The public sector is also fearful as elimination of custom duties would lead to substantial revenue losses as Pakistan heavily relies on taxation on international trade for revenue generation. According to the latest figures, 40% of the Pakistan's total revenue is from taxes on import of goods.

Pak- Iran PTA: Pak – Iran PTA became operational in September 2006. When this PTA began during 2006 the total trade between Pakistan and Iran was US \$ 638 million and was showing expansionary trend as Pak- Iran bilateral

that, although theory of bal- a total of 311 tariff lines on ket for 261 tariff lines covproducts, consumer goods, chemicals, tableware, kitchenware, rubber products, wood products, glassware products and electronic products. Pakistan has offered the same preferential treatment on edible palm oil products from Indonesia as provided to Malaysia under Pakistan Malaysia Free Trade Agreement.

Prior to the PTA volume of bilateral trade was US \$ 1.65 billion in 2012 Pakistan exports to Indonesia were US \$ 273 million while Indonesia exports to Pakistan were US \$ 1.38 billion. However, volume of two ways trade has grown significantly US \$ 4.5 billion but share of Pakistan's exports remained low in comparison just 188 million dollar against US \$ 4331 million (4.3 billion). Pakistan Uzbekistan

Pakistan Uzbekistan signed a Prefer-

ential Trade Agreement (PTA) in March 2022 be-

(MILLION US\$)									
YEAR	EXPORTS	IMPORIS	TOTAL TRADE	BALANCE OF TRADE	TOTAL EXPORT OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL EXP.	TOTAL IMPORTS OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL IMPORTS	
2018	63.6	29.3	93.0	34.3	23,778.6	0.3	60,391.1	0.0	
2019	22.7	93.8	116.4	(71.1)	23,818.8	0.1	50,511.0	0.2	
2020	24.0	97.4	121.4	(73.3)	22,245.7	0.1	45,841.7	0.2	
2021	50.7	126.6	177.4	(75.9)	28,880.0	0.2	73,106.6	0.2	
2022	110.8	123.7	234.5	(12.9)	31,175.9	0.4	71,104.7	0.2	
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Trade in Goods Agreement, Trade & Investment Framework Agreement between Pakistan and USA and Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area. Recently, Pakistan is also negotiating FTA with GCC.

All these agreements are differ in scope and nature and unfortunately inadequately utilized to produce desired results instead contributed in imbalance in Pakistan trade. Pakistan's export is significantly low then imports. Surprisingly, in some cases Pakistan's imports have increased manifold from its FTAs/PTAs

The low utilization and trade deficit indicates failures of receiving potential benefits from partners under agreements.

these agreements is discussed below to emphasize reviewing and cautious approach while setting such agreements.

Pak - China FTA:

Volume of bilateral trade between Pakistan and China is increasing under the Pak -China FTA which was become operational in 2007. At the time of FTA (2006-07), volume of bilateral trade was US \$ 4110 million and balance of trade of US \$ 2958 million was in favour of China. On completion of the Phase-I, which was from 2007 to 2011, the volume of bilateral trade was stood at US \$ 10558.1 million in which share of Pakistan exports was US \$2118.4 million while share of Chinese exports was US \$ 8439.7 million. In the first phase both sides were agreed on the elimination of tariff on 30% of the products. The second phase envisages liberalisation of tariff up to 90% of the goods from both sides. The tariff concessions

trade was US \$ 366 million during 2002-03. However, current volume of bilateral trade has significantly increased to US \$ 2144 million in which Pakistan exports to Iran is US \$781 million while Iran exports to Pakistan is US \$ 1363 mil-

Under the Agreement, Pakistan offered concessions to Iran on 338 tariff lines, whereas Iran gave concessions on 309 tariff lines. Preferences granted by both countries to each other cover approximately 18% of MFN tariff of both coun-

Pakistan and Iran has also signed a barter trade agreement Government ministries from both sides and Quetta and Zahedan tween Pakistan and Uzbekistan covering a total of thirty-four goods. The main objectives of the PTA is to lower duties which was ranges from 20 percent to 100 percent while NTBs (Non-tariff barriers) are to be reduced by mutual recognition of standards and easing procedural requirements for goods covered under the PTA.

In order to compliance international treaty and rights of the landlocked countries, Pakistan has also given transit trade facility via its ports to Uzbekistan under Transit Trade Agreement which was signed in

Though Pakistan and Uzbekistan are PTA and Transit trading partner, but followed by China (8%)

ering traditional as well as non-traditional sectors such as leather, rice, dates, mangoes, cutlery, sports goods, seafood, processed agricultural products, rubber tubes and tires, plastics, and engineering goods. While Turkey has been granted concessions on 130 tariff lines, including products such as black tea, processed food products and flavorings, industrial raw materials and parts of machinery, and parts of electronic equipment. akistan exports to Türkiye was expanding rapidly till the imposition of duties by Türkiye Authorities. However, after strong advocacy by business community the two countries agreed to sign FTA instead PTA, both countries now trading under agreement on trade in goods. Volume of trade between Pakistan and Türkiye has seen significant growth after implementation of the agreement. Current volume of bilateral two way trade is US\$1.3 billion in which share of Pakistan's exports is US \$ 432 million while Türkiye exports to Pakistan

is US \$ 870 million. Pakistan Afghanistan and Tajikistan Transit Trade

Agreement Pakistan being the signatory of the various international protocols/agreements has granted transit trade facilities. Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement was signed in 1965 and has been modified accordingly. Similarly, The Agreement betweer Tajikistan and Pakistan had been negotiated and finalized, covering trade and transit of goods by road and rail along with customs procedures, largely on the template of Transit Trade Agreement between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, which was a comprehensive agreement, implemented since March 2022.

Besides above PTAs/ FTAs and trading agreements, Pakistan is also negotiating bilateral trading arrangements, with Singapore (FTA), Thailand and Gulf Cooperation Countries

While Pakistan's exports mainly depending on USA's market (19% shares),

	PAKISTAN'S TRADE WITH TÜRKIYE (MILLION US\$)										
YEAR	EXPORTS	IMPORTS	TOTAL TRADE	BALANCE OF TRADE	TOTAL EXPORT OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL EXP.	TOTAL IMPORTS OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL IMPORTS			
2018	330.7	462.2	793.0	(131.5)	23,778.6	1.4	60,391.1	0.8			
2019	306.3	550.2	856.5	(243.9)	23,818.8	1.3	50,511.0	1.1			
2020	268.8	620.2	888.9	(351.4)	22,245.7	1.2	45,841.7	1.4			
2021	314.8	773.1	1,087.9	(458.3)	28,880.0	1.1	73,106.6	1.1			
2022	432.4	870.3	1,302.7	(437.9)	31,175.9	1.4	71,104.6	1.2			
		merce were		tunately, bil			s), UK 7% Spain and U				

allowed to begin barter is very low just US \$ 235 trade. Ministry of Commerce of Pakistan issued notification to begin implementing the "Business-to-Business (B2B) Barter Trade Mechanism, 2023, allowing public and private entities to engage in trade with Iran, Afghanistan and Russia under the B2B Mechanism. Trade of goods under a B2B BT arrangement allowed on the principle of import followed by export. The export would be made to the extent of the value of imported goods. Pakistan - Indonesia

million.

The bilateral relations and trade agreements between Pakistan and Uzbekistan are helpful for improving and capturing Central Asia Market to trade Pakistani products. Pakistan is also achieving other targets than trade by signing such agreements with Uzbekistan which is one of the major nations of CARs, ECO and SCO which an emerging and influential bloc. Pakistan – Türkiye

Trade in Goods Agreement The Framework Agree5% of Pakistan exports. Only 21.5 percent of Pakistan's exports share by its trading partners.

Pakistani exporters are overabundance of various fixed and variable costs, such as documentation, transportation, border delays, tariffs, and non-tariffs, inadequate IT and shipping connectivity.

Reduced cost influence the nature, direction and composition of trade flows, however, Pakistan's trade does not enjoy improved trade facilitation. Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) predicts that a reduction in trade costs in Pakistan to the level of those of Singapore could increase Pakistan's GDP by \$10 billion, create 2.2 million jobs and reduce poverty by 5%. Pakistan ranks 122nd out of 167 countries on the Logistic Performance Index (LPI). Neighbouring India stands at 44th and Bangladesh at 100th. China ranks 19th, Indonesia 61, Sri Lanka 73 Uzbekistan 88, Tajikistan 97 and Iran ranks at 123rd on Logistic Performance Index. LPI provides country-wide assessments of six aspects of logistics performance: trade- and transport related infrastructure, customs and border management, logistics services quality, timeliness of shipments, ability to track and trace, and the availability of competitively priced international shipments. Pakistan could only be achieved potential benefits from overseas trade specifically from trading partners by reducing trade cost, cost of producing exportable surplus improving shipping connectivity and enhancing logistics performance. Improvement in domestic

commerce to serve as

buffer stock removal of in-

frastructure bottlenecks

and business friendly

policy to establish confi-

comm	litted by I	akistan in	PIA;	Pakistan	Indonesia	ment	Establishi	ng a Fre
		PA	KISTAN'S	TRADE WITE (Million US	I <mark>AFGHAN</mark> IST. \$)	AN		
<u>YEAR</u>	EXPORTS	IMPORTS	TOTAL TRADE	BALANCE OF TRADE	TOTAL EXPORT OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL EXP.	TOTAL IMPORTS OF PAKISTAN	% SHARE IN TOTAL IMPORTS
2018	1,356.4	510.3	1,866.6	846.1	23,778.6	5.7	60,391.1	0.8
2019	1,183.6	580.5	1,764.1	603.1	23,818.8	5.0	50,511.0	1.1
2020	871.2	518.5	1,389.7	352.7	22,245.7	3.9	45,841.7	1.1
2021	835.9	640.5	1,476.4	195.4	28,880.0	2.9	73,106.6	0.9
2022	988.9	958.0	1,946.9	30.9	31,175.9	3.2	71,104.7	1.3

the first phase of the FTA predominantly contained raw materials and intermediary goods. In return, China eliminated tariff on finished goods. Protocol on the Phase-II of the CPFTA has been signed by Pakistan and China during the visit of the Prime Minister to Beijing on 28th April, 2019. In pursuance of Article 79(2), the Amending Protocol will form an integral part of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement. Under the Phase-II, Pakistan has secured enhanced and deeper concessions on products of its export interests, revision of safeguards mechanism for protection of the domestic industry, inclusion of the balance of payment clause as a safety valve against balance of payments difficulties, and effective enforcement of the electronic data exchange.

It is worth mentioning

preferential trade agreement was signed on February 3, 2012 after conclusion of prolonged negotiations, which were initiated in August 2002. The Preferential Trade Agreement became operational in September 2013 after many rounds of negotiations. Under the agreement, Indonesia agreed to offer market access to Pakistan for 220 tariff lines on preferential rates. The list included fresh fruits, cotton yarn, fabrics, readymade garments, fans, sports goods, leather goods and other industrial products. After PTA's implementation, Indonesia will be able to increase exports of crude palm oil to Pakistan, whereas Pakistan can export fruits, value-added textiles, carpets, fabrics, leather goods, chemicals, surgical equipment and other items.

Pakistan offered Indonesia

Trade Area between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Türkiye signed in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the 22nd day of March, 201 6. Pakistan and Turkey's Trade in Goods Agreement, which was signed in August 2022, has finally come into effect on May 1, 2023, as per mutual agreement. The Trade in Goods Agreement signifies a notable milestone in the historic brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkey and envisages further integration of the markets and business communities of both countries. This agreement is expected to increase bilateral trade across various sectors and bring reciprocal tariff concessions extended to select exports of both countries. Under the agreement, Paki-

stan has gained preferential

access to the Turkish mar-