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Barrick Gold delegation calls on Premier

## Reko Diq project will prove to be game changer: PM

Shehbaz encourages Barrick Gold to invest in other projects too; Plans to be chalked out for communication infrastructure; Reko Diq project feasibility to be completed this year; Local people are being given priority in jobs, Premier Shehbaz told

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Barrick Gold Company led by Chief Executive Officer Mark Bristow was called Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday and informed the delegation that the feasibility of the Reko Diq project in Balochistan would be completed by end of current year. The prime minister said that Reko Diq project would prove to be a game changer for the development of Balochistan and the region. "This project will usher in a new era of development of the province and prosperity of the people," he added.

He said planning would be made regarding communication infrastructure, es-

pecially railway lines, to take full advantage of minerals in Balochistan.

The prime minister asked Barrick Gold to also invest in other mineral projects in the province. He also proposed that the government and the Barrick Gold could collaborate to establish a technical university in Chagai district of the province.

The government is taking all possible measures to facilitate investors especially in the fields of road and communication systems, he remarked.

Briefing on the progress of Reko Diq project, the Barrick Gold delegation informed the meeting that the Reko Diq project feasibility would be completed by

end of current year.

The prime minister was informed that preference was being given to local and Balochistan domiciled persons to work on Reko Diq project.

Barrick Gold said that it had set up three schools near Reko Diq under Corporate Social Responsibility while so far the company had also imparted technical training to 100 people including women.

Federal Minister for Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Muhammad Jehanzeb and relevant senior government officials participated in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer of Barrick Gold, Mark Bristow along with a delegation calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## SC nullifies notification of dismissal from service in respect of former judge IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has declared null and void the notification regarding sacking of former judge Islamabad High Court (IHC) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui.

A five-member larger bench comprising Justice Aminuddin, Justice Jamal Mandokhel, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Irfan Saadat headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa issued the reserved judgment.

The SC said in its decision appeals against the dismissal of Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui are accepted. Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui should be given all the privileges of a retired judge.

Due to delay in fixation of case Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui has completed his 62 years age. He cannot be reinstated due to completion of his age. The court said in its decision Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui will be considered retired judge from high court.

SC had reserved judg-

ment of the appeal against the dismissal of Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui on January 23. During the hearing of the case CJP Qazi Faiz Isa had remarked we will have to proceed cautiously so that the constitutional balance among the institutions is not disturbed.

During the hearing of the petition filed by Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui on December 15, 2023, SC had issued notices to former DG ISI Lt Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed, Brig (Retd) Irfan Ramay, former chief justice IHC Anwar Kasi and former registrar SC Arbab Arif.

Former DG ISI Lt Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed had filed reply in this case in SC on January 22. Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui was removed from the judicial office on the recommendations of the Supreme Judicial Council under Article 209 of the Constitution for misbehavior as a judge for a speech at the District Bar Association Rawalpindi on 21st July 2018.

## CM visits residence of Aimal Wali

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti visited the residence of provincial president of Awami National Party (ANP), Aimal Wali Khan in Islamabad on Friday.

He was accompanied by the former caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaarul Haq Kakar and Senator Dhanesh Kumar.

The Chief Minister and others expressed condolence with Aimal Wali Khan over death of wife of veteran politician Asfandiyar Wali Khan. They also offered feteha for the departed soul and prayed for the patience on the loss.

## Nation to celebrate Pakistan Day today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The whole nation celebrates Pakistan Day on Saturday with renewed pledge to work hard for the progress and stability of the country.

The day marks adoption of historic Lahore Resolution this day in 1940 that provided a framework for realization of the goal of a separate homeland for Muslims of South Asia.

The Day will dawn with 31-gun salute in the federal capital and 21-gun salute in provincial capitals.

Special prayers will be offered in mosques after Fajr prayers for the welfare, prosperity and solidarity of the country. National flag will be hoisted on major government buildings.

The main feature of the day will be the grand military parade in Islamabad where contingents of the three-armed forces and other security forces will conduct march past while fighter planes will present aerobic maneuvers.

## CM Balochistan emphasizes on Pakistan Day: We have to make pledge not to hesitate from any sacrifice for safety & stability of country

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has emphasized that we have to make pledge not to hesitate from rendering any sacrifice for safety, stability and development of the country.

We would utilize all our capabilities as a united nation to achieve the very goal. The Chief Minister said at present we have to perform our responsibilities individually and collectively to face the challenges being faced by the country.

This was stated by the Chief Minister Balochistan in a message issued on eve of the Pakistan Day on Friday.

He said that people of Balochistan are patriotic and they would never become tool of any external

propaganda. He also said that the country is in need of unity and it can't afford any chaos as a result of any external agenda and anti-Pakistan activities.

The Chief Minister appealed to the masses to forge unity among their ranks. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty protect the country from the evil eye of enemies and it may long live.

Referring the Pakistan Day, the Chief Minister said that Pakistan was founded on the basis of two-nation theory.

All the minorities living in the country enjoy complete rights and religious freedom, Chief Minister said adding that

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ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, former caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar and Senator Dhanesh Kumar offering Feteha for departed soul of mother of Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP), Aimal Wali Khan

## China to assist Pakistan in stabilizing its financial situation: Vice Premier

BRUSSELS (APP): Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Friday held a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing wherein the latter underlined that China would assist Pakistan in stabilizing its financial situation.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of the First Nuclear Energy Summit in Brussels, both sides agreed on the importance of the longstanding cooperation between Pakistan and China in civil nuclear technology.

Vice Premier Zhang and

Foreign Minister Dar noted with appreciation the traditional 'Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Co-operative Partnership' and iron-clad friendship as an exemplary and unique relationship.

Foreign Minister Dar reiterated Pakistan's longstanding support for the One-China policy. He underscored that there was an absolute consensus in Pakistan on relations with China and Pakistan's strong commitment to the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif chairs an introductory meeting on arrival in Ministry of Defence Production.

## Govt keen to provide support to progress of defence production industry: Asif

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Production Khawaja Muhammad Asif says the government is keen to provide maximum support to progress of defence production industry of the country.

He was speaking during his visit to the Ministry in Rawalpindi on Friday.

On arrival, the Minister was received by Secretary Defence Production Lieutenant General Muhammad Chiragh Haider and was introduced to the key appointment holders of the Ministry, a

news release said.

The Minister was given an introductory briefing regarding the Ministry's executive departments and organizational structure.

The briefing was attended by senior officers of the Ministry of Defence Production.

The Defence Production Minister appreciated the performance and contribution of the defence industrial sector and its due role in modernizing the defence capabilities of Pakistan. He also appreciated the contribution of the defence industry in the social sector.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), led by Sultan Bin Abdul Rehman Al Marshad, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), SFD call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Sub-office of NAB Balochistan set up in Gwadar for coordinated system of accountability

Independent Report QUETTA: The sub-office of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan has been established in Gwadar.

The Director General NAB Balochistan visited the NAB's sub-office in Gwadar on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, DG NAB said that the sub-office of NAB has been established on special directives of Chairman NAB, Lt. General (Retd) Nazir Ahmed.

He said that the establishment of sub-office of NAB Balochistan reflects the resolve of Bureau for increasing the access against the corrupt practices in effective manner besides tackling with the issue of corruption.

He said that the Chairman NAB has stressed the

need to establish a coordinated system of accountability in Gwadar.

He said that it would be easier for the people of area to lodge complaint about corruption with establishment of sub-office of NAB in Gwadar.

While on the other hand, there would also be importance of NAB's sub-office in increasing transparency in projects of public sector and promoting the culture of answerability.

The DG NAB also said that Gwadar is a port city and there are great potential of Gwadar's becoming big trade center in time to come.

He also stressed the need to take measures for bringing transparency as well as accountability and good governance.

## PM, SFD delegation discuss dev. projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), led by Sultan Bin Abdul Rehman Al Marshad, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), SFD, during its visit to Pakistan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Friday and discussed its ongoing projects in Pakistan.

The Prime Minister welcomed the delegation and appreciated the long-standing friendship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and the efforts of SFD for providing financing to Pakistan in the fields of Health, Energy, Infrastructure and Education as well the recent floods.

The CEO, SFD thanked the Prime Minister.

## Investiture ceremony to be held at Governor House today

Independent Report QUETTA: The investiture ceremony is scheduled to be held at the Governor House today (Saturday).

According to an official hand out issued here on Friday, the acting Governor Balochistan Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai will confer the 15 Civil Awards on numerous people for their outstanding contribution in various spheres of life.

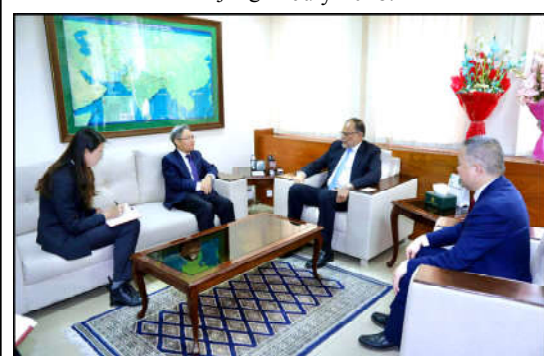
It may be mentioned here that the investiture ceremony would be held on behalf of the President of Pakistan.

## Court orders to present PTI founder, Qureshi on April 20

ISLAMABAD (Online): Local court of Islamabad has ordered to present PTI founder and Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the court on April 20.

Civil Judge Murid Abbas heard Azadi March vandalism case Friday which was registered against PTI founder, Shah Mehmood Qureshi and others in police station Karachi company.

The PTI lawyers Sardar Muhammad Masroof Khan, Naeem Haider Panjutha and others appeared in the court.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zaidong calls on Planning Minister Prof Ahsan Iqbal in Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives to discuss accelerated growth of CPEC projects.

## Pakistan, China to form WG on 5 new economic corridors under CPEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Friday agreed to establish a Working Group (WG) on five new economic corridors under the second phase of CPEC, aligning with the 5Es framework already prepared by the Planning Ministry.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between Federal Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal, and Chi-

nese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, which lasted for more than an hour here at the Planning Ministry, a news release said.

The Chinese envoy Jiang Zaidong congratulated Ahsan Iqbal on assuming the role of Planning Minister for the fourth time.

During the meeting, both sides "agreed to expedite phase 2 of the CPEC, while deciding to establish

Continued on page 2

## Two soldiers embrace martyrdom in DI Khan suicide attack

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom on Friday after a vehicle borne suicide bomber exploded himself on a security forces' convoy in Dera Ismail Khan District.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the two brave sons of soil were identified as Naib Subedar Yasir Shakeel (Age: 38 years, resident of District Kohat) and Sepoy Tahir Naveed (Age: 34 years, resident of District Kohat)

who embraced martyrdom.

"Security forces of Pakistan remain determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve. Moreover, the perpetrators of this cowardly attack will be brought to justice," the ISPR said.

Meanwhile Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Friday strongly condemned the suicide attack on the convoy of security forces in Dera Ismail Khan.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with the UAE Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, Almazrouel Suhail on the margins of the Nuclear Energy Summit in Brussels.

## خواب سے تعبیر تک عزم سے تکمیل تک

یوم پاکستان پر وزیر اعلیٰ بلوچستان  
میر سرفراز احمد بگٹی کا پیغام

23 مارچ ہمیں اس عظیم دن کی یاد دلاتا ہے کہ جس دن مسلمانوں نے ایک ایسی ریاست کے قیام کی  
داغ بیل رکھی جہاں مذہبی آزادی جمہوری استحکام آئین کی بالادستی کو تقویت حاصل ہو۔  
آج ہمیں ملکر اتحاد و یکجہتی بھائی چارے اور شہ سوچ بگر کے ساتھ مملکت خدا داد کو ترقی کی ان منازل پر لے جانا ہے  
جس کا ہمارے آباؤ اجداد نے خواب دیکھا تھا۔

حکومت بلوچستان صوبے کی ترقی اور خوشحالی کے لئے کوشاں ہے

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On Pakistan Day PM vows to put country on track of economic recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that being cognizant of the serious challenges confronting Pakistan, the incumbent government was committed to put Pakistan on the path to economic recovery and prosperity with a cogent policy reform framework.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayatur Rehman presiding over a meeting regarding different issues of Gwadar and their solutions

ceded, bringing respite for our citizens," the prime minister remarked. He said that in the journey on the path of democracy, the people of Pakistan elected their representatives in the general elections held on 8th February and consequently the governments had been formed at the federal and provincial levels.

Prime Minister Shehbaz urged the countrymen to renew their firm resolve to follow the footsteps of our founding fathers to make Pakistan a trivet of peace, progress and stability. "Let us not forget that our actions today will define the legacy of our generation and shape the course of history. Let us work for a Pakistan that is not driven apart by differences but is united around shared values," he urged.

The prime minister said that the 23rd March marked a momentous day in the history as on that day in 1940 the Muslims of Sub-Continent passed the historic 'Lahore Resolution' and demanded a separate homeland where they could freely live their

own way of life according to the principles of Islam. Through a consistent and dedicated political struggle of our founding fathers, the dream of a separate homeland for Muslims of South Asia became a reality and Pakistan appeared on the map of the world on 14th August 1947, he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the forefathers made untiring efforts and rendered exemplary sacrifices for Pakistan and millions of Muslims left their homes in India and decided to migrate to Pakistan. The new state had faced unprecedented challenges including creating a social and economic foundation, settlement of refugees, creation of state institutions, and meagre resources.

However, the prime minister said that under the inspiring leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and with the resilience and dedication of the nation, those daunting challenges were addressed and a foundation for an independent democratic state was laid down.



Grand Mufti of Bosnia prays for Palestine at Faisal Masjid

ISLAMABAD (APP): The esteemed Grand Mufti of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Husein ef Kavazovic offered Friday prayer at the Faisal Masjid.

At the Faisal Masjid, the Grand Mufti was received by Incharge Protocol and Public Relations of International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) Nasir Farid who extended a warm welcome to him. He also conveyed heartfelt congratulations by the President IIUI, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi for his forthcoming receipt of the Sitare e Quaid e Azam Award on March 23rd, conferred by the President of Pakistan, Dr. Husein ef Kavazovic thanked IIUI President for the warm wishes and felicitations.

Planning minister calls for 'proactive approach' in disaster management

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday urged the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to adopt a 'proactive approach' to cope with any natural calamity-like situation in the future, saying "Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries affected by climate change."

The minister made these remarks during his visit to the National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC), where he received a detailed briefing by the Chairman of NDMA Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, according to a Planning Ministry news release.

Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Iqbal highlighted that in 2022, Pakistan faced unprecedented devastation due to torrential rains and flooding in most parts of the country, affecting 33 million people and causing economic losses worth \$30 billion.



QUETTA: Security official stands high alert to avoid untoward incident during the congregational Friday prayers during the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, in Quetta.

Pakistan, China to form...

Continued from page 1 a working group on five new economic corridors, including the Corridor of Job Creation, Corridor of Innovation, Corridor of Green Energy, and Inclusive Regional Development."

Both the Planning Ministry and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China would prepare separate concept papers on the new economic corridors, which would provide a clear road map for each sector in the future.

"This framework will be aligned with the five new economic corridors to advance Pakistan's prosperity in each sector under the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif," emphasized the Minister highlighting the importance of accelerating Pakistan's export capabilities through enterprise development and job creation.

The Planning Ministry has already initiated the implementation of the 5Es framework, which includes Export, Energy, Equity, E-Pakistan and Environment.

"This framework will be aligned with the five new economic corridors to advance Pakistan's prosperity in each sector under the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif," emphasized the Minister highlighting the importance of accelerating Pakistan's export capabilities through enterprise development and job creation.

President approves remission for prisoners on Pakistan Day, Eid ul Fitr

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday approved remission for the prisoners on the occasion of Pakistan Day annually observed on March 23 and Eid ul Fitr.

The president granted a remission of 90 days each, for both occasions in sentences exercising his powers under Article 45 of the Constitution and Rule 15-A of the Rules of Business.

However, the remission would not be applicable on the prisoners involved in murder, espionage and anti-state activities.

Bilawal pays tribute to Nusrat Bhutto on her 95th birth anniversary

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid glowing tribute to the Madar-e-Jamhooriat Begum Nusrat Bhutto, on the occasion of her 95th birth anniversary.

In a statement on Friday, he said that late Begum Nusrat Bhutto epitomized nobility and unwavering dedication to the cause of democracy. Her life stands as a testament to patience, perseverance, and boundless sacrifices for the betterment of the nation, said a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Sardar Awas Ahmad Khan Leghari, presenting shield to the US Ambassador Donald Blome.

Pakistani consulate lauds New York State Assembly's resolutions honouring Pakistan

NEW YORK (INP): Pakistan Thursday welcomed New York State Assembly's three resolutions — proclaiming 23rd March as Pakistan-American Heritage Day, 14th August as Pakistan Independence Day, and congratulating the American-Pakistani Public Affairs Committee (APPAC), a political group, for its contributions to the New York.

The resolutions were the result of the efforts by the American-Pakistani Advocacy Group (APAG), a leading non-profit social service and advocacy organization based in New York said.

تعمیراتی کام (Construction) advertisement with details of a project in Quetta, including contact information and a QR code.

TENDER NOTICE

TSE-232403384933 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.

Table with 3 columns: S.No, Name of Work, E/Cost. Item 1: Establishment of Technical Training Institute at Dar-ul-Aman at Brewery Road Quetta. E/Cost: 17,277,945.

TENDER NOTICE for Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan Institute of Cardiology. Details include eligibility, submission process, and contact information.

"I never refused to play one down," says Rizwan

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan's wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Rizwan has denied reports that he refused to move to the one-down position during the T20I series against New Zealand in January. During an interview with a local news outlet, Rizwan expressed his willingness to adapt to any role for the national team. He is ready to bat at any number, and even ready to relinquish his duties as a wicketkeeper. "I never refused to play one down. When I was asked, I said I am absolutely available," said Rizwan.

We have to...

Continued from page 1 Pakistan's basis is on Kalma-e-Tauheed. He said that 23rd March, 1940 is such a great day in the history of sub-continent when the resolution of Pakistan had been presented. That resolution proved to be milestone of struggle of Muslims of the sub-continent towards achieving the country like Pakistan.

TENDER NOTICE for Balochistan Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education Quetta. Details include eligibility, submission process, and contact information.



# 23rd March: Pakistan Resolution Day

## Pakistan Day: A resolution of commitment March 23 is day of renewal of covenant

By Huma Kashif

**"We wish our people to develop to the fullest spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think the best and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of our people."**

— **Muhammad Ali Jinnah**

The nation of Pakistan is celebrating another momentous "Pakistan Resolution Day" which possesses an enormous commemoration in the historic struggle for acquiring Pakistan. The particular resolution is also renowned as "Lahore Resolution" made the Muslims of India to decide their own destiny and journey for the attainment of a separate entity to establish a Muslim State. That was the day when the Muslims of the sub-continent rejuvenated their political struggle for self-determination and acquisition of socio-political, economic, religious, and cultural freedom. On this particular day, the idea of a separate homeland for Muslims of India was converted clearly into the demand of Pakistan. Although presently, 23<sup>rd</sup> March day is losing its significance among our young generation. Most of our youth consider this day as just a public holiday, without realizing its true essence and spirit. But due to the emerging social chaos, and the political upheaval it is the need of the time that we should once again revitalize the spirit, struggle, and sufferings behind the freedom struggle.

Providing a short background, the British Raj, socio-political injustice, economic downfall, religious restraints, linguistic clash, cultural subjugation



led to the Pakistan Resolution and ultimately to the creation of Pakistan. Furthermore, the provincial autonomy achieved in 1937, and the discriminatory congress rule further strengthened the Muslims' notion of a separate sovereign state. The 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940 resolution was moved under the strong leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah also called the father of the Nation, who

rate homeland where they could live their life according to the teachings of Islam.

Pakistan is a precious gift that has given to us by Allah Almighty, it is the time to do some constructive efforts for our beloved country. Pakistan's armed forces are fully equipped and have the capacity to defend the territorial integrity and state sovereignty. Pakistan Navy is a strongly capable force having the potential to protect the sea borders and national maritime interests of Pakistan. With its unremitting vigilance and professional competence, Pakistan Navy has recently once again surprised the Indian Navy by detecting and blocking its submarine from entering into Pakistani wa-

paredness, high morale, and exceptionally superior professional skills at sea.

As Youth has always been a harbinger to a welcome change and given a proper direction, our youth can easily channelize the passion for their country. Ideally, 23<sup>rd</sup> March is the sort of day that should motivate people to seriously contemplate and reflect over our lives in a national sense rather than with the myopia of personal and individual evolution. Keeping in mind the countless sacrifices and sufferings of the men, women, children, old and young, certainly, it is not just another national day but it is the day to take a resolution at individual level to contribute positively in democratic structuring of Pakistan, give our

By Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri

March 23 is the day of renewal of the covenant in which a resolution was passed for the establishment of a separate country for Muslims in the subcontinent. Through a peaceful struggle under the great leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the dream of Allama Muhammad Iqbal was realized on August 14, 1947. In these circumstances, it is imperative that the Pakistani nation realize the spirit of this revolutionary resolution and move beyond the traditional kind of renewal. Go out and work for the ideological and geographical completion of Pakistan according to this resolution. In order to make this Kingdom of God truly the Pakistan of Quaid-e-Azam and Iqbal, we have to show the same continuous and selfless sacrifice at the individual and collective level which was characteristic of the trained soldiers of freedom of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In this historic gathering on March 23, 1940, the Father of the Nation had made it clear that "the fact is that the mutual disagreement between the "national concept of Islam and the social practices of the Hindu religion is a mere figment of India's imagination." To deny for a thousand years the civilizations of Hindus and Muslims have been intertwined and the two nations have been intertwined, but their differences are as strong as ever. It is totally wrong to expect that a revolution will take place in them and that Hindus and Muslims will become one nation only because of the imposition of a democratic constitution on them.

When the British government established in India for one and a half hundred years did not succeed in their work, how is it possible that the forcible establishment of federal system in the central government of India will achieve that success. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that India's political problem was not about sects but about nations. Of course, this should be considered an international issue and a solution must be sought from that point of view. We need to acknowledge the veracity of this fundamental issue. As long as we do not accept it, the constitution we have drafted will fail and bring disaster. Islam and Hinduism are not just religions but in fact they are two different social systems. Therefore, this wish should be called a dream and dream that Hindus and Muslims will be able to create a common nation together."

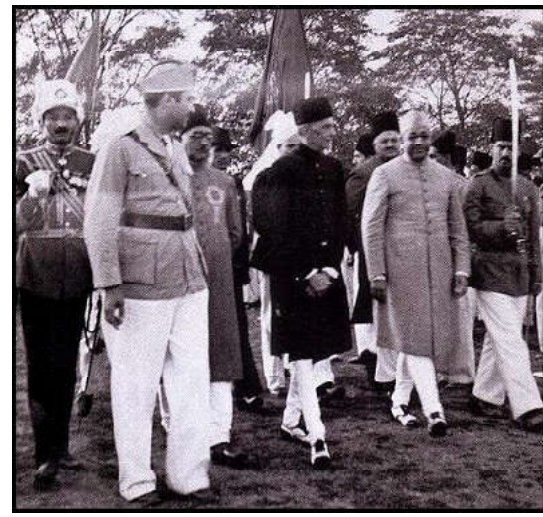
"Pakistan came into being. When the British and the Hindus saw the seal of Pakistan being sealed, they by mutual alliance annexed several Muslim-majority districts of Punjab to India under the most unfair Red Cliff Award and also di-

vided Bengal into Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Ensured the establishment of a divided Pakistan.

If we look at the back in history, it would be correct to say that in fact the Muslims of the subcontinent

seen many ups and downs since the demise of these beloved leaders of the Pakistani nation. Especially after 9/11, Pakistan paid a heavy price for being a Muslim country.

The western world has laid the burden of uncom-



mitted sin on the Muslims and under a well thought out conspiracy has tried hard to prove the Muslims as terrorists and extremists but Pakistan has always proved to be a peace loving country and against terrorism. Fighting on the front lines in the war, the Pakistani nation and the Pakistani forces, by sacrificing thousands of lives, proved to the world that Muslims are not terrorists and there is no room for ter-

contribute to the development of the country. We need unity, we need justice, we need the rule of law and the constitution. We need to stand with Pakistani armed and security forces for national security and safety. On March 23, 1940, people of different languages, of different faiths, of different statuses, of different races, of different castes were transformed into one united nation. It is very hard to say that today, despite being citizens of one country, we are divided into regions, we love our community, our city, we love our language more than our national language, we love our private business more than state institutions. Today we need the same enthusiasm, the same unity of 1940. At that time only Hindus were our enemy. Today all enemies of Islam are united against Pakistan. We can fight the enemies only by adopting the idea of unity, justice and love with motherland. We need to be tolerant and tolerant internally while being cruel to our enemies. We have sacrificed more than 80,000 precious lives over the last few years against terrorism to bring lasting peace to the country. In order to maintain this peace, to ensure the security of this country, we have to face internal enemies as well as external ones. The



pression of the British government and the prejudice of the Hindu majority. He became aware of his right to self-determination and determined the direction and destination of his struggle for independence. The aim of this great struggle is to establish a modern Islamic, democratic and welfare state in which the religion of Islam is a stronghold.

By establishing the political, economic and social system of Islam on the golden principles of Islam, it can be proved to the nations of the world that these golden principles are as applicable today as the Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him). He was in the blessed time of Allah and his Companions and the Righteous Caliphs. However, shortly after the establishment of Pakistan, the father of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah passed away and a few years later, his right-hand man Quaid-e-Millat Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan was also martyred. The country has

only way to confront the enemies of Islam and Pakistan is through unity. We must realize that the more divided we are, the more difficult the journey of development will be.

In these circumstances, there is a need for the Pakistani nation to realize the spirit of that revolutionary resolution and to move beyond the traditional kind of renewal and work for the ideological and geographical fulfillment of Pakistan in accordance with this resolution. In order to make this God-given kingdom truly the Pakistan of Quaid-e-Azam and Iqbal, we must demonstrate at the individual and collective level the same constant sacrifice and self-sacrifice that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his companions those fought for an independent country for Muslims. It was the specialty of the old, women, children and youth who got a separate country for the Muslims of the subcontinent by sacrificing millions of lives on the voice.

March 23, 2022 is a day to remember forgotten lessons. Every March 23 reminds us that we have strayed from the destination, lost, forgotten the promises, today we need more unity than ever before, we need to be one nation, we need to adopt collective thinking for the betterment of the country. We need to

## Thank you Jinnah

By Ali Basit

As Pakistan prepares to celebrate the 82<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Lahore Resolution, it is vital to shed light on the event that changed the course of history in the subcontinent. As "Magna Carta" laid the foundation stone of people's power in Great Britain, the pledge made on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940 at the erstwhile Minto Park, for decades, serves as a cornerstone for Pakistan's socio-political culture. The Nation must utilize this moment to revisit the ideology and thought behind the historic resolution. 23<sup>rd</sup> March, revives the essence of nationalism among common people of Pakistan. As we breathe in a free country today, tribute must be paid to the ones who sacrificed their present for us. On this historic day, the Nation must be reminded of Quaid's words that defined the purpose and meaning of Pakistan. This article reproduces the most relevant quotes of the presidential address of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah at the Lahore session of All India Muslim League that carved out an independent homeland for the Muslims of South Asia. As the events highlighting bigotry and communalism unfold across the border, the Pakistani nation stands indebted to the vision and foresight of its founding fathers. The Quaid said, "You may remember that we appointed a committee of ladies at the Patna Session (1938). It is of very great importance to us, because I believe that it is of absolutely essential for us to give every opportunity to our women to participate in our struggle of life and death."



ment by inducting Pakistani women in various fields including medical, education and technical branches of the Tri-services. Pakistani women in uniform has contributed a lot in service to the country. The first ever Pakistani Female Engagement team in any United Nations (UN) mission around the world received UN medals for serving in the Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo last year. A team of 15 Pakistani women officers, received major recognition for being the first all-female group from Pakistan to serve in a UN peacekeeping mission. This service abroad for peacekeeping missions brought an immense respect to Pakistan at the global level.

At the same occasion, the Quaid further stated that, "We want that the British Government should in fact and actually meet the demands of the Arabs in Palestine." Muhammad Ali Jinnah backed the plight of Palestinians eight decades ago. In his all-important address, he did not forget to show solidarity with Palestinian brethren. To date, Pakistan's stance on Palestine is unchanged. On many occasions, PM Khan advocated a Two-State solution according to the aspiration and wishes of the people of Palestine. Pakistan should continue its unequivocal diplomatic support to the cause and must attempt to mobilize Muslim Ummah to resolve the crisis which has brought enormous pain to the people of Palestine. Jinnah reiterated,

"Muslims are not a minority. The Muslims are a nation by any definition. We find out that even according to the British map of India we occupy large parts of this country, where the Muslims are in a majority." Citing the work of London Times and the letter of Lala Lajpat Rai to C.R. Das, Quaid stressed on the separate identity of Muslims of the Subcontinent. He validated the 'Two Nation Theory' and presented colonialism with a workable solution to maintain peace in the Subcontinent.

Jinnah was well aware of the fact that Pakistan's due to its peculiar geostrategic location and the hostile neighboring environment needs strong Armed Forces to protect its national interests. Among the Tri-Services, Pakistan Navy was thus designated as an instrument to defend the maritime frontiers and interests of Pakistan.

During wartimes, Pakistan Navy has always espoused high standards of professionalism and valour. In 1965 war, Operation "Dwarka" launched by Pakistan Navy caused irreparable damage to Indian Navy, vehemently destroyed the Indian Radar system. In addition, Pakistan Navy's submarine Ghazi moved its patrol to Bombay harbor to challenge enemy's ships namely INS Vikrant and INS Mysore to dock out and get destroyed. This psychological fear of Ghazi adversely affected the Indian Navy's operational maneuvers. Yet again in the 1971 war, sinking of Indian warship

Kukri brought an immense wartime casualty by PNS Hangor, is the only incident after WWII wherein any conventional submarine sank a Warship. Furthermore, the detections of Indian Navy submarine, after Pulwama military standoff, by Pakistan Navy evidently portrays its effective employment strategy coupled with superior professional acumen.

Recent developments and reports of subjugation and ill treatment of Muslims coming out of India validate Muhammad Ali Jinnah's address at the Lahore Session of All India Muslim League. Quaid remarked, "Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu Raj." The prediction of our visionary founding father made eight decades ago stands relevant and applicable today. In post-1947 India, it was evident that Nehru's sugar-coated secular democracy was bound to collapse one day or another.

Today, from revocation of Article 370 and Citizenship Amendment Act to Ayodhya Verdict, each development embosses Jinnah's words. This is what a Hindu Raj forced upon Muslims looks like. As renowned Indian author Arundhati Roy said, "Modi had been coming since 1925." Nehru's deodorized democracy was destined to fall apart and Gandhi's India was doomed to become Godse's India.

## Pakistan Day: A manifestation of Muslims' struggle for a separate homeland in subcontinent

By Fakhar Alam

Following the Independence War of 1857, the Muslims of subcontinent were subjected to an unending ordeal of discrimination, inequality and disparity after the colonial rulers had strengthened their grip over the united India.

The Muslims, who ruled over the united India for over 800 years, had faced great mental agony, sense of deprivation and dejection after they were pushed to the wall in terms of intellectual, political, economic and education decay. After failure of 1857 War of Independence, the Muslims of British India were given a new hope and direction by social reformer, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who instilled a new vigor into Muslims after an inspired teachings of the renowned religious leaders, Mojaddad Alf Sani and Shah Waliullah.

Brought about an intellectual revolution among Muslims through his educational, political and social reforms, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had succeeded to nullify the malicious propaganda of the colonial rulers, hindus and pessimist forces during an era of ominous, cruelty and oppression. He founded All India Muhammadan Educational Conference (AIMEC) at Aligarh in 1886, which carried forward his vision regarding modern education, socioeconomic empowerment and political unity of Muslims to regain their past glory. The network of educational institutions and political unity organized under AIMEC had enabled millions of Muslims to compete with other communities including Hindus and Sikhs by providing a launching pad for Muslims to initiate a peaceful political and democratic struggle for a separate homeland where they could live with dignity and freedom.

Sir Syed's reforms had excelled Muslims in education, social, economic and political sciences, resultantly their voices have strongly been heard by the British rulers. The Muslims, under the flag of All India Muslim League (AIML) founded on December 30, 1906 at Dhaka, got united by giving new impetus to the independence movement. It witnessed further momentum after Quaid-i-Azam spearheaded independence movement after formally joining AIML in 1913 and outlining of an independent state for Muslims majority provinces in North West India by the great poet philosopher Dr. Allama



Muhammad Iqbal during historic Allahabad address in 1930.

Thus, Dr. Allama Iqbal became the first statesman to articulate about the two nation-theories that Muslims were a separate and distinct nation besides deserving political independence from other regions and communities of the united India. "Pakistan Movement passes through different phases and finally achieved its practical shape in 1933 during a high-level gathering in London where Chaudhry Rehmat Ali had presented the name of Pakistan," said Professor Dr Muhammad Younas Khan, Chairman, Pakistan Studies Department, Islamia College Peshawar University (ICP) while talking to APP.

Recalling Chaudhry Rehmat Ali's famous saying "Now or never or parish forever", he said ICP's two former students, Aslam Khattak and Inyatullah Khan of Charsadda along with others Muslims leaders had endorsed the name of Pakistan. "Pakistan's name and Allahabad address had set a clear direction to the Muslims to achieve a separate homeland in the subcontinent," he said. The great Quaid united millions of Muslims at Iqbal Park, Lahore where they unanimously passed the historic Pakistan's Resolution on March 23, 1940. Following adoption of the Pakistan Resolution, Quaid-i-Azam had reorganized AIML on modern lines and made repeated visits to all Muslims majority provinces including KP (earlier called NWFP) to mobilize masses for Pakistan.



# Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Saturday March 23, 2024

## Reactivating Nacta

Confronted with a complex wave of terrorist violence, the state has little choice but to 'restructure' the National Counter Terrorism Authority, as the interior minister stated on Wednesday. Mohsin Naqvi was attending a meeting at the Nacta headquarters on the day Baloch separatists stormed the Gwadar Port Authority Complex, while only a few days earlier, militants believed to be associated with the Hafiz Gul Bahadur group had staged a deadly attack, martyring security personnel in North Waziristan.

The current terrorist threat is varied both ideologically and geographically, and over the last few years, particularly after the Afghan Taliban's capture of Kabul in 2021, militants have been further emboldened and have staged a large number of attacks in Pakistan.

Formed in 2009 in the midst of an earlier terrorist insurgency, Nacta — though it is supposed to be the state's primary counterterrorism organ — has been largely sidelined by the rulers after initial successes against militancy. Though envisioned as a 'one-window operation' to corral national CT efforts, the agency has not been empowered with the tools necessary to deliver on its mandated goals. Instead, the CT effort has been dominated by the military and its intelligence apparatus. While the military undoubtedly has a central role to play in rooting out terrorism, the militarised CT approach has its limits, particularly in urban areas, where civilian law-enforcement bodies, and related long-term CT strategies, are required to complement kinetic efforts. It is also essential that while Nacta provides the operational framework, the ideological element of the CT effort is guided by the National Action Plan. NAP, formulated after the 2014 APS massacre, was updated in 2021; the interior minister also reiterated the state's resolve to implement the plan "at any cost".

NAP specifically mentions the reconciliation process in Balochistan, as well as reforms in KP's merged districts, in its latest iteration. These ideas must not remain on paper, and need to be implemented with full vigour if the state is to uproot militancy permanently. In both instances — Baloch separatism as well as religiously inspired militancy in KP — poverty, deprivation and the state's apparent disinterest in the welfare of the populations of these affected areas, have contributed to swelling the militants' ranks. Therefore, to address the considerable CT challenges, Nacta must be fully empowered to coordinate the state's fight against terrorism. Moreover, civilian LEAs, particularly the provincial counterterrorism departments, should be provided with funds, equipment and training to preempt terrorist violence and break militant networks. Along with kinetic measures, NAP should be implemented in letter and spirit. In particular, sectarian and extremist actors that remain active in society must be put out of business. These malignant forces provide the ideological background that produces the violent foot soldiers powering terrorist insurgencies.

Rihab Khalid

Feminism often sparks debate. It is hailed by some as a beacon of equality and derided by others as a divisive ideology. It is almost taboo in Pakistan, especially since the Aurat March that began in 2018 raised critical issues of gender equality and faced a fierce backlash. While it was accused of emphasising minor issues and controversial slogans, the division went beyond placards. Rather than uniting people under a common cause, the marches inadvertently widened the gap between many Pakistanis and the feminist movement, highlighting a crucial misunderstanding of what feminism entails.

This piece explores a deeper, research-informed understanding of feminism, that aims to foster a more inclusive dialogue to move towards a more equitable society.

What is feminism? Feminism is a sociopolitical movement that champions equality, tackling systemic discrimination and oppression by challenging power imbalances. It advocates for

a society where everyone, irrespective of identity, is free from discrimination, by dismantling underlying oppressive social structures (such as patriarchy) through empowering marginalised voices and advocating for equitable access to resources.

Feminism has evolved in various waves: from legal rights and suffrage of first-wave feminism, to broader societal issues of second-wave feminism, to postcolonial thought in third-wave feminism, and now emphasising 'intersectionality' that recognises that oppression can intersect across gender, race, class, and more. Feminism is not limited to a single gender or to women alone. Though historically focused on women's rights due to greater discrimination against women, contemporary feminism aims to eradicate systemic inequalities that harm everyone, promoting solidarity among all who aim for universal equity and justice.

Feminism: a Western ideal? Often misperceived as a Western, liberal, or anti-religious movement, feminism has evolved into a diverse, global phenomenon

that includes Islamic feminism, advocating for gender equity within Islamic teachings and challenging patriarchal norms. In Pakistan, since 1947, the feminist movement has navigated between secular/liberal and Islamic perspectives but shares the goal of advocating for women's rights and empowerment. While feminist groups like the Women's Action Forum have advocated for women's equal rights and access to the public sphere, contemporary Islamic feminists leverage Islamic principles for advocating reforms in marriage, divorce, and inheritance rights. Both unite under the common cause of women's emancipation and rights.

Why choose feminism? Feminism means opposing pervasive injustices and violence in daily life, and recognising that while such injustices manifest across socio-spatial demographics, they are deeply influenced by gender. In Pakistan, about 32 per cent of women have experienced gender-based violence and over 90pc face domestic violence in their lifetimes. Pakistan ranks 142<sup>nd</sup> out of 146 on the Global Gender

Gap Index. Of the 23 million children not attending school, the majority are girls — 58pc in Sindh and 78pc in Balochistan. Additionally, while only 50pc of women own a mobile phone compared to 81pc of men, women are also 49pc less likely to use mobile internet, highlighting significant gaps in access to education, communication, and digital resources.

Women constitute only about 25pc of the formal workforce (compared to 83pc of men) and hold merely 4.5pc of senior positions. Additionally, they occupy only 20pc of the national parliament seats, underscoring the struggle to meet gender quotas. Even when women participate in the formal economy, they fail to secure equal wages and benefits for the same amount of work. A UNDP report notes that the country's gender wage gap results in a cumulative wage loss of Rs500 billion, across women's lifetime earnings. Women undertake four times more unpaid and undervalued care work than men, highlighting the critical need for feminism to address and dismantle the systemic barriers women

face. My research reveals that in Pakistan, access to energy and services is significantly gendered. Rural women often bear compounded burdens of agricultural and household responsibilities without clean energy access, thus causing their health, well-being and climate resilience to be adversely affected. Urban low-income women face similar disparities, balancing income work with household chores, and experiencing limited mobility and socioeconomic opportunities.

Such disparities extend beyond income levels, and are rooted in women's intersectional identities — including class, religion, education, occupation, and location — and household roles as caregivers, household managers, mothers- and daughters-in-law, income-generators, housemaids, etc, highlighting the need to address such gendered disparities across all social strata. Feminist approaches also reveal how many such disparities result from cultural conservatism, entrenched patriarchy, gender blindness

and stereotypes, rather than religion. By exposing and challenging these oppressive systems, feminism seeks to dismantle rigid gender roles, improving the visibility and understanding of gender disparities.

Feminism for all: Feminism has grown into a diverse movement of plurality beyond any single ideology. While the Aurat March faces the challenge of uniting diverse feminist thoughts, it has succeeded in spotlighting critical issues like gender violence and socioeconomic inequalities — issues of justice with sound basis in Islamic jurisprudence, like women's right to assets, land ownership, safety, education and basic services. Undermining these rights perpetuates discrimination, contradicting the principles of both religion and humanity. Focusing on these issues, the Aurat March offers a potent platform for all women and feminists to advocate for these fundamental rights. Success lies in celebrating diversity and uniting to achieve the common good. — Courtesy Dawn

## Going beyond austerity

Abdul Sattar

The recent announcement by President Asif Ali Zardari to forgo his salary is worth appreciating. It is equally heartening to see that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is determined to cut down on government expenses.

The prime minister's decision to ban unnecessary foreign visits of ministers, secretaries and other government officials is a positive step. It has been decided that the president will travel in first class while the prime minister, services chiefs, ministers and other staff members will travel in business class.

It is safe to assume that this may reduce government expenses. However, believing that this exercise would yield any substantial result is unrealistic. Such measures were taken in the past as well but did not turn out to be helpful. For instance, during his tenure as caretaker prime minister, the late Malik Meraj Khalid refused to take a large fleet of cars for his protocol and preferred maintaining a low profile. Former prime minister Imran Khan also claimed to work against lavish spending by government ministers,

advisers and bureaucrats.

His government opened the Prime Minister House for media persons to create the impression that the government of Nawaz Sharif spent tax money extravagantly. TV anchors took a tour of the PM House, exposing the alleged luxurious lifestyle of the elected chief executive in a bid to make people dislike the residents of the country's top house.

Khan's government also auctioned a number of belongings of this house 'to drastically reduce expenses' but it was reported that they ended up spending more money on helicopter journeys and rent accrued on VIPs' vehicles which were taken from the open market. In addition to that, they wasted precious time of people and government officials in orchestrating this farce which was meant to tarnish the image of the previous government and boost the popularity of 'the pious chief executive'.

So, such austerity measures do not have a history of success. If parliamentarians feel that they should do something for this nation, they have the option of refusing to take

salaries and forego perks and privileges. Most parliamentarians are not from the bottom layer of social stratification. Even those who are from relatively poor backgrounds usually have a steady income that enables them to at least contest expensive elections albeit with the help of their friends and comrades.

President Zardari, Nawaz Sharif, PM Shehbaz, Bilawal, and a number of other politicians are extremely wealthy. Critics claim that their lifestyle indicates that they have been basking in extreme wealth and opulence. All of them own extensive properties and run businesses either directly or indirectly. Almost all parliamentarians have their personal or family vehicles. The country has over a thousand members in the National Assembly, Senate and provincial legislatures. If these public representatives voluntarily stop drawing their salaries and sacrifice their perks and privileges, the national exchequer might be in a position to save billions of rupees over five years. If parliamentarians make such sacrifices for a long time, it might go some way in reducing government expenses.

While this would not

be significant savings, the money can be used to help regions like Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Balochistan. It is also important for our leaders to understand that drastic economic and financial measures can help the government make budget cuts in a true sense. For instance, circular debt is one of the top three burdens on the national budget. The debt is wreaking havoc on our economy. There is a need to renegotiate with independent power producers.

States all over the world have leverage over the capitalist class. China reined in its ever-mighty business tycoons, forcing them to understand the country's compulsions as well. Pakistan can do the same, but instead of employing sledgehammer tactics, the government should engage them in talks and find an exit from this monstrous trap of circular debt.

Given the precarious security situation, it might not be possible to drastically cut down the defence budget, but non-combatant expenses must be slashed. The civil and military leadership need to explore ways to make such reductions.

According to a World

Bank report, the Pakistan government has been spending Rs328 billion yearly on the devolved ministries for years now. The country witnessed the emergence of new divisions and departments after the landmark legislation. Such development has added to our financial burden. Therefore, it is important that the government used this whopping amount for the revitalization of public-sector entities turning them into profit-oriented concerns. In the past, the government's efforts helped the Pakistan Steel Mills run at over 60 per cent capacity. The state should explore the possibility of raising the productive capacity of the mills that provided jobs to tens of thousands of people in the past. Similarly, Pakistan Railways, PIA and other state entities could be the biggest sources of employment and revenue generation if the elements of conflict of interest are controlled and sincere efforts are made to restore the lost glory. Such employment will benefit our youth who seem to have lost all hope for a better life in Pakistan. This might also prevent the brain drain that has been sapping the technical foundations of the country.

Instead of sending Pakistanis on scholarships to foreign countries, the country needs to upgrade its universities and higher education institutions. A far less amount could be used to employ excellent academics than the amount we spend on rewarding private universities inside the country and abroad. More campuses of universities and medical colleges should be set up to attract those students who go abroad to get higher education. Similarly, improvement of state-run schools can prompt many from the middle and low-middle classes to send their children there instead of paying hefty amounts to institutions that are affiliated with Western countries. Such measures may not even require any legislation. It is only the administrative authority of the federal and provincial governments that has to be employed. Political will is also important for these measures as some of these might require collective efforts, but this is what the purpose of our parliament and provincial legislatures is. It is time we achieved some tangible results that are difficult to obtain without drastic policy shifts. — Courtesy TheNews

## Fifty is the new 40

Mohsin Fareed

Historically, the term 'generation' is used to explain relationships amongst family members — grandparents, parents and children. However, the word now alludes more to (six) social generations: the Silents (1925-1945), Boomers (1946-1964), Gen X (1965-1979), Millennials (1980-1994), Gen Z (1995-2012), and Gen Alpha (born after 2013). The era in which one is born sometimes changes one's deportment and personal attributes more than the family that brings him up.

The study of generations is a useful tool to understand history as well as look at the future. Historic perspectives associate generations with events in history: like the Vietnam War for Boomers; fears of nuclear war with Russia for Gen X; 9/11 for Millennials; and the Covid-19 pandemic for Gen Z. The problem with this approach is that it does not account for cultural changes encountered during the intervening years. Expressing one's views on politics by attending a protest or writing a letter to the editor in the past is now accomplished by the inscription of a few words on a smartphone. As opposed to major events like wars and pandemics that revolve in circles, these cultural changes are linear, moving year after year in the same direction. So, what drives this cultural change? The answer is technology.

In today's world, the way we think, live, communicate, and interact has been completely revolutionised by technology. As expressed by Prof Jean Twenge, this technological model of generations is a new generational theory for the modern world. Technology has

shattered the spokes of the old generational cycle with everlasting impact on the world today by influencing our societal norms. According to this model, technology has made individualism possible. Mere existence was a challenge up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with almost no time for thinking about oneself in the absence of clean drinking water, refrigeration, automobiles, central heating and washing machines. It was a collective integral living effort by societies. In comparison, as technology has relieved us of the chores of life, we have more time to think of our aspirations.

In addition to the direct linear impact of technology, generational differences are better understood by two intertwined factors that define the 21<sup>st</sup>-century generation: individualism and a slower life ambit. Whereas the former focuses on the self, the latter pertains to longevity. Individualism has different implications in different world cultures. Whereas the individualistic culture of the US considers personal space and freedom and equality as important factors, inclusive cultures such as South Korea emphasise group consensus and abiding by the rules. Although every industrialised nation cannot be individualistic, every individualistic country is an industrialised nation. Individualism also promotes equality based on sex, race, ethnicity, and transgender status. Recently, equality has been one of the most important forces driving cultural generational change evident in the Civil Rights Movement, Black Lives Matter, #Me Too and transgender rights awareness.

Another cultural shift shaped by technology is the impact it has on society by making the average lifetime longer. Infant mortality has dropped from one in six in the late 1800s to one in 200 in 2020, resulting in an overall slower life course, as shown by a recent study utilising eight aging biomarkers where 40-59 years old Americans were two to three years and those from 60-79 years about four years younger biologically than the same age group in 1988-94. Today, fewer children are doing things on their own, teens are becoming less independent, young adults are postponing adult milestones, middle-aged people are younger, with 50 being the new 40 and people remaining healthier past retirement. Modern healthcare, birth control, labour-saving devices and a knowledge-based economy requiring more years of formal education are among the factors causing sluggish life curves.

Propitiously, we live in the era of Big Data that can compare generations of the past with those of the present and get a glimpse of the future. Individuality in the current generation means choices based on personal preferences alone, whereas societies are interconnected and dependent on personal interactions. Since the surging popularity of social media, the lives of people of all ages have been affected, with the largest effects observed in younger people.

As a result, we see that their social and communication skill sets is different from those of older people; they prefer to stay indoors and do work from home. The technologically-advanced data-driven generation of today might create interesting political, workplace and domestic dimensions in future societies. As generations grow, so does the world. — Courtesy Dawn

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Zubeida Mustafa  
Pakistan enjoys the dubious distinction of being the fifth most populous state in the world. But unlike the four countries that precede it in population size, Pakistan has been unable to manage its demographic growth and economy to its advantage. The shocking revelation made by the census last year was that Pakistan's population had grown faster in the last five years. The annual growth rate was 2.55 per cent. It had been 2.4pc in the 2017 census.

Other indicators are no better. The Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-2018 puts the total fertility rate at 3.6pc and the contraceptive prevalence rate at an appallingly low 34pc (which includes more than 10pc users of highly unreliable customary methods). The unmet need is 17pc. This data discredits the government's performance, and testifies to the disinterest of our rulers in improving the quality of life of the people.

There are many factors that account for the rapid rise in numbers. The most important is officialdom's reluctance to bring the population issue into the public discourse. There is no open debate on it. Along with this silence is the unwillingness of opinion-makers to take action against patriarchal structures and practices in our society. As a result, the status of women remains low.

The UN has been convening international conferences periodically on population development. The Cairo conference of 1994 was a landmark one as it adopted the Programme of Action and for the first time there was a paradigm shift from controlling population as an economic compulsion to the human rights dimen-

sion of individual men and women. A Shirkatgah report describes the emphasis on education, especially for girls; gender equity; infant, child and maternal mortality reduction; the provision of universal access to reproductive health services; and the inclusion of family planning and sexual health in the programme to empower women and girls. This is one of the most reliable pathways to the improved well-being of all.

All this has been beyond Pakistan. In the pre-Zia 1970s, the population programme had made a reasonably good start. Population centres were scattered all over the country, and motivators and counsellors played an effective role in getting people to become acceptors. The population growth rate fell to 1.9pc. Then came a dark age for women and the progress achieved was reversed. Now I see light at the end of the population tunnel.

I often hear from people working in this sector that they meet women who confide in them that they do not want many children but their partners do not agree. So some seek to space their children on the quiet. But they are unsure if that is a wise thing to do given their men's demand for large families. Since women have traditionally been the focus of birth control strategies and male motivators have never been the forte of any population programme in Pakistan, this is creating an unrecognised dilemma.

Now we have an answer offered by a remarkable Lady Health Worker in Khero Dero. She is Mashkoora, a widow aged 43 and the mother of seven. Mashkoora has endeared herself to her clients. Called 'Maasi' by the women she has emerged as their saviour. Mashkoora was hired by

the Ali Hasan Mangi Memorial Trust (AHMMT) as a motivator and counsellor to persuade women to space their children and have themselves sterilised if they already had a large family. Her achievement? In a span of two years, she has personally arranged for the tubal ligation of 144 women, made numerous couples acceptors and created a demand for family planning advice.

Mashkoora's real feat is her ability to talk to men and persuade them to be-co-me acceptors. I asked her how she manages this in our patriarchal society. She tells me she has no qualms about talking to men on the issue. She is persuasive and explains to the men the ill effects of frequent pregnancies on a woman's health, and worse still, the neglect children suffer from when there are too many of them. She says she reminds them of how it affects them adversely.

Mashkoora may be illiterate but she is worldly-wise. She has educated her children and knows what would appeal to a man. For instance, she tells me that she introduces herself as Mashkoora from AHMMT. That is half the work done as all the people from the 44 villages she visits are beneficiaries of one or the other of the Trust's projects — house-building, toilets, solar panels, school, healthcare, micro-loans, etc. A bond of mutual trust already exists that Mashkoora uses to her advantage.

Without her even knowing it, Mashkoora is what the paradigm shift, that was witnessed at the UN International Conference on Population and Development, suggests: treat family planning as a matter of human rights rather than economic compulsion. — Courtesy Dawn



## Shahera Shahid highlights govt's commitment to strengthen Radio Pakistan

KARACHI (APP): Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Shahera Shahid on Friday, underscored the crucial role played by the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Pakistan), emphasizing its extensive reach across the nation with news delivery in multiple languages.

During her visit to the PBC office, she addressed various issues including Radio Pakistan's financial matters such as liabilities, salaries, and pensions, which are currently being discussed at higher levels for prompt resolution.

Furthermore, she mentioned the government's deliberation on enhancing financial self-sustainability for institutions with high expenses. The burden of power utility bills on Radio Pakistan is also being

addressed through collaboration with the Power Division. Notably, efforts have been made to ensure timely pension payments, which were previously delayed, benefiting pensioners.

Secretary Shahera Shahid underscored the government's efforts to uplift Radio Pakistan and its workforce, including the adoption of government scales. Improvements in transmitters are underway to guarantee seamless transmission, alongside the establishment of a centralized broadcast setup in Rawat, Islamabad.

Moreover, organizational measures are being implemented to provide medical facilities for employees, while Radio Pakistan's properties are being leveraged for organizational enhancement and employee welfare.



LAHORE: Police official stands high alert to avoid untoward incident during the congregational Friday prayers of the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, at Shimla Hill in Lahore on Friday.

## WB village civic facility programme reviewed

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Local Governments Minister Zeeshan Rafique has directed to speed up the work on providing municipal services in 200 selected villages of sixteen tehsils with the support of the World Bank, saying that life standards will improve in the backward areas with provision of quality facilities.

During his maiden visit to the Punjab Rural Municipal Services Company (PRMSC), he welcomed the fact that the provision of rural municipal services has been planned keeping in mind the needs of the expected population till 2048. "In the first phase, clean water, sanitation and other model facilities will be provided in 200 villages of Punjab and I will request Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to expand the scope of this program", he pledged.

On this occasion, PRMSC Chief Executive Officer Asadullah briefed the provincial minister regarding the company's affairs and future schemes. Minister for Local

Governments Zeeshan Rafique, while directing the issuance of contracts for development works through 'E-tendering', said that 'E-tendering' will not only ensure transparency in the projects but stakeholders will also be facilitated. He said that solarization of tubewells and other machinery will also be done under the rural development program.

"This process will reduce electricity consumption and utility bills as well", he noted. During the briefing, it was informed that the sanitation water will be treated and provided for agriculture purposes under the project. Similarly, the local garbage will be first segregated and then it will be disposed of in a scientific manner. The provincial minister directed the PRMSC to set up waste segregation points at the tehsil level and also directed that a survey be conducted in the respective villages to determine the per capita rate of solid waste. Appreciating the merits of the program, he vowed that villages should not be left behind in provision of civic facilities.

## We all have to play our full role to fight against polio virus: DC Ghotki

**By Tanveer Ahmed**  
MIRPUR MATHELO: Deputy Commissioner Ghotki Dr. Syed Mohammad Ali has said that we all have to play our full role in the fight against polio virus.

Arrangements should be completed, legal action should be taken against negligent workers.

He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting held in connection with the polio campaign. DHO Dr. Altaf Soomro along with related medical officers participated in the meeting. On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that District Ghotki Polio Campaign is doing well, but more improvement and

dedication is needed so that no child is deprived of polio drops, all concerned officers and polio workers throughout the district to make the campaign successful. In this regard, action will be taken against those who are negligent while also encouraging those who show better performance so that they will do better in the future. It was said that during the campaign that will continue from March 25 to March 31, 4 lakh 77 thousand medical officers will be given polio vaccines and all the arrangements have been completed in this regard. Dr. Niaz of WHO and Dr. Rahim Gadani of UNICEF also participated in the meeting.



FAISALABAD: Students participating in a walk about 'Clean Punjab Campaign' at Zila Council organized by the District Administration.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Health Khawaja Suleman Rafique presides over the meeting to review law and order situation at Home Ministry.

## Murad to further strengthen coordination with federal govt to implement projects

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah while presiding over a meeting here decided to further strengthen coordination with the federal government for implementation of all important projects besides enhancing efforts to cooperate with tax collecting bodies.

The meeting was held here at CM House and attended by provincial ministers Sharjeel Inam Memon, Nasir Hussain Shah, Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Jam Khan Shoro, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, and other concerned secretaries, a communique

said. During the meeting, provincial minister for energy Nasir Hussain Shah pointed out that 26-Wind projects with a cumulative capacity of 1875 mega watt (MW) and 19-Solar projects of 1150 MW were waiting for competitive bidding. After discussion, the Sindh government proposed to the federal government that 1<sup>st</sup> round of competitive bidding amongst LOI holders be carried out by provincial energy departments instead of the private power & infrastructure board (PPIB). The CM disclosed that a consensus has been developed with all the stakeholders to

conduct competitive bidding on wind LOI holders for procuring 300 MW for Karachi electric (KE). Financing agreement for Thar Rail Connectivity, the minister Nasir Shah told the CM that the previous PPP Sindh government had earlier agreed to fund the project through equity contribution.

The caretaker Sindh government approved financing 50 per cent of the project cost through a loan to Pakistan railways by the Sindh government subject to ratification by the elected cabinet of Sindh.

The finance facility agreement (FFA) was executed between the

energy department and Pakistan railways for financing 50 per cent of the project cost on January 31, 2024. The CM directed the energy department to file a proposal for ratification of the agreement.

The CM also said that provincial and federal data collection and integration was most important for which he directed chief secretary Asif Hyder Shah to coordinate with the federal government.

The chief secretary told the CM that necessary coordination between federal board of revenue (FBR), NADRA and relevant Sindh government departments was in place.



KARACHI: Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting, Shahera Shahid addresses during visit at Radio Pakistan Building.

## Kashmiri rights activist calls for urgent attention from UNHRC to stop HR abuses in IIOJK

MIRPUR (APP): Seeking the urgent attention of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), veteran Kashmiri human rights activist Altaf Hussain Wani has urged the world human rights forum to immediately move to stop the continual increased human rights abuses on the part of the Indian occupational forces against innocent populations in the illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir state.

Addressing the ongoing 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council under Agenda item 4 General Debate on behalf of the World Muslim Congress in the Swiss city of Geneva on Friday, Wani, also

senior APHC leader and Chairman Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), said, "For the last 76 years and more importantly, since the last 34 years, people of Kashmir have been reeling under brutal military occupation, custodial killings, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, sexual abuse, destruction of properties, and torture continue with impunity, said a message released to the media here on Friday.

Altaf Hussain Wani continued by saying, "As anticipated, the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35 A was a pretext to implement settler colonialism and mass land grabs by India, the occupying power." The

Hague regulations of 1907 and the 4 Geneva Convention have laid certain restrictions and responsibilities on the occupier.

He pointed out that most recently, the Indian state of Maharashtra has bought land in the occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir, which is not only illegal as per state subject laws but also an attempt to deprive indigenous people of land and their rights, which are protected through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indian has put Kashmiri land on sale to Indian realtors. Given military power to occupy any land without the consent of local authorities.

## Azma condoles demise of DGPR cameraman

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari has expressed her deep sense of sorrow over the death of DGPR Cameraman Asghar Ali.

While expressing her heartfelt sympathy and condolence with the bereaved family, she acknowledged that Asghar Ali rendered invaluable services as a cameraman in DGPR. Asghar Chishti's professional services rendered in the production and other affairs will be remembered for long.



KARACHI: People break their fast during the Muslim's holy fasting month of Ramadan at a free meal distribution point run by a charity group, in Karachi, Pakistan.

## Health Minister for strong Primary Health Care on district level

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Minister Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Qasim Ali Shah has stated that in order to manage the burden of patients in major hospitals in Peshawar, it is essential to strengthen the Primary Health Care system on district level.

Under the Primary Health Care Reform Project, during a one-day training workshop for Lady Health Workers coordinators, he expressed the need for improvement in the system to ensure basic healthcare facilities are provided to people in health centers and DHQ hospitals in the province.

He emphasized that

although there are challenges in the health system, working as a team would help in overcoming these challenges. Minister health further stated that it is his responsibility to provide the best healthcare facilities, especially in underserved areas.

He assured Lady Health Workers coordinators that all their challenges and issues would be addressed promptly, emphasizing the importance of not neglecting the health of the people.

Syed Qasim Ali Shah stressed the importance of treating patients as clients rather than just medical cases to ensure better facilities in hospitals.

He emphasized that

## Khawaja emphasizes peaceful atmosphere

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique underscored the paramount importance of providing a peaceful environment for the province's residents during the inaugural session of the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Law and Order, convened at the Home Department headquarters here on Friday. Presiding over the meeting, Minister Rafique reiterated the commitment to bolstering coordination with law enforcement agencies to uphold law and order across Punjab. Special attention was drawn to implementing

robust security measures during Ramadan, encompassing Sehri and Iftar timings, Youm e Ali, Chand Raat, and Eid-ul-Fitr.

Additionally, a strategic initiative was proposed to address the issue of illegally residing foreign nationals within the province. The minister further highlighted the comprehensive security arrangements for Friday prayers and Taraweeh. The meeting also featured briefings on Border Military Police and Baloch Levi Police, delivered by Home Secretary Nurul Amin Mengal.

## Minister urges KMU to extend colleges network to NMDs

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Archives and Libraries Department, Meena Khan Afridi on Friday emphasized the concerned officers of Khyber Medical University (KMU) to extend its colleges network to all over Newly Merged Districts in collaboration with the Higher Education Department. The KP

minister undertook a detailed introductory visit to (KMU) to recognize its pivotal role in advancing medical education and fostering innovation within the sector. The visit commenced with an insightful presentation by Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Zia ul Haq, underscoring KMU's unwavering commitment to academic excellence and groundbreaking initiatives.

## CM grants approval for Sports Advisory Council, reconstitution of PSB

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has decided to constitute a Sports Advisory Council and former players and students would be its members. The CM has also decided to reconstitute Punjab Sports Board and directed to avail the services of national and international coaches for the promotion of sports and training. She presided over a meeting at the Sports Department in which it was agreed to make multi-purpose sports grounds in

91 constituencies. A special planning unit will be constituted in the Sports department to undertake planning and other development affairs. It was decided during the meeting that biometric attendance will be ensured in the sports department to identify ghost employees.

The CM lauded the efforts of the Minister for Sports and Sports Department. Maryam Nawaz said, "I greatly like sports and was the captain of the baseball team during my studies. I want

restoration of sports and there is a dire need to take measures at a mega scale. The youths face a dearth of opportunities and are driven towards addiction. The sports infrastructure should be restored immediately for the youth and hockey competitions should be organized as it is our national sport." The proposal to constitute the Institute of Sports Sciences Punjab was reviewed during the meeting. The CM directed to include basketball in the talent hunt programme.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Kali Mori are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Hyderabad press club.

## Opposition in KP assembly stages protest

PESHAWAR (APP): The opposition in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday staged a protest in front of assembly hall against non convening of assembly session.

They said that on the advice of the provincial government the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali didn't call the session.

Dr. Ibad said that the Tehreek-e-Insaaf were making hue and cry about form 45-47, while at the same time they were violating the constitution and the law.

He said the opposition members reached the assembly secretariat but all the staff including the speaker were absent from the assembly.

## LHC rejects petition against reducing life time disqualification period 5yrs

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has dismissed the petition against reducing the life time disqualification period to 5 years by parliament.

Lahore High Court's Justice Shahid Bilal Hasan announced the reserved judgment on the petition filed by Azhar Siddique advocate Friday. The court said the applications was non-maintainable Counsel for the federal government opposed the petitions.

The petitioner had taken plea in his petition that parliament made amendment in law by

decreasing the life time disqualification period to five years. As per rules parliament cannot make amendment in life time disqualification law through specific members.

The petitioner had requested to nullify the law on reducing the life time disqualification period to five years.

Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan while announcing reserved judgment on the petition of Azhar Siddique advocate dismissed the plea against reducing the life time disqualification period to 5 years.

## Chief Secretary suspends MD WASA for misconduct

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah has suspended the Managing Director of Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA), Hyderabad, Zahid Khemtio on account of misconduct and failure in performance of his duties.

According to a notification issued on Friday, during his visit to Hyderabad the Chief Secretary found sewage poodles flowing over several roads in the city.

The city's main arteries and several main roads, Circuit House, the

roads leading the Sindh High Court and lower courts were all filled with sewage water. The notification stated that the Chief Secretary also received complaints against Khemtio from the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Hyderabad. The officers said BS-19 Khemtio did not respond well whenever they contacted him.

The Chief Secretary also stated that he attended a court hearing as a respondent on Friday and the matter pertained to supply of contaminated water.



## Pakistan eyes \$300 mln by selling Panda Bonds to Chinese investors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb said Friday that he was keen to tap Chinese investors by selling as much as \$300 million in Panda bonds for the first time ever this year.

In an interview with Bloomberg, the minister said, selling Yuan-denominated debt would allow Pakistan to diversify its funding sources and reach investors in a new market.

"We should have looked at quite frankly some time back," he said.

China has the "second-largest and

deepest bond market in the world" and it is the "right thing to do for the country" to tap the market, given Pakistan has already sold dollar and eurobonds, he said.

Aurangzeb said that initial Panda bond sale would be about \$250 million to \$300 million, which would be followed by further issuances.

The finance minister said that government's cash balances are strong enough and it's able to pay its debts on time.

The payments are unlikely to put pressure on the currency, and he expects the rupee to remain stable, he said.

"I don't really see a huge pressure on the rupee at this point in time," he said.

"As we go forward, I think it's going to remain range bound around these levels." The "wildcard" is oil prices, he added, which remain uncertain given the Red Sea attacks.

Pakistan's rupee is up 1.3% this year, according to local pricing compiled by Bloomberg, among the best-performing currencies in Asia.

According to Bloomberg report, Aurangzeb's most pressing challenge is negotiating new loans with the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) to help bolster the country's reserves right after the current bailout program ends in April.

Bloomberg quoted IMF as having said earlier this week that Pakistan has expressed interest in a new medium-term program to improve its fiscal and external weaknesses and strengthen its economic recovery.

According to report, Aurangzeb said Pakistan will seek a new loan program from the IMF of at least three years. Further details will be discussed after the Washington-based lender's annual spring meetings, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding reforms in Pakistan's IT sector.



Dr. Walid Abdulwahab, Director IsDB Regional Hub Turkey and Dr. Kazim niaz Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs signing the Agreement on 22nd March 2024 in Islamabad.

## CEO Jazz advocates for policy reforms to ensure industry viability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer of Jazz and Chairman of the Telecom Operators Association of Pakistan (ToAP) Aamir Ibrahim on Friday held a significant meeting with the Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

During the discussion, Aamir presented a comprehensive overview of the telecom sector's vital contributions to bolstering Pakistan's digital infrastructure.

Highlighting a substantial investment of \$5.7 billion over the past five years, the sector has significantly contributed Rs. 1.27 trillion to the national exchequer, while fueling broadband penetration from 32% in 2019 to 54.9% in 2024.

Aamir also highlighted the pivotal role of the mobile industry in

fostering economic growth, promoting digital inclusion, and catalyzing the prosperity of other sectors.

He called for the urgent need to address some key challenges facing Pakistan's telecom sector to help realize Pakistan's potential for attracting international investments and accelerating the integration of future technologies.

"These challenges included the lowest global average revenue per user (ARPU), a high taxation environment, soaring spectrum prices tied to the U.S. dollar, and currency depreciation. Such factors not only deter investment but also impede consistent improvement in service quality, posing a threat to Pakistan's potential for attracting international investments and integrating future technologies," he added.

## Finance minister for enhancing Pak, Germany bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Friday underscored the importance of further strengthening bilateral trade between Pakistan and Germany.

During a meeting with Ambassador of Germany to Pakistan, Alfred Grannas, who called on him, the minister underscored the significance of bilateral trade between the two nations, recognizing Germany as the most important trading partner for Pakistan in the European Union (EU).

The minister acknowledged the long-standing bilateral relations between the two countries and appreciated the support provided by the German government for various projects in Pakistan.

He also apprised the German Ambassador about the conclusion of the

second review of International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the Standby Arrangement (SBA) and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to implement prudent fiscal policies and structural reforms in various sectors to enhance economic resilience and attract investments.

Ambassador Alfred Grannas appreciated Pakistan's commitment to economic reforms and expressed Germany's continued support for Pakistan's development initiatives. Ambassador Grannas also highlighted the importance of mutual cooperation in various sectors and reiterated Germany's commitment to further strengthen the economic ties with Pakistan. They also reaffirmed their commitment to deepen bilateral cooperation and foster stronger economic ties between Pakistan and Germany.



LAHORE: A large number of women standing in a long queue and waiting for their turn to purchase wheat flour on subsidized price provided by government in the city.

## Tokyo's Nikkei index renews record high at close

TOKYO (APP): Tokyo's key Nikkei index ended at another record on Friday after Wall Street stocks also hit fresh highs on optimism about the US economy and Fed policy.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was up 0.18 percent, or 72.77 points, to end at 40,888.43, while the broader Topix index added 0.61 percent, or 17.01 points, to 2,813.22.

The dollar stood at 151.43 yen, against 151.65 yen on Thursday in New York.

Overnight in Wall Street, all three major indices climbed to fresh records, led by the Dow Jones Industrial Average, which moved nearer to 40,000 points.

The risk-on sentiment coupled with a weaker yen "reassured investors" in Japan and prompted Nikkei to top 41,000 soon after the market opening, IwaiCosmo Securities said.

## SECP indicates procedure for payment of subscription money

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) through a notification on Friday specified the time, manner, and conditions for payment of subscription money, payable by a subscriber in accordance with his undertaking in the memorandum of association against subscribed shares. Issued in terms of Section 17 of the Companies Act, 2017, the notification states that the subscription money is payable in cash through the banking channel, immediately after incorporation of the company, but not later than a period of thirty (30) days from the date of incorporation. The issuance of shares by the company is contingent on the full subscription money received from each subscriber.

## PM seeks comprehensive strategy for increase in IT exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday sought a comprehensive strategy for increase in information technology exports of the country on priority basis.

He was chairing a meeting on progress of the information technology sector. Prominent information technology experts attended the meeting and gave their proposals.

The PM said information technology had a prominent role in the

economy. The capacity of the information technology sector to boost the country's economy would be utilized, he added.

He said every sector of the economy would be modernized with the use of technology.

Youth would be provided facilities of international level to equip them with knowledge and skills of the present age in the sector of information technology, he added.

The services of the information technology

experts would be hired for advancement of the IT sector, he remarked.

The meeting was informed that a strategy was being prepared for reforms in the information technology sector and digitisation. The strategy included increasing access of people to the internet, improvement of digital infrastructure, e-governance, training of youth in digital skills and increase of business opportunities in the IT sector.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United States of America, Donald Blome calls on the newly appointed Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik.

## Food Minister visits food points

ISLAMABAD (APP): Food Minister Bilal Yasin visited food points at several places in Lahore.

The provincial food minister checked 13 well-known food points in Gulberg, Samanabad, Wagah and Shalimar Town. Four food points were sealed for poor arrangements during the visit while the other 4 were fined Rs. 2.5 lakh.

Similarly, rectification notices were also issued to 5 food points. Moreover, more than 2 tons of defective meat, oil and expired items were discarded at these food points.

Food Minister Bilal

Yasin said that elements engaged in selling substandard food do not deserve any relaxation. He said that action has been taken on the presence of prohibited and expired items and poor cleaning arrangements.

The food minister said that rusty utensils were being used at food points and fast food was being prepared in dirty machines. Bilal Yasin said that there is no record of oil change at the sealed points, that's why the food points were closed for violations of Pure Food Regulations.

He said that violation of laws will not be tolerated and elements destroying the health of citizens in the holy month are on our target.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari calls on Federal Minister for Privatisation and Board of Investment, Abdul Aleem Khan at Privatisation Division.

## Pak earns \$555m by exporting transport services in 7 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$555.927 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the first seven months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

This shows an increase of 1.46 percent as compared to \$547.939 million earned during the provision of services during the corresponding months of the fiscal year (2022-23), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 10.40 percent, going up from \$159.840 million last year to

\$176.460 million during the months under review.

Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services dipped by 51.89 percent from \$83.920 million last year to \$40.370 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services however increased by 79.25 percent from \$75.920 million to \$136.090 million current year, the PBS data revealed. The exports of air transport witnessed a nominal decline of 3.53 percent going down from \$376.089 million last year to \$362.807 million during July-January 2023-24.

Among the air transport services, the exports of passenger services decreased by 5.36 percent.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, APL Southampton, Bolan and Patreas, carrying Container, Gas oil and LPG, berthed at Container Terminal, FOTCO Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively on Thursday.

A total of eight ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them general cargo carrier "Trans Spring" left the Port on today morning while five more ships, APL Southampton, Tethis-7, Patreas, Evrial and Crater are expected to sail on today afternoon.

A cargo volume of 118,219 tonnes, comprising 89,666 tonnes imports cargo and 28,553 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,017 Containers (2,137 TEUs Imports).

## Minister stresses need for in-form water management sector

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Minister for Agriculture Muhammad Sajjad here Friday highlighted the importance of in-farm water management sector in the development of agriculture.

He said that the role of water management in the orderly arrangement of water for agricultural purposes in the province is unquestionable.

The Minister expressed these views on the occasion of visiting the Directorate General of Farm Water Management in Peshawar to take a briefing on in-farm Water Management.

The sector should adopt better planning now in view of the concerns and need for future water

scarcity due to global climate change. In view of the concerns and need of water shortage in the future, adopt better planning than now.

He further said that it is very gratifying that the agricultural sector is making efforts in various ways to supply water for the greater development of agriculture, they should adopt modern methods to prevent the wastage of water for irrigation and to protect it.

Director General Javed Iqbal gave a briefing to the Provincial Minister on the activities, achievements and future strategy of the department, while Additional Director General Naseer Rehman and other directors and officers were also present on the occasion.

## Dr Musadik, US Ambassador discuss investment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr Musadik Malik and Ambassador of the United States, Donald Blome Friday discussed technology transfer, investment opportunities, e-a-p-a-c-i-t-y-b-u-i-l-d-i-n-g initiatives in the energy sector, and regional projects.

During the meeting with Dr Malik, the ambassador extended his congratulations on assuming the office and expressed high hopes for the transformation of the energy sector.

The minister appreciated Ambassador Blome for always extending his support and reaffirmed that together, both countries can achieve shared energy goals.

Ways and means to promote a sustainable carbon-friendly footprint, renewables, and green hydrogen were also discussed, said a news release.

Dr Musadik, US Ambassador discuss investment opportunities



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with Jazz delegation.

## RCCI urges youth to lead "Plant for Pak" drive

KARACHI (APP): Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the youth to lead "Plant for Pakistan" under vision Green Punjab Initiative 2024-27.

RCCI President and Chairman RWMC, Saqib Rafiq while addressing the ceremony at a plantation and clean-up campaign, urged the younger generation to plant more saplings, aiming to protect the planet from global warming and the adverse impacts of climate change.

Saqib said Pakistan was vulnerable to climate challenges and it could not cope with climate risks, particularly floods, desertification and heatwaves.

He said planting at least four trees per person in a year would go a long way in making Pakistan clean and green.

The drive was aimed at building a green belt around Potohar Triangle, Soan Bridge and along the banks of Nullah Lai to increase the scenery of the city. Under the vision of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz, Green Punjab Initiative 2024-27, RCCI in collaboration with the Forest Department, and Schools had started a large-scale plantation campaign in Rawalpindi.

## Weekly inflation decline by 1.13 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed a decrease of 1.13 per cent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on March 21, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 323.50 points as compared to 327.21 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 29.06 per cent.

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

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs. 17,732, decreased by 1.83 per cent and went down to 314.20 points from last week's 320.06 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. 44,175, decreased by 1.64 percent, 1.34 percent, 1.25 and 0.91 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 09 (17.65%) items increased, 17 (33.33%) items decreased and 25 (49.02%)

## PSX stays bearish, loses 265 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Friday, losing 265.57 points, a negative change of 0.41 percent, closing at 65,151.83 points against 65,417.40 points the previous trading day.

A total of 208,408,686 shares valuing Rs. 7,149 billion were traded during the day as

compared to 389,654,899 shares valuing Rs. 11,307 billion the last day.

Some 332 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 120 of them recorded gains and 185 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 27 remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Pak Reinsurance with 24,162,000 shares at Rs. 13.08 per share.



## Russia and China veto US resolution calling for immediate cease-fire in Gaza

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: Russia and China on Friday vetoed a U.S.-sponsored U.N. resolution calling for “an immediate and sustained cease-fire” in the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza to protect civilians and enable humanitarian aid to be delivered to more than 2 million hungry Palestinians.

The vote in the 15-member Security Council was 11 members in favor, three against and one abstention.

Before the vote, Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said Moscow supports an immediate cease-fire, but he questioned the language in the resolution and accused U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield of “mis-

leading the international community” for “politicized” reasons.

The draft that was put to a vote made no direct link to the release of hostages taken during Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel, which was in the previous draft. But it unequivocally supported diplomatic efforts “to secure such a cease-fire in connection with the release of all remaining hostages.”

The Security Council had already adopted two resolutions on the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, but none calling for a cease-fire. Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution in late October calling for pauses in the fighting to deliver aid, protection of civilians, and a halt to arming Hamas. They said it didn't reflect

global calls for a cease-fire.

The U.S., Israel's closest ally, has vetoed three resolutions demanding a cease-fire, the most recent an Arab-backed measure supported by 13 council members with one abstention on Feb. 20. A day earlier, the U.S. circulated a rival resolution, which went through major changes during negotiations before Friday's vote. It initially would have supported a temporary cease-fire linked to the release of all hostages, and the previous draft would have supported international efforts for a cease-fire as part of a hostage deal.

The vote took place as Blinken, America's top diplomat, is on his sixth urgent mission to the Middle East since the Israel-Hamas war, discussing a deal for a cease-fire and hostage release.



The United Nations Security Council meets to consider a United States-sponsored resolution calling for a ceasefire during the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, at U.N. headquarters in New York City, U.S.

## Over 70 Rohingya presumed dead in boat tragedy off Indonesia's Aceh coast

**Monitoring Desk**  
JAKARTA: More than 70 Rohingya are “presumed dead or missing” after a boat they were on capsized off the coast of Indonesia's Aceh province, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Friday.

The UNHCR said in a joint statement with the International Organization for Migration that if the death toll was confirmed, it would be the biggest loss of life so far this year.

The alert was raised on Wednesday when Indo-

nesian fishermen rescued six of the migrants. A fishing community in Aceh said they had been standing on the hull of the boat after it capsized due to high tides.

For years, Rohingya have left Buddhist-majority Myanmar where they are generally regarded as foreign interlopers from South Asia, denied citizenship and subjected to abuse. More than 2,300 Rohingya arrived in Indonesia last year, UNHCR data showed, surpassing the number of arrivals in the previous four years combined.

## Israeli raid kills four Palestinians in West Bank

**Monitoring Desk**  
TULKAREM: As the UN top diplomat on Thursday called for an “immediate ceasefire” in war-torn Gaza, an Israeli air strike and gunfire have killed four Palestinians at the Nur Shams refugee camp in the occupied West Bank.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said on social media platform X that its “ambulance teams have just transported an 18-year-old man who was killed by the Israeli occupation forces in Nur Shams camp”, bringing the death toll in the raid to four people.

## Ukraine says power line to Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant fixed after blackout risk

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukrainian engineers have fixed a high-voltage power line supplying the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Ukraine's nuclear power company Energoatom said on Friday, after it said earlier disruption to the cable threatened a blackout. The Russian-controlled management of the Zaporizhzhia plant, the largest in Europe, also said the line had been repaired.

## Attack on Nigerian forces kills 23 soldiers and underscores continued conflict with militants

**Monitoring Desk**  
NIAEMEY: A militant attack on Nigerian forces in a border region near Mali and Burkina Faso killed 23 soldiers, the defense ministry said Friday.

The soldiers were taking part in an overnight clearing operation on Tuesday in the country's west when they were ambushed by armed men on motorcycles equipped with homemade bombs, the ministry statement said, according to state television. Details of the attack were previously

unreported.

The statement by Defense Minister Gen. Salifou Mody blamed the attack on jihadi fighters, saying the army had killed about 30 attackers in response.

The violence highlighted the troubles facing Niger and its neighbors.

Niger, along with neighbors Mali and Burkina Faso, is battling jihadi groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in a decade-long conflict in the Sahel region that is worsening.

## EU leaders to discuss using profits from Russian assets to arm Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: European Union leaders will on Thursday discuss a plan to use billions of euros in profits from frozen Russian financial assets to buy arms for Ukraine as they try to bolster Kyiv in its fight against Moscow's invasion.

The bloc's 27 national leaders will also debate how Europe can do more to defend itself and boost its arms industry, reflecting fears that Russia may not stop at Ukraine and the US may not be such a staunch protector of Europe in future. “For decades, Europe has not invested enough in its security and defence,” Charles Michel, president of the European Council of EU leaders, wrote in his invitation letter for the summit. “Now that we are facing the biggest security

threat since the Second World War, it is high time we take radical and concrete steps to be defence-ready and put the EU's economy on a “war footing.”

In a two-day summit in Brussels due to start at 1200 GMT on Thursday, the EU leaders will also tackle topics as diverse as the war in Gaza, the prospect of opening membership talks with Bosnia and farmers' protests. But Ukraine will top the agenda, with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy joining the leaders via video link. EU leaders have voiced increasing alarm about the state of the war in recent weeks, with ammunition-starved Ukrainian forces struggling to hold back Russian troops and a \$60 billion military aid package for Kyiv stuck in the US Congress.

## Russia warns Japan of 'serious consequences'

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's newly appointed ambassador to Japan has warned Tokyo of serious consequences and retaliatory steps if Patriot missile systems manufactured under US licence in Japan end up in Ukraine, the RIA news agency reported on Friday. RIA cited the new envoy, Nikolai Nozdrev, as saying that Moscow would be watching closely to see where Japanese arms exports ended up after Tokyo softened its export rules at the end of last year.

In particular, he said, Russia would be watching to see if and when Patriot missile complexes and missiles made in Japan under US licence are exported to the United States and then to Ukraine. “Accordingly, we will be watching carefully to make sure that the Patriots delivered do not end up in Ukraine, because if that happens, there will be the most severe consequences for bilateral (Russia-Japan) relations.”

## Australia tightens student visa rules as migration hits record high

**Monitoring Desk**  
SYDNEY: Australia will begin enforcing tougher visa rules for foreign students this week as official data showed migration hit another record high, which is likely to further exacerbate an already tight rental market.

From Saturday, English language requirements for student and graduate visas will be increased, while the government will get the power to suspend education providers from recruiting international students if they repeatedly break rules.

“The actions this weekend will continue to drive migration levels down while delivering on our commitments in the migration strategy to fix the broken system we inherited,” Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil said in a statement.

“A new “genuine student test” will be introduced to further crack down on international students who look to come to Australia primarily to work, while the imposition of “no further stay” conditions will be used on more visitor visas.

The moves follow a raft of actions last year to close off COVID-era concessions introduced by the former government, including unrestricted working hours for international students. The government at the time said rules would be tightened for students that could halve its migrant intake over two years.

Australia boosted its annual migration numbers in 2022 to help businesses recruit staff to fill shortages after the COVID-19 pandemic brought strict border controls, and kept foreign students and workers out for nearly two years.

## Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal challenges arrest ahead of India election

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: A top Indian opposition politician appeared in court on Friday to fight his arrest in a case supporters say is aimed at sidelining challengers to Prime Minister Narendra Modi before next month's election. Arvind Kejriwal, chief minister of the capital Delhi and a key leader in an opposition alliance formed to compete against Modi in the polls, was detained on Thursday in connection with a long-running corruption probe.

He is among several leaders of the bloc under criminal investigation and one of his colleagues described his arrest as a “political conspiracy” orchestrated by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

## Iraq warm to Turkey's proposed anti-PKK joint ops centre, says Turkish official

**Monitoring Desk**  
ANKARA: Turkey proposed to set up a “joint operation centre” with Iraq in order to fight the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and Baghdad responded “positively” in a meeting last week, a Turkish defence ministry official said on Thursday.

Senior Turkish and Iraqi officials, including defence ministers, held talks in Baghdad last week to discuss security issues including potential measures against the PKK, after Turkey warned of new military operations in the region.

“Iraq also views (the PKK) as a threat to itself. They approached us positively on our offer to set up a joint operation centre and to cooperate in the fight against terrorism,” the official told reporters.

During last week's meeting, the two sides also discussed preparations for a planned visit by President Tayyip Erdogan to Baghdad, which is expected to take place after the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which ends in April.

The official said Ankara wants the joint operation centre to be included in a broader strategic document that Erdogan intends to sign during the visit.

## UN calls for guidelines to address AI's risks, rewards

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: The UN General Assembly on Thursday called for the development of a set of international guidelines to address the risks and benefits of artificial intelligence.

The resolution, co-sponsored by dozens of countries and adopted by consensus, emphasises the necessity of guidelines “to promote safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems,” while excluding military AI from its purview. On the whole, the resolution, prepared by the United States, focuses more on the technology's positive potential.

## Magnitude 6.1 quake strikes off Indonesia's Java island, geophysics agency says

**Monitoring Desk**  
JAKARTA: A magnitude 6.1 earthquake struck off the shore of Indonesia's Java island on Friday, at a depth of 10km (6.21 miles), Indonesia's geophysics agency (BKMKG) said.

The epicentre was located 132 km north of Tuban in East Java province, BMKG said.

The tremors were felt strongly in East Java, its capital Surabaya, as well as cities in neighboring provinces.

## Japanese emperor and empress visit towns hit by Jan 1 quake and console thousands of homeless

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: Japan's Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako on Friday visited towns in the north-central region of Noto to pray for victims of the deadly New Year's Day earthquake and console thousands of homeless living in evacuation centers.

The magnitude 7.6 quake killed 241 people. Four are still missing. More than 9,000 residents whose homes were destroyed or damaged are still living in evacuation facilities such as community centers and school gymnasiums.

Reconstruction has come slowly in a largely rural area with an aging population. The region is known for Wajima lacquerware and other handicrafts. Hundreds of people lined the streets to cheer the imperial couple and held up their phones to take photos of them waving back from the window of a bus.

Naruhito and Masako had not visited earlier because they did not want to interfere with the immediate relief and reconstruction efforts, officials said.

## UN chief urges the EU to avoid 'double standards' over Gaza and Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: European Union leaders were urged Thursday to show the same respect for international law in Gaza as they aim to uphold in Ukraine, as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians face dire food shortages and possible famine.

At an EU summit in Brussels, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed to the leaders to remain strong and united in their respect of standards enshrined in the United Nations Charter and international law.

“The basic principle of international humanitarian law is the protection of civilians. We must stick to principles in Ukraine as in Gaza without double standards,” Guterres told reporters, standing alongside EU Council President

Charles Michel, who chaired the summit.

A U.N. food agency has warned that “famine is imminent” in northern Gaza. Israel, meanwhile, appears determined to launch a ground offensive in the southern city of Rafah, where many people have sought refuge from the fighting.

The 27-nation EU has long been deeply divided in its approach to Israel and the Palestinians, and the devastating Hamas attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7 laid bare those differences. But as the death toll in Gaza mounts to nearly 32,000 people, more countries are supporting calls for a cease-fire.

In contrast, almost the entire bloc sees Russia's two-year long war on Ukraine as an existential threat.

## French President Macron regrets the Senate's vote to reject the EU-Canada trade deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: French President Emmanuel Macron said Friday he “regrets” the Senate's vote to reject legislation to ratify a trade deal between the European Union and Canada that has been criticized by farmers as bringing unfair competition from abroad.

The EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA, provisionally went into effect in September 2017 after all EU governments agreed to it, but its full implementation requires approval by each national parliament.

Thursday's vote in the French Senate does not necessarily mean that the country ultimately will reject ratification. The text is to be sent back to France's lower house of parliament for further discussion, Macron said in a news conference at an EU summit in Brussels. He did not say

whether he would like the vote at the National Assembly to be held before or after June's European elections.

“It's a very good agreement” that benefits to the French farming industry, Macron argued.

“Is it good or bad for our agriculture? The assessment is extremely clear. It's very good for milk, it's very good for cheese, it's very good for wine.”

French senators' vote comes after farmers across France and Europe demonstrated on their tractors earlier this year in protests over low earnings, heavy regulation and what they call unfair competition from abroad, often criticizing free-trade agreements, including the CETA.

While Macron's centrist alliance advocated for the CETA, conservative and leftist senators joined their votes to reject the ratification bill.

## Nuclear's EU comeback on show at Brussels summit

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: Promoting nuclear power was long taboo in Brussels, but a high-profile international summit Thursday will send loud and clear the message that atomic energy—now touted by its champions as key to fighting climate change—is back.

Gone are the days when Berlin's anti-nuclear stance set the tone; in the past two years atomic pioneer France has been decisive in crafting friendlier regulation, and putting nuclear back on the EU's agenda.

Rafael Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which is organising this week's meet in Brussels, is a leading proponent of nuclear as a “clean and reliable source of energy.”

“The world needs much more of it,” says Grossi, who sees “a growing realisation that nuclear energy is an indispensable part of the solution to some of the most pressing global challenges of our time.”

The IAEA's first summit held to promote nuclear energy brings together representatives from some 50 countries—from the EU but also the United States and China—and 25 leaders including France's Emmanuel Macron.

“For the past four years, we have been sowing seeds—they began to grow, and now we are reaping the harvest,” said EU lawmaker Christophe Grundler, from Macron's centrist Renew Europe party.

Back in 2021, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen made headlines by arguing the EU needed nuclear as a “stable source” of energy—and Brussels went on to label it among its list of “sustainable” investments.

By early 2023, France was spearheading the launch of a “nuclear alliance” of a dozen EU members including Poland, Bulgaria, Finland and the Netherlands, with a view to weighing on policy.

As election nears, Venezuelan govt keeps arresting opponents allegedly tied to criminal plots

**Monitoring Desk**  
MEXICO CITY: As Venezuela's government would have it, President Nicolás Maduro and members of his inner circle have been the target of several conspiracies since last year that could have left them injured or worse.

people working with Machado's campaign whom he accused of participating in a plot.

Oscar Murillo, general coordinator for the Venezuelan human rights group Provea, said officials are coordinating actions of the police, military and civic groups to tamp down on any anti-government activity. “This has translated into greater political repression and a deepening of the policy of persecution that seeks to break civil society at a time when perhaps the ideal thing would be to be talking about the public policies needed to reverse poverty or inequality in Venezuela,” Murillo said.

Attorney General Tarek William Saab has described the plots variously as aimed at attacking military installations, killing Maduro and other officials and de-stabilizing the country. He has publicly presented alleged confessions, planning documents, laptops and other items he has characterized as evidence.



People walk past a damaged car in the Carrefour Feuilles neighborhood, which was deserted due to gang violence, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti



## President UNGA applauds Pak role in global peace efforts

NEW YORK (APP): Pakistan's journey has been punctuated by remarkable achievements and an unwavering spirit expressed in the resilience of its people," the UN General Assembly President, Dennis Francis, said at a largely-attended Pakistan Day reception on Thursday.

Francis, who was the chief guest at the reception held at the Pakistani Mission to the UN in New York, applauded Pakistan's "steadfast, devoted and robust commitment" to multilateralism, noting the country's role as a member of the UN, its multiple terms on the Security Council, and its consistent presence and leadership in various UN bodies, including ECOSOC and the Human Rights Council.

He also commended Pakistan's significant contributions to UN peace-keeping missions, and acknowledged the sacrifices made by Pakistani peace-

keepers in promoting global peace and security.

The reception was attended by top diplomats of the New York-based Permanent Missions, UN officials, members of academia, media, civil society organizations and the Pakistani diaspora.

Ambassador Munir Akram welcomed the General Assembly President, highlighting Pakistan's unwavering commitment to multilateralism and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter.

The Pakistani envoy emphasized Pakistan's active role as a member state of the UN since 1947, supporting initiatives aimed at promoting international peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights.

In his speech, the General Assembly President extended his warm greetings to Pakistan, pointing out that the auspicious occasion com-

memorates the adoption of the Lahore Resolution in 1940 and the adoption of the first Constitution of Pakistan in 1956.

"As the largest contributor of police and troop personnel to the UN for decades, Pakistan's unwavering dedication to maintaining peace globally is clear and manifest," the President said.

The President of the General Assembly lauded Pakistan's diplomatic achievements, citing Sir Zafarullah Khan's presidency of the UN General Assembly and membership of the International Court of Justice. He also praised Pakistan's efforts in addressing global challenges, including its role in advocating against Islamophobia and its contributions to climate action and environmental sustainability.

Referring to the second recently adopted resolution on measures to combat Islamophobia.



ISLAMABAD: SFD CEO, Sultan Abdul Rahman Al Murshif and Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs, Dr. Kazim Niaz, signing the Agreement.

## Govt committed to steer country out of current challenges: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Friday said that government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, is determined to steer the country out of the current crisis.

Addressing a press conference along with Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan and Romina Khurshid Alam, she said, "the country will be put on the road to progress, prosperity, and development under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif."

She expressed confidence that the country would overcome all the challenges and crisis within the next three to four years.

Recalling about the past achievements of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, she highlighted the eradication of load shedding and terrorism, as well as the successful initiation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the remarkable economic growth witnessed during his last tenure.

She recounted that soon after assuming government in 2013, under the guidance of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, an agreement was made with the IMF. However, the government terminated the program within two years, leading the country towards economic self-reliance.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, she said, made all out efforts to protect the country away from default during his 16-month tenure. The Minister said that collaborative efforts of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) and allied parties had stabilized the country economically during the 16-month period.

She highlighted the stabilization of the Pakistani rupee and the robust performance of the stock exchange during Shehbaz Sharif's tenure. She assured that the government is well aware of the problems and hardships faced by the common people and said that government is working on various direction and taking initiatives to provide relief to poor men.

Shaza Fatima reiterated that underprivileged segments of society would be protected in every tough

## Pakistan, SFD sign \$107m hydropower agreements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary, Economic Affairs Division, Dr. Kazim Niaz and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) here Friday signed loan agreements worth \$107 million for Shounter Hydropower Project (48 MW) and US\$ 41.00 million Jagran IV Hydropower Project (22 MW).

Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema witnessed the signing ceremony, according to press statement issued by Economic Affairs Division.

These endeavours aim at harnessing the indigenously available hydropower potential and generating 70 MW hydropower, which will be transmitted to the national grid.

Moreover, it will help in eradicating the menace of



LONDON: Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar shakes hand with UK Minister of State for South Asia and Commonwealth, Lord Tariq Ahmad.

## Education Dept. & UNICEF continue school admission campaign in Chaman

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Education Department, Government of Balochistan and UNICEF jointly continued the school admission campaign in Chaman district.

The very objective of the school admission campaign is to get over 4,000 children admitted in the schools.

Speaking on the occasion of school admission campaign, Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (Retd) Raja Athar Abbas, District Education Officer, Malk Noor Ahmed, District Programme Manager UNICEF and others said that the future of our nation, area and country is associated with the education, so we have to decorate our children with ornament of knowledge.

If we didn't impart proper education to our children, then dark future would be our fate, they feared. They said that it is our target to enroll 4,000 children in the government schools. Free education would be imparted to the children to be admitted in the schools besides other academic facilities, they maintained. The Deputy Commissioner, DEO and other high ups appreciated the invaluable role and contribution of UNICEF for the cause of education in Chaman and Killa Abdullah.

They mentioned that the UNICEF has contributed in building of rooms, provision of computer system and adult education programme.



RAS AL KHAIMAH: Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasbi receives Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi in Ras Al Khaimah on an Iftar hosted for all Resident Ambassadors accredited to the UAE.

## Security plan and other arrangements reviewed for Youme Ali (RA) in Quetta

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The security plan and other necessary arrangements were reviewed for observance of the martyrdom day of Hazrat Ali (RA) in Quetta on Friday.

In this regard, a meeting was held with Deputy Inspector General of Police, Abdul Hayee in the chair here. Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Saad bin Asad, SSP operation, Jawad Ahmed Dogar, other concerned high ups and members of the peace committee participated in the meeting.

The participants discussed the security plan and other arrangements made and being made for the Youme Ali (RA) in Quetta.

Speaking on the occasion, DIG Police said that under the security plan, the police jawans and officers would be deployed on the occasion to avert any untoward incident.

He said that the deployment would be made for security of majalis and processions to be taken out on the day.

The Deputy Commissioner Quetta stressed the need to ensure law and order, cleanliness and other arrangements on occasion of Youme Ali (RA) in the district. He also urged the religious leaders of all schools of thoughts to cooperate and remain in contact with the administration and other concerned organizations to maintain law and order on Youme Ali (RA).

Moreover, he was stressed to maintain peaceful environment and complete harmony on the day. It may be mentioned here that the Youme Ali (RA) would be observed on 21st Ramadanul Mubarak.



QUETTA: A meeting chaired by Deputy Inspector General of Police, Abdul Hayee reviewing security plan and other necessary arrangements for observance of the martyrdom day of Hazrat Ali (RA) in Quetta.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the National Party calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

### NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq says

## Parliament-to-parliament contacts vital for regional prosperity, economic dev.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday said that Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) enjoy cordial ties based upon shared religious and cultural values. He said that parliament-to-parliament contacts are vital for regional prosperity and economic development.

He added, "UAE has always supported Pakistan in difficult times and Pakistan values its tie with UAE." He expressed these views during his meeting with the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Alzaabi who called on him in Parliament House, said a news release. While talking about the significance of enhanced bilateral ties between the two countries, he emphasized the need to revive the Parliamentary Friendship group.

He also extended an invitation to the Speaker Parliament of UAE to visit the Parliament of Pakistan. He said that Pakistan has vast opportunities for investment and trade. He added, "Pakistan is bestowed with a skilled labour force which can play a significant role in the development of UAE."

He also appreciated the support and facilities provided by the UAE government to the Pakistani

diaspora in UAE. He said that the Pakistani diaspora in UAE has a substantive role in bringing both Nations closer.

Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Alzaabi extended warm felicitations to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on his successful election as Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan.

He expressed hope that parliament-to-parliament contacts between UAE and Pakistan would further improve ties between both nations. He also said that the UAE is committed to facilitating Pakistani workers in UAE and values the services offered by the Pakistani diaspora.

## National Party delegation calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the National Party called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday and discussed matters relating to mutual concerns.

The delegation congratulated the prime minister on assuming the charge of his office.

In the meeting, matters regarding the situation of law and justice in Balochistan and the issues of the youth of the province came under discussion.

The prime minister reiterated his determination to provide all possible facilities to the youth of Balochistan.

He said it was the responsibility of the state to provide the opportunities of education and earning livelihoods to the Baloch youth.

## VCs body advocates to halt creation of new universities

ISLAMABAD (INP): Recognizing the detrimental impact of proliferation in the number of institutions on the quality of education, the Vice Chancellors Committee has advocated for an immediate halt to the establishment of new universities. They also underscored the importance of consolidating existing institutions to enhance efficiency and optimize resource allocation.

In a concerted effort to address the pressing challenges faced by the higher education sector, the Vice Chancellors' Committee was convened for a two-day meeting in Islamabad with the participation of more than 160 public and private universities from across the country.

The gathering provided a platform for the university heads to engage in comprehensive discussions and formulate strategic initiatives to navigate the turbulent landscape of the country's tertiary education. The meeting was presided over by the Chairperson of VCs' Committee Dr. Iqar Ahmad Khan and was also attended by Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Executive Director HEC Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum and divisional heads of HEC.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy officials handing over seized liquor worth PKR 145.6 million to Pakistan Customs.

## Senator Samina Zehri March 23 is the day of renewal of the pledge with motherland

Independent Report  
QUETTA: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, while congratulating the nation on the occasion of Pakistan Day on March 23, said in her congratulatory message that March 23 is the day of renewal of the pledge to establish a separate country for Muslims in the sub-continent. A resolution was passed for the establishment of Pakistan on this day in 1940 and the Muslims of India turned the dream of Allama Muhammad Iqbal into a reality on August 14, 1947 through a peaceful struggle under the able leadership of Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Today, the youth of the nation have a huge responsibility to compete in the world, to specialize in modern education and to play their role in the development and prosperity of the country, because in the future, our beloved homeland of Pakistan to take over the reins and We strongly hope that our youth will work day and night for the country and make the country developed by removing it from the list of developing countries.

She said that today we will not allow any kind of fire to come on the motherland Pakistan and all together we will fight the enemies of Pakistan and forget our personal interests and differences and collective interests for the country. Will work for the whole nation have to stand side by side for the security and stability of our country and face all the challenges together. For this, forgetting their differences and showing the best performance.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Alzaabi calls on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House.

## Govt taking steps to provide relief to needy people in Ramazan: Ubaidullah

QUETTA (APP): Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) Mir Ubaidullah Gorgage on Friday said that the provincial government under the leadership of Balochistan Chief Minister was taking all possible measures to provide relief to people including needy people in the month of Ramazan.

He expressed these views while distributing food items to the poor and deserving people in his constituency of BP-44.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader, Mir Ubaidullah Gorgage said that said that during Ramazan, we should also take care of the poor and deserving people around us. He said that in this regard, the government was making every possible effort to provide relief to people within its resources.

The provincial government under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan is taking all possible measures to provide relief to the people.

He said that he is fully aware of the problems of the people of his constituency and all available resources will be used to solve them.

He said that ration was being distributed keeping in mind the difficulties of poor and deserving people in Ramazan saying that ration would be continued in the future.

## Quetta's sasta Ramazan bazaars fail to provide respite to people

QUETTA (INP): In the month of Ramadan, the citizens of Quetta could not get relief contrary to the claims of the district administration as essential items are being sold at higher prices even in the open market.

A few stalls were established in the name of Ramzan Sasta Barar for the welfare of the people and at these stalls, there is a shortage of food items and the prices are higher than the open market.

Several citizens complain about the quality of goods available in the sasta Ramazan markets.

The citizens urged the government to activate the price control committees to control the inflated prices instead.

## Two held with narcotics, pistols

QUETTA (APP): Shalkot Police arrested two people and recovered chas 2 kg and pistols from their possession in two separate area near Hazarganji and Sariab area of Quetta.

Police sources said on Friday that on special directives of Deputy Inspection General (DIG) Abdul Hai Amir Baloch, SSP Operation

Quetta Muhammad Jawad Tariq, police teams led by SP Sariab Division Shafiq Amir Janjua and SHO Shalkot Khair Muhammad conducted raid at place and arrested a drug dealer along with chas 2 kg.

Meanwhile, SHO New Sariab Tuseef Farman led police team and conducted raid and apprehended a man and recovered illegal rifle and pistol from his possession.

Further investigation was underway.

## PML-N Women's Wing Fatima condemns terrorist attack on GDAC

QUETTA (APP): Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Women's Wing Fatima Khan on Friday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Gwadar Development Authority Complex (GDAC). In a statement issued here, she said that the PML-N has already taken steps to eradicate terrorism from the country and would ensure the expulsion of terrorists.

Fatima Khan also paid tribute to the men of the police and security forces for thwarting the terrorist attack on the Gwadar Development Authority complex.

She said that the soldiers of the security forces killed the terrorists by showing bravery and thwarting their nefarious design saying that during this time, two security personnel who were the heroes of the nation were martyred.

She said that the brave sons of the nation were protecting the country by sacrificing their lives against the terrorists.