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Federal Minister for Commerce
Jam Kamal Khan

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FM, US ambassador agree to enhance ties



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The United States ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome called on Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar here on Monday and discussed matters of mutual interest. Ambassador Blome congratulated the FM on assuming office and assured his and his mission's full support in further strengthening bilateral relations. Progress made in diverse fields and ways and means to further enhance the bilateral ties were also discussed.

Maqbool assumes charge as Minister of Science and Technology



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has assumed charge as Minister of Science and Technology here on Monday. The high officials extended a warm welcome to the minister on his arrival at the ministry.

An introductory meeting was conducted with senior officials while the minister was briefed about the role and functions of the ministry and its executive departments including major ongoing activities.

The federal minister has called for a meeting of all wings of the ministry on March 19, 2024 to receive briefings from the respective officials and discuss the future goals.

Commerce Minister engages with sugar mills, ethanol manufacturers to overcome challenges

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan here on Monday convened significant meetings with representatives from the Sugar Mills Association and Ethanol Manufacturer Association separately to address pressing concerns affecting their industries. The meetings, held in the Ministry of Commerce, aimed to foster dialogue and find feasible solutions to the challenges faced by these sectors. The associations appreciated the act of calling stakeholders before making any major decisions. During the discussions, Minister Jam Kamal assured the industrialists of his commitment to advocate for their interests and address their concerns to support the local industry while simultaneously enhancing export volume to increase foreign reserves. The Sugar Mills Association voiced apprehensions regarding the anticipated increase in tar-

iffs for Molasses exports. Members of the association highlighted the importance of encouraging Molasses exports to bolster foreign reserves. They underscored the need for infrastructure improvements to enhance terminal capacity, facilitating greater access to international markets. Conversely, representatives from the Ethanol Manufacturer Association emphasized the necessity of long-term policy measures to sustain the domestic ethanol industry. They advocated against allowing excessive Molasses exports, citing the adverse impact on local production. The Chairman of the Ethanol Association urged authorities to permit the importation of raw sugar to sustain sugar manufacturing. In response to these concerns, Minister Jam Kamal reassured participants of the government's commitment to prioritizing their issues. — VOM Report



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Amb. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM Shehbaz, UAE ambassador discuss ties

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) to Pakistan, paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday and discussed matters of mutual interest. The Ambassador congratulated the Prime Minister on his re-election and conveyed best wishes of U.A.E. President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and hoped that the strong fraternal ties between the two countries would be strengthened further in the years ahead.

The Prime Minister thanked the U.A.E. leadership for their warm messages of greetings and conveyed his best wishes for President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Recalling the historic ties between Pakistan and the U.A.E., the prime minister said Pakistan attached great importance to its brotherly relations with U.A.E. The two countries had always supported each other and there was a strong desire on both sides to elevate the relationship to a higher level, the PM added.

The Prime Minister further said that Pakistan wanted to translate the tremendous political goodwill into a stronger economic partnership. Noting the exciting transformation of the U.A.E. into a hub for commerce, tourism,

PM visits residences of Captain Ahmed Badar Shaheed, Lt. col Syed Kashif Ali Shaheed



TALAGANG: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday visited the residence of Captain Ahmed Badar Shaheed to offer his heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family. Expressing sympathies with the bereaved family, the prime minister said he was very impressed by their patience and determination. Earlier, the prime minister also visited the residence of Lt. Colonel Syed Kashif Ali

Shaheed in Rawalpindi and offered his heartfelt condolence to the family. PM visits residences of Captain Ahmed Badar Shaheed, Lt. col Syed Kashif Ali Shaheed. He prayed to Allah Almighty to grant eternal peace to the martyrs and patience to the bereaved families to bear the loss with courage. He said the brave jawans and officers of Pakistan Army had sacrificed their lives to safeguard their motherland. He said the entire nation including himself pay tributes to them.

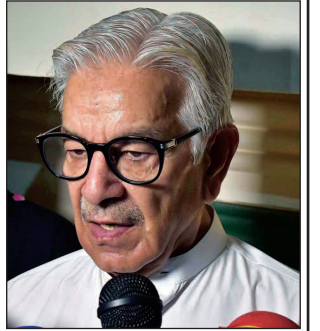
"The families of martyrs are a matter of pride for the entire nation", he remarked. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its armed forces till complete eradication of the menace of terrorism. Defence minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar also accompanied the prime minister.

and investment, the Prime Minister said Pakistan wanted to partner with the U.A.E. He highlighted the role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) as an efficient mechanism to attract foreign investment into priority sectors including agriculture, minerals & mining, I.T., renewable energy and

industry. On the multilateral side, the Prime Minister congratulated the U.A.E. for successfully hosting COP 28 meeting on climate change last year as well as its efforts to bring peace in Gaza while serving as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

'Charter of economy is the need of the hour': Asif

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday said that Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) was seeking economic consensus with all parties to push the country towards economic prosperity.



Talking to a private news channel, he said that it was included in PML-N's manifesto to give facilities to the interior areas of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and bring them at par with cities. PML-N's manifesto prioritizes grassroots economic initiatives to address the country's failing economic structure, he added.

The government was taking steps to overhaul the fragmented tax system, ensuring businesses pay their tax in time, while also tackling electricity and gas theft to strengthen the economy, he added.

SC serves notices to respondents in petition against extra taxes in electricity bills

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday served notices to respondents including the federal government in a case against imposition of alleged extra taxes in electricity bills.



A three member bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah heard the aforesaid case.

The petitioners' lawyer adopted the stance that further and extra taxes could only be imposed on unregistered institutions, adding that his clients have already been paying GST taxes. The law of registration couldn't be applied on petitioner institutions, he contended. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah said that the court was serving notices to respondents to hear them on next hearing. Further hearing of the case was then adjourned till April 25. APP

Terrorist Commander Sehra among eight others killed in N Waziristan



RAWALPINDI: The security forces have killed a high value target identified as terrorist commander Sehra alias Janan among the eight other terrorists during an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) conducted on the night of March 17 and 18th in North Waziristan District. The terrorist commander was involved in orchestrating the terrorist attack on Security Forces' Post in Mir Ali on March 16 and was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies. "Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area as the Security Forces of Pakistan remain determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR said. PR

Shaza, Huawei delegation discuss various, programs, initiatives, ICT infrastructure



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja met with a delegation from Huawei Pakistan and discussed about various programs, initiatives, and ICT infrastructure. The Huawei team led by Ethan Sun, CEO Huawei Pakistan said a news release.

The Minister shared the Ministry's vision of digitalizing Pakistan, create opportunities for the youth and leverage technology to build capacity and achieve economic growth.

Mr Sun said, as a key stakeholder contributing to the digitalization of the economy and the country, Huawei is committed to creating a fully connected, intelligent world."

The meeting was attended by Mr Jahanzeb Rahim, Member Telecom, Mr Faisal Ratal, DG Telecom, Dr Babar Majid Bhatti, CEO, NITB, Mr Ahmed Bilal Masud, Director Subsidiary

Board, Mr Shahzad Rasheed, CEO Huawei Cloud, Mr Yu Shaoning, Deputy CEO Public Affairs and Mr Saad Talha Saeed, Director Public Affairs Government Relations.

Pakistan has immense potential in the ICT space; Students from Pakistan won the second and third prizes in the Network Track and third prize in the Innovation Track at the Huawei ICT Competition 2022-2023 Global Final, competing with more than 120,000 students from more than 2,000 universities from 74 countries and regions around the world.

Huawei has designed a Super App that serves as a one-stop digital ecosystem connecting government services, and service hotlines, providing health and education services and connecting to various mini-apps. With internet connectivity, this app can create smart cities across Pakistan.

Pakistan carries out operation against terrorist sanctuaries of TTP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Monday carried out intelligence-based anti-terrorist operations in the border regions inside Afghanistan. In a statement, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said the target of today's operation was the terrorists belonging to Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group, which along with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), is responsible for multiple terrorist attacks inside Pakistan, resulting in deaths of hundreds of civilians and law enforcement officials. The latest attack took place on 16 March 2024 at a security post in Mir Ali in North Waziristan and claimed the lives of seven Pakistani soldiers. Over the past two years, she said Pakistan has repeatedly conveyed its serious concerns to the Interim Afghan Government over the pres-



ence of terror outfits including TTP inside Afghanistan. These terrorists pose a grave threat to Pakistan's security and have consistently used Afghan territory to launch terror attacks inside Pakistani territory. Pakistan accords prime importance to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. It has, there-

fore, always prioritized dialogue and cooperation to confront the terrorist threat, she added. Pakistan had repeatedly urged the Afghan authorities to take concrete and effective action to ensure that the Afghan soil is not used as a staging ground for terrorism against Pakistan. Pakistan has also called on them to deny safe havens to TTP and to hand over its leadership to Pakistan.

The Spokesperson said Pakistan has great respect for the people of Afghanistan. However, certain elements among those in power in Afghanistan are actively patronising TTP and using them as a proxy against Pakistan.

"Such an approach against a brotherly country, which stood with the people of Afghanistan through thick

and thin, manifests shortsightedness. It ignores the support extended by Pakistan to the people of Afghanistan over the last several decades."

She said, "We urge these elements in power to rethink the policy of siding with Khwarij terrorists shedding the blood of innocent Pakistanis and to make a clear choice to stand with the people of Pakistan."

"Terrorist groups like TTP are a collective threat to regional peace and security. We fully realize the challenge Afghan authorities face in combating the threat posed by TTP. Pakistan would therefore continue to work towards finding joint solutions in countering terrorism and to prevent any terrorist organization from sabotaging bilateral relations with Afghanistan," she added. APP

ECP sets up appellate tribunals to review Senate nomination challenges

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has constituted five appellate tribunals to address appeals regarding the acceptance or rejection of nomination papers submitted by candidates for the vacant Senate seats.

According to a notification issued by Election Commission, Justice Saman Rafat Intiaz has been appointed as the tribunal judge for the Islamabad, while Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan

has been appointed as the appellate tribunal for resolving disputes in Punjab.

Likewise, Justice Adnan Iqbal Chaudhry was appointed as the Appellate Tribunal Judge to handle petitions concerning disputes in the Sindh province. Justice Shakeel Ahmed for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Justices Ejaz Swati and Nazeer Ahmed Langove for Balochistan were appointed as Appellate Tribunal judges. APP

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New data, old insights

DR AYESHA RAZZAQUE

There was a time when systematically collected data about schoolchildren's learning levels was scarce, spottily collected, and hard to obtain. 'Reforms' were the brainchildren of politicians or senior bureaucrats in charge at the time, usually without a formal connection to the education sector. Reforms that came up this way were guided by anecdotes rather than data and, therefore, hit-or-miss. The post-9/11 years brought a flood of development programmes, many in the education sector, by foreign aid and development agencies into the country. One lesson that has thankfully sunk in within policy circles is that grown-ups make policy and reform decisions based on evidence and data. Perhaps as a result of that realization or perhaps the general buzz around data science and decision-making based on evidence, we have seen more data collection efforts, both domestic and international (through participation in global benchmark tests), with varying levels of regularity. Among the major recent data collection and reporting efforts are the National Achievement Test (NAT) 2023 report, compiled by Cambridge University Press (data collected by the federal Pakistan Institute of Education and Education Departments of provinces) and the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Pakistan 2023 by the Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA). Both reports are notable for the scale and extent of their data collection efforts and are filled with plots slicing their data dozens of ways. The ASER-Pakistan 2023 report is based on a wide-ranging household survey (notable for its scale). It has been conducted with some regularity over the last 10 years - in 2014, 2019, 2021, and 2023 - and reports on a lot of dimensions. What was key to me were the observed learning achievement levels over the years. They are notable for being (mostly) flat over the years. Learning achievement in Urdu, Sindhi, and Math at 5th grade level in most provinces and districts has gone down in the 2023 survey. The report does not specify whether it is due to school closings during Covid-19 or any other reason. However, if the new school textbooks alone were supposed to improve learning, there certainly does not seem to be any evidence of that. The NAT 2023 reports test results of grade 4 students for English, Foundational Literacy (FL), Math, and Urdu & Sindhi and grade 8 students for Math and Science. The averages of learning levels are in line with what one might expect. A small nugget that stood out in the results of 4th graders was the fact that the distributions of English, Math, and Urdu & Sindhi scores were bi-modal - they have two peaks. This is indicative of two groups of students - one group that is performing better than the other. The report stops short of identifying causal or correlated factors, although we can probably guess what they might be. And that is my takeaway from both of these recent reports. Broadly speaking, the learning levels of children appear to have, more-or-less, stagnated. One study after another, the story the new data is telling is the same, but the recommendations they generate are decades old. The data is new, but the insights it is giving us are old and well-known. It is time for action. The recommendations that are produced by such surveys, reports, and studies have become reliably predictable: Teach children in a language they understand (their mother tongue), particularly in early grades. Teach the curriculum. Follow up on assigned homework. Provide teachers the opportunity to develop professionally. Don't just hire anyone to be a teacher but make sure they are qualified for the subjects they need to teach. Add to that all the usual school infrastructure asks - more schools, more classrooms, electricity, water, bathrooms, boundary walls, libraries, internet connectivity, etc - that many of us take for granted and expect from a school. Aside from schools' legitimate minimum infrastructure needs above, all of the other items are well-established good practices, and many are contingent on one factor: That the teacher be qualified and motivated to do their job. That, in my view, is the hardest nut to crack in school education - making teaching in schools a profession of first choice, not a career of last resort. Without that crucial piece, all the professional teacher training in the world will not make a difference. There is only so much that monitoring by a distant education bureaucracy tucked away in some distant capital / provincial capital, or even at the district level, can do. No well-performing school education system in the world has gotten to where it is by cutting corners when hiring teachers. Anyone who has ever supervised people at work knows that it is infinitely harder to get work out of someone uninterested, unmotivated, and adamant to put in no more than their absolute minimum effort. Motivated people who (on most days) love their work and workplace and take pride in doing their job well are the ones who regularly go the extra mile or two. When that is not the case, you must build extensive and expensive monitoring mechanisms to push and prod and constantly look over shoulders. We need better teachers, teachers that want to be teachers. The job of monitoring and accountability is beyond even the most well-intentioned faraway bureaucracies. The country is still coming to terms with the devolution of education from the center to provinces, but that will not be enough. Punjab alone, with a population of around 130 million, is larger than most countries in the world. Schools need to be accountable to the people they serve: the parents and communities they are in. That puts some responsibility on parents and a shift away from the all-too-common attitude in which parents treat their responsibility of educating their children as fully outsourced to schools. Public schools used to have regular parent-teacher meetings, but those have largely fallen by the wayside now. In some respects, it feels like we are going in reverse. There is no way around fixing the teaching profession which (considering we have many hundreds of thousands of teachers across the country) will likely be expensive. That makes fixing public school education a money problem, which links it to the state of the economy. There is no fixing education without fixing the teacher problem.

The writer (she/her) has a PhD in Education.



Hassan Hakeem

A gateway to rights

As the 16th National Assembly starts its first parliamentary year, it is essential to carry out a deep dive into the recently concluded elections. One key angle is the registration of women on electoral rolls, which is a prerequisite for citizens' electoral and political participation. According to the sixth Population and Housing Census 2017, women and girls comprise around 49 per cent of the total population of Pakistan. Despite significant efforts to empower women and fulfil their human rights, a great deal still needs to be done to improve the situation of gender equality in the country. Despite impressive gains in various sectors, the gap between male and female voters on electoral rolls continues to persist. In Pakistan's diverse landscape, a national identity card (NIC) serves not only as a vital document for identification but also as a key to unlocking a multitude of social benefits and political inclusion. It is a gateway to numerous social safety incentives and programmes designed to uplift communities and individuals. From healthcare services to education support and skill development, a valid NIC is a prerequisite for accessing these benefits. This identification not only ensures that individuals are accounted for in the national system but also facilitates targeted and effective implementation of social welfare initiatives. For instance, NICs for women beneficiaries are a prerequisite for accessing financial support and incentives offered by the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). This welfare initiative not only ensures targeted assistance but also serves as a catalyst for increasing the number of women who obtain their NICs, subsequently enhancing their

participation in broader social life. The NIC also plays a pivotal role in financial inclusion, enabling women to access banking services, receive government subsidies directly, and engage in economic activities. As we strive for gender equality, ensuring that women have equal opportunities to avail themselves of these social safety nets is crucial. Beyond social benefits, NIC registration empowers individuals with a fundamental democratic right - the right to vote. In a country where each vote can shape the destiny of the nation, women's inclusion in the electoral process is paramount. Gender inequality in political rights is evident; women have fought long and hard for their right to vote and hold public office. In Pakistan, the demand side of the equation shows that millions of women are not registered as voters due to non-possession of NICs. This figure also includes women who lost NICs during the devastating floods of 2022. Compared to the 2018 general elections, progress has been made to increase the absolute number of women on the electoral rolls in the 2024 general elections. In response to this gap, and in line with Section 47(2) and Section 47(3) of the Elections Act 2017, NADRA has prioritized women's NIC and voter registration campaigns that have evolved into an important coordination and implementation mechanism at the national and local levels. This has resulted in increased awareness about the importance of women obtaining their NICs, in addition to strengthening women's participation in the country's democratic process. As a result, millions of women have been added to the electoral rolls of Pakistan to expand the voter base. NADRA has also established a dedicated department 'inclusive registration department' (IRD) to increase registration of all segments of society, especially women and transgender persons. The IRD actively promotes the registration of marginalized communities by creating awareness about the pivotal role of identity in empowering individu-

als for fair participation in society. Through various initiatives such as mobile registration vans, media campaigns, and stakeholder engagement, the IRD strives to eliminate barriers to registration. A significant achievement for ensuring gender inclusivity and empowerment was recorded in 2023 with female registration reaching 50 per cent. Through its eight regional head offices (RHOs) and an extensive network of 837 NADRA registration centres (NRCs) nationwide, along with 222 mobile registration vans (MRVs), NADRA aims to close the gender gap on electoral rolls before the next general elections. To bridge the gender gap in CNIC registration, it is essential to understand and dismantle the obstacles that deter women from obtaining this crucial document. Cultural norms, lack of awareness, and logistical challenges often contribute to this disparity. Intersectionality of ethnicity and religious minorities makes women more vulnerable in the face of discrimination in social security programmes, economic activity, health and education services. Hence integrating gender-sensitive policies in the NIC registration process can contribute to a more inclusive system. This may include flexible operating hours for registration centres, ensuring the privacy and security of women during the registration process, and actively engaging communities to dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding NIC registration. To curtail these barriers, significant achievements have been made through joint efforts by NADRA, the ECP, and development partners. Through their engagement campaigns, such as facilitating women to NRCs and MRVs, providing fee waivers and incentives to employees at NADRA, increasing working hours at NADRA offices to increase women's registration, increasing the number of mobile registration vans, radio and television campaigns - all efforts have attributed to millions of women being added to the electoral

roll since late 2018. During the year 2023, NADRA issued 29.9 million identity documents through its NRC network as well as online operations. Additionally, 6.76 million child registration certificates (CRCs), 0.65 million smart NICOPs and 0.29 million smart POCs were issued during the same period. In terms of meaningful political participation, low voter registration can discourage political parties from prioritizing women candidates in their electoral strategies. Political parties may be less inclined to nominate women if they perceive a lack of voter interest or engagement among women. This perpetuates a cycle where fewer women candidates run for office, further limiting the chances of women holding leadership roles. Elected leaders often prioritize issues that resonate with their voting base. When women are underrepresented among registered voters, issues affecting women may receive less attention, leading to a lack of policies addressing gender-specific challenges. This, in turn, hinders progress towards achieving gender equality in leadership positions. Hence, in the journey towards a more equitable and inclusive society, NIC registration stands as a cornerstone for ensuring that every individual, particularly women, can access social safety incentives and programmes, and exercise their right to vote. By addressing the gender gap in NIC registration, we not only empower women but also strengthen the democratic fabric of the country. As the incoming government navigates the path towards progress, it is essential to recognize the transformative potential of NADRA's work in registration to ensure that no woman is left behind, invisible and muted, in the corridors of social and political empowerment.

The writer works on gender and governance. The views expressed here do not reflect those of any organization. He tweets @Hassanhakeem87

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

Pakistan



TOWARDS A SEPARATE MUSLIM HOMELAND

The 1930s witnessed awareness among the Muslims of their separate identity and their anxiety to preserve it within separate territorial boundaries. An important element that brought this simmering Muslim nationalism in the open was the character of the Congress rule in the Muslim minority provinces during 1937-39. The Congress policies in these provinces hurt Muslim susceptibilities. There were calculated aims to obliterate the Muslims as a separate cultural

unit. The Muslims now stopped thinking in terms of seeking safeguards and began to consider seriously the demand for a separate Muslim state. During 1937-39, several Muslim leaders and thinkers, inspired by Allama Iqbal's ideas, presented elaborate schemes for partitioning the subcontinent according to two-nation theory. **PAKISTAN RESOLUTION** The All-India Muslim League soon took these schemes into consideration and finally, on March 23, 1940, the All-India Muslim League, in a resolution, at its historic Lahore Session,

demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims in the Muslim majority regions of the subcontinent. The resolution was commonly referred to as the Pakistan Resolution. The Pakistan demand had a great appeal for the Muslims of every persuasion. It revived memories of their past greatness and promised future glory. They, therefore, responded to this demand immediately.

CRIPPS MISSION

The British Government recognized

the genuineness of the Pakistan demand indirectly in the proposals for the transfer of power after the Second World War which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India in 1942. Both the Congress and the All-India Muslim League rejected these proposals for different reasons. The principles of secession of Muslim India as a separate Dominion was however, conceded in these proposals. After this failure, a prominent Congress leader, C.

To be continued...

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson wins hearts with 'gentleman' act on Barrymore Show

Dwayne Johnson left a lasting impression by asking Drew Barrymore for consent before demonstrating the act

Dwayne The Rock Johnson recently left a lasting impression by asking Drew Barrymore for her consent before demonstrating his signature act. Dwayne made an appearance on The Drew Barrymore Show last week, featuring hilarious moments from beginning to end. It all started with Drew dressing up in the Rock's iconic throwback outfit, including a black turtleneck, pairing with fanny pack, and light wash jeans. During his time on her show, Drew asked the celebrity if he could "complete five squats" with her on his back. Dwayne, who was thrilled and more than delighted to accept the challenge,

explained the process to the host, asking for her consent before demonstrating the act. Barrymore enthusiastically accepted the challenge. Even when Johnson popped her up on the Rock's shoulders, he asked the host if she was comfortable with him lifting her up. Meanwhile, the WWE alum's act quickly gained popularity, with fans praising his morals and advising men to "take notes" from the actor. The Internet was abuzz with Dwayne's praiseworthy gesture, flooding the comments section. One fan commented: "The way the Rock asked for consent and explained what he was going to do before doing it. You can totally tell he's a girl dad, bravo sir."



Showbiz

This outrageous idea could 'slow' global warming

In the far reaches of the Arctic, scientists embark on an audacious mission: slowing down sea-ice to counter the irresistible impacts of climate change, BBC reported. Putting on their parkas to protect against the harsh cold, they watch the seawater pouring over the ice, in an attempt to slow down global warming. The goal is clear: as the ice of the sea is melting, exposing the dark surface of the ocean which absorbs more energy leading to an increase in the heat, the researchers try to stop this process. Professor Shaun Fitzgerald, the person in charge of the project at the University of Cambridge's Centre for Climate Repair, imagines that ice could stop or even reverse melting by making it thicker. Yet, skepticism abounds. Critics sound cautious about the unpredictable outcomes and ask for predominance of emission decrease before geoengineering. Undaunted, the team continues the mission watching ice to grow thicker while the Arctic



winds and freezing temperatures keep blowing. Although positive changes might have been noted, concerns still remain about the efficiency and impact in the long run. At the same time this issue is also being faced with challenges such as ecological disruption and the diversion of focus from the core solutions. Although the researchers appreciate the fact that there are limitations to the technology, they still believe that a thorough assessment is necessary before the use of this technology becomes widespread.

Health

Ramadan fasting can help with lower blood pressure, weight loss, better immunity — here's how

Nutrition specialist Dr Shireen Kassam says Ramadan fasting can provide many health benefits

Health professionals say fasting could come with some major health benefits as billions of Muslims worldwide are taking part in Ramadan this month. Dr Shireen Kassam, a nutrition specialist and founder of Plant Based Health Professionals UK gave an exclusive interview to The Mirror regarding the health benefits of fasting in Ramadan. There is evidence to suggest that fasting could have a number of health benefits, including lower blood pressure, improved immune health, and improved blood lipid levels

according to Dr Kassam. People are unlikely to see any "long-term benefits" unless they make dietary changes after their fast, she added. She said: "There is some evidence to suggest periods of fasting may lead to better immune health, lower levels of inflammation and growth factors, and improve blood lipid levels and blood pressure."

"Fasting results in beneficial changes to the types of bacteria residing in the gut and this is thought

to be one of the reasons for the wide range of short-term benefits seen. However, if outside of the periods of fasting you are not consuming a fibre-rich, gut-healthy diet, it is unlikely that there will be any long-term benefits to health." "On a basic level, fasting usually results in a reduction in the number of calories you are consuming in a day and so for some people it can be easier to lose excess body weight when fasting is incorporated into a weight loss regimen," she said.



شمالی وزیرستان، سیکورٹی فورسز آپریشن، کمانڈر سمیت 8 دہشتگرد ہلاک

افواج پاکستان گزشتہ 2 دہائیوں سے دہشت گردی کے خلاف جنگ میں مصروف، قیمتی جانوں کے نقصان کے تانے بانے بھی افغانستان میں پناہ لیے دہشت گردوں سے جا ملنے ہیں، نجی ٹی وی

پہلے ہی پناہ لینے والے دہشت گردوں کے خلاف آپریشنوں میں افواج پاکستان نے بڑی کامیابی حاصل کی ہے۔ کمانڈر سمیت 8 دہشتگرد ہلاک ہوئے۔ افواج پاکستان نے گزشتہ 2 دہائیوں سے دہشت گردی کے خلاف جنگ میں مصروف رہے ہیں۔ قیمتی جانوں کے نقصان کے تانے بانے بھی افغانستان میں پناہ لیے دہشت گردوں سے جا ملنے ہیں۔ نجی ٹی وی

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سیٹیٹ ایکشن، امیدواروں کے کاغذات کی جانچ پڑتال شروع

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) سیٹیٹ ایکشن کیلئے امیدواروں کے کاغذات کی جانچ پڑتال شروع ہوئی ہے۔

اسلام آباد، پانی کے مابین فکس

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) پانی کے مابین فکس ہوئی ہے۔

میں نے ہمیشہ عوام کو طاقت کا سر

چشمہ سمجھا، بیرسٹر سلطان آزاد (سٹاف رپورٹر) میں نے ہمیشہ عوام کو طاقت کا سر سمجھا ہے۔

اسٹیٹ بینک کا شرح سود 22 فیصد پر برقرار رکھنے کا فیصلہ

اسٹیٹ بینک نے شرح سود کو 22 فیصد پر برقرار رکھنے کا فیصلہ کیا ہے۔



لاہور، پنجاب کے وزیر خزانہ میاں شجاع الرحمان نے ایوان میں بجٹ پیش کر رہے ہیں



اسلام آباد، وزیر خارجہ اسحاق ڈار کی میزبانی میں فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں

ملک بھر میں بجلی کے بعد گیس

مزید مہنگی کرنے کی تیاریاں

لاہور (پورٹ) سندھ اور بلوچستان کے بعد پنجاب اور خیبر پختونخوا کیلئے بھی گیس کی قلت کی تیاری کر لی گئی۔



تلد گلگ، وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف شہید کینٹن احمد بدر کے اہلخانہ سے فاتحہ خوانی کر رہے ہیں

ماہیاز کا خاتمہ کر دیا، گڈ گورننس قائم رکھنا ترجیح

احتساب اپنی ذات سے شروع کیا، انوار الحق

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) وزیر اعظم نے احتساب اپنی ذات سے شروع کیا، انوار الحق نے کہا ہے۔

اسٹیٹ بینک کا شرح سود 22 فیصد پر برقرار رکھنے کا فیصلہ

اسٹیٹ بینک نے شرح سود کو 22 فیصد پر برقرار رکھنے کا فیصلہ کیا ہے۔



کراچی، بینظیر بھٹو کے پروگرام کی قسطوں پر احتجاج کیا جا رہا ہے

بجلی، بلوں میں اضافی ٹیکسز کیخلاف وفاقی حکومت کو نوٹس جاری

فردرنگس اور ایکسائز ٹیکسز پر نوٹس جاری کرنے والے اداروں پر لاگو ہونے والے نوٹس جاری کیے گئے۔

ایس آئی ایف سی کا سعودی عرب کی منجھگیت دے

ہولڈنگ کمپنی کے ساتھ معاہدہ

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) ایس آئی ایف سی نے سعودی عرب کی منجھگیت دے کر معاہدہ کیا ہے۔



اسلام آباد، صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری سے متحدہ عرب امارات کے فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں

پنجاب، ڈاکٹرز کی حاضری کیلئے بائیو میٹرک نظام لانے کا فیصلہ

لاہور (پورٹ) پنجاب کے ڈاکٹرز کی حاضری کیلئے بائیو میٹرک نظام لانے کا فیصلہ کیا گیا ہے۔

کراچی، صدر زرداری کا پٹرول لائن

منصوبے کی تکمیل میں تاخیر کا نوٹس

کراچی (پورٹ) صدر زرداری کا پٹرول لائن منصوبے کی تکمیل میں تاخیر کا نوٹس دیا گیا ہے۔

اکبر ایس باہر کرائی آئی کے تمام غیر

ملکی خفیہ کا نوٹس کی تحقیقات کا مطالبہ

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) ایس آئی کے تمام غیر ملکی خفیہ کا نوٹس کی تحقیقات کا مطالبہ کیا گیا ہے۔

حکومت اور ایکسائز ٹیکسز پر نوٹس جاری

حکومت اور ایکسائز ٹیکسز پر نوٹس جاری کرنے والے اداروں پر لاگو ہونے والے نوٹس جاری کیے گئے۔

مونس الہی کی اہلیہ پر ایف آئی کے تاقابل

خواتین وارنٹ گرفتاری جاری

لاہور (پورٹ) مونس الہی کی اہلیہ پر ایف آئی کے تاقابل وارنٹ گرفتاری جاری کی گئی ہے۔

ایم ایم عالم کی 11 ویں برسی عقیدت و احترام کیساتھ منائی گئی

لاہور (پورٹ) ایم ایم عالم کی 11 ویں برسی عقیدت و احترام کیساتھ منائی گئی ہے۔



اسلام آباد، صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری سے متحدہ عرب امارات کے فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں

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لاہور (پورٹ) پنجاب کے ڈاکٹرز کی حاضری کیلئے بائیو میٹرک نظام لانے کا فیصلہ کیا گیا ہے۔



غزہ، مہاجرین کی پستی پر اسرائیلی حملے کے بعد بلڈنگز کا پورا پورا کام ہو گیا ہے



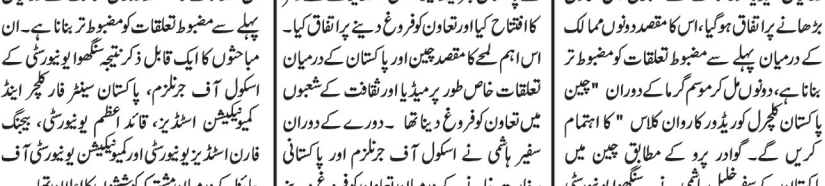
اسلام آباد، وزیر خارجہ اسحاق ڈار کی میزبانی میں فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں

چین اور پاکستان کا میڈیا اور شعبہ ثقافت میں تعاون بڑھانے پر اتفاق

چین اور پاکستان کے میڈیا اور شعبہ ثقافت میں تعاون بڑھانے پر اتفاق کیا گیا ہے۔

مسلم لیگ (اے) اور پیپلز پارٹی کے درمیان ہونے والے اتحاد انہونی نے اور پیپلز پارٹی کا وفاقی کا بیٹھنے نہ جانے کا فیصلہ غیر معمولی ہے

مسلم لیگ (اے) اور پیپلز پارٹی کے درمیان ہونے والے اتحاد انہونی نے اور پیپلز پارٹی کا وفاقی کا بیٹھنے نہ جانے کا فیصلہ غیر معمولی ہے۔



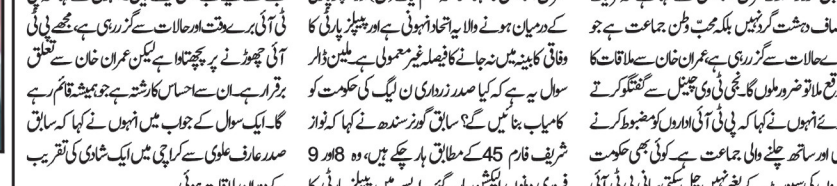
اسلام آباد، صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری سے متحدہ عرب امارات کے فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں



اسلام آباد، پیپلز پارٹی کے صدر شجاعت حسین نے پیپلز پارٹی کے ساتھ اتحاد کیلئے فیصلہ کیا ہے

کوئی حکومت اداروں کی سپورٹ بغیر نہیں چل سکتی، عمران اسماعیل

عمران اسماعیل نے کہا کہ حکومت اداروں کی سپورٹ بغیر نہیں چل سکتی ہے۔



اسلام آباد، وزیر خارجہ اسحاق ڈار کی میزبانی میں فیملی ملاقات کر رہے ہیں

Ayaz Sadiq condoles demise of Raja Waqar

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Monday expressed deep sorrow on the sad demise of Raja Waqar – a seasoned political and social worker. In his condolence message, Ayaz Sadiq has expressed deep sorrow and grief to the family of the deceased.

He said, "the sudden death of the deceased is a great shock and is an irreparable loss for the family." The speaker prayed to Allah Almighty for granting high status to deceased in Jannah and for bestowing patience to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Campaigns against martyrs deplorable, says Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Petroleum and Energy Dr. Musadik Malik said on Monday that the propaganda against the institutions, campaign against martyrs and the events of May 9 are tantamount to push the country towards anarchy. Talking to a private news channel, Musadik said that cipher conspiracy and events of 9th May were the centered around maligning the state institutions. He said the it has been a cynical attempt to push the country into an economic quagmire, he added.

KSA to establish a state-of-the-art skill university in Pakistan to meet skilled workers demand

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development recently has planned to propose the dedication of a special quota for Pakistani skilled and semi-skilled workers for NEOM and other upcoming projects. Additionally, a proposal for Saudi Arabia to establish a state-of-the-art Skill University in Pakistan further aligns the two nations in their pursuit of economic transformation, an official source told APP.

He said that collaboration in the training of Pakistani workers to meet the rising needs of the Saudi labor market and enhance their skills and capabilities were also key points of discussion. The Ministry has proposed collaborative efforts between the Embassy of KSA in Islamabad, the Consulate General (CG) Karachi, and Pakistani authorities to facilitate the entry of new Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs) into the Saudi sector. The high-level delegation visit aims to align Pakistan's workforce with Saudi Arabia's economic transformation program under Vision 2030, fostering a strong partnership for mutual benefit. The visit aims to enhance crucial remittances, contributing to the stability of Pakistan's economy and supporting the economic well-being of families that rely solely on these financial inflows. Which was aimed at fostering collaboration and exploring employment opportunities for the Pakistani workforce in the Kingdom.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Pakistan, Mr Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for further boosting of bilateral ties with UAE in diverse fields

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday emphasised the need for further boosting of bilateral ties between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the areas of trade, economy, aviation, renewable energy, climate change and human resource development for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. The president expressed these views while talking to Ambassador of UAE to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Talking to the ambassador, the president urged the need to increase collaboration in the aviation industry to facilitate the Pakistani diaspora in the UAE, including the initiation of commercial flights of Airbus A380s. He said that Emirati businesses should be encouraged to invest in the Pakistan Stock Exchange to infuse innovative ideas and more capital in the Pakistan's economy. Talking about Sindh, the president apprised that Pakistan had started investing in mangrove forests and was trading carbon credits in the international market. He suggested that Pakistan and the UAE should mutually benefit

He also called for focusing on economic diplomacy, adding that big companies from the UAE were keen to invest in aviation, agriculture, renewable energy (solar), education and healthcare in Pakistan

from this opportunity. He said that projects had been undertaken for the lining of canals to overcome seepage and boost agricultural production. He maintained that Pakistan and the UAE needed to collaborate in the agricultural sector by sharing new technologies as food security was a growing concern for the region due to climate change. During the meeting, the ambassador highlighted that the UAE was committed to Pakistan's development and would continue to stand with Pak-

istan. He stressed upon the need to transform the existing bilateral relationship into a strategic partnership between Pakistan and the UAE. He also called for focusing on economic diplomacy, adding that big companies from the UAE were keen to invest in aviation, agriculture, renewable energy (solar), education and healthcare in Pakistan. He informed that the UAE had recently hosted COP-28 and pledged \$100 million for the "loss & damage" fund to help vulnerable countries deal with the adverse effects of climate change. He said that Pakistan could benefit from this fund to mitigate the impacts of climate change. The ambassador congratulated President Asif Ali Zardari on becoming the President for the second term and extended best wishes on behalf of the leadership and people of the UAE. He further reaffirmed their strong commitment to further reinforce the bond of friendship between the two countries. He also extended an invitation to the president to visit the UAE, which the president accepted. The president thanked the UAE's leadership for warm greetings and messages of felicitation and said that the UAE was very close to his heart. He appreciated the warmth and affection of UAE's leadership towards Pakistan and highlighted the need to further strengthen the fraternal ties between the two countries.

FM Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciates the longstanding bilateral relations & development cooperation b/w EU & Pakistan

Ambassador of the EU to Pakistan Dr. Riina Kionka calls on Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Finance Division, on Friday. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb welcomed the Ambassador of the EU and appreciated the longstanding bilateral relations and development cooperation between EU and Pakistan. He thanked the Ambassador for EU's ongoing support in flood-affected areas of Pakistan.

Dr. Riina Kionka congratulated the Federal Minister of Finance and Revenue on his recent appointment to office and looked forward to collaborating with the new Government. The Finance Minister apprised the EU Ambassador about the important reform priorities of the Government. The Finance Minister also shared possible areas of mutual collaboration including digitization, export competitiveness, livestock and dairy production. The Ambassador acknowledged the economic agenda of the Government and assured the Finance Minister of EU's continued support to Pakistan. SABAH

Need more trees to tackle environmental changes, control pollution: Governor

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has emphasized the need for more trees to protect the future generations from the effects of environmental changes and to control environmental pollution. He was speaking on the occasion of launching spring tree planting campaign in Punjab along with his wife by planting saplings at the Governor House Lahore on Monday. Muhammad Balighur Rahman said that during the spring, a tree planting campaign will be conducted across the province. He urged the people from all walks of life to actively participate in this campaign.

From the life and Aha Hadees of the Prophet, we get numerous examples about the importance of trees, he added. The Governor Punjab further said that according to experts, each tree provides enough oxygen in a day which was equal to meeting the oxygen requirement of forty people. He said that we have to increase the number of trees and green areas in cities to eliminate the effects of environmental pollution. Balighur Rahman said that he appeals the people of the province and especially the children to do your part in this campaign and do your part to make the country greener by planting more trees and focus on their growth along with planting to achieve the objectives of the plantation drive. INP

CPEC's timely completion reiterated by Dar, Chinese Envoy



ISLAMABAD: Timely completion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) phase II has been reaffirmed by Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong. During a meeting of Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong with Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar here on Monday, both agreed to further expand cooperation between Pakistan and China in different sectors.

The Foreign Minister declared Pakistan-China all-weather strategic cooperative partnership indispensable for the progress and prosperity of the two countries and an anchor of regional peace and stability. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to making joint endeavours for further deepening bilateral relations and to advance phase II of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as envisaged by the leadership of the two countries. Ambassador Jiang underscored the special importance China accords to Pakistan and its firm support for Pakistan's socioeconomic development, and industrial and agricultural cooperation. INP

Khurram Nawaz Gandapur condemns terrorist attack on Mir Ali check post

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of Pakistan Awami Tehreek Khuram Nawaz Gandapur on Monday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on North Waziristan Mir Ali check post expressing deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the brave officers of Pakistan armed forces. According to Islamabad Media Cell, he said that the martyrdom of the officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army is intolerable. The elements involved in this incident of terrorism and their sympathizers should be severely punished. He said that the officers and youths who sacrificed their lives for the defense and security of the country are the heroes of the nation. He also extended heartfelt condolences and solidarity with the families of the martyrs.

Meanwhile, President Awami Tehreek North Punjab Qazi Shafiq, President Awami Tehreek Rawalpindi Ghulam Ali Khan also strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Mir Ali check post in North Waziristan and expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of the military officers. APP

Federal Interior Minister visits Quaid's mausoleum



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohnsin Raza Naqvi on Monday visited the

mausoleum of father of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah and paid rich tributes to him. Federal Interior Minister visits Quaid's mausoleum

The Minister laid a wreath and offered fatha at the mausoleum. He also prayed for the development and prosperity of the country. Later, he inked his impressions in the visitors' book. APP

PTDC, Pakistan Embassy in Syria organized virtual tourism forum



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with Pakistan Embassy in Syria organized a 'Virtual Tourism Forum' between Pakistan and Syria to enhance bilateral tourism and foster B2B linkages between the two countries.

The esteemed gathering witnessed the participation of Minister of Tourism Syria Muhammad Radwan Rami, Ambassador of Pakistan to Syria Shahid Akhtar, Ambassador of Syria to Pakistan Dr Ramez, Director of planning of Syrian Ministry of Tourism Ahid al-Zaeem, Managing Director of PTDC Aftab Ur Rehman Rana and representatives of both sides including national tourism organizations, tour operators associations and tourism committees of Chamber of Commerce, said a press release issued here on Monday.

Engaging discussions underscored the mutual commitment to fortify bilateral ties, with par-

ticular emphasis on hosting delegations of tourism professionals from both sides for fostering closer cooperation.

During the event, the Syrian Minister for Tourism expressed keen interest in bolstering bilateral linkages, while the Managing Director of PTDC delivered a compelling presentation showcasing Pakistan's diverse and captivating tourist destinations.

The ambassadors of both sides ensured their full support for the promotion of bilateral tourism between the two countries. In a significant development, it was unanimously agreed to establish a joint working group comprising representatives from Pakistan and Syria, tasked with spearheading initiatives to promote tourism.

This collaborative effort marks a pivotal moment in the tourism landscape of both nations, promising exciting opportunities for growth and mutual prosperity. APP

Norwegian Ambassador Commends PRCS Humanitarian Efforts

Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari commended Ambassador Ilsaas for his genuine concern for Pakistan's people and emphasized the visit's potential to strengthen ties between both countries, not only in humanitarian efforts but also in exploring areas of collaboration beyond diplomacy

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas commended the strides made by PRCS under Chairman Laghari's guidance, noting the organization's remarkable countrywide program outreach and robust volunteer base; reaffirmed Norway's commitment to supporting PRCS's humanitarian endeavors.

The Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas, met with Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) at the PRCS National Headquarters. During the meeting, Ambassador Ilsaas emphasized the crucial role of humanitarian service, expressing a shared dedication to advancing such efforts in Pakistan.

Ambassador Per Albert Ilsaas commended PRCS's pivotal role in alleviating the suffering of vulnerable communities. The meeting delved into various topics including bilateral relations, the programs and initiatives supported by the Norwegian Red Cross and the



imperative of enhancing cooperation for the betterment of humanity. Chairman Laghari provided insights into PRCS's initiatives, notably its post-flood rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Pakistan, highlighting collaborative programs with support from the Norwegian Red Cross. These programs encompass basic healthcare, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, water supply schemes, the mobile health units, deployment of

mobile health teams and initiatives targeting vulnerable groups such as children under five and pregnant women. He also briefed the Ambassador about the newly launched pilot program of Cash and Voucher Assistance, focusing on pregnant and malnourished women in Jamshoro district, Sindh province. In collaboration with the Norwegian Red Cross, PRCS is supporting 1000 pregnant and malnourished women by providing PKR 109,000 per family over a nine-month period.

Chairman Laghari commended Ambassador Ilsaas for his genuine concern for Pakistan's people and emphasized the visit's potential to strengthen ties between both countries, not only in humanitarian efforts but also in exploring areas of collaboration beyond diplomacy. He emphasized PRCS's anticipation of continued support from the Government of Norway, especially in the

recovery phase following the devastating Monsoon 2022 floods. Chairman Laghari also expressed a keen desire to enhance cooperation, particularly with the Norwegian government and the Norwegian Red Cross, with the aim of strengthening collaboration in provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, merged districts, and extending it to other provinces such as Sindh and Balochistan.

Ambassador Ilsaas commended the strides made by PRCS under Chairman Laghari's guidance, noting the organization's remarkable countrywide program outreach and robust volunteer base. He reaffirmed Norway's commitment to supporting PRCS's humanitarian endeavors. Prior to this, the Norwegian envoy was briefed on various sectors and also recorded his impressions in the visitor's notebook during his visit. In appreciation of their shared commitment to humanitarian causes, Chairman Laghari presented Ambassador Ilsaas with a commemorative shield and souvenir symbolizing the enduring partnership between Norway and Pakistan in advancing these efforts.