



"Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) gave status of community centres to mosques and Islam gave us golden principles for society; we all should get inspiration from Quran and Sunnah"

President of Pakistan  
**DR ARIF ALVI**

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## Govt to take strict action against elements using social media platforms for inciting violence: Murtaza Solangi

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that some elements were using social media platforms to incite violence, which was an illegal activity.

Addressing a press conference along with Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, he said the government would take strict action against such illegal activities under the law. He said that freedom of expression under Article 19 of the Constitution was not unlimited, rather it was subject to law of the land. Under Article 19, derogatory remarks against judiciary, armed forces and brotherly countries were not allowed, Solangi remarked.

He said that the companies earning billions of dollars from the social media platforms could not abdicate themselves from the responsibility if their platforms were used to disturb law and order in any country and incite people to violence and hatred, he maintained. The minister said that social media platforms X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Facebook and Instagram had been continuously used for propaganda, lies, defamation of government officials and harassment, and the companies owning these platforms would have to control this illegal activity.

"The state of Pakistan will not in any way allow these platforms to spread baseless, false and fabricated propaganda in the country", he added.

The minister said if this baseless propaganda was not stopped by these social media platforms, the state would have to take strict measures under the law. He said there were means of legal review against any decision of the judiciary and if anyone had a complaint, a review petition could be filed.

The minister stated categorically that no one would be allowed to take the law into their hands and disturb the peace and tranquility of the country.

"Pakistan is a peaceful country with rule of law and lawlessness and anarchy will not be allowed to be spread in the country," he added.

He said all foreigners living in Pakistan should feel assured that they were safe and their security would be ensured by the Pakistan government.

"All foreigners living in Pakistan must feel assured that they were safe and nobody would be allowed to hurt them. They should feel safe and secure. The state of Pakistan will guarantee their safety and peace," he added. — VOM Report



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting inaugurated a 'Display Centre' at Directorate of Electronic media and Publications (DEMP).

## Ashrafi denounces misuse of apex court ruling ambiguities

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Representative for Religious Affairs, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, and Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Islamic Countries, Thursday denounced attempts by certain individuals to exploit ambiguities arising from the Supreme Court verdict in the Mubarak Ahmed Sani case for political purposes.

Addressing to the media persons with the Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs, he asked the detractors of verdict to use legal avenues to address issues, rather than opting for street protests or violence. This is particularly crucial, considering the impossibility of allowing the use of banned material in Pakistan.

Urging the Punjab government to submit a review petition to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, he emphasized the fundamental belief in the finality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the last Prophet of Allah, which was an integral

part of the Muslim faith. According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, this matter is settled. Every Muslim is entrusted with safeguarding the sanctity of the finality of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). He appealed to everyone to foster an environment that ensures the stability and peace of the country remains undisturbed.

The religious freedom of every Pakistani, including non-Muslims, is enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Similarly, the rights of non-Muslim Pakistanis are safeguarded in the constitution. It is essential to ensure the protection of their rights as well. Praising the efforts of law enforcement agencies for ensuring peaceful elections nationwide, he called upon YouTubers and social media activists to refrain from causing disturbances, emphasizing that Pakistani Muslims unanimously uphold the sanctity of the finality of the Holy Prophet. APP



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Caretaker Federal Cabinet.

## Caretaker setup leaves behind useful strategy safeguarding national interests: PM Kakar

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said the caretaker setup in a short span of time had left behind a useful strategy for the upcoming elected government that would ensure public welfare and protect national interests.

"The caretaker government always gave priority to national interests while taking policy decisions as it believed to work together for national stability and development," the prime minister said while chairing a meeting of the federal cabinet at Prime Minister office.

He said the government had improved the national economy, saying "we are leaving country's economy in a better condition than before".

He appreciated and thanked his cabinet members and the civil servants for their tireless efforts during short tenure of the government. The federal cabinet expressed satisfaction over the steps taken by the caretaker government regarding restructuring of various institutions, promotion of foreign investment and providing facilities to businesses.

Appreciating the prudent leadership of Prime Minister Kakar on behalf of the federal bureaucracy, the cabinet secretary said that he had taken important difficult decisions in the interest of the country, which will have far-reaching

## PM, CM hold farewell meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Thursday held a farewell meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi and discussed matters of mutual interest.

During the meeting, the chief minister lauded the prime minister for steps taken by the government for economic stability in the country, under his leadership.

The PM appreciated the chief minister for the measures taken for progress in different



sectors in Punjab particularly health, education and communication infrastructure.

results.

Among other agenda items, the cabinet, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, allowed Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI (M) to receive the "Turkish Armed Forces Legion of Merit" awarded by Turkey in honor of his services regarding cooperation between the armed forces of Pakistan and Turkey.

On the recommendation of ministry of finance, the cabinet also approved the extension of deputation period of Lubna Farooq Malik as Director General Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) from June 9, 2023 to June 8, 2024.

The cabinet, on the recommendation of ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFS&R), approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between

MNFS&R Pakistan and Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agriculture Innovation. Under this MoU, the first Pakistan International Date Palm Festival will be held by September, 2024 to promote date production in the country.

The cabinet approved the decisions taken in the meetings of the Economic Coordination Committee held on February 13, 2024 and February 14, 2024. The cabinet also approved the decisions made in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee for State Owned Enterprises held on February 16, 2024. The Federal Cabinet ratified the decisions taken in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases held on February 16, 2024.

## ECP directs multi-seat winners to vacate extra seats

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) directed candidates who have won more than one seat in the 8th February General Elections to retain only one seat of their choice and vacate others. As per details, the ECP urged the candidates who emerged victorious from multiple constituencies to vacate the extra seats before administering the oath. The ECP urged the candidates to submit applications for relinquishing seats to either the office of the Chief Election Commissioner at the ECP in Islamabad or the Provincial Election Commissioner in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan.

"Alternatively, by Article 223(2), if no action is taken within 30 days, all seats, except the one for which the candidate is ultimately declared successful, will be deemed vacant," the ECP maintained.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari are among the candidates who won more than one seat. INP



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif chairing 6th Board of Directors meeting of National Information Technology Board (NITB).

## Pak inks agreement to export skilled workers to S Arabia in construction sector

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Jawad Sohrab Malik has signed an agreement recently with NESMA & Partners for the export of skilled Pakistani labor to Saudi Arabia. The agreement was signed at the Embassy of Pakistan in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, said a press release received here on Thursday. The agreement marks a pivotal collaboration between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, paving the way for the export of a substantial Pakistani workforce to contribute to Saudi Arabia's ambitious infrastructure and development goals.

NESMA & Partners, as the leading construction company in Saudi Arabia, holds responsibility for numerous mega-projects within the kingdom. The agreement would provide Pakistani workers with the opportunity to showcase their expertise and contribute to the success of these critical infrastructure projects.

Jawad Sohrab Malik highlighted the exceptional reputation of Pakistani workers for their dedication and hard work. The agreement was signed between the Pakistan Overseas Employment Corporation (POEC) and NESMA & Partners. The POEC is a government agency responsible



for the recruitment and deployment of Pakistani workers abroad. NESMA & Partners is a leading Saudi Arabian construction company with a portfolio of mega-projects in the kingdom.

The agreement is expected to create significant job opportunities for Pakistani workers in Saudi Arabia. It will also help to strengthen the economic ties between the two countries.

The meeting was also attended by the Ambassador of Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Ahmad Farooq, Director-General of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BEOE), and the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, along with community welfare attachés. APP

## Japan envoy hosts reception to celebrate 64th birthday anniversary of Emperor of Japan

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, WADA Mitsuhiro, hosted a reception on Thursday to celebrate the 64th birthday anniversary of the Emperor of Japan, Emperor Naruhito.

Jamal Shah, the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture attended the event, Ministers, Parliamentarians, senior government officials, members of the diplomatic community and other dignitaries from the public and private sector attended the event, said a news release.

Ambassador WADA together with the distinguished guests cut a cake to mark the Emperor's Birthday, which



is on February 23.

Since his accession to the throne on May, 1 2019 as the 126th Emperor of Japan, Emperor Naruhito stands as the symbol of Japan and the unity of the people.

While welcoming the guests on the occasion, Ambassador WADA conveyed his gratitude to the government and the people of Pakistan for sending their best wishes on the 64th birthday celebration of His Majesty the Emperor.

Expressing his appreciation for the long-standing friendly relations between Japan and Pakistan, the ambassador lauded the contributions of all the people who had helped to further strengthen our mutual ties in individual, business or official capacity.

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## Surviving surveillance capitalism

HUSNAIN KHAN

The shift from the labour-driven Industrial Revolution of the 16th century to the data-centric revolution of the 21st century marks a transformation where private data is meticulously monitored and analyzed to boost profits. The absence of effective regulation by democratic leaders in digital information and communication domains leads to the widespread proliferation of surveillance practices in society.

In contemporary times, prominent entities in capitalism, including Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Microsoft, have amassed significant influence within the digital domain. These corporations exert substantial control over the majority of platforms and mechanisms, facilitating information dissemination and communication.

Their main way of making money is by collecting vast amounts of data from users. They track everything you do, create a profile of you, and then use that information to manipulate your behaviour through access to personal information. Shoshana Zuboff from Harvard Business School calls this system surveillance capitalism and defines it as follows: "Surveillance capitalism refers to a new economic system that claims human experience as free raw material for translation into behavioural data."

Surveillance capitalism operates as a feedback loop between surveillance and capitalism. In traditional capitalism, wealth accumulation is the primary objective. However, surveillance capitalism takes this a step further by investing accumulated wealth in surveillance devices. These devices are used to manipulate individuals' behaviour and emotions, ultimately driving greater profits for the companies involved. This manipulation reinforces the feedback loop, perpetuating the cycle of surveillance and profit generation.

In conventional economics, the principle of consumer sovereignty asserts that consumers, through their purchasing choices, determine the demand for goods and services, thus holding significant influence over what is produced and how it is produced. However, in today's landscape, the prevalence of advertisements by corporate giants challenges the notion of consumer sovereignty.

These ads shape tastes and drive market activity, undermining the role of consumers in dictating demand. Consequently, the authenticity of consumer preferences becomes questionable, blurring the line between genuine desires and artificially constructed wants.

This shift undermines the assumption that greater production levels inherently lead to enhanced welfare, as the foundation of consumer choice becomes increasingly manipulated by external influences. In contrast to traditional capitalism, where value is generated through the production and exchange of goods and services, surveillance capitalism thrives on monitoring, analyzing, and manipulating human behaviour.

Big giants create 'prediction products' using private data, which they can then sell to potential buyers. These goods are meant to sway consumer decisions and behaviour. As a result, businesses can move beyond simply satisfying current consumer needs to anticipating and forming future demands and directing customer behaviour accordingly. This change encourages firms to continuously monitor, manipulate, and commodify their customers, in addition to raising issues about privacy and human liberty.

Nowadays, some of the top businesses in the globe are those that manage the data firehose's faucets. Their consumer base exceeds that of the whole world, and even the smallest of their decisions have an impact on billions of people's lives and means of subsistence. They are some of the most powerful beings on the earth, capable of deciding what we see and don't see. They can therefore affect our opinions, guide our choices, and cause us to have second thoughts. The pervasive nature of social media, personal data collection, and targeted advertising underscores the extent to which our daily lives are observable in the digitized realm. As Shoshana Zuboff has stated, "Surveillance capitalists have adeptly capitalized on a gap in social progress. Their swift advancement in profiting from surveillance has outpaced public comprehension and the subsequent development of laws and regulations to govern it."

In an era dominated by information, both individual and collective existence are shaped and influenced by the flow of information. However, crucial questions arise: What knowledge is accessible? Who controls access to knowledge? Who decides who has access to knowledge, and who holds the power to make these decisions?

Regarding this, the European Parliament has enacted legislation to address digital privacy concerns, including the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and the Digital Services Act (DSA). The Digital Markets Act is designed to regulate large online platforms or 'gatekeepers', ensuring fair online behaviour and promoting equitable opportunities for digital enterprises of varying sizes. Meanwhile, the Digital Services Act aims to enhance consumer empowerment by granting them greater control over the timing, sources, and types of targeted advertisements they encounter. It is imperative to acknowledge that developing nations also require similar laws and regulations to shield their nations from such manipulations. These regulations are necessary not only in terms of consumerism but also to safeguard democracy, ensuring that the thoughts and opinions of their citizens are not manipulated by external forces. Such measures are crucial for maintaining the integrity of democratic processes and protecting the sovereignty of nations in the digital age.

The writer is a freelance contributor.

These corporations exert substantial control over the majority of platforms and mechanisms



Abdul Sattar

# What the future holds

will set stringent conditions for offering any financial assistance or loans, which means the government will have to carry out price hikes besides withdrawing more subsidies that are still being extended to a few sections of society.

The government is also likely to increase the burden of existing taxpayers instead of imposing an agriculture tax. Such moves will multiply the problems of the salaried classes who have already been complaining about rising inflation and taxes beyond their capacity to pay.

four days, they would like to spend at least two of them on foreign visits. No matter how dire the economic situation is, this can never prevent our oligarchic politicians from spending public money on useless foreign trips. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq and his brigade of federal ministers also undertook a number of foreign visits without any tangible returns for the country.

Instead of reducing the size of the government, all political parties since 2008 have been creating more

renovation that could match their social status.

So, within no time, orders will be released to import new cars and since the lives of our politicians are always in danger, nothing short of bulletproof and bomb proof will be acceptable.

This all could trigger a social crisis. The withdrawal of subsidy might force people to take to the street as we recently witnessed in Gilgit-Baltistan where the government tried to abolish the wheat subsidy that it had been extending to the people of that area for decades. Slashing the social sector budget would have catastrophic impacts on a country where millions of people are still homeless after the 2022 floods.

The human development index of the country is already abysmal. According to the World Food Programme, 20.5 per cent of Pakistan's population is undernourished. A WFP report says, "The National Nutrition Survey (NNS) 2018 (Pakistan) confirms that macro and micronutrient deficiencies are alarming in women of reproductive age - 14.4 per cent were underweight, 24 per cent were overweight and 13.8 per cent were obese. There was a very high prevalence (41.7 per cent) of anaemia (haemoglobin (Hb) levels."

According to Unicef, four out of ten children under five years of age in Pakistan are stunted (40.2 per cent) while 17.7 per cent suffer from wasting. "The double burden of malnutrition is becoming increasingly apparent, with almost one in three children underweight (28.9 per cent)," the report adds. This is in addition to thousands of schools, hospitals and basic health units that have been without adequate facilities for years now.

The country also has a debilitating infrastructure that needs billions of dollars before it can witness any improvement. Given this, it is likely that the country will continue to plunge into crisis after crisis. Only a pro-people approach will possibly rid the country of such a myriad of crises.

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Even with our political parties hammering out a deal, the country is still likely to lurch from one crisis to another, making it extremely difficult for any incumbent government to tide over this wave of difficult situations.

A recent report by an Islamabad-based think tank indicates that the first major crisis that the PML-N-led government is likely to face will be the mountain of internal and external debt and the liabilities of the government that have been piling up over the years.

The alarming 68-page report, titled 'A raging fire: Pakistan's debt crisis', was released on Sunday (Feb 18). It reveals that the country's total debt and liabilities - including domestic and external debt - are at Rs77.66 trillion, or \$271.2 billion.

The report says that Pakistan's external debt is primarily borrowed from a range of creditors: Paris Club (6.3 per cent), multilaterals (30.1 per cent), other bilateral (19.1 per cent), commercial banks and T-bills (4.9 per cent), Eurobonds (6.3 per cent), the IMF (5.7 per cent), banks (5.1 per cent) and private-sector liabilities (12.7 per cent).

It notes that Pakistan's debt per capita has also grown from \$823 in 2011 to \$1,122 in 2023, a 36 per cent increase in 12 years. The country's GDP per capita has declined from \$1,295 in 2011 to \$1,223 in 2023, a 6.0 per cent decrease. It concludes that the country's debt is growing "at a much larger pace than its income, widening financing gaps [and] necessitating further borrowing."

The report says that since 2011, Pakistan's external debt has nearly doubled while the domestic debt has increased by six-fold, of which the country will need to pay back an estimated \$49.5 billion in debt maturities - 30 per cent of it being interest. This dire economic situation will force the government to approach international monetary institutions and other lenders who

## The government is also likely to increase the burden of existing taxpayers instead of imposing an agriculture tax

This might prompt the PML-led government to take more unpopular measures. The allies will not support such moves without extracting concessions. The PPP and MQM might seize the opportunity to blackmail the government, putting a question mark on the stability of this dispensation.

The PPP is likely to distance itself from unpopular economic decisions while the PML-N would want it to share the responsibility for inflation that is likely to affect more than 60 million people living below the poverty line.

Such neoliberal reforms may provide an opportunity for the PTI to propagate against the government. The defeated JI and disgruntled JUI-F might try to become messiahs for the people amidst this, resorting to street protests and creating political instability. So, terrible economic conditions are likely to trigger a political crisis.

Since our ruling elite has a penchant for spending lavishly on foreign trips and visits, the future government is not likely to be an exception. During the 16-month PDM government, not only did former PM Shehbaz Sharif and former FM Bilawal Bhutto make record trips within a short period, but other federal ministers also considered it their national duty to attend every conference. Shehbaz and his ministers were not the only ones. Even if some politicians were to come into power for

divisions and ministries, adding to the burden on the national exchequer. Kakar has reportedly turned the Intelligence Bureau into a division which means that the government might have to allocate more resources to this department that has done more to serve the ruling masters than the 230 million hapless people.

So, it seems non-productive expenses cannot be slashed, debt servicing must be carried out and demands of independent power producers (IPPs) must be accepted without creating any fuss. Therefore, the government would be left with no option but to dangle the sword of austerity over the shrinking social sector.

The government will likely cut down the development budget, diverting the share of federating units in a way that could help reduce federal expenses. The federal government will also try to delay the payment of provinces, which will affect social-sector development in provinces as well.

The provincial governments will also follow their masters, sitting in the power corridors of Islamabad. Within no time we will hear about the import of luxury cars for our bureaucrats and provincial ministers and advisers.

New ministers would consider it beneath their honour and dignity to ride around the city in old vehicles. Their offices would also need urgent

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

### History of Pakistan



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 elabo-

rate schemes for partitioning the sub-continent 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.

To be continued....

## Showbiz

# Greta Gerwig calls out Oscars for Margot Robbie 'Best Actress' snub

Margot Robbie and Greta Gerwig dealt major snub at the Oscars nominations unveiled last month



Greta Gerwig is not one bit disappointed about not getting nominated

for her work in Barbie. However, she'd very much like Margot Robbie to get the credit where it's due.

The Academy Awards nominations sparked uproar among internet users for excluding the filmmaker from the Best Director category despite the successful run of the comedy fantasy film in theatres across the globe.

In her recent Time magazine profile, the 40-year-old filmmaker revealed her inner circle informed her about the omission, noting they said, "I can't believe you didn't get nominated."

Also Read: Biggest Oscar snub of 2024: Barbie's Margot Robbie fails to land a nod

However, the Little Women alum dis-

puted the snub by acknowledging the other eight nominations netted by the film. "I said, 'But I did. I got an Oscar nomination,'" Gerwig enthused, adding of her acquaintance: "She was like, 'Oh, that's wonderful for you!' I was like, 'I know!'"

The director did call out Margot Robbie not bagging a nod in the Best Actress category, noting, "Of course I wanted it for Margot." "But I'm just happy we all get to be there together." Robbie also addressed her omission from the nomination during an appearance at a SAG screening on January 30. "There's no way to feel sad when you know you're this blessed," she enthused.

## Tech

# Nasa's JWST spots 800m-year-old ghost galaxy that's impossible to exist

Nasa's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has discovered a galaxy in the early universe that is so huge that it shouldn't exist, presenting a "significant challenge" to the current model of cosmology.

ZF-UDS-7329 is a galaxy that developed barely 800 million years into the 13.8 billion-year history of the universe, but it has more stars than the Milky Way, according to Live Science. This means that in contrast to what the traditional paradigm of galaxy formation suggests, they were somehow born without dark matter fuelling their formation.

"Having these extremely massive galaxies so early in the universe is posing significant challenges to our standard model of cosmology," study co-author Claudia Lagos, an associate professor of astronomy at the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research, said in a statement. "This is because massive dark matter structures, which are thought to be necessary components for holding early galaxies together, did not yet have time to

form this early in the universe," Lagos added. Since light moves through vacuum space at a set speed, our ability to see farther into the cosmos and observe farther back in time increases with our depth of field of view. Because of this, scientists were able to detect ZF-UDS-7329 using JWST.

The researchers discovered that the stars in this very distant galaxy were formed 1.5 billion years before that observation, or about 13 billion years ago, by examining the light spectra from the stars.

Although the exact time of the initial star clusters' formation into the galaxies we see today is unknown to astronomers, cosmologists have previously calculated that the process started slowly in the first few hundred million years following the Big Bang. According to current beliefs, gas and dark matter halos—an enigmatic and unseen material thought to constitute about 25% of the universe—combined to produce the earliest galaxies.

## Which fruit is healthiest? Here's dietitians' top choice

According to studies, eating this fruit daily may reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease and boost mental capabilities

Experts suggest that individuals should consume 1 1/2 to 2 cups of fruit every day, yet only 12% of adults do so.

Fruits are loaded with fibre, vital vitamins and minerals, and antioxidants that protect us against chronic illnesses like cancer, heart diseases, and mood disorders such as anxiety and depression, among others, Today reported.

#### What is the healthiest fruit?

In terms of health, blueberries are the best fruit. The antioxidants known as anthocyanins, which give blueberries their striking colour, are thought to be the reason for many of the health advan-

tages associated with them. According to long-term studies, eating blueberries daily may reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart diseases.

Additionally, blueberries boost mental capacity and enhance cognitive function. High consumption of blueberries may contribute to maintaining a healthy weight, according to additional studies.

In research involving twins, the twin who consumed more blueberries had less body fat than the sibling who consumed less.

**The top healthiest fruits include:** Strawberries, Watermelon, Dates, Kiwis, Prunes, Raspberries, Cherries, Bananas, Grapefruit, Man-

goes and Blackberries.

#### What are the best fruits to eat daily?

Fruits have different kinds and quantities of nutrients, yet they are all superfoods. Therefore, to take advantage of the range of defensive compounds that fruits offer, it is important to consume a variety of fruits.

#### How do I eat fruits?

Reach for fruit in forms that don't include added sugars, such as fresh and unsweetened frozen and dried fruits. Fruit drinks like punches and cocktails contain added sugar and potentially other additives, so it's best to drink these infrequently, if at all.

## Health





## Senate body approves amendment in Pakistan Penal Code

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Interior on Thursday unanimously passed the Bill further to amend the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 [The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024].

The committee passed the bill unanimously emphasizing the preservation of the right of dignity of the human corpse. The bill was passed with the increase of fine to 5 hundred thousand rupees.

However, the Bill further to amend the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance, 2002 [The Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking (Amendment) Bill, 2024] introduced by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri on Amendments in Sections 3, 4 & 5 of the Ordinance was withdrawn by the mover as the Ordinance in which the amendment was being proposed has already been repealed by an Act of Parliament in the year 2018.

The Bill further to amend the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 [The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024] introduced by Senator Shahadat Awan on 1 January, 2024.

(Amendments in Sections 292, 293, & 294 of PPC and subsequent amendment in Cr.P.C.) was also passed by the committee.

The chairman committee however was of the view that the enhancement of sentences as proposed by the Mover are not reasonable as the same will be misused. The bill however was passed with amendments. The Bill further amended the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 [The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2024] introduced by Senator Shahadat Awan on 1 January, 2024. (Amendments in Sections 513 and 514 of Cr.P.C) was deferred.

Additionally the Bill further to amend the National Database and Registration Authority Ordinance, 2000 [The National Database and Registration Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2023], introduced by Senator Fawzia Arshad on 6th November, 2023 was also passed by the committee with amendments.

The committee also discussed at length the point of public importance raised by Senator Danesh Kumar regarding the problems/humiliation being faced by the commuters/travelers from different areas of Balochistan to Karachi via Hub Chowki at check posts of various agencies including Sindh Police, Pakistan Rangers, Customs Police etc., on the pretext of security checking. After due deliberation the committee recommended to establish a joint check post and directed all relevant stake agencies including customs, rangers and police to develop consensus on one window operation.

Similarly the point of public importance raised by Senator Danesh Kumar regarding the demolition of a Hindu Temple in Mithi District of Tharparkar by the District Administration was also discussed in detail. The chairman committee after due deliberation recommended that if the district administration can demolish the temple on the pretext of encroached land then similar treatment should also be done to the person who has encroached the state land and included it in his house.

The committee was attended by Senator Saifullah Abro, Senator Danesh kumar, Senator Fawzia Arshad, Senator kamil Ali Agha, Senator Shahadat Awan, Senator Waqar Mehdi, and Senator Aon Abbas. Senior Officials from the Ministry and other relevant department were also in attendance. INP



LAHORE: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the recipients of recognition shields at the award distribution ceremony for the officers of the Federal Insurance Ombudsman and representatives of insurance companies, at Governor House.

## Trade Conference 2024: Ambassador Tirmizi highlights opportunities for Pakistani companies in Middle East

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, has highlighted opportunities for Pakistani companies in the Middle East (ME), particularly in the UAE, focusing on sectors such as dairy, meat, fruits, vegetables, and non-food products. He emphasized the country's trade potential at the Pakistan Middle East Trade Development Conference 2024, held at the Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD) auditorium, according to a news release received here from Dubai.

The conference, organized in collaboration with Pakistan's Embassy, the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Engro-Pakistan, was attended by Pakistani exhibitors participating in Gulfood-2024 and the Emirati business community. The event aimed to exchange ideas to explore trade relations between Pakistan and the Middle East, providing networking opportunities for Pakistani traders, particularly with UAE buyers. Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi explained that the UAE market was continuously



growing, offering ideal opportunities for dedicated Pakistani companies with sound business plans to maximize their potential. Panel discussions during the conference focused on developing strategies to enhance market penetration and overcome challenges effectively. Senior Vice Chairman of the Pakistan Dairy Association, Usman Zaheer, underscored the importance of dairy exports to the UAE market from Pakistan, emphasizing the need for value-added dairy products.

Ali Tanveer appreciated the support of the Government of Pakistan, which enabled FrieslandCampina's penetration into the UAE market.

Moderating the panel discussion, Dr Shehzad Amin proposed the creation of an incubator cell at the Pakistan Association Dubai for new companies and exporters aiming to enter the UAE market.

TDAP Chief Executive Muhammad Zubair Motiwala endorsed the idea and pledged support from TDAP to establish the business incubator center at PAD to promote new export businesses. He also highlighted the Agro Food exhibition to be held in Karachi in August 2024, inviting businessmen from the UAE to participate.

The event was attended by Chairman Al Awar Livestock Trading Est., Abdullah Ali Mohammed Al Awar, Vice Chairman Rashid Abdullah Al Awar, Chief Executive Officer of the Pakistan Dairy Association, Dr Shehzad Amin, Director of Business Development & Optimization Ali Tanveer Khan, MEPA, FrieslandCampina, and other leading Pakistani businessmen and exporters. APP

## Mushaal Mullick pays tribute to Mohammad Yasin Malik on completing 5-year in unlawful detention

Says revolutionary Kashmiri leader a source of inspiration for freedom fighters

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick paid tribute to the most powerful voice of Kashmir freedom struggle Mohammad Yasin Malik on completion of five years of his unlawful incarceration in Indian jails, who was a main source of inspiration for Kashmiri people battling to break shackles of Indian slavery.

Mushaal went on to say that the special court in Delhi sentenced Yasin Malik to life imprisonment in the same fake cases and now the supremacist Narendra Modi's government was hell-bent sentence him to death as a part of its police of political vengeance and political victimization. The SAPM pointed out that despite the constant deterioration of his health and serious threats to his life, he was denied basic medical facilities, as he was kept in solitary confinement, adding that even his lawyer was not allowed to meet him. She stated that all the state coercive measures were being implied against him to break him; however, despite all these state terrorism and fascist and inhuman acts, he did not budge an inch from his principled stance.

Mushaal urged that the UN bodies and the human rights organisations should raise voice for this prisoner of conscious, who was illegally incarcerated for his sole crime to seek birth right for his people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). She saluted all Kashmiri prisoners including Yasin Malik for their determination and sacrifices, who were the real and true hero of the nation.

Meanwhile, SAPM for Human Rights and Women Empowerment said that Kunan-Poshpora tragic incident would remain as a big blot on the face of so-called largest democracy in the world. In her message on the occasion of the anniversary of the incident in village Kunan-Poshpora of Kupwari district, in which a young girl was killed by Indian forces on February 23, 1991 during a search in the area, wherein dozens of women, including an 86 year old woman were publicly humiliated. Mushaal recalled that the Kashmiri women were subjected to on the dreadful night of February 23, 1991 finds no place in human history while despite the passage of 33 years, justice continues to elude the victims. SABAH



## Minister stresses govt role in fostering growth of pharma sector



LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Professor Dr Javed Akram Thursday said he expected the new government would play its role in promoting the pharmaceutical industry.

"Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry has a good position in the world and should be happy over its progress," the minister said during his visit to 16th Pak Pharma and Healthcare Expo at the Lahore's Expo Centre.

The two-day Pak Pharma and Healthcare Exhibition was held by the Prime Event Management with the support of Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA). He said a lot of progress in science also transformed the pharmaceutical businesses across the globe. Dr Javed appreciated the holding of another mega pharma exhibition and hoped

that the business deals would not only benefit the local industry and foreign companies, but also promote investment in the country.

Earlier, the minister visited various stalls and interacted with the local and foreign exhibitors. Exhibition organiser Kamran Abbasi told the minister that 400 stalls were set up to display medical and laboratory equipment and chemicals. Stalls were set up by pharmaceutical equipment manufacturers, laboratory equipment, research and testing laboratories, raw and packaging supplier, pharma printing, pharma chemicals, lab chemicals and pharma instruments, and hospital and health equipment manufacturers. Abbasi said more than 200 business deals worth millions of rupees had been signed during the two-day event. He said a conference under the aegis of the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) also continued on both days. The two-day event, which was participated by 100 foreign and local exhibitors, attracted a large number of people associated with the pharmaceutical and medical businesses. INP



Pakistan Ambassador to the US, Masood Khan meeting with delegation of USAID led by Zeinah Salahi, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator. Other members of the delegation included Peter Young, Asia Bureau Director for South & Central Asia, Adeline Joshua and Brittany Brown.

## Promoting sports key to establish healthy society: Governor Punjab

LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that the promotion of sports was very important for the establishment of a healthy society. He stated this while talking to the Dutch Hockey Club team and the HEC Pakistan team participating in the Shuhada Punjab Police Hockey Series which called on him at Governor House Lahore on Thursday. During the meeting, Chief Organizer Chairman Khawaja Junaid briefed Governor Punjab about the series. Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that hockey was as our national

game and hockey players have brought laurels to the country. He expressed hope that we will once again regain our lost position in this field. He welcomed the teams and officials to the Governor House on this occasion.

He said that the sports legends were the heroes of the nation who brought glory to the country through their outstanding performance in their respective sports. He further said that sports equipment of best quality was manufactured in Pakistan and the city of Sialkot was famous for manufacturing sports equipment. INP

## PPP ready to cooperate in federal government

ISLAMABAD: Leader of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Qamar Zaman Kaira on Thursday affirmed PPP's willingness to be part of the federal government without seeking a share in power.

Talking to a private news channel, he highlighted PPP's commitment to national interests and willingness to offer cooperation to the treasury benches, even without holding ministerial positions.

Although coalition governments are typically perceived as weak, he said adding that they can also be strength if managed effectively with unity. Answering a query, he said that even in these difficult situations, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) attitude towards reconciliation and progress has been democratic.

Furthermore, responding to the news about his candidacy for the Governorship of Punjab, Kaira stated that the decision rests with the party leadership. DNA

## Ex-Rawalpindi Commissioner apologises over election rigging allegations

RAWALPINDI: In a surprising turn of events, the Ex-Commissioner Rawalpindi, Liaquat Chatha, on Thursday withdrew all his allegations related to rigging in the general elections 2024 and apologized to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

In a recorded statement before the ECP's investigative committee, Chatha revealed that he was under huge pressure due to retirement and surrendered before the authorities.

The former commissioner clarified that he did not direct any Returning Officer (RO) or interfere in anyone's support during the general election of 2024.

The ex-commissioner clarified that he never instructed any Returning Officer to show favoritism or intervene in the election process. "With a 32-year service record, I was scheduled to retire on March 13, 2024, and held concerns about potential loss of benefits in the future. I deeply regret my statement and offer a sincere apology to the nation," Chatha stated.

The former commissioner revealed that during his role as Punjab's secretary, he forged close ties with a political party official, aiming for future advantages.

"The party official went into hiding due to involvement in the May 9 incidents, I was in touch with him and also used to assist him secretly," he said.

Liaquat Chatha disclosed a covert meeting with the leader of a political party in Lahore on February 11 and was tasked with devising a plan to 'confirm' allegations of election rigging, however, concerned about the potential ineffectiveness of the accusations, he opted to conduct an emotionally charged press conference. The former Rawalpindi commissioner revealed that, according to the political leader, the plan had the backing of a particular party's top leadership.

The press conference was strategically tied to a party's protest plan. Chatha admitted that adding the Chief Justice's name was a deliberate move to fuel animosity among the people. INP

## Senators laud dedication, commitment of MoCC&EC, members at Climate body's farewell meeting

ISLAMABAD: The members of the Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change on Thursday at the body's farewell meeting here appreciated the dedication and commitment of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) and its participants for striving towards resolution of environmental conservation challenges.

The Chairperson, Senator Seemee Ezdi while opening the forum with the recitation of the verses of Holy Quran extended her warm gratitude to the member Senators for successfully completing their tenure at the Committee with landmark interventions intended to address challenges pertaining to environment and nature conservation.

The Committee was convened on a one-point agenda moved by Senator Fawzia Arshad on implementation of the guidelines of the National Climate Change Policy 2021.

Senator Ezdi thanked the committee members for supporting the body and making all its field visits a success. The Committee organized eight field visits in total starting from its maiden visit to Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) office and its smog control center, then to the

Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB)'s Trail-6 Leopard Preserve Zone, fire control room at erstwhile Marghar Zoo (Margalla Wildlife Rescue Centre), Pakistan Meteorological Department office, Trail-5 visit followed by visits to Shahdarah, Farash Town, and Mangroves Forest, Karachi. She mentioned the Committee mem-

bers gave a tough time to the Met Office officials during their briefing through very pertinent questions. Senator Ezdi appreciated the capability of MoCC&EC officials and their successful presentation of the country at COP-28 (28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Dubai) and lauded Secretary, Ministry Asif Hyder Shah for his efforts in this

regard. Senior Joint Secretary MoCC&EC, Muhammad Farooq while briefing on the agenda item apprised the Committee and the mover that all provincial climate action plans were aligned with the National Climate Change Policy 2021 which was submitted at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

and published at the MoCC&EC website. He added that all multinationals' investment was being done after consulting this policy which was formulated by all stakeholders' consultation and the Ministry strictly abides by this policy guidelines.

Senator Fawzia Arshad said on the occasion that her concerns were related to the Islamabad Capital Ter-

ritory (ICT) that was an autonomous entity neglected in the policy endeavours.

She added that this policy should be clarified either it was enacted while considering Punjab or the federal capital as well.

"What has been done for Islamabad alone? We need to highlight policy endeavours for Islamabad specifically as it faced unprecedented urban flooding phenomenon in its history. There 43 slums in its out of which 10 are being regularized that lacked proper amenities of water and sanitation," she added. She commended the Ministry officials for their well-written and detailed brief in response to her query.

Secretary MoCC&EC, Asif Hyder Shah told the Committee that the federal capital owing to its small territory was performing better than the provinces in the areas of air pollution index, surface water treatment and others. He added that the Ministry's nomenclature and location was changed five times that made its restructuring a challenge for him whereas the Ministry had hired climate experts equal to the number of its civil service staff to ensure better and well-planned tasks. APP

