



"Leading global companies have shown interest in investing in Pakistan's ports, which speaks to the potential for economic growth"

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs
Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh

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PIA privatisation to be done in best way: Aleem Khan



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Privatisation Abdul Aleem Khan said on Sunday he had responsibility of selling Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and the best solution would be made in this regard.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that a framework had been made for privatisation of the PIA by the caretaker government. He said that the PIA had a debt of Rs 830 billion, adding that out of that debt, around Rs. 600 billion had been parked in Holdco Company, while Rs. 200 billion had been parked in the PIA. He said all these things had happened before he took charge of his office, adding that he could not change the process which had already been initiated. Aleem said he had no power to change the framework of privatisation. He said there was procedure of privatisation under which he could privatise anything. He said he had a responsibility of selling PIA, and not to put it on the right track. He said that he was not responsible for the present condition of PIA and added that he could not deviate from privatisation procedure given to him.

A former privatisation minister was also giving him suggestions, he said and added that he should have implemented those suggestions during his tenure as the minister. He said that the PIA was a national asset and could not be sold at throw-away price. Abdul Aleem Khan said that on the PIA bidding day, he was in Riyadh busy in a meeting with Saudi Arabia's Investment minister. He said that on the day of PIA bidding two meetings were held; one of the privatisation commission, which he presided over, and he also attended the CCOP meeting on the same day. He said, "We have no objection if Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh governments together want to buy the PIA."

Professional management was vital to run PIA in effective manner, he said and added that revenue could be generated through the national airline if managed properly. The minister said: "The PIA has best timings for international routes."

Regarding National Highway Authority, Aleem Khan said it was going to give a profit of Rs 50 billion in one year. He said that this year the NHA revenue would reach Rs 110 billion from Rs 64 billion. He said that no truck would be allowed on motorway or national highway carrying more than allowed weight. He said the PIA privatisation matter would be carried forward in the best way and if a new framework would be required in this regard, it would be made.

He said, "If the PIA was to be privatised on government-to-government basis, the matter would be looked into."

Aleem said in present framework, there were limitations, but if new framework would be made, there was a possibility that the PIA would be privatised with zero liability and this might attract more buyers.

Regarding Pakistan Post, the minister said that 3,500 jobs had been abolished and that helped save Rs 2.8 billion. To a question, he said that the number of memorandums of understanding with Saudi Arabia had increased to a 34-35 from the figure of 27. He said that implementation of some of the MoUs was under way currently. — VOM Report



LAHORE: A delegation of leading businessmen of the United Kingdom calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Ensuring conducive environment for foreign investment top priority, PM Shehbaz

PM commends successful operation against terrorists in Balochistan

VOM Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has said that ensuring favourable environment for foreign investment in the country is top-most priority of the government.

Inviting the businesspeople to invest in Pakistan, the PM said country's economy had improved due to dedicated efforts of the government in the recent days, adding that the initiatives had increased confidence of the overseas investors to invest in various ventures in Pakistan

Talking to a business delegation from the United Kingdom (UK) during a meeting here on Sunday, he said immaculate services are being provided to the business and trader community through 'One Window Operations' under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in the country.

The UK-based renowned business figure Zubair Isa led the business delegation during the meeting.

Inviting the businesspeople to invest in Pakistan, the PM said country's economy had improved due to dedicated efforts of the government in the recent days, adding that the initiatives had increased confidence of the overseas investors to invest in various ventures in Pakistan.

Ways to discover new vistas to enhance business-to-business ties between Pakistan and the UK were also discussed during the meeting.

The delegation hailed the economic policies of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, which had strengthened the economy and put the country on the path to sustainable development.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has praised the Frontier Constabulary (FC), the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), and police officers for their successful operation against terrorists belonging to banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).

An official statement issued here on Sunday said the PM lauded the forces for their achievement in eliminating three terrorists and apprehending two others, preventing what could have been a major act of terrorism in Balochistan.

Acknowledging the critical role of the security forces, Shehbaz Sharif highlighted the sacrifices made by these units in combating terrorism. "Security forces have made invaluable sacrifices to eradicate the menace of terrorism in Balochistan," he added.

He also expressed his deep appreciation for their courage and dedication, saying, "Along with the entire nation, I pay tribute to the officers of FC, police, and the CTD."

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Pakistan's ports set for growth and global partnerships: Minister Maritime

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Sunday said that Pakistan's ports were on a promising trajectory, poised for significant growth in the near future.

Speaking to a private news channel, he said that Pakistan's plans was to establish business partnerships by supplementing nearby ports, with Karachi Port expected to play a pivotal role in bolstering the country's economic position.

"Leading global companies have shown interest in investing in Pakistan's ports, which speaks to the potential for economic growth," he added.

Commenting on PTI's protest call, he said that has relied heavily on protest-driven politics over the past decade. The government, he asserted, remains focused on economic progress and providing relief to the public, rather than engaging in negative political propaganda.

He added, "PTI's protest politics lacks public relevance, as it is driven by personal agendas rather than public welfare."

Stressing the government's openness to dialogue, he said doors remain open for principled discussions with elected representatives to address the core national issues.

The minister highlighted recent diplomatic successes, with nine foreign prime ministers visiting Pakistan, which he viewed as a testament to a successful foreign policy.

This progress, he said, underscores the country's positive direction. He also urged the opposition to adopt a constructive role, prioritizing national interest for continued development and stability.

Tarar grieved over demise of senior journalist's wife

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture on Sunday expressed deep grief over demise of the wife of senior journalist Altaf Hussain Qureshi.

The minister, in a condolence message, prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss with fortitude.



SIALKOT: Minister of Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif listening to the problems of people at his residence. APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf along with prize winners of 17th CNS Amateur Golf Cup 2024 at MGCC.

No durable peace until world's occupied people granted right of self-determination: Pakistan

NEW YORK: Lasting international peace and stability will remain elusive until the people under foreign occupation, like those in Kashmir and Palestine, are allowed to exercise their right to self-determination, acting Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN, Usman Jadoon, told a visiting 23-member delegation from the US War College. "The right to self-determination is one of the fundamental pillars of the UN Charter," Ambassador Jadoon said at his meeting with the delegation at the Pakistan Mission in New York.

In the course of briefing the delegation members about Pakistan's role and work at the UN, he apprised them of its stance on the various regional and international issues, highlighting the decades-old Kashmir dispute and efforts to seek its resolution peacefully.

The UN Security Council resolutions, which calls for a UN-supervised plebiscite to decide the wishes of the Kashmiri people, provide the framework for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

On combating terrorism, the Pakistani envoy referred to the enormous sacrifice made by Pakistan, saying, "Afghanistan has become a hub where the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was

using the Afghan soil to consistently target Pakistan."

There were valid concerns about the TTP forming an alliance with other terrorist outfits, principally Al-Qaeda, with its implications for regional peace and security.

Pakistan, he said, shared the expectations of the international community about political inclusivity, and provision of educational and employment opportunities to women in Afghanistan, while underscoring that equal attention needed to be paid to the counter-terrorism aspect as well.

Ambassador Jadoon said that developing countries were making efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals, and fight the adverse aspects of climate change if given access global concessional finance. He said that mounting debt liabilities, and increase in fuel and commodity prices had created formidable challenges for the economies of developing countries. "Pakistan has been advocating the reform of international financial architecture in a manner that it is equitable and fair and helps the Global South overcome development deficits," he said. APP

Lahore's AQI reaches unprecedented levels

LAHORE: Smog reigns in the city of gardens, Lahore is still number one among the most polluted cities in the world. Air pollution in Lahore soared on Sunday, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) briefly reaching an "unprecedented" level of over 1,000 despite the Punjab government intensified efforts and a "green lockdown" in the city.

Data from a global air quality monitoring platform, AQL, showed air quality at 1,067 between 8am and 9am on Sunday. It was the highest in the world.

The average level of smog in the provincial capital has also crossed the alarming level, making Lahore's mean air quality index 650. Apart from this, the smog has increased to an alarming level in Multan also, due to which citizens have common complaints of breathing problems and eye irritation.

In terms of air pollution, the Indian city of Delhi is number two. The American space agency NASA has released an aerial image in which it can be seen that smog has intensified due to the burning of crop residues in Indian bordering regions. Medical experts have instructed citizens to wear masks and do not leave their homes unnecessarily.

ECP summons two former prime ministers Nawaz Sharif, PTI founder on Tuesday

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has summoned two former prime ministers, PTI founder Imran Khan, and Muhammad Nawaz Sharif – to respond respectively in two separate cases to contempt and disqualification on Tuesday (November 5).

The ECP's case list indicated that hearings for matters involving the two political figures are scheduled for Tuesday.

A notice has been issued to the PTI chairman to record evidence in a contempt case initiated by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in 2022 for allegedly using "Intemperate language" against the chief election commissioner and the electoral body.

Likewise, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has been directed to submit a reply and provide arguments on a disqualification petition filed against Member of the National Assembly



(MNA) from NA-262, Quetta, Adil Baza.

The petition, based on Article 63A, concerns Baza's failure to vote in favor of the budget and the 26th constitutional amendment.

PML-N President Nawaz Sharif submitted a reference to the National Assembly Speaker against MNA Adil Baza for not voting on the 26th Constitutional Amendment. In response, NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq sent a letter to the ECP, requesting the disqualification of MNA Baza and declaring his seat vacant under Article 63-A, which addresses the defection clause. APP

There is no echo of the 27th constitutional amendment: Attaullah Tarar

Says in 26th constitutional amendment, a committee has been established which will determine which judges going to sit in constitutional bench

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar Advocate has said that in the 26th constitutional amendment, a committee has been established which will determine which judges are going to sit in the constitutional bench.

These views were expressed by Attaullah Tarar in an interview with the state-run TV. He said, "The constitution has given a system and powers to resolve the issue, I think this forum should sit and decide, I will say what should be done and what should not be done, the committee will make a better decision in this regard."



He said the 26th constitutional amendment has the silent support of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, adding there is no echo of the 27th constitutional amendment. He said a new package is coming with reference to the improve-

ment of the criminal justice system in legal and judicial reforms.

He further said the package will be brought to the Parliament, adding the 26th Constitutional Amendment is a document approved by consensus, which has also been approved by the lawyers in the elections of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan. He said the Supreme Court Bar Association elections have completely closed the door of starting the lawyers' movement. He said, "I am categorically saying that no mini-budget is coming."

He said, "I spoke to Chairman FBR, he said that there are only rumors

regarding the mini budget. If a YouTube is sitting in Pakistan earning two and a half lakh dollars per month and does not pay anything to the state, I will ask FBR to bring these people into the tax net. Vloggers should also pay tax voluntarily; there are people who are earning Rs 1 million to 1.5 million a day, he added.

Attaullah Tarar said that out of the 34 agreements struck with Saudi Arabia during the recent visit of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, work on five agreements has been started immediately, while progress will be made on the rest of the agreements as well. SABAH

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Nobel insights

DR NAYAR RAFIQUE

On October 14, 2024, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences (known more as the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences), awarded to Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A Robinson for their groundbreaking studies on how institutions are formed and their impact on prosperity. Their research highlights the critical role societal institutions play in creating economic disparities among nations.

Three traditional perspectives explain differences in economic development. The Geographic Hypothesis emphasises geography and natural resources, suggesting that nations with favourable conditions develop faster. The Cultural Hypothesis attributes progress to cultural factors such as work ethic and social norms, arguing that societies valuing hard work and innovation tend to advance more. The Ignorance Hypothesis posits that differences stem from leaders' knowledge of growth fundamentals, suggesting that ineffective leadership leads to inefficient resource use and poor development outcomes.

The recent Nobel laureates' institutional hypothesis challenges these views by asserting that the primary factor behind national prosperity differences is the nature of institutions. They explored how colonisation influenced institutional structures globally, finding that two types emerged: extractive institutions, which aimed to exploit indigenous populations, and inclusive institutions, which fostered long-term development for European settlers.

Regions with inclusive institutions experienced sustainable growth through broad participation and investment in public goods, while those with extractive institutions faced stagnation and restricted opportunities due to centralised control and elite interests. The laureates demonstrate how these institutional differences reshaped nations' destinies, with some former poor colonies achieving prosperity and wealthier ones becoming impoverished.

Extractive institutions, characterised by monopolised power and limited freedoms, hinder growth and innovation, while inclusive institutions promote economic participation and sustainable development. When analysed through the lens of inclusive and extractive institutions, as explained by the recent Nobel laureates in economics, Pakistan has struggled to overcome its colonial legacy and its influence on state institutions, policies, and practices since independence.

While some inclusive practices exist in certain areas of the political, economic, and social domains, state institutions have historically reflected the dominance of extractive structures established by the colonial regime. Consequently, the state has failed to fully leverage its potential for sustainable growth and development across various sectors, hindered by the extractive interplay of different institutions, extractive policies, resource allocation, and limited public participation in strategic institutional settings.

In Pakistan, extractive political structures are dominated by a few elite families and the military, characterised by limited freedom of expression, restricted political participation, corruption, and legislation that consolidates power among the elite. The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, which assesses the state of democracy in 165 states, classifies countries into four categories based on their scores across 60 indicators. Since its introduction in 2006, Pakistan has consistently ranked poorly, initially scoring 3.92 under General Pervez Musharraf's regime and fluctuating between 4.13 and 4.64 from 2008 to 2022, categorising it as a 'Hybrid Regime'.

Recently, however, its score dropped to 3.25, ranking Pakistan as the third worst performer and placing it in the 'Full Authoritarian' category. This decline is attributed to electoral interference, government dysfunction, and repression of opposition.

To understand how political and government institutions have influenced economic and social institutions in Pakistan, we must analyse historical economic performance alongside various social indicators. Over the past seven decades, historical economic data reveals a troubling landscape marked by fragile growth, accumulating debt, inconsistent revenue collection, prolonged inflation, persistently high unemployment, currency devaluation, and chronic fiscal and trade deficits. There has also been slow technology adoption, high interest rates, and inefficient, corrupt state-owned enterprises. These issues have constrained economic growth by limiting both domestic and foreign investments, hampering infrastructure development, and resulting in slow or fragile growth in per capita income.

Furthermore, insufficient spending on education and health, alongside escalating conflicts and security concerns, has exacerbated the situation. Data from the State Bank of Pakistan and global sources such as the World Bank indicates that from 1960 to 2023, the average tax-to-GDP ratio has fluctuated between 7.0 per cent and 13.7 per cent. Historically, government spending has consistently outstripped revenue estimates, leading to a persistent budget deficit averaging 6.5 per cent of GDP from 1960 to 2024.

For instance, in FY2023-24 Pakistan faced a staggering budget deficit of Rs6.52 trillion, representing 45.09 per cent of the total budget and 6.8 per cent of GDP. Foreign direct investment has remained below 1.0 per cent of GDP, while inflation has exceeded 30 per cent on multiple occasions, further exacerbating living costs. Interest rates, fluctuating between 5.0 per cent and 22 per cent, pose additional challenges for investment and savings, and high exchange rates complicate foreign transactions.

Trade data reveals that average exports comprise 11.3 per cent of GDP, while imports account for 17.6 per cent, leading to a trade deficit averaging 6.3 per cent of GDP. This imbalance has compelled Pakistan to resort to debt financing for foreign transactions and internal resource deficits, culminating in public debt equivalent to 75 per cent of GDP. The resulting debt, combined with substantial interest payments, exacerbates budgetary deficits and places further strain on the economy.

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DAOUD KUTTAB

Why Israel's UNRWA ban may backfire

It is hard for any observer to understand or explain the latest Israeli action against the UN Relief and Works Agency. After the state of Israel was established in 1948, it took two years for it to become a full member of the then-nascent UN. Among the key issues that delayed Israel's induction was the status of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians it had made refugees. For its part, the UN had passed a clear and unambiguous resolution (General Assembly Resolution 194) guaranteeing the right of return of Palestinian refugees and compensation for the losses they incurred. Decades later, in negotiations, Palestinians insisted on Israel recognizing its historic and moral responsibility for having caused the Palestinian refugee crisis.

The US, wanting to ease the terrible humanitarian conditions that Palestinian refugees were facing in tents in countries bordering Israel, helped create UNRWA, which began its operations in 1950. America was the biggest donor to this UN agency until President Donald Trump took power and cut off aid. This action, which has partially continued under the Biden administration due to pro-Israeli pressure in Congress, has whetted the appetite of members of the right-wing Israeli government who have always hoped that the Palestinian refugee issue would simply disappear.

UNRWA has been providing human-itarian aid services to 5.9 million Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. It is their primary source of humanitarian support. Its services include the provision of basic needs like education, food, medical care and the distribution of fuel. Its closure may inevitably lead to the collapse of the primary lifeline for Palestinians. It is not a political body and has refrained from any political actions. UNRWA has strictly followed the regularly approved mandate of the UN.

The agency's mandate, as defined by the UN General Assembly, is to serve "Palestine refugees." This term was defined in 1952 as any person whose "normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948 and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict." Palestine refugees are both those who fulfill this definition and the descendants of fathers fulfilling the definition.

For years, Israel and its supporters have zoomed in on this humanitarian agency, trying to bring about its disappearance by pressuring countries not to fund it or by making claims, at times using fabricating stories, about UNRWA or its staff. The latest fabrication — that a few members of its huge local staff were involved in Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks on Israel — was debunked by a high-level investigation committee set up by the UN secretary-general. A UN

inquiry published in April found no evidence of wrongdoing by UNRWA staff, noting that Israel had neither responded to requests for names and information nor "informed UNRWA of any concrete concerns relating to UNRWA staff since 2011." But despite failing to convince the world of its accusations and despite pressure from Israel's allies not to approve the ban, 92 of the 120-seat Knesset's members on Monday voted in favor of banning UNRWA from working in Israel and 87 backed a ban on state authorities from having any contact with the agency, effectively crippling its ability to operate in the Occupied Territories.

The foreign ministers of Canada, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea and the UK this week criticized the proposed ban, saying it could have "devastating consequences" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

This move came shortly after Israeli authorities had confiscated the land in East Jerusalem where UNRWA's headquarters is located. Israel plans to build 1,440 settlement units, which are illegal under international law, on the site.

While the international community, under immense Israeli pressure, debated whether and how much money to commit to this important UN agency, no one expected Israel to act in such a callous manner and vote in its highest legislative chamber to prohibit UNRWA from providing humanitarian aid to needy Palestinians.

For decades, Israel has demanded that the world, including its enemies, recognize its right to exist. But by banning a UN agency, Israel is weakening its own legitimacy. Folklore is full of proverbs that apply to what Israel, a UN member state that is obliged to abide by the UN Charter, plans to do to UNRWA. "Do not spit in the well that you drink from" and "do not saw the branch you are sitting on" are two examples that seem to perfectly illustrate the madness of a country that is worried about its own legitimacy acting against the one international agency that gave it license to exist.

What Israel is doing in a conflict it calls an existential war is weakening its own status in the world community. When you steal other people's land and create a country over their properties, the last thing you want to do is strengthen those who are questioning your own existence. So, as racist elements in Israel attempt to make the Palestinian refugee problem disappear, this move risks having the opposite effect. As a UN member state that is banning a UN agency, Israel has helped strengthen the demand of its enemies and is forcing the international community to seriously consider its membership of the global body that once gave it recognition.

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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

The classic example was its refusal to form a coalition government with the Muslim League in the United Provinces. Instead, it asked the League leaders to dissolve their parliamentary party in the Provincial Assembly and join the Congress. Another important Congress move after the 1937 elections was its Muslim mass contact movement to persuade the Muslims to join the Congress and not the Muslim League. One of its leaders, Jawaharlal Nehru, even declared that there were only two forces in India, the British and the Congress. All this did not go unchallenged.

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah countered that there was a third force in South-Asia constituting the Muslims. The All-India Muslim League, under his gifted leadership, gradually and skillfully started organising the Muslims on one platform. 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. 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.

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. Rajgopalacharia, suggested a formula for a separate Muslim state in the

Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, which was rejected at the time, but later on, in 1944, formed the basis of the Jinnah-Gandhi talks.

The Pakistan demand became popular during the Second World War every section of the Muslim community. Organized under the banner of the All-India Muslim League. Branches of the party were opened even in the remote corners of the subcontinent. Literature in the form of pamphlets, books, magazines and newspapers was produced to explain the Pakistan demand and distributed widely. The support gained by the All-India Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan was tested after the failure of the Simla Conference, convened by the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, in 1945. Elections were called to determine the respective strength of the political parties.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Oscar winning actor Michael Caine recalls giving advice to Tom Cruise 40 years ago

Michael Caine is a two-time Academy Award winner



Now You See Me actor Michael Caine recalled meeting young Tom Cruise 40 years ago and giving him some career advice on their first meeting.

Caine mentioned about meeting the future superstar while talking to The Sunday Times newspaper. He revealed that he met Cruise back in 1983 for an event of his film, Educating Rita.

Recalling their first meeting, the two-time Academy Award winner said: "I turned around and there was this young actor, very polite, asking questions about how not to be just a flash in the pan. That was Tom, probably around the time of Risky Business."

He further mentioned: "I can't remember what I said, but it obviously didn't

do him any harm! There was something special about him."

The 91-year-old actor said that he believed that the Mission Impossible star will someday reach to a point of fame where people will go to see a film just because he is in it.

"He had a great attitude, this sense of poise. What interests me is that he is really one of the last true stars in movies. People will go to see a film just because he's in it.

At present, Michael Caine is all set to launch his biography, Don't Look Back, You'll Trip Over that will be filled with wit, insights, entertaining stories and wisdom. The memoir will come out on November 7, 2024.

Tech

Here is how you can make your Instagram account more private

With the growing use of the internet and social media, the risk of privacy compromise also increases as our online activity can reveal more than we might intend. Instagram is one of the popular social media platforms used by billions of people to express themselves through photos and videos.

If you're looking to protect your privacy, here are seven tips to make your Instagram account more secure.

One of the easiest ways to make your social life more private on Instagram is by changing your account visibility to 'Private.' This not only prevents strangers from viewing your posts, but also gives users the option to share content with the people they approve.

You can do so by opening the Instagram app on your phone and go to the settings. Tap on 'Account privacy' under the 'Who can see your content' section and enable the toggle named 'Private account'.

Instagram has a handy feature that lets users

automatically share content they post on the platform to Facebook. While this can be handy at times, for many, this can cause problems since the people we follow on these platforms might be different.

If you want to unlink Facebook account with your Instagram profile, head over to the app settings, tap on the topmost option named 'Accounts Centre', scroll down a bit and click on 'Accounts'. Now, press the 'Remove' button to the right of the Facebook account and you are good to go.

Want to keep certain posts and stories from random strangers or specific people on Instagram? Consider setting up a 'Close Friends' list, which allows you to share content with a select group. To create one, go to your app settings, scroll down to the 'Close Friends' option, and add the friends you want to include. When you next post or share a story, Instagram will prompt you to choose whether to share it with all your followers or just your close friends.

Why is rate of triplet births declining in US?

A recent report by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed that the rate of triplet births and births of a higher order, like quadruplets and sextuplets, in the United States decreased by 62% in 2023 from 1998.

The decline is particularly significant among white mothers, who saw a 71% drop, while Hispanic mothers experienced a 25% decrease, the New York Post reported citing information from the report. In contrast, the birth rate for black mothers increased by 25%.

The CDC report attributes this dramatic decline in numbers to the trend of implanting multiple embryos during in vitro fertilisation (IVF), a method that increases the likelihood of pregnancy and is often more cost-effective. However, it carries heightened risks for mothers

New CDC report reveals rate of triplet births plummeted in past few decades and the reason behind it is quite surprising

and infants, including premature births, low birth weight, and other serious health complications like ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth, high blood pressure and gestational diabetes.

"This decline in triplet and higher-order births over the last 25 years has been associated with changes to guidance related to the number of embryos transferred during assisted reproductive technology use," the report read.

Previously, women under the age of 35 were limited to three embryo transfers, while those over

40 or with multiple failed IVF cycles could implant up to five, according to the guidelines issued by the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) and the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology in the 1990s.

However, ASRM now advises transferring primarily one embryo for most cases. For women over 40, recommendation is to implant a maximum of four untested early-stage embryos at once.

"These guidelines have evolved as the technology has evolved," Dr Micah Hill — president of the Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology, who was not involved in the new report — told CNN. "I think it's been successful in making fertility treatments safer, which is really what we care about when we're talking about reducing these higher-order multiples," Hill added. The decision is ultimately left to the physician and patient.

Health



Ambassador Alisher hints Pak-Uzbekistan direct flights from November

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtaev announced that direct flight operations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will start at the end of the current month of November 2024, describing it as important for the business community of both countries.

At present, the businesses of both countries, including the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), want to take advantage of the direct flight operation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and play their role in promoting bilateral economic and trade relations between the two nations, the ambassador said.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtaev said this during his meeting with President Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) Rana Muhammad Siddique Khan at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad.

On the occasion, both sides discussed the promotion of bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries and the possibility of an upcoming visit of the business delegation of GCCCI to Uzbekistan.

The Ambassador said that the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce should play its due role in bilateral trade and business between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and exchange delegations with Uzbekistan.

He welcomed the decision of the President of the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce to take a trade delegation to Uzbekistan and assured the business delegation of GCCCI to get full cooperation in Uzbekistan, describing it as important for bilateral trade.

He said that the business community of Pakistan can work in Uzbekistan in textile, Chemicals, IT, wood production and many potential sectors. Uzbekistan is geographically located in the centre of Central Asia and can play a vital role in connecting the 80 million population of Central Asia with Pakistan, he added.

The envoy said that Uzbekistan is an important country due to its geo-strategic position which can provide market access to Pakistan in European markets including Russia and Belarus.

The Ambassador of Uzbekistan hinted at further increasing cooperation with the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce in the near future and said that he would soon visit the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He said that he sees an important role of the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the bilateral economic and trade relations between Uzbekistan and Pakistan.

The envoy said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a long history of close economic ties in a number of areas for potential cooperation. He said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have signed a bilateral Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA) and a bilateral Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) on 17 items.

On the occasion, President of Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), Rana Muhammad Siddique Khan said that the role of the business community of Gujranwala is significant in increasing bilateral trade between Uzbekistan and Pakistan and the role of the private sectors of both countries is very important for flourishing both sides economic ties. He said that Gujranwala Industrial Sector contributes 8 percent to Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and similarly, Pakistan's exports from Gujranwala are currently \$2.5 billion and the city is the third largest contributor to the country's revenue also. APP



RAWALPINDI: People buying fruits from stalls at Sahulat Sasta Bazar, organized by the Punjab government. APP

Still wrecked from past Israeli raids, hospitals in northern Gaza come under attack again

JERUSALEM: They were built to be places of healing. But once again, three hospitals in northern Gaza are encircled by Israeli troops and under fire.

Bombardment is pounding around them as Israel wages a new offensive against Hamas fighters that it says have regrouped nearby. As staff scramble to treat waves of wounded, they remain haunted by a war that has seen hospitals targeted with an intensity and overtone rarely seen in modern warfare.

All three were besieged and raided by Israeli troops some 10 months ago. The Kamal Adwan, Al-Awda and Indonesian hospitals still have not recovered from the damage, yet are the only hospitals even partially operational in the area.

Medical facilities often come under fire in wars, but combatants usually depict such incidents as accidental or exceptional, since hospitals enjoy special protection under international law. In its yearlong campaign in Gaza, Israel has stood out by carrying out an open campaign on hospitals, besieging and raiding at least 10 of them across the Gaza Strip, some several times, as well as hitting multiple others in strikes.

It has said this is a military necessity in its aim to destroy Hamas after the militants' Oct. 7, 2023 attacks. It claims Hamas uses hospitals as "command and control bases" to plan attacks, to shelter fighters and to hide hostages. It argues that nullifies the protections for hospitals.

"If we intend to take down the military infrastructure in the north, we have to take down the philosophy of (using) the hospitals," Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said of Hamas during an interview with The Associated Press in January after the first round of hospital raids.

Most prominently, Israel twice raided Gaza City's Shifa Hospital, the biggest medical facility in the strip, producing a video animation depicting it as a major Hamas base, though the evidence it presented remains disputed. But the focus on Shifa has overshadowed raids on other facilities. The AP spent months gathering accounts of the raids on Al-Awda, Indonesian and Kamal Adwan Hospitals, interviewing more than three dozen patients, witnesses and medical and humanitarian workers as well as Israeli officials.

It found that Israel has presented little or even no evidence of a significant Hamas presence in those cases. The AP presented a dossier listing the incidents reported by those it interviewed to the Israeli military spokesman's office. The office said it could not comment on specific events.

The Israeli military has never made any claims of a Hamas presence at Al-Awda. When asked what intelligence led troops to besiege and raid the hospital last year, the military spokesman's office did not reply.

In recent weeks, the hospital has been paralyzed once again, with Israeli troops fighting in nearby Jabalia refugee camp and no food,

water or medical supplies entering areas of northern Gaza. Its director Mohammed Salha said last month that the facility was surrounded by troops and was unable to evacuate six critical patients. Staff were down to eating one meal a day, usually just a flat bread or a bit of rice, he said.

As war-wounded poured in, exhausted surgeons were struggling to treat them. No vascular surgeons or neurosurgeons remain north of Gaza City, so the doctors often resort to amputating shrapnel-shattered limbs to save lives.

"We are reliving the nightmares of November and December of last year, but worse," Salha said. "We have fewer supplies, fewer doctors and less hope that anything will be done to stop this."

The military, which did not respond to a specific request for comment on Al-Awda hospital, says it takes all possible precautions to prevent civilian casualties. Last year, fighting was raging around Al-Awda when, on Nov. 21, a shell exploded in the facility's operating room. Dr. Mahmoud Abu Nujaila, two other doctors and a patient's uncle died almost instantly, according to international charity Doctors Without Borders, which said it had informed the Israeli military of its coordinates. Dr. Mohammed Obeid, Abu Nujaila's colleague, recalled dodging shellfire inside the hospital complex. Israeli sniper fire killed a nurse and two janitors and wounded a surgeon, hospital officials said.

AJK PM Anwar-ul-Haq calls on the State's President and Barrister Sultan

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq called on the AJK State President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Sunday and discussed the matters of mutual interest and concern, including the need for an early peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute, official sources said.

In a detailed one-on-one meeting, both the leaders discussed, in length, the issues of concern, with a special focus on the issue of Kashmir, AJK President office sources later told APP here Sunday night.

While expressing their grave concern over the worsening political and human rights situation in the region, both leaders agreed to accelerate efforts at the international level to seek an early and amicable settlement of the lingering disputes.

Terming the Modi government's Hindutva agenda as an existential threat to Jammu and Kashmir people, they emphasized that it was high time that the global community must take effective notice of the situation in the region. During the meeting, the prevailing political situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the ongoing development projects in the region also came under discussion, the official sources added.

Rs 1 billion approved for KP police' modern vehicles

PESHAWAR: For the capacity building of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police, faced with shortage of modern arms and vehicles, the provincial government has decided to release an advanced grant of Rs one billion rupees for police department to overcome their shortcomings. A document on Sunday said the grant will be utilized in acquiring B-6 level security vehicles. On procurement of B-6 level protective vehicles, a sum of Rs 800 million will be spent while Rs 200 million for the purchase of mine-resistant vehicles. The document said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police were facing an acute shortage of required arms and modern anti-crime vehicles. To overcome this situation, the document said the KP government has decided to release Rs one billion as an advanced grant. It further confirmed that the provincial cabinet has accorded approval to the release of this advance grant. DNA

61,540 power stealers arrested in Punjab

LAHORE: Punjab Police have launched a massive crackdown on power theft, resulting in the arrest of 61,540 individuals across the province, including Lahore. As per details, the police have registered 99,572 cases against power thieves, completed challans for 60,278 cases, and convicted 8,424 accused. In Lahore alone, 32,057 individuals have been arrested, with 31,559 cases registered and 8,722 challans submitted. This year, 53,323 accused have been arrested, with 91,264 cases registered and 58,067 case challans submitted.



LAHORE: Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani offered condolences on the sad demise of Khalifa Syed Muhammad Hassan.

Easterly winds from Indian cities pushing polluted air into Lahore, says Senior minister



LAHORE: Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb addressed the worsening smog situation during a press conference today, explaining that easterly winds coming from India are pushing air from Amritsar and Chandigarh into Lahore.

This has caused the city's air quality index (AQI) to spike close to 1000 over the past two days. Mariyum Aurangzeb noted that since the air speeds up while crossing the eastern corridor and then stagnates over Lahore, it intensifies the pollution already present in the city, creating critically high AQI levels in the morning, which gradually decrease to below 200 by midday. Further deterioration of AQI is expected in the coming week.

Mariyum Aurangzeb announced that due to these factors, all private and public educational institutions, from playgroup to grade five, will remain closed from November 4 onward. This includes private schools, which are also mandated to comply. Authorities will use the week to conduct research, mapping, and studies to reassess and determine if extended school closures are needed. Preparations for two additional "green lockdowns" are also underway. The minister emphasized that Chief Minister

Maryam Nawaz Sharif has mobilized all departments over the past eight months to reduce smog, adhering to a set timeline. Farmers are being provided with 1,000 super-seeders at a 60% subsidy, with a goal to supply 5,000 in total. These machines are also available on a rental basis at the union council level to discourage farmers from burning rice crop residue.

Mariyum Aurangzeb noted that unlike COVID-19, which spread through air travel, smog enters through cross-border wind corridors, carrying pollution from neighboring areas and combining with local emissions. The chief minister will be reaching out to India via diplomatic channels to address the issue, urging critics to avoid politicizing what she described as a matter of generational survival. The government is actively implementing its own measures, including the closure of 550 kilns, shutdown of factories, and suspension of construction activities that fail to comply with SOPs. Vehicles emitting excessive smoke are also being impounded. Artificial rain technology is under development but currently lacks sufficient clouds for deployment.

The senior minister also stated that regular road sprinkling is underway, and the Environmental Protection Department has been restructured, increasing human resources, monitoring, and capacity. Plans are in place to introduce an electric mass transport system. Aurangzeb appealed to farmers to refrain from burning crop residue and adopt super-seeder technology. She urged the public to ensure their vehicles are fit, use quality fuel, avoid burning garbage, wear masks, and keep children and the elderly indoors with windows and doors closed. Any smoke-related issues should be reported to helpline 1373.

Govt. focuses on judicial integrity: Barrister Aqeel

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Law and Justice, Barrister Aqeel Malik, on Sunday said that the government is committed to maintaining the integrity of the judicial system. Speaking to a private news channel, he added that the government was focused on reforms that enhance its effectiveness and independence of judiciary. He rejected the misconceptions surrounding the government's intentions regarding the judiciary, stating that "there is a false impression that the government wants to appoint its own judges." Answering a question, he said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has made it a habit to find negative aspects even in positive developments.

He said that constructive criticism was welcome, but misinterpretations of the government's actions only serve to undermine the progress being made in legal reforms. He said that the government wanted to keep the 26th Amendment focused on legal and judicial reforms. Adding that, the judicial package was in that regard only, not anything else." He further explained that the government was dedicated to building a consensus regarding the 27th amendment, stating, that whenever the 27th Constitutional Amendment is brought, it will be introduced with consensus. APP

PTI Govt befooling masses on hallow slogans: Engr Amir Muqam

SHANGLA: Federal Minister for SAFRON, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs Engr Amir Muqam here Sunday said that PTI Government was befooling masses on hallow slogans and indulged them in lies based politics.

He was addressing at peace jirga after turning the 30 years old enmity into friendship between families of Poran Sandori here.

The families of Ayub Khan and Ameer Zareen Khan announced an end of a 30 years long enmity due to reconciliation efforts of Engr Amir Muqam.

Engr Amir Muqam expressed proud of an immense respect given to him by the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially Shangla and that he always preferred people welfare over his personal interests.

The Minister said that he served people in all difficult times whether it was flood, terrorism incidents or earthquake and has never left them alone.

He said the record development projects worth



billions of rupees were approved by the Government during last four months for the area. The Minister said the people problems related to NADRA, electricity, gas and national highway authority were addressed.

On the other hands, he said that PTI has deceived people on the name of change and hallow slogans.

He said that despite the third term in Government, PTI has failed to address people problems. Engr Amir Muqam heard about people problems and issued spot orders on some applications.

Pakistani motorcyclists complete friendship journey by reaching Istanbul

ISLAMABAD: A group of Pakistani motorcyclists proceeded on an 8,000 km journey, what they called the 'Lahore-Istanbul Rally' to strengthen the bonds of friendship between Pakistan and Türkiye.

Led by Mukaram Tareen, the riders departed Lahore on October 11, traveling through Iran and eventually reaching Istanbul in 18 days. Tareen, a 57-year-old rider, shared how the historic streets of Istanbul reminded him of Lahore, highlighting the deep-rooted cultural ties between the two cities.

"Pakistan, Iran and Türkiye were friendly Islamic countries and our culture, food and friendships are based on hundreds of years of history. Istanbul is a deep-rooted city like Lahore," aa.com.tr quoted him as saying. Tareen said, "Reaching here symbolizes the strong friendship between our two countries. This provided an opportunity to establish a closer bond with our Turkish friends." He pointed out that Lahore's narrow streets and historical texture are similar to Istanbul, and said, "While walking through the streets of Istanbul, we at times felt like we were in Lahore.



The people, shops and the old city walls of the city resembles Lahore." Emphasizing that eastern Türkiye fascinates them, Tareen said, "People usually only visit big cities like Istanbul or Izmir. However, eastern Türkiye has a unique beauty with its high peaks, snow-capped mountains and villages. The people in eastern Türkiye are very hospitable, kind and sincere. This region is definitely a place we would like to explore again." the people they met along the way, Tareen said, "We travelled 300 to 400kms every day. We had the opportunity to stop and taste local foods and chat with people on the way. We met many motorcyclists from Iran and Türkiye. We invited Turkish motorcyclists to Pakistan and with

this trip we aim to promote tourism exchange between both the countries." Pointing out the difficulties in going on long journeys, he said that one of their group members had engine problems in Ankara and was stuck there for a while. Tareen said that the Turkish motorcyclists they met in Türkiye invited them to dinner and thus they had the opportunity to experience Turkish cuisine. He said that they were planning to visit Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in their next trip and that this friendly relationship between Pakistan and Türkiye should be expanded to other countries as well. One of the group members, Munawar Hussain said that he had previously come to Türkiye by air but by coming

on a motorcycle gave him a different experience.

"When we come by air, we can only see big cities. But when you travel by motorcycle, you have the chance to explore small towns and villages. We got to know Türkiye more deeply," Hussain said.

Hussain, said they were very impressed by the hospitality in Türkiye. "We were welcomed very warmly in Iran as well, but in Türkiye, people smile when they hear that we come from Pakistan. Turks see Pakistan as a brother country and this makes us feel very good."

Abu Bakar Cheema, 31, who lives in Medina, Saudi Arabia, also noted the similarities between Istanbul and Lahore.

The group members encountered difficulties from time to time throughout the journey, but despite this, they had an enjoyable journey, he said.

They also invited Türkiye citizens to visit Pakistan and discover its cultural richness, pointing out that with such events, the people of the two countries will come closer to each other and cultural ties will be strengthened thanks to tourism. APP