

Tourists urged to follow traffic rules to avoid mess on roads in Murree



BT NEWS

RAWALPINDI—Deputy Commissioner (DC) Murree,

Agha Zaheer Abbas Shiraiz has urged the tourists to strictly abide by traffic rules to avoid traffic congestion and

road mishaps at the hill station.

He informed that the traffic management plan was being implemented to facilitate the tourists.

He said that 13 tourist facilitation centers were established at different places in Murree while a control room had also been made fully functional. The DC said that the district administration had made excellent arrangements to promote tourism in the region besides helping and assisting the tourists.

A large number of tourists visit, 'Queen of Hills' Murree to enjoy the snowfall in winter,

he said adding, solid steps were taken by the district administration to provide assistance and guidance to the tourists.

He informed that on the directives of the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatta, the administration was ensuring strict implementation of Murree Contingency Plan to facilitate the tourists.

All the machinery along with the drivers was available round the clock during the snowfall season, he said.

According to Murree Contingency Plan, additional staff had been provided to

traffic police and related departments.

He said that the role of traffic police is most important to regulate the traffic in Murree.

Entry of the vehicles would be allowed according to the parking capacity in Murree, he informed.

The management had completed all its arrangements for the snowfall season and the staff and officers would not be allowed to remain absent from the duties, he warned.

Facilitation Centers at various locations in Murree at Satara Meel, Lower Topa, Jika Galli, GPO, Kashmir Point,

Kuldana, Kali Mitti, Masiyari, Sindhan, Sunny Bank, Bhorban, Thanda Jungle and Saharbagha had been set up to guide and assist the tourists, the DC said.

Public service messages were being displayed on SMDs to spread awareness for the tourists, he informed.

The DC further said that a 24/7 helpline is available to guide the tourists and keep them updated about the weather and traffic conditions.

The vehicles entering the city would be monitored through digital counting at the 17 Meel Toll Plaza.

Election Day: Surveys and Outcomes



AHMED CHOUDHARY

The general elections in Pakistan, which took place on 8 February 2024, have sparked widespread concern. The Ipsos Pakistan Pulse study, however, shows otherwise. The fact that 75% of people have indicated acceptance of the election results demonstrates their trust in these elections. Previously, the country endured cycles of political instability caused by one party's refusal to accept election results. Fears of rigging have been a near-constant on the political scene.

However, the survey data indicate that people are satisfied with the polls and the results that will follow. The increase in acceptance graphs with age and other demographics demonstrates how different age groups evaluate the country's political process. The smooth conduct of elections and acceptance of results is the first step toward a peaceful power transition. It is worth noting that the majority of Pakistan's Tehreek-e-Insaf followers have accepted the survey results.

Historically, suspicions of rigging leveled against the party that establishes government by the

opposing parties have significantly hampered meaningful development and advancement. Political stability is the single most important variable in the country right now. Everyone must trust and believe in the newly established government.

The political opposition parties must support the new government coalition, and the emphasis must be on economic security as well as immediate measures to resolve the turmoil in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.

The Ipsos survey looks promising, and the next several days will be critical in determining whether the survey's findings hold up. It is worth noting that, regardless of political affiliation, a significant proportion of voters from various countries express willingness to accept the results, demonstrating a widespread commitment to democratic principles.

Pakistanis have been proud to vote and be a part of democratic history. People's enthusiasm triumphed over disappointment in an uncertain political climate. Now that the election results have been accepted, the country may hopefully begin a new democratic cycle. After voting, they expect that the new term will bring much-needed stability, peace, and growth.

Despite strong obstacles, yesterday's polls represent a collective victory for the country—one that must be maintained.

The Writer is a Student of Sociology at Atchison College.

Faiz Festival concludes on promotion of 'progressive ideology' note

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE—The three-day cultural and literary extravaganza—8th Faiz Festival, that was held at Lahore Arts Council from February 9 to 11, concluded here at the Alhambra Art Centre, The Mall, on Sunday.

The Faiz Festival concluded with a pledge to spread the social and progressive ideology message of the great poet around the world for generations. The festival promised a cultural extravaganza of literary dialogues, music performances, theatre, book launches, documentaries, dances, drum circles, workshops, open mic sessions and a discussion on the future of Pakistani films. Delegates from around the world arrived for converge of the festival that began with an



exhibition, 'Women Artists of Pakistan'.

According to a statement, the inaugural day featured renowned Qawwals Saleem and Waseem Sabri. On the second day of the three-day festival, 32 sessions are lined up to explore diverse themes in art, literature, language, politics and poetry. On the third and final day, 35 sessions were scheduled, to pay tribute to prominent women from various fields.

The festival reflected delving

into world affairs, societal shifts, politics, literary nuances, linguistics, and events shaping different nations. On the final day, the international festival attracted rather bigger turnout as compared to the inaugural day. Faiz Foundation Trust Chairperson Salima Hashmi said told the audience that the title of the exhibition had been espoused from a line of a ghazal of Faiz Ahmed Faiz 'Dil Na Umeed Tou Nah' that talks about hope, struggle, resilience.

The exhibition is a homage to the struggle of living women artists, who depict hope and resilience in their works, she said.

Arvinder Chamak, a poet from India, who spoke in Punjabi, held Faiz in high esteem. He said he was from Amritsar, a city where Faiz taught. Chamak said he would eagerly wait for the Faiz Festival every year. Besides Faiz's Urdu poetry, his Punjabi poetry was also full of messages for humanity.

Building Bridges not walls through peace education: The missing piece in the Immigrant Crisis

DR. MUHAMMAD SHAHZAD ASHFAQ

In recent years, we have witnessed an unprecedented rise in the number of immigrants seeking refuge and a better future. The resulting immigrant crisis has triggered a wave of divisive and often heated debates, generating an atmosphere of hostility rather than compassion and understanding. However, amidst these polarizing sentiments, it has become clear that there is a missing piece in our responses to this issue - peace education. By prioritizing peace education, we can work towards building bridges instead of walls and foster empathy and cohesion in our communities. Peace education is a transformative process that encourages individuals to critically examine their own biases and prejudices while promoting a culture of peace, understanding, and empathy. It equips individuals with the skills necessary to resolve conflicts through non-violent means, creating sustainable solutions that benefit all parties involved. By bringing peace education to the forefront of our response to the immigrant crisis, we can address the root causes of our divisions and work towards creating a society that is more inclusive, tolerant, and compassionate.

One of the main challenges we face when attempting to address the immigrant crisis is the fear and misunderstanding that often underlies the sentiments against immigrants. Fuelled by misinformation and stereotypes, this fear can often lead to hostile reactions towards individuals seeking refuge in our countries. Peace education has the power

to challenge these irrational fears and replace them with knowledge and empathy. By providing accurate information about the causes and consequences of migration, peace education will dismantle the myths that perpetuate discrimination and create a more informed and compassionate society. Peace education can play a crucial role in breaking down the walls of ignorance and fostering intercultural understanding. By promoting dialogue and exchange between different cultures and communities, it allows individuals to build connections and develop an appreciation for diversity.

Recognizing our shared humanity, peace education enables us to see immigrants not as strangers, but as fellow human beings with dreams, aspirations, and the potential to contribute positively to our communities. It is through this process of dialogue and understanding that bridges will be built, connecting people from different backgrounds and fostering a sense of belonging and unity. Furthermore, peace education emphasizes the importance of non-violent conflict resolution. Equipping individuals with the skills necessary to manage and resolve conflicts peacefully, prevents the escalation of tensions and promotes a culture of dialogue and negotiation.

The immigrant crisis will have profound implications. Instead of resorting to divisive rhetoric and the construction of physical walls, peace education encourages individuals and communities to find sustainable and inclusive solutions that address the concerns

of all parties involved. It prioritizes the rights of immigrants while also considering the needs of the host communities, focusing on the principles of justice, empathy, and compromise. Additionally, peace education will be extended to community organizations, religious institutions, and civil society groups, fostering a culture of inclusivity in all aspects of society. The immigrant crisis demands an inclusive response that extends beyond physical borders and walls. No single nation can resolve this crisis alone, as its root causes lie in various regions with complex socio-political dynamics.

A holistic response requires a coordinated effort between countries of origin, transit nations, and destination. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations promote peace, stability, and economic development in regions plagued by poverty, and underdevelopment. Moreover, an inclusive response is crucial to ensuring the protection and empowerment of migrants.

History has shown that constructing physical barriers, such as walls, does little to discourage individuals from seeking a better life. Instead, such measures only divert them towards perilous often-deadly migration routes. Instead of fortifying borders, it is imperative to focus on strengthening legal channels for migration creating avenues for individuals to seek haven and work in a safe and orderly manner. This requires simplifying immigration processes and reducing bureaucratic obstacles that impede the integration of migrants into host societies.

Open Market Exchange Rate

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	184.8
Bahrain Dinar	743.68	751.68
Canadian Dollar	206	208
China Yuan	3909	3949
Danish Krone	40.25	40.65
Euro	304	307
Hong Kong Dollar	35.74	36.09
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	21	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.35	917.35
Malaysian Ringgit	58.87	59.47
New Zealand \$	169.12	171.12
Norwegian Krone	26.13	26.43
Omani Riyal	726.28	734.28
Qatari Riyal	76.82	77.52
Saudi Riyal	74.4	75.2
Singapore Dollar	20.7	20.9
Swedish Korona	26.55	26.85
Swiss Franc	321.35	323.85
Thai Baht	781	796
UAE Dirham	76.6	77.4
UK Pound Sterling	357	360.5
US Dollar	279	281.5

Gold Rate

Metal	10 Gm	1 Tola
Gold 24K	183,231	213,494
Palladium	82,144	95,711
Platinum	79,472	92,597
Silver	2,008	2,339

CDNS attains Rs 58 billion in Islamic investment bonds



BT NEWS

ISLAMABAD—The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has secured Rs 58 billion in Islamic finance bonds during the current fiscal year 2023-24 till February 9. "The National Savings had issued the Islamic bonds for the promotion of the Islamic finance system, which will help the development of the Islamic economy in the country," a senior official of the Directorate of National Savings told APP.

The official said that the CDNS had set the target of collection Rs 75 billion from the Islamic finance bonds in the financial year 2023-24. Some Rs 16 billion were collected through the bonds during July 2023, the first of the ongoing fiscal year, he added. Replying to a question, he said the CDNS had achieved the target of Rs 60 billion during the last fiscal year (2022-23) from the Islamic bonds, and that was why it aimed to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector. "The Islamic finance now has a very important role in the global financial sector. A large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in the CDNS. Given the current market trend in the country, an ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture, he added. To another query, the official said that the CDNS had achieved the target of Rs 990 billion in fresh bonds from July 1, 2023 to January 19, 2024 in the current fiscal year.

Pak Ambassador condoles over death of UAE officials in terrorist attack in Somalia

BT NEWS

ISLAMABAD—Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Naz Tirmizi on Sunday extended his deepest condolences to the families of those Emirati officials who were martyred in a terrorist attack in Somalia. The statement was shared by Pakistan Embassy in Abu Dhabi to media after the UAE Ministry of Defense confirmed via X post that three of its officials along with a Bahraini officer were martyred during an attack in Somalia.

"We share the grief and sorrow of the bereaved families and express solidarity with our brothers and sisters in this difficult hour", the press release quoted Ambassador Tirmizi



as saying. Expressing his sympathies and solidarity, he said that he and his countrymen shared the pain of the mourning families, and firmly stood with the people and government of UAE. He further said that Pakistan, being a victim of this menace, was against terrorism in its all forms and manifestations.

CM reviews progress on Mazar Bibi Pak Daman road

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE—A new route from the Empress Road will be built to facilitate pilgrims at Mazar Bibi Pak Daman.

Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a visit to the project and reviewed the progress being made on construction of the road to link the Mazar Bibi Pak Daman with the Empress Road.

Mohsin Naqvi inspected the allocated site for car

parking along with the construction of the new road and also inspected the construction activities from the Empress Road up to the Mazar along with removing the building structure causing obstruction during the construction work. He ordered to remove the remaining structure at the earliest.

The caretaker CM ordered to expeditiously complete the road construction work. He said the pilgrims would be

provided easy access to the Mazar with the construction of 20 feet wide road up to the Empress Road. More space is being allocated for parking of vehicles. Secretary Communication and Works gave a briefing about progress being made on the project.

Officials of C&W, Lahore Development Authority, Infrastructure Development Authority Punjab (IDAP) and other administrative officers were also present.

