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### Mohsin Hamid's novel shortlisted for International Literary Award



Sehara Nadeem  
BS41 3607

Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid's latest novel, "How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia", has been shortlisted for Germany's International Literature Award.

"I'm thrilled for 'How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia' to be shortlisted," Hamid said.

The International Literary Award is the biggest prize for foreign literature that has been translated into German. This year 81 participating German-language publishers submitted a total of 154 titles,



whose authors hail from 64 countries and write in 27 languages.

"How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia" has been translated by German translator Eike Schönfeld.

"Germany has a vibrant literary culture. I believe translators are enormously important, and it makes me

*Contd... on Pg. 7*

### Innovative teaching styles: Making maths as easy as 1, 2, 3



Fareeha Jabbar  
BS43 3817

If the numbers swim before your eyes every time you open your math textbook, Ameen Jan has developed an e-learning portal to ease your sufferings.

The programme, EDeQUAL, makes math easy and fun to learn with tools and comprehensive learning material as a replacement to after-school tuitions for students between grades three and 11.

EDeQUAL as a learning solution can be put into practice by schools or by individual

students at their homes, besides the learning centre in Karachi that was established in January 2012.

The programme employs the 'blended learning' approach – a perfect blend of online instruction and effective in-class teacher support – that has proved to be highly effective in raising student learning outcomes in countries, such as Singapore, South Korea and the United States.

The brain behind the initiative  
*Contd... on Pg. 6*

### Steering committee on polio: Over 96,000 displaced children vaccinated



Bilal Asad Baig  
BS41 3603

Some 96,487 children of displaced families have been administered anti-polio vaccines at different permanent transit points since the military mounted its Zarb-e-Azb operation in the North Waziristan Agency.

Members of the Steering



Committee on Polio Eradication were informed that a total of 76,565 children were vaccinated at the permanent transit points established at FR Bannu, 13,500 were immunised at the transit points at Hangu/Thal while 1,648 children were vaccinated at DI Khan.

Some 3,500 IDP children were vaccinated during a campaign in Bannu and 1,274 children were given Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) during a campaign in Lakki Marwat, the committee was told.

According to an official in the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and

*Contd... on Pg.6*

### Pakistan wins at the International Gourmand Awards



Mohsin Akram  
BS44 3994

Pakistan's independent publishers Markings' first dessert based cookbook, Deliciously Yours by chocolatier Lal Majid won prestigious Gourmand Award for Best Pastry Sweets Cookbook in the World, beating culinary giants Italy and France who were also shortlisted for this category at the International Gourmand Awards Ceremony held in Beijing during the first Beijing Cookbook Fair which took place from May 19 - 21. According to a press release, the cookbook was also nominated in two



other categories: Best First Cookbook and Best Chocolate Cookbook.

This is the first time that a book from an independent Pakistani publisher has been recognised and awarded on an international platform, competing against 187 countries. Indeed the annual Gourmand Awards have established themselves as the premier cookbook recognition authority and are widely

*Contd... on Pg.6*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*"There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up."*

— John Holmes

*Lending a helping hand works both ways, we are there for those who need it and when they take hold of our hand, we feel happy and replenished. If we get a chance to help someone, we should do so without thinking twice, as there is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well.*

*This month, many influential people assisted the IDPs, mathematics was made easier for students, flour prices were reduced for Ramzan, Shahid Afridi constructed a hospital for the needy and so much more helping and giving took place.*

A compilation of news made by students of Mass Communication and Media Studies of Greenwich University to highlight the positive aspects of Pakistan

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## Branchless banking: Branching out



Raafe Hassan  
BS41 3697

The banking sector in Pakistan has come a long way since 1947. With over 12,000 branches spread across the country, the banking footprint is well established. However, it is still insufficient to serve the rapidly growing population, most of whom still have little or no access to banking services.

The State Bank of Pakistan, the regulator of the banking sector, realised the gravity of the situation and once the technology was available, grasped the opportunity to bring the "unbanked" lower income groups and rural population into the fold. The solution to this situation is branchless banking that relies heavily on IT, es-

pecially telecom-  
munications tech-  
nology.

Branchless banking is defined as the delivery of financial services outside conventional bank branches, often using agents and relying on information and communications technologies to transmit transaction details – typically card-reading point-of-sale (POS) terminals or mobile phones. It has the potential to radically reduce the cost of delivery and increase convenience for customers.



The Consultative Group to Assist the  
Contd... on Pg.6

## Balochistan to boost spending on security, job creation



Saad Saeed  
BS40 3543

Balochistan's Rs215.7 billion budget for the next financial year proposes to significantly boost spending for improving security situation in the

province, building social and economic infrastructure and creating new jobs in the province.

Other fiscal and development choices that the Abdul Malik Baloch government has spelt out in its second budget include enforcement of financial discipline, increase in the tax revenue, development of coastal and mineral wealth, reduction in corruption, focus on coal- and solar-based power generation and facilitation of private investment through public-private partnership.

The development spending also includes foreign project assistance of Rs2.7bn.

Contd.... on Pg.6



## Punjab, Sindh reduce flour price for Ramazan



Laraib Rajput  
BS38 3345

Flour prices have been reduced as provinces aim to provide relief to the masses in Ramazan, with Punjab taking the lead.

The Punjab government subsidised the sale of flour all over the province whereas in Sindh, the private sector attempted to give relief but on a limited scale.

In Sindh, millers unilaterally slashed price by Rs2 per kg at the fair price



shops of mills and in Bachat Bazaars in Karachi.

In Punjab, the provincial government initiated the move and slashed the flour price by Rs4 per kg at all shops across the province.

Experts expect the price of flour to crawl  
Contd... on Pg.7



## Tractor sales to receive boost after GST revision



Nimra Arshad  
BS40 3541

With the reduction in General Sales Tax (GST) back to 10% in budget 2015, tractor industry sales are expected to rebound over the next year, AKD Securities reported.



The brokerage house predicted that the sales of Millat tractors in fiscal year 2015 might touch 32,000 units

while the Al-Ghazi tractors sales may reach 25,000 in 2015.

The government had reduced GST on tractors from 16% to 10% in the federal budget. Considering the tractor industry recorded sales of just 31,060 units in the first 11 months of fiscal year 2014 (down from highest-ever 71,512 units sales in fiscal year 2010), this GST reduction is expected to provide a significant boost to tractor sales.

With 71,512 units sold in fiscal year 2010, overall tractor sales plummeted to 49,745 units in FY12 and 31,060 units (MTL: 20,060 units; AGTL: 11,000 units) in 11MFY14 – tractor sales are

*Contd... on Pg.6*

## ATM transactions increase 5.9%

Raafe Hassan  
BS41 3697

More than 390 new ATMs were installed in the first quarter of 2014, up of 5.1% from the preceding quarter, bringing the total number of ATMs in Pakistan to 8,077, according to the Payment Systems Review released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Wednesday.

ATMs remained the preferred channel for cash withdrawals, accounting for 81.2% of the total amount transacted via this mode, the SBP said. Total ATM-based transactions constituted a volume share of 63.8% and a value share of 8.1% in total e-banking transactions.

Moreover, total transactions carried through ATMs showed a quarterly increase of 5.9% in volume and 6.2% in value of transactions. The Pakistan Real-Time Interbank Settlement Mechanism (PRISM), which is a

large value payment system, showed a mixed trend of transactions settlement over the last five quarters, the SBP said. Compared to the preceding quarter, total transactions settled in PRISM showed an increase of 10.2% both in volume and value in Jan-Mar. Compared



to the same quarter of 2013, the increase in volume was 28.7% while the value of transactions decreased by 1.6%.

The retail payment system in Pakistan is supported by payments made through the branch network or through e-banking channels, such as ATMs, points-of-sale (POS),

*Contd... on Pg.7*

## Powering the power plant: Sitara Chemicals signs largest Musharaka deal

Sehar Nadeem  
BS41 3607

Sitara Chemicals, the country's largest manufacturer of caustic soda, signed a Musharaka deal with a syndicate of local banks to finance its 35 MW coal-fired power plant in the biggest such deal under this mode of Islamic finance.

The syndicate including MCB Bank, United Bank, Meezan Bank, Al Baraka, Faysal Bank and Bank of Khyber will arrange Rs2 billion for the diminishing Musharaka facility which is a participatory way to finance a project that involves one partner buying the ownership from the other over a period of time.

"We will recover the entire cost of this project within three years (from start of production). Construction of the power plant will be completed within next 15 to 18 months. Hopefully by September 2015." CEO Sitara Chemical Muhammad Adrees said. "This project will help us save on production costs and meet the requirement of our future projects. With a requirement of 50 MW, Sitara Chemical Industries is the single largest customer of Wapda", he said. The company will now open letters of credit for import of boilers, turbine and generator within next few weeks.

State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)

Deputy Governor Saeed Ahmad said this was probably the largest Musharaka financing deal in Pakistan. "This is very good for Islamic finance as it will encourage other companies to use such mode of finance," he said. "The choice of Islamic instruments depends on situation. If you are not really sure about returns and don't mind giving up part of those returns from a project then you go for participatory finance



In recent years, Engro Polymer and Chemicals has emerged as a competitor of Faisalabad-based Sitara in the southern part of the country especially Karachi.

Adrees says the company will move its excess capacity to the port city where it sees very good prospects for growth. "Out of our total daily production capacity of 610 tons, we will move around 100 tons to Karachi. That will be expanded to 200 tons later."

Sitara says it already has 30% to 35% market share in Karachi. "With the by-products we make along with caustic soda, we will have an edge over competition as we can meet demand for diversified customer base."

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

## Mobicash expands to 35,000 retailers

Fareeha Jabbar  
BS43 3817

The network of Mobicash, a Mobile Financial Services (MFS) of Mobilink, has spread to more than 35,000 retailers across Pakistan, according to a press release issued on Friday.

"Mobicash possesses the



second largest MFS retail network in Pakistan, with the total value of transactions being over Rs18 billion in 2014 alone," it added.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

### From a local shoemaker to international retailer

Mirza Bilal Asad Baig  
BS41 3603

Waqas Ali and Sidra Qasim of Markhor have taken Pakistani handmade leather shoes for men to the international markets. The brand, previously known as Home-town Shoes, designs and manufactures leather shoes and sells them online.



"I was introduced to the internet in 2007, when I moved from Okara to Lahore for college," says Ali. "It was fascinating for me to see how technology had changed society and connected the world."

Internet startups and success stories float all around us, but the way these two students used it to benefit their local society is inspirational. Back in 2010, when Facebook was banned in Pakistan, Ali found himself sitting in a panchayat in his village, where a local shoemaker Mohammad Husain suggested that the villagers protest against Facebook for being against Islamic teachings. "I was taken aback by the ignorance of people and spoke up in favour of the website and showed them how Facebook was, in fact, helping young people start up their businesses," says Ali. "When I found out that Husain was a shoemaker it got me thinking that maybe I could try and sell his shoes online for him and show people that technology is, in fact, beneficial."

Contd... on Pg.7

### Rs 500 mln fund established for IDPs

Saad Saeed  
BS40 3543

Chief Minister of Punjab Shahbaz Sharif has said that Rs. 500 million fund has been established to help the internally displaced persons (IDPs) of North Waziristan,

Talking to media in Lahore while sending relief goods for the IDPs of North Waziristan, Shahbaz Sharif said that Pakistan is fighting for its survival.

Pakistan's armed forces have launched an offensive 'Operation Zarb-e-Azb' against militants in North Waziristan tribal region, a hotbed of militancy in the country.

He said the steps have been taken to foil the possible reactions of the terrorists.

Shahbaz said that the nation



has been united for the help of the displaced persons and a fund of Rs. 500 million has been established. He said the ministers and the lawmakers will donate their salaries of one month for the fund.

He appealed philanthropists to donate for their war-hit brethren and promised to spend every penny of the donation over the affected people.

The chief minister said that the government of Punjab has sent Rs. 100 million relief goods for the displaced persons of North Waziristan Agency.

Courtesy: ARY News

### PM launches interest-free loan scheme

Mohsin Akram  
BS44 3994



Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif launched an interest-free loan scheme and said that the government would serve the nation without any discrimination, DawnNews reported.

Premier Sharif said Rs2.5bn would be spent annually on the government grants and in the next four years one million people would be able to avail the facility.

The Rs50,000 per person interest-free loan, with relaxed conditions, would form the backbone of the country's economic stability and will be offered indiscriminately to all the citizens of the country, the prime minister said. The relaxed conditions mean that the loan applicant would not be required to present any guarantor or collateral to avail the loan scheme.

"We have to serve the whole nation regardless of whom they voted for, even those holding protests will be able to avail the loan facilities provided by the government," he added.

The prime minister further said that the loans would be provided to those people who have not taken any bank loans in the past and 50 per cent of the recipients would be women.

Talking about the role of women, Sharif said, "We want women to develop and also contribute to the development of society".

He also said that in the government had allocated a 10 per cent quota for women in the loans being provided to citizens under different development schemes announced by the government last year. Prime Minister Sharif also said that the establishment of the Dasu hydel project would be Pakistan's largest power production facility generating up to 4,300 megawatts of electricity.

He added that the 4,500 megawatts Bhasha dam would also be constructed which would help eradicate darkness from the country.

Courtesy: Dawn

### Right to information: Transparency website launched

Sehar Nadeem  
BS41 3607

The district government launched a website under the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013 on Wednesday. Sargodha DCO Saqib Manan said the purpose of the website was to provide people access information about government projects. He was addressing a meeting with Punjab Information Commissioner Mukhtar Ahmad Ali and representatives of the CTDI and SP Attaur Rehman. Information Commissioner Mukhtar Ahmad Ali said the government was bound to provide

information to citizens who asked for it. He said people could request information about government departments and projects. He said the information would be delivered within 14 days. He said every government department would set up a Public Information Office and appoint a public information officer (PIO). In case of delay in provision of information, the PIO's two-day salary would be deducted. He said the information about defence, law and order and personal lives of officials would not be made public.

Courtesy: Express Tribune





### Bigger, better: Children's film festival promises fun, learning

Laraib Rajput  
BS38 3345

The upcoming Lahore International Children's Film Festival promises to be the largest in its five-year history as the organisers have so far received 700 submissions from Pakistan and abroad. The event will be held in October or November this year.

An inter-school national film competition will be held for the first time in the sixth edition of the festival.

The Little Art, a non-government organisation, has been holding the festival regularly since 2008. Last year, the festival received 450 submissions. However, the organisation is expecting over

1,000 entries this year as 700 submissions have already been received.

Shoaib Iqbal, founder and director of The Little Art, said, "We are certainly more excited and overwhelmed by the response to our call for submissions this year. Hopefully this time around the festival will be bigger and better." The organisers invited submissions in March and will continue to accept projects until June 30.

The festival was held in Lahore and Karachi last year with a turnout of around 35,000 people. In 2012, it extended to six cities.

In Lahore, the movies were screened at the Defence Housing Authority Cinema and Alhamra Arts Council. "But even that was not enough. So we extended our screenings from January this

*Contd... on Pg .7*



### Back to the movies: 'Punjab government to promote film industry'

Sehar Nadeem  
BS41 3607

The Punjab government is making all-out efforts to revive the film industry and make necessary amendments in the Dramatic Performances Act, 1876, to promote art and culture.

This was said by Punjab Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Culture Rana Mohammad Arshad, while addressing a news conference at Rawalpindi Arts Council (RAC) on Monday. He was speaking to the news media after inaugurating a calligraphy exhibition.

The government is in touch with the film industry association and district-level art and culture committees are being strengthened to achieve the task across the province, he announced. The Punjab Film Censor Board has been reactivated

to prevent objectionable scripts from making it to the screen, he stated.



"The government will do all it can to encourage the production of local films and stage plays." All available resources will be used to promote the country's art and culture at national and international levels, he added. "Tax on cinemas has been abolished to promote the film industry."

Presently, he said, RAC is holding around 24 courses to polish the skills of youth aspiring to excel in art and literature.

*Contd... on Pg.7*

### Amir Liaquat among 100 famous Pakistanis

Saad Saeed  
BS40 3543

Dr Amir Liaquat Hussain has earned a prominent name in the media industry due to his religious and social services which were acknowledged nationally and internationally. After the resounding success of the 2013 'Amaan Ramazan' transmission, he was named among the 500 influential Muslim personalities of the world. Recently, he was listed among the 100 most popular and successful personalities of Pakistan in the book, 'The Famous & Influential 100 Pakistanis' which was published by the famous publisher Universal Oxford Publication.



He was given this honour by a non-partisan research team which was assigned the project of '100 Pakistanis'. According to them, Dr Amir Liaquat has upheld the torch of hope in a Pakistan which has been plagued by pessimism and despondency. He played a prominent role in promoting positive thinking in Pakistani society.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

### Tahira Syed performs in Dallas

Mohsin Akram  
BS44 3994

Pakistan's famous vocalist Tahira Syed made a remarkable performance at a special ghazal evening in Fun Asia Theater Richardson Texas.

The event was hosted by Fun Asia entertainment of Dallas. A large number of prominent members of Dallas and art loving people attended the event.

She presented famous ghazals of her mother as well as her own songs and ghazals. Singer Tahira Syed performed on the request of audience and received accolades from them.



The host of Tahira Syed in Texas, Mayor of Paris Texas Dr. Arjumand Hashmi was also present on this occasion.

A large audience gathered to listen to her on this occasion. The guests and audience expressed their appreciation and said that these are rare occasions when "we see such a performances here in America, which is nothing less than a gift for us."

*Courtesy: ARY News*

**Cont... from pg 1: Innovation teaching styles: Making maths as....**

tive, 46-year-old Jan, is a Stanford graduate and a Karachi Grammar School (KGS) alumnus. He returned to Karachi two years ago with a view of implementing the idea that originated from the global influences he experienced while residing for around 25 years in the United States and United Kingdom. While abroad, he remained involved in the field of technology, education and e-learning for over a decade as well as an adviser and consultant to foreign governments and the United Nations.

This 'revolutionary change' in how education was delivered and received inside the classrooms, and the individuals' independent access to it became the guiding principle around which EDeQUAL was established.

He added that there was a dire need to bring much more concept-based learning into schools at all levels, whether they are top-tier private schools, low-income-neighbourhood schools or the public schools.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 2: Branchless banking: Branching out**

Poor (CGAP) is a global partnership of 34 leading organisations that seek to advance financial inclusion. As CGAP's definition states, branchless banking is all about the financial inclusion of the unbanked, who often belong to the lower-income groups. The role of information and communication technologies is central in this approach.

The basic concept is, for those who cannot or do not go to the bank for logistical or at times even social reasons, the bank comes to their doorstep or at least nearby. Major services on offer:

- (i) Deposits
  - (ii) Withdrawals
  - (iii) Remittance to various cities, where the receiver may not need to have a bank account
  - (iv) Payment of utility bills
  - (v) Payments for products/services provided by vendors who accept e-payments through branchless banking channels (e.g Internet Service Providers)
- In addition to consumer-centric services, there is also

great potential for the government. The government can use branchless banking to make or receive payments from remote areas where physical infrastructure is not present.

A typical branchless banking model is beneficial for the bank, the telco, consumers and the economy as a whole. Below is a simplified diagram of collaboration between a bank and a telco for branchless banking services.

Besides BISP, EOBI in collaboration with NADRA has started paying EOBI benefits through Telenor, utilising their agent network and at NADRA kiosks using smart CNICs without the hassle of waiting in lines. Similar models can be implemented for making payments to farmers, government employees etcetera. In 2013, there were around 4.5 million G2P beneficiaries. It is estimated that at the current growth rate of 75 per cent, all G2P payments could be digitised in the next five years.

*Courtesy: Dawn.com*

**Cont.. from pg 8: Pakistan now part of cricket's 'Big Four'...**

cricket from an extremely precarious position. We have accomplished all our objectives. And I am positive that in the times to come Pakistan

Cricket shall greatly benefit from what PCB has been able to obtain for it today," said PCB chairman Najam Sethi from Melbourne.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

**Cont.. from pg 1: Pakistan wins at the International .....**

regarded by international journalists as the Oscars of the Cookbook Awards.

Speaking about Pakistan's win at the Gourmand Awards, CEO of Markings, Kiran Aman said, "This has been a very proud moment for us as Pakistanis – it is the first time that the work of an independ-

ent publisher from our country has been awarded internationally. It is a great source of pride to have our work recognized by one of the world's most prestigious authorities in cookbooks, winning the Gourmand Award for our first ever dessert based title."

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 1: Steering committee on polio: Over 96,000....**

Coordination (NHSRC), these children are being vaccinated under the Emergency Vaccination Plan (EVP) for internally displaced persons (IDPs) implemented by the federal government.

The EVP was launched along with the Zarb-e-Azb operation and is being headed by the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (Safron) which is working in collaboration with the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa health department.

For this plan, polio vaccines have been provided by the federal Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) from its limited stock for routine immunisation and it vaccination activities are being monitored by the Prime Minister's Monitoring and Coordination Cell for Polio, said the official.

"The aim of the Emergency Vaccination Plan is to vacci-

nate all those 250,000 children, who since 2012 have not been vaccinated against polio due to law and order situation," said the official.

The steering committee during the meeting was informed that according to the emergency plan, in addition to vaccination at PTPs, polio vaccine will be administered at the time of registration to all IDP children missed during transit by the PTPs.

With at-least three rounds of short interval additional doses (SIAD) of OPV, routine immunisation including measles vaccine and vitamin-A will also be administered to all children.

No anti-polio drives were held in North Waziristan since the middle of 2012 and an estimated 2,50,000-plus children in the region had not received a single dose of polio vaccine during this time.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont.. from pg 5: Back to the...**

At the week-long calligraphy exhibition, 50 art pieces by Aftab Ahmed Khan were showcased. The artist is a recipient of the Pride of Performance. The pieces mostly depict verses from the Holy Quran in Nastaleaque and Kofi scripts in Khan's distinct style.

Later, Arshad distributed certificates among students for participating in art competitions including interior, fashion, textile and stained glass designing.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 3: Tractor...**

set to post their worst record in the last seven years.

This dip in tractor sales can partly be attributed to a volatile taxation regime over the last five years.

The tractor industry was one of the sectors that benefited most out of the budget. The reduction in GST is expected to boost sales in coming months where the listed tractor space has gained 4% since budget announcement, outperforming the KSE-100 Index by 6.8% in the process.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*



**Cont... from pg 3: Punjab, Sindh reduce flour price for Ramadan**

down in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) as well when the Consumers will get a discount of Rs2 per kg on flour only at the 170 fair price shops of flour mills across Sindh and at 110 Bachat Bazaars in Karachi.

No reduction has been made for the retail shops in Karachi. However, there would be no limit on lifting flour bags from the mills' fair price shops.

The decision was taken by the PFMA Sindh Chapter on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Mo-

hammad Yousuf.

Talking to Dawn, he said that millers had already informed the Sindh Food Minister about the possible price reduction.

"We have slashed prices on our own without demanding subsidy from the government," PFMA Sindh chief claimed, adding that the association had already asked the government not to announce any Ramazan package since the millers have already planned a relief package.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

**Cont... from pg 4: From a local shoemaker to international ...**

With no funds and just a dream in hand, Ali approached Qasim, his family friend, to join him as a partner for this venture. They entered into various competitions to see if they could win a grant and in September 2011, they won \$10,000 by Pasha Social Innovation Fund, a programme sponsored by Google.

Now they could buy raw materials and supply them to Husain's cobbler shop: however, things still weren't easy for them. They were living in hostels that were far away from each other and they had no funds for office space.

For three months they held meetings with suppliers at a KFC branch in Lahore and in

June 2012, Markhor launched its website.

Stars aligned and the order was successful, soon he came to Pakistan to start up a programme with the Punjab Government in collaboration with Google and featured Markhor as their Innovation Hero. In October 2012, Plan9 (an organisation that helps small businesses grow) opened up and selected Markhor as their first team.

Markhor is the national animal of Pakistan and an endangered species. "We decided to change the name because we think of our product as iconic and endangered as the animal.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 5: Bigger, Better: Children's Film**

year and took them to individual schools," Iqbal said. Fifteen such events were held last year. Over 15,000 people attended these screenings, he said. This year, the organisers hope to screen the films in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore.

The highlight of this year's festival will be an inter-school national filmmaking competition. Iqbal said that 20 submissions had been received

for it so far. "We want to help children explore films as a new medium of creativity and expression," he said. The participants from Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi will take part in the competition.

The festival organisers hoped that the Punjab government and the city district government would support them. Iqbal said that the event would be held in October or November this year.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 3: ATM transactions increase 5.9 %**

internet banking, mobile phone banking and call centres. Out of the existing 11,153 total bank branches, 10,601 are providing Real Time Online Banking services. Total RTOB transactions constituted a volume share of 23.9% and a value share of 89.2% in total e-banking transactions.

As of March 31, 24 banks are offering internet banking services, 13 are offering mobile phone banking and 22 are offering the call centre banking facility to customers for bill payments, fund transfers and other banking services. During the current quarter, 68 POS machines have been added in the network bringing their total number to 33,802.

Internet banking constituted a volume share of 4.4% and a value share of 2.1%, mobile phone banking constituted a volume share of 1.6% and a value share of 0.2% and call centre banking constituted a volume share of 0.2% and a value share of 0.03% in total e-banking transactions.

"In the composition of plastic cards, debit cards have the highest percentage share of over 90.6% followed by credit cards with 5.5% and ATM-only cards with 3.9% share as of the end of the last quarter. The total number of plastic cards showed a quarterly increase of 8.6% a year-on-year increase 11.7%", the SBP said.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

**Cont... from pg 1: Mohsin Hamid's novel shortlisted....**

very happy to see my excellent German translator Eike Schönfeld being recognised for his work on the novel as well," said Hamid.

A jury of literature critics, translators, culture journalists, and authors reviewed the nominated books. A total of six books, including "How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia," have been shortlisted for the prize.

The criteria for the award are to select the year's best work of fiction translated into German, revealing how world literature is evolving..

The International Literature Award is accompanied by €25,000 for the winning author and €10,000 for the winning translator.

The winner will be announced later next week and the short-listed authors and winners will be honoured at a ceremony in Berlin on July 3.

Hamid is also the author of the novels 'Moth Smoke' and 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist'. His book, 'How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia', also won Italy's Terzani Prize for International Literature last month.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

**Cont... from pg 2: Balochistan to boost spending on security ...**

The annual development plan (ADP) is also higher by 16pc. It has announced several financial and other benefits for the provincial government employees, including 10pc ad hoc raise in salaries and pensions. The government hopes to create about 4,000 new jobs as around 9pc of population is estimated to be unemployed.

The minimum wages have been fixed at Rs10,000 a month and its violation will be

treated as a cognisable offence.

Development of agriculture, rural areas, fisheries, livestock, irrigation and mining and reduction in poverty through interventions like the Rural Poultry Self-Support Programme are also among top priorities of the government to boost the production sector to woo private investment and create jobs.

*Courtesy: Dawn*



## Softball: Pakistan to host international event

Mirza Bilal Asad Baig  
BS41 3603

The Softball Federation of Pakistan (SFP) is planning to hold international events in order to prepare for the 2016 International Softball Federation (ISF) Women's World Softball Championship.



Secretary SFP Haider Khan Lehri informed The Express Tribune that the first phase of the preparations will get underway from September 10 to 13 this year in the South & West Asia Women's Cup.

The official added that softball is a big sport in the international arena and the national federation is trying to promote it in the country while simultaneously establishing strong relations with the ISF.

"We have been talking to the international federation about organising more tours of other countries in Pakistan and vice versa, as it will help us form a strong national team."

According to Lehri, Softball Confederation of Asia (SCA) President Dato Low Beng Choo will also visit Pakistan during the tournament.

Hosting the South & West Asia Women's Cup championship would cost Rs5 million, for which the SFP have submitted a request to the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB).

"If the grant doesn't get approved, then we will self-finance the championship as we want to start international sporting events in Pakistan." When asked about trials for the selection of the team to appear in September's event, Lehri said the same squad selected for last month's national championship would play until 2016.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

## Asif, Sajjad reach knock out stage of IBSF 6-Reds Snooker Championship

Mohsin Akram  
BS44 3994

Sharm-el-Sheikh: Both the Pakistan cueists have qualified for the knock out stage of International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF) team snooker championship being played at Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt.

Pakistan's former world amateur snooker champion Mohammad Asif booked his berth for knockout stage of the event by defeating Alaa Elsaed of Egypt. He faced



only single defeat from Indian Dharminder Lilly.

Mohammad Sajjad, in group M, has won all 4 of his matches he played and qualified for knockout stage.

Total 172 cueists from 29 countries have been participating in the championship. They have been divided in 32 groups.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Afridi constructs hospital for the needy

Nimra Arshad  
BS40 3541

Pakistani all rounder Shahid Afridi has constructed a hospital in his father's name in Kohat that will provide free treatment to the needy people especially mothers and their children, ARY News reports.



The hospital is named "Sahibzada Fazal Rehman Memorial Hospital".

In a function organized by Shahid Afridi Foundation, he said that poverty can be eradicated if everyone shows honesty.

The firebrand cricketer said that he will organize a Twenty20 cricket match in Lahore to help the people displaced by the military offensive in North Waziristan.

Afridi also said that he did not seek help from the government for his charity works. He added that his foundation seeks to promote education, health and sports.

*Courtesy: Express Tribune*

## Pakistan now part of cricket's 'Big Four': PCB

Saad Saeed  
BS40 3543

Pakistan now have the opportunity to have a major say in the affairs of international cricket after securing considerable concessions from the 'Big Three' India, Australia and England in the backdrop of the ICC's Annual Conference in Melbourne, Australia, DawnNews reported.

Pakistan will now receive the most in terms of percentage of revenue after the Big Three, from the ICC in the next eight years from broadcasting and other rights on ICC fixtures, effectively now making them part of a 'Big Four', the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said in a press release.

According to the PCB, India has officially turned the MoUs signed earlier this year with regard to six series between the two nations, four of these to be hosted by the PCB in



the UAE or Pakistan with mutual consent, into binding agreements straightaway. The six tours are now part of the Future Tours Programme and are to be played from 2015 to 2023.

Another major 'achievement', as the PCB puts it, is ICC confirming that the president of the global body will be from Pakistan with effect from June 2015.

Sources say the agreements have been made possible because of Pakistan's non-opposition to India's N Srinivasan being elected as the new chairman of the ICC.

The PCB had organized itself and planned to get maximum advantage for Pakistan

*Contd.... on Pg.6*