

**Earthquake jolts KP**  
**F.P. Report**  
PESHAWAR: A 5.9 magnitude earthquake struck several cities in KP on Thursday morning, causing panic among residents. The tremors were felt in Malakand, Upper Dir, Shangla, Swat, and other surrounding areas, with no immediate reports of casualties or significant damage. The tremors were felt across various regions, including Kohat, Parachinar, Hangu, and Orakzai districts.

# Pakistan, Mongolia agree to form JMC

## PM terms successful Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting as major diplomatic win for Pakistan

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Mongolia on Thursday agreed to form a Joint Ministerial Commission to enhance cooperation in trade, tourism, agriculture and mining sectors, and an inter-parliamentary union to expand the bilateral parliamentary ties.

The bilateral relations were discussed in a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his Mongolian counterpart Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene here on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting, according to a PM Office press release. In the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz suggested that both sides should explore new avenues of mutually advantageous cooperation with a particular focus on trade, investment, people-to-people contacts and connections.

He offered the Mongolian side to send civil servants to training institutions in Pakistan and also proposed to declare 2025 as the year of Pakistan-Mongolia Friendship to bolster the brotherly ties between the two countries. Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly welcomed Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene and noted that his visit marked a new chapter in the history of the bilateral relationship, defined by mutual respect, goodwill and amity.

Felicitating him on his re-election as the Prime Minister of Mongolia,

Shehbaz Sharif stated he looked forward to working closely with Oyun-Erdene in the days ahead to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries. Oyun-Erdene warmly felicitated the prime minister on the successful conduct of the SCO CHG Meeting and appreciated Pakistan's leadership role as SCO CHG Chair. He reciprocated that Mongolia shared Pakistan's desire to build stronger and closer bilateral relations through joint efforts and collaboration. The Mongolian prime minister also planted a sapling in the lawn of the Prime Minister's House.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hailed the successful hosting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Heads of Government meeting as a major achievement for Pakistan on diplomatic front.

"Pakistan's diplomatic profile further strengthened internationally after successfully hosting this summit," the prime minister said while addressing a banquet organized in honor of senators of the government allied parties here. Congratulating the political parties' leaders on successful conclusion of the SCO summit in Pakistan, the prime minister said all relevant institutes worked together as a team in this regard.

He said before the SCO meeting, visit of the Chinese Premier also proved to be very successful. He specifically mentioned the crucial role of Deputy Prime Minister and

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in making the event successful.

He expressed confidence in the country's ongoing economic recovery and stability, asserting that the government will respond to its political opponents through tangible development and prosperity in the country. The prime minister said due to the government's prudent policies, the country's economy had stabilized and it achieved the 2025 targets before time in 2024.

The prime minister said the inflation rate witnessed a quick decline in very short time. He said the government allied political parties worked diligently to ensure economic stability by setting aside their political interests. "You have all sacrificed your politics and worked hard, the results are economic stability and diplomatic successes," the prime minister conveyed to the leaders of coalition parties in the Senate.

He said all political parties and the people had made sacrifices to help the country overcome difficulties. "All political parties and institutions are working together for the national development," he added. He said foreign remittances have also been witnessing consistent increase for last several months which reflected the confidence of the overseas Pakistanis on the incumbent government. Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, DPM Ishaq Dar, and government allied parties's senators attended the event.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif exchanging views with Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani at a banquet organized in honour of senators.

## Constitutional package bill to be tabled in Senate today: Irfan

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Parliamentary Leader in Senate Irfan Siddiqui said on Thursday that the bill on contentious constitutional package would be tabled in the upper house of the parliament on Friday (today) after "three parties reached consensus on a comprehensive draft".

Siddiqui, speaking to journalists in the parliament after attending a special committee meeting on constitutional reforms, detailed that a final draft would be finalised by Friday evening and presented before the Senate in today's session. He said that Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar gave a briefing on the draft in the meeting, adding that JUI-F Senator Kamran Murtaza also expressed optimism about the proposed amendments.

According to Siddiqui, 90% of the work on the amendments has been completed, and hopefully, the package will be tabled in the Senate on Friday. Substantial progress has been made on the proposed constitutional amendments package, with just a few finishing touches needed, he added.

Siddiqui's assertion referred to the coalition government's claims of securing 'magic number' in parliament as the two-thirds majority required to pass the constitutional amendment. Signaling a consensus between the ruling PML-N, the PPP, and the JUI-F, he said religious-political party chief Fazlur Rehman had shown a "general agreement" on all matters.

He said that "it is a matter of give and take" and the coalition government has also accepted recommendations from the politico-religious party. Those points which drew reservations from major parties have been precisely modified [in today's meeting], he added. The PML-N senator claimed that they saw a "very comprehensive draft" in the meeting today in which judiciary-related constitutional reforms were added.

## Tarar accuses PTI of poisoning political culture

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, on Thursday accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of poisoning political traditions and culture through a well-organized campaign.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said the country's political traditions were tainted in the past, but PTI has poisoned them through a specific campaign. He expressed regret, stating that it was unfortunate the opposition members lacked the tolerance to listen to differing viewpoints.

He said that all political parties in Pakistan participated in the All Parties Conference (APC) to show solidarity with Palestine, except for PTI, which refused to attend. He further alleged that PTI was running a malicious campaign against national institutions and their leadership. He said, no one had taken note of their silence on Goldsmith, who has openly supported Israel and tweeted against the people of Palestine.

He also accused the opposition members of never speaking out against the atrocities committed by Israel against the innocent people of Palestine. Tarar said that with the help of NGOs, the government had sent relief items to Gaza and Lebanon to support the war-ravaged people. He also criticized the PTI for writing letters to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to push Pakistan towards default, orchestrating the May 9 attacks, vandalizing memorials of martyrs, and calling for protests during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit. Despite the PTI efforts, the government successfully conducted the event in Islamabad, he added.

Tarar recalled that although the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had been

political opponents, there was decorum and mutual respect between both parties. He cited how Nawaz Sharif was the first leader to visit the hospital after Benazir Bhutto was martyred, demonstrating respect across political lines. "PTI's founder turned political opposition into enmity," the minister added, stressing that the political tolerance of the PML-N had been perceived as weakness.

He said, when the PTI Chairman was injured after falling from a crane, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif suspended his election campaign and personally visited him at Shaukat Khanum Hospital. "After the elections, Nawaz Sharif himself visited Bani Gala and advocated for working together for the betterment of the country," he added. The minister also recounted how, during Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's imprisonment, he was denied a phone call to his ailing wife. He accused PTI of introducing a culture of dragging women into political disputes, citing the midnight arrest of Faryal Talpur from a hospital and Maryam Nawaz's arrest on false charges in front of her father.

He mentioned how fake cases were filed against the families of Abdul Aleem Khan and Jahangir Khan Tareen, and how Rana Sanaullah was arrested in a fabricated case. Tarar recalled the time when Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif mother passed away, yet a judge insisted on continuing cross-examinations.

"Today, the PTI cries foul, claiming political victimization of women, but they crossed all limits during their tenure," he said. He also accused the PTI of dissolving national and the provincial assemblies and violating the Constitution and the law during their time in power. He also highlighted the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where PTI allegedly abducted and detained its people. "The empty benches here today—were they cleared by the police or Rangers?" he questioned.

## PML-N, PPP withdraw proposal to establish constitutional courts

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: A significant breakthrough has occurred regarding the 26th Constitutional Amendment, as the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have backed away from their stance proposing the establishment of constitutional courts.

According to sources, a special parliamentary committee meeting reached an agreement among government coalition parties and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam

(JUI) on the formation of a constitutional bench. Parliamentary sources revealed that the government and JUI have decided to consult with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on a joint draft, which Maulana Fazlur Rehman will share with PTI leadership.

It may be recalled that on Monday, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that they rejected the government's draft of the constitutional amendment, which could potentially infringe on individual freedoms. He

said that his party had raised objections to the government's draft amendments "that would undermine both judicial and public rights."

However, after discussion with the PPP leadership, many provisions have been withdrawn. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that they rejected the government's draft of the constitutional amendment, which could potentially infringe on individual freedoms. He

## Pak Navy ship Zulfikar seizes narcotics

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) ZULFIQUAR, while participating in Focused Operation HIMALAYAN SPIRIT, successfully interdicted a vessel carrying 1.3 tons of Hashish in the North Arabian Sea. The operation, aimed at disrupting illicit maritime activities, was conducted under the command of the Pakistan Navy, which is currently leading Combined Task Force (CTF) 150.

PNS ZULFIQUAR and PMS KOLACHL, along with US Navy and US Coast Guard ships, patrolled their assigned areas and conducted boarding operations on suspicious fishing boats. Surface assets involved in the focused operations were supported by aerial surveillance from Pakistan Navy aircraft and the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN Carrier Strike Group (CSG) operating in the area. Information regarding suspicious boats was regularly exchanged among the participating units, leading to the interdiction of a vessel by PNS ZULFIQUAR, which was found carrying 1.3 tons of Hashish, valued at approximately 26 million US Dollars.

The Pakistan Navy-led CTF 150's Focused Operation HIMALAYAN SPIRIT was specifically aimed at deterring illicit activities, particularly narcotics smuggling, in the North Arabian Sea.

## SC orders transfer of dam fund to federal govt

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court ordered the transfer of the dam fund to the federal government's public account. The court issued a written order regarding the dam fund case.

On Thursday, the Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a written order regarding the Diamer Bhasha and Mohmand Dams Funds case. The court also ordered the closure of the Supreme Court's account established for the said funds. The court further instructed that a sub-account under the government's public account be created to facilitate the transfer and management of the funds.

The order also stressed that the federal government should expedite the transfer of the funds and manage markup. The court clarified that, whenever required, the funds from the respective account can be used to construct the dams. It is to be recalled that the federal government demanded release of dams funds from the Supreme Court (SC). A four-member bench headed by CJP Qazi Faez Isa heard the Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams funds case today.

Additional Attorney General Amir Rehman informed the court that a miscellaneous application had been filed and dams funds must be handed over to the federal government and Water and Power

## PTI calls for protest today

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has called for a nationwide protest, urging citizens to take to the streets today (Friday). The Chief Minister (CM) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Ali Amin Gandapur, announced that protests will be held in every district and city across the country for the release of PTI founder, party leaders and workers. Gandapur made an appeal to the public, emphasizing the need to stand against what he termed as unconstitutional amendments. He warned that if the nation remains silent today, future generations will suffer the consequences. He added, "We must raise our voices now to protect our rights and the future of our children."

Development Authority (WAPDA). Amir Rehman said that the funds were deposited in the account opened in the State Bank in the supervision of the SC. CJP inquired about the amount of funds collected for dams. Wapda counsel Saad Rasool informed the court that Rs 20 billion was deposited in dams funds.

**Supreme Court proposes of pleas against constitutional amendment:** The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) on Thursday disposed of pleas against proposed constitutional amendment due to eleven hour withdrawal by senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyer Hamid Khan.

A three-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa disposed of joint pleas filed by Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Abid Zuberi and other applicants. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and

Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan were also part of the bench.

It must be noted that six members of Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) along with Balochistan Bar Council (BPC) had approached the apex court against proposed constitutional amendment. When Advocate Hamid Khan sought to withdraw petition, Chief Justice Isa asked him whether he was appointed only to withdraw the application. "Abid Zuberi could have withdrawn the application himself," said the CJP.

The Chief Justice remarked that a second application is also scheduled for hearing with objections. However, Hamid Khan requested "withdrawal of both the applications." It may be noted that on October 12, the Supreme Court of Pakistan constituted a three-member bench to hear the petition against the proposed constitutional amendment.

TEL AVIV (AFP): Israel claimed on Thursday that its forces killed Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar in a Gaza operation, dealing a massive blow to the group it has been fighting since October 7, 2023. "Eliminated: Yahya Sinwar," the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) said in a post on X. The military said that "after a year-long pursuit", soldiers "eliminated Yahya Sinwar ... in an operation in the southern Gaza Strip" on Wednesday. Hamas has not confirmed his death.

"The mass murderer Yahya Sinwar, responsible for the massacre and atrocities of October 7th, was eliminated today by IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) soldiers," Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said in a statement sent to media. Israel earlier said it was checking whether it had successfully "eliminated" Sinwar in a Gaza operation, in what constitutes a massive blow against the group it has been fighting since last year's October 7 attack.

Israel accused Sinwar of masterminding the attack and was hunting him down since the start of the Gaza conflict. Israel's raging military offensive has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, including women and children. Sinwar became the group's new leader after the killing of its former political chief Ismail Haniyeh in

## Hamas leader Sinwar is dead, Israel says

July. Hamas and Iran blame Israel for Haniyeh's killing, but Israel has not commented on it.

Israel's announcement on Sinwar comes weeks after it assassinated Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah in a massive strike in Lebanon, where its military has been waging an offensive since late September. A slew of other Iran-backed commanders have also been killed in recent months. With Hamas hugely weakened more than a year into the Gaza conflict, Sinwar's death deals a major blow to the organisation. In a brief statement, the military earlier said that during "operations in the Gaza Strip, three terrorists were eliminated".

Israeli defence agencies "are checking the possibility that one of the terrorists was Yahya Sinwar. At this stage, the identity of the terrorists cannot be confirmed", the statement added. There was no immediate comment from Hamas. Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said that Israel would hunt down "every terrorist" after the military made its announcement. "We will reach every terrorist and eliminate them," Gallant wrote on social media platform X.

US President Joe Biden was briefed aboard Air Force One while heading to Germany and was being kept informed of developments, a US official said. Israel has been fighting Hamas since the October 7 attack — which resulted in the deaths of 1,206 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of official Israeli figures. Israel's retaliatory campaign in Gaza has killed 42,438 people, mostly civilians, according to data from the health ministry.

Following the attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to crush Hamas and bring home all 251 hostages seized by fighters in their cross-border assault. Israel has since expanded the scope of its operations to Lebanon, where Hamas ally Hezbollah opened a front against Israel by launching low-intensity cross-border strikes that forced tens of thousands of Israelis to flee their homes. Netanyahu has vowed to battle Hezbollah until victory and Israel on Thursday launched strikes on the south Lebanese city of Tyre, where the group and its allies hold sway. Israel also issued evacuation warnings for civilians in part of the

eastern Lebanese Bekaa Valley, a Hezbollah stronghold.

It had earlier struck a Hezbollah target in Syria, according to a war monitor, while Israel's main ally the United States used heavy bombers to hit rebel targets in Yemen. Syria, the Houthis rebels in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza all belong to the "axis of resistance" of groups aligned with Iran, which on October 1 conducted a missile strike on Israel.

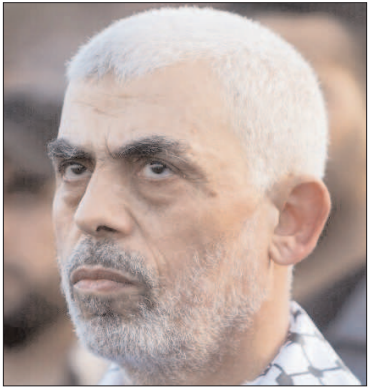
Israel has vowed to retaliate for Iran's strike, sparking concern around the world that what is already a conflict on multiple fronts could morph into an all-out regional conflagration. Iran's Revolutionary Guards chief Hossein Salami on Thursday warned Tehran would hit Israel "painfully" if it attacks Iranian targets. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said the Israeli raid on the Syrian city of Latakia targeted a "weapons depot belonging to Hezbollah".

The Israeli military did not comment on the strike when contacted by AFP. Israel has conducted hundreds of strikes in Syria in recent years,

including multiple recent attacks along the Lebanese border that sought to cut off Hezbollah's main weapons and equipment supply route from Iran to Lebanon. In Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, the United States conducted multiple B-2 bomber strikes on weapon storage facilities, according to the US military and Defence Department.

The Houthis' political bureau said "the American aggression will not pass without a response", and vowed to continue the group's "support and assistance to Gaza and Lebanon". The fighting in Lebanon has left at least 1,373 people dead, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures, though the real toll is likely higher. Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters have been clashing near Lebanon's southern border, where Hezbollah on Thursday said it hit four Israeli tanks with guided missiles.

Rescue workers affiliated with Amal in the southern city of Qana were digging through the rubble of several buildings destroyed in a bombing this week. "More than 15 buildings have been completely



destroyed, total destruction in a neighbourhood in Qana," said Mohammed Nasrallah Ibrahim, one of the rescuers. Israel has faced criticism over its strikes in Lebanon, including from its top arms supplier, the US. The United Nations has also warned about a growing number of attacks on Lebanese healthcare facilities.

A new ambulance was destroyed by an Israeli strike in a southern village last week, volunteer rescue worker Bachir Nakhal told AFP. "We weren't expecting the ambulances ... to get directly targeted or bombed," he said. The Israeli army has accused Hezbollah of using ambulances to transport weapons and fighters, without providing evidence.





# Sindh achieves 27% annual tax revenue target

## F.P. Report

**KARACHI:** The Sindh Excise Department has successfully achieved 27% of its annual tax revenue target in the first quarter. Due to the efforts of Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, the Excise Department collected 55.48 billion rupees in the first three months against a target of 203 billion rupees for the fiscal year.

An important meeting of the Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Department was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. The meeting was attended by Secretary Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Muhammad Saleem Rajput, DG Excise Aurangzeb Akbar Panhoor, DG Narcotics Control Usman Ghani Siddiqui, and other officials.

On the occasion of the meeting, Senior Minister of Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon praised the department's performance for its success in the quarter and provided immediate instructions to further streamline operations.

In the meeting, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon also issued orders to make the motor vehicle tax system online within 15 days.



Additionally, professional tax and excise duty collections, along with other services, were discussed. The meeting also covered manpower augmentation and procedural improvements to enhance the department's capacity and achieve future goals.

Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that the motor vehicle tax system must be made online within 15 days to make the tax process more convenient and efficient for citizens. He stated that the provision of efficient services is the top priority of the Sindh Government, and it must be ensured that people can pay all taxes from the comfort of their homes.

He said that more public priority numbers should be added to attract more participants to the online auction of premium number plates as a means of raising funds for flood victims. Further steps must be taken to ensure the success of the online auction for premium and personalized number plates.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that an awareness campaign should be launched to promote the new systems of the Excise Department and encourage citizen participation. He emphasized that the Government of Sindh is committed to modernizing the tax system and ensuring transparency, efficiency, and convenience for the public.



**QUETTA:** Traffic police official with the help of lifter, lifting a car from no parking area.

## KU student protest continue

## F.P. Report

**KARACHI:** Protests at the University of Karachi have entered their seventh consecutive day, as negotiations between Vice Chancellor Dr. Khalid Iraqi and student leaders collapsed without any resolution.

Thousands of students, united under a student alliance, have launched a strike to voice their grievances over various issues, including exorbitant fee hikes, inadequate transport facilities, deteriorating infrastructure, and security concerns on campus.

The protests, which have paralyzed campus life, saw canteens and other university services shut down as students took to the streets, chanting slogans against the administration. One of the main points of contention is the annual 10% increase in fees and a 50% hike in late fees, which students say is unsustainable given the declining quality of education and services. "We are forced to pay an additional Rs.5,000 in the name of re-admission every year, and yet the infrastructure of the university is falling apart," a student leader explained.

With over 50,000 students enrolled, the University of Karachi is one of the largest educational institutions in Pakistan. However, students argue that the facilities have failed to keep up with the rising enrollment. The university operates only 24 transport "points" (buses) for the entire student body, making daily commutes difficult for many.

## KMU holds community health nursing Project

## F.P. Report

**PESHAWAR:** Khyber Medical University (KMU) Institute of Nursing Sciences (INS) organized a Community Health Nursing Project with the goal of empowering communities through the promotion of health education. The project emphasized key areas such as immunization, reproductive health, family planning, and adolescent well-being, highlighting the critical role of community health nursing in addressing these fundamental health issues.

The event was inaugurated by KMU Registrar Inamullah Wazir, Dr. Ejaz Hussain, Director of KMU-INS Dr. Najma, and Lecturer Zeenat Bibi from Post Graduate College of Nursing (PGCN) Hayatabad, Peshawar.

The dignitaries visited various project stalls where students showcased their work. Guests engaged with students, asking questions and providing them with an opportunity to discuss their projects, fostering an active learning environment. The

# ICCBS r



project supervisor and  
KMU-INS                      Lecturer

Hammad, in his opening remarks, outlined the objectives of the initiative, stressing the importance of community health nurses in improving public health outcomes. Students emphasized the core values of

community health nursing, including empowerment, education, and access to health services.

Empowerment aimed to encourage individuals and communities to take control of their health, while education focused on providing accurate health information and resources. The event also highlighted the importance of immunization,

which plays a vital role in disease prevention and promoting community health. Reproductive health services and education were recognized as key to promoting safe practices, while family planning methods were seen as essential for improving family health.

Discussions also centered on adolescent well-being, addressing the specific health challenges faced by this age group, and promoting healthy lifestyle choices. The event concluded with recognition of the students' and faculty's efforts. The distinguished guests appreciated the initiative and commended the students' dedication to promoting health education.

## ICCBS raises concerns over meeting of Selection Board

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaheen, Director of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) at the University of Karachi raised concerns over the meeting of

the biased Selection Board held for the appointment of the new ICCBS Director

Speaking at a meeting with ICCBS officials on Thursday, she clarified that the two candidates Prof Farzana Shaheen and Prof Shabana Simjee appeared on

the selection board to record their protest on the bias of selection board members, and left the board without giving interviews.

It is important to note that two members of the selection board are also adjunct or visiting faculty at the ICCBS.



**حکومت پاکستان (وزارت داخلہ)**  
**نیشنل ایف ایس اینڈ ریسٹر سروسز کمیشن (نارڈرا)**



## نوٹس بوجہ غیر حاضری

آپ کا مکان نام (جنیٹر/اگر جیکبہ) ای ڈی نمبر **71260**، **وزارت خان** (پتہ: پتہ چارشل، ڈاک خانہ، مارف جھیل، ملتان) پر  
**روز 26-July-2024** سے اپنی ڈیوٹی سے بغیر اطلاع واپس آگئی اجازت جاری، افسانہ مسلسل نمبر  
 حاضر ہیں۔

گھر پر دستخط: (2) **نواز کمال سہیل**: **RHO/NADRA/Disp/08/HR/71260/First Notice**  
**Dated : 30 - Aug - 2024** اور دو نم ڈیوٹی نکال نمبر  
**24-Sep-2024** **RHO/NADRA/Disp/08/HR/71260/Second Notice** **Dated:**  
 روزے پڑھنے کی غرض سے اور اپنی غیر حاضری کی وجہ سے کرنے کی اجازت کی درخواست کی ہے جس کی آپ نے قبول کرنا یا رد کرنا  
 عمل میں لایا جائے گا۔ اگر ایجنڈہ روزہ (کارروائی اور اجلاس) **2020** کی سرکاری خلاف ورزی کے ضمن میں آتا ہے۔ آپ کو پڑھنے کی اجازت کی  
 جاتی ہے کہ آپ نے ان اجلاس کی ڈیوٹی پڑھنے میں اور پوری اپنی غیر حاضری کی وجہ سے چھٹی چاہ کر لیں۔ یہ صورت ہوگی کہ اگر  
 ہوگی اگر ایجنڈہ روزہ (کارروائی اور اجلاس) **2020** کے تحت یہ طریقہ کار جاری کیا جائے گا کہ آپ کو اجازت سے یہ طریقہ کار  
 جائے گا۔



**ڈائریکٹر جنرل (مجاز انیس)**

**PID(1)2662/24**

وکیل علیہ افسانہ ایف ایس اینڈ ریسٹر سروسز کمیشن- B-5 قریب جات آباد پشاور  
 فون نمبر: **051-8815862**

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# PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

## پاکستان ایئرپورٹس اتھارٹی

### TENDER NOTICE (REVERSE PROCUREMENT)

### BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY AT BACHA KHAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PESHAWAR

Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) is inviting tenders from registered companies/firms/joint ventures/sole proprietors in accordance with the criteria for eligibility of bidders as described in detail in tender terms & conditions on a single-stage, two-envelope basis i.e. Technical & Financial offers for the award of the following concessions at Bacha Khan International Airport (BKIAF), Peshawar.

S. No.	NAME OF CONCESSION	RESERVE PRICE (in PKR P.M.)	LICENSE PERIOD	TIMINGS & CONTACT PERSON'S DETAILS	LAST DATE OF PURCHASE OF TENDER DOCUMENT	TENDER FEE (Non-refundable)	DATE, TIME & VENUE OF SUBMISSION	DATE, TIME & VENUE OF OPENING
1.	Establishment & Operation of Foreign Currency Exchange Counters inside International Briefing Area and International Arrival Lounge	1,493,400/- (Fourteen Lakh, Ninety Three Thousand and Four Hundred Rupees)	Five (5) years	0900 hours to 1700 hours on working days  Sr. Dy. Director Commercial PAA BKIAF, Peshawar 091-9211517	04 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024	Rs. 5,000/- (Five Thousand Rupees only) for each concession	05 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 at 1100 hours C.O.O./APM Office BKIAF, Peshawar	05 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 at 1130 hours C.O.O./APM Office BKIAF, Peshawar
2.	Establishment & Operation of Rent-a-Car Service	1,443,100/- (Fourteen Lakh, Forty Three Thousand and One Hundred Rupees)					05 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 at 1500 hours C.O.O./APM Office BKIAF, Peshawar	05 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 at 1530 hours C.O.O./APM Office BKIAF, Peshawar

For detailed Tender Notice, kindly visit: [www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk) & [www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk).

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# FAZAIA DEGREE COLLEGE, PESHAWAR

## VACANCY FOR VICE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHING FACULTY

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<b>Subject Teachers: Urdu</b> (Senior Section)	03			
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- Only shortlisted candidates would be called for the interview & TA/DA will not be admissible.
- Concealment of any fact or information may lead to strict disciplinary action, even after selection.
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# Saif flays statement of Azma Bukhari against media

Raises concern over ‘abduction’ of Zain Qureshi’s wife

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations Barrister Dr. Saif, issued a strong statement in response to Uzma Bukhari’s press conference expressing disappointment over the Punjab government’s focus on blaming PTI rather than investigating the actual incident of Punjab College. He criticized the administration for failing to bring the real culprits to justice, while students protesting for their rights were subjected to violence.

Barrister Dr. Saif called on Uzma Bukhari and the Punjab administration to stop what he referred to as “pampering” of Maryam Nawaz instead of focusing on conducting a transparent investigation into the incident. He pointed out that it was the Punjab police who used force against students seeking justice.

He further accused the federal and Punjab governments of promoting a culture of violence and confrontation, which, according to him, the entire country is witnessing. Dr. Saif also disclosed that just yesterday, the “illegitimate” government abducted the wife of PTI MNA Zain Qureshi, calling it yet another troubling episode.

Dr. Saif condemned the continuous violations of citizens’ privacy by the federal and Punjab governments, particularly regarding the sanctity of homes and personal space. He also criticized the PML-N leadership, accusing them of holding “false press conferences in broad daylight” to distort the truth.

Concluding his statement, Barrister Dr. Saif pointed out the Sharif family’s long history of human rights violations, a record he claimed is well-known to the public.

Meanwhile, Advisor to Chief Minister for Information and Public

Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has expressed deep concern over the recent abduction of PTI MNA Zain Qureshi’s wife adding that the kidnapping, intended to intimidate and threaten, represents the peak of fascism, an act unprecedented in its severity.

Barrister Dr. Saif further criticized the Sharif family, accusing them of relying on state oppression to maintain power. He emphasized that the remnants of Nawaz Sharif’s political career would be buried by none other than his own family members, particularly Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz.

He condemned the federal and Punjab governments as illegitimate, accusing them of routinely violating the constitution, law, and human rights. Dr. Saif warned that the Form-47-based government is secretly conspiring against the Constitution of Pakistan. He highlighted

concerns over unconstitutional amendments being made to undermine democracy in the country.

Dr. Saif affirmed that PTI’s leadership and workers would mount both legal and political resistance against any such amendments. “We will not allow anyone to tamper with the Constitution of Pakistan,” he asserted.

Furthermore, Barrister Dr. Saif condemned the restrictions placed on PTI Chairman Imran Khan, labeling the ban on visits from his legal team, family, and other associates as a severe violation of human rights. He added that this prohibition is fueling uncertainty across the country.

Barrister Dr. Saif stated that the illegitimate government, established through conspiracies, will be held accountable for its oppression. He reiterated that this group, enjoying power through lies and deceit, is unfit to represent the people of Pakistan.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi unveiling the plaque to inaugurate the squash court at Islamia College Peshawar.

# Special committee discusses KP House Islamabad incident

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Special Committee of the Provincial Assembly, under the chairmanship of Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Munir Hussain Laghmani, convened its third meeting on Thursday to deliberate on the incident at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, Islamabad.

The meeting was attended by MPAs Ifitikhar Ali Mashwani, Muhammad Arif Shafiullah Jan, Johar Muhammad, Asif Khan, Ahmed Kundi, Adnan Khan, and Muhammad Nisar, alongside representatives from the Home Department, Police,

Communications and Works, and the Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shah Faisal Utmankhail. Special Assistant to Chief Minister for Prisons, Humayun Khan, also participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, the members unanimously condemned the attack on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, describing it as an assault on the federal unit and a violation of provincial autonomy.

The committee expressed concerns over the federal government’s indifference towards the incident and discussed the possibility of initiating legal proceedings against the responsible individuals or institutions.

It was decided that the Law Department would be approached to seek legal redress for the damages incurred at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House.

The committee chairperson, Munir Hussain Laghmani, emphasized that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, Islamabad, should not be referred to as FATA House, as the ownership of the premises has shifted to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government following the merger of the tribal districts.

He directed the relevant authorities to submit a clear and comprehensive documentary report on the ownership status of the property.

In addition, MPA Ahmed Kundi stressed the

need for presenting of financial data relating to damages occurred at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, Islamabad, covering the period from October 5 to October 15.

The Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa informed the committee that necessary legal documentation has been prepared in light of the Chief Minister’s directives.

It is worth noting that this Special Committee was constituted under Rule 194 of the Provincial Assembly Procedure and Conduct of Business Rules 1988, and this marks the third meeting of the committee formed to seek report of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House incident.

# PHC declares detention orders under 3MPO unconstitutional

### Humayan Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad has declared the detention of banned Pashtun Tahafuz Movement Swabi General Secretary Sikander Ali under Section 3 of Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) as unconstitutional and illegal while ordered his release, on Thursday.

The counsel Daras Khan advocate argued that Sikander Ali was arrested on 4th October for campaigning to participate in Pakhtun Qaumi Jirga at District Khyber. The petitioner was arrest under 3MPO on October 4 violates Articles 19 and 10 of the Constitution.

The lawyer further argued that no evidence links Sikander Ali to anti-

state activities. Therefore, his detention under 3MPO should be declared illegal, the counsel stated.

PHC’s divisional bench accepted the petition of Sikander Ali against detention under 3MPO was declared illegal. The court ordered his release from jail while directed to submit a surety bond of Rs. 300,000 to the relevant DC.

**PHC orders appointment of PST otherwise to place COC charges**

A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad ordered relevant authorities to issue appointment letter to female candidate named Samira Ibrahim for Primary School Teacher in Chak Hoti, Mardan, within 15 days, otherwise appear for charging under Contempt of Court on 6th November, on Thursday.

The counsel Akhunzada

Ahmed Saeed advocate argued that the petitioner named Samira applied for the PST post in Union Council Chak Hoti area of Mardan district. She was on the waiting list based on merit. Despite a three-month wait, authorities failed to appoint her, the lawyer added.

The counsel informed that Peshawar High Court ordered her appointment in 2023, citing merit. Advocate General’s office appealed, but the Supreme Court ruled that the decision was final. Despite this, Samira’s appointment was not made which lies in the jurisdiction of contempt of court.

PHC directed the Additional Advocate General to ensure Samira’s appointment letter is issued within 15 days otherwise the relevant authorities to appear before court on 6th November to face contempt charges.

# Journalists stage walkout from Assembly

PESHAWAR (APP): The Journalists staged walkout from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly proceedings in protest over the delayed start of the session, which failed to commence on time as scheduled.

The walkout led by President Press Gallery Gulzar Khan and General Secretary Rasool Dawar highlighted ongoing frustrations regarding transparency and accountability in the assembly’s operations.

They said that the assembly proceedings were always starting 2 to 4 hours delayed on daily basis that not only waste the precious time of journalists but facing difficulties to file news on time.

Media persons emphasized the importance of punctuality for maintaining public trust and facilitating timely reporting on legislative matters.

The walkout aimed to draw attention to the need for improved adherence to schedules, reflecting broader concerns about the functioning of assembly proceedings.

The journalists end their walkout after giving surety by ministers and chair Deputy Speaker Suraya Bibi.

# Govt making efforts to solve labours problems : Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Labor, Fazal Shakoor Khan has said that government is making incessant efforts to solve problems of labors and provide them basic amenities of life.

He was chairing a meeting to discuss problems and issues of labor community here on Thursday. The meeting was also attended by Director Labor, Vice Commissioner Social Security Institution and representatives of various labor organizations.

The minister listened to the problems of labor community and directed concerned authorities to devise a plan to resolve them.

He said that government is not oblivious to the problems of labors adding that he would utilize his capabilities to facilitate labors.

He also directed labor department to develop a liaison with representatives of labor organizations and invite their suggestions before initiating projects relating to welfare of labors.

# Minister announces interest-free loans to boost livestock sector

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Minister for Livestock, Fisheries, and Cooperatives, Mr. Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai, has announced that interest-free loans will be provided to livestock farmers and cattle herders. This initiative is aimed at supporting small-scale farmers, encouraging investment in the livestock sector, and improving productivity.

The minister made these remarks while presiding over a review meeting on the current projects and future plans of the Livestock, Fisheries, and Cooperatives Department. The meeting was attended by Secretary Livestock, Fisheries, and Cooperatives Department, Mr. Fakhr Alam Khan, Director General Livestock Extension, Dr. Asaf Khan, Director General Livestock Research, Dr. Ijaz Ali, Director Livestock Merged Districts, Dr. Abdul Waheed Wazir, and Registrar Cooperatives, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq, among other officials.

During the meeting, Dr. Asaf Khan provided updates on various projects and initiatives within the Livestock

Extension. He informed the participants that discussions are ongoing with banks to facilitate the provision of interest-free loans to cattle herders. The government will bear the cost of the project, and the principal loan amount will be repayable in easy installments.

Dr. Ijaz Ali, Director General Livestock Research, highlighted the ongoing research on cattle and poultry diseases. He noted that Livestock Research Centers, equipped with modern facilities, have been established in Peshawar, Abbottabad, Chitral, Swat, Kohat, and D.I. Khan to enhance research capabilities.

Minister Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai emphasized the importance of research in the fisheries sector, calling for enhanced efforts to increase fish breeding, production, and disease prevention. He also directed relevant authorities to take necessary steps to revive the Cooperative Bank to further support the agriculture and livestock sectors. Dr. Ijaz Ali further informed the meeting about steps taken toward digitalizing the livestock sector. He highlighted the introduction of an animal identification and tracking system, which will improve livestock management and monitoring across the province.



# Three more matches decided in PPC Media Cricket League

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the aegis of Peshawar Press Club with the support of DHA Peshawar and RMI three more matches in the ongoing Media Cricket League have been decided. PPC Lions PPC Spider and PPC Sultan emerged victoriously.

The first match of the day was between PPC Lions and PPC United played at Gymkhana Cricket Ground PPC Lions defeated PPC United by five wickets. United won the toss and chose to bat first scoring 63 runs in the allotted eight overs.

Kashif scored 10 runs while Shahid contributed seven. Qari Zia and Fida Adeel took two wickets each while Haq Nawaz and Ihsan picked up one wicket each.

In response Lions chased down the target with five wickets in hand. Haq Nawaz top-scored with 18 runs including two sixes while Asad added 17 runs also hitting two sixes. For United Wajid took three wickets and Shehzada Fahad claimed two. Haq Nawaz was named Man of the Match.

The guest of honor General Secretary of Khyber Union, Imran Yusufzai, presented medals to the standout performers.

In the second match PPC Spiders won the toss and opted to bat first posting 62 runs for the loss of six wickets. Khurram top-scored with 23 runs hitting two fours and two sixes while Asad added 10 and Arsalan chipped in with nine runs.

Waqar Ahmed took two wickets while Naem, Waheed and Zafar claimed one wicket each. In reply Spiders comfortably chased the target in just three overs without losing any wickets. Waqar Ahmed

was the star of the innings scoring an unbeaten 49 runs which included six sixes.

Zafar contributed nine runs. Waqar Ahmed was awarded Man of the Match. Senior journalist Shahabuddin the guest of honor presented the Man of the Match medal.

The final match of the day saw PPC Sultan take on PPC Dolphins. Dolphins batted first and posted 43 runs for the loss of six wickets.

Amir Muawiyah scored 13 runs For Sultan Riaz Shahid was the standout bowler taking three wickets for just 11 runs. In response, Sultan chased

down the target losing only one wicket. Hazbullah top-scored with 20 runs while Sunny remained unbeaten on 11. Riaz Shahid was awarded Man of the Match for his excellent bowling performance.

The guest of honor for this match was General Secretary of the Sports Writers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shahid Afridi who was accompanied by Sports Committee Chairman Abid Khan.

In today’s fixtures, PPC Zalmi will face PPC Eagles in the first match while PPC Darवेश will take on PPC Gladiators in the second match.



# Anti-encroachment drive in Peshawar Dozens of illegal structures demolished

### Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR- In a coordinated effort, the Peshawar District Administration, along with the Peshawar Development Authority (PDA), carried out a large-scale operation against illegal constructions and encroachments in the Karkhano area, demolishing dozens of unlawful structures.

The operation was led by Deputy Commissioner Sarmad Saleem Akram and conducted under the directives of the provincial government.

To ensure the operation proceeded smoothly and without incident, a substantial police force was

deployed. Heavy machinery was used to demolish the illegal constructions, and several hazardous and illegally sold medicines were seized and subsequently destroyed.

In addition, 20 individuals were arrested for obstructing the operation and for being involved in the unlawful encroachments. Legal action against the arrested persons is now underway.

Deputy Commissioner Sarmad Saleem Akram stated that the encroachers had occupied roads and sidewalks, causing significant inconvenience to pedestrians and disrupting traffic flow.

The joint operation

with the PDA successfully cleared these illegal structures.

Sarmad Saleem emphasized that the campaign against encroachments across all areas of Peshawar will continue indiscriminately, and those attempting to re-establish illegal constructions will face severe legal consequences.

The district administration has reiterated its commitment to ensuring public safety by taking strict measures against such illegal practices. Citizens are urged to report any unlawful activities to the relevant authorities to help maintain law and order in the city.

# Secy HED assures redressal Islamia Collegiate issues



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Secretary Higher Education Department (HED) Captain (Retired) Kamran Ahmed Afridi assured the Islamia Collegiate School,

Teaching Staff Association to resolve their issues on a priority basis, on Thursday.

This he assured to a four-member delegation led by Islamia Collegiate School (TSA) President Kafeel Ahmed Khalil

during a meeting held at Secretary’s HED office.

The delegation included Vice President Khalilur-Rehman, General Secretary Muhammad Shehzad, and Executive Member Alamgir Khan.

Islamia Collegiate TSA demanded representation in Syndicate and Senate as well as restoration of the school’s prestige and other concerns related to the school’s operations.

The secretary Captain (Retired) Kamran Ahmed Afridi promised full support and cooperation. He committed to resolving the issues on a priority basis. The delegation thanked the Secretary Higher Education for his time and assurance.





## In brief

### 40 sheep killed on railway track Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: More than 40 sheep and goats were killed when their herd was hit by a train in Hakimabad area of Nowshera district, local administration informed on Thursday. Locals said the stray dogs were chasing the herd pushing it towards the railway track which resulted in the mishap and deaths of so many animals. They said owners of the goats and sheep have faced huge financial losses and demanded monetary assistance from the government. The locals also complained that bodies of the dead animals were still laying alongside the railway track, stinking the area and causing environmental hazards. They also demanded removal of stray dogs and other wild animals from the area that were posing threat to people and domestic animals. The railways police and administration also paid a visit to the site to evaluate the losses and ascertain the causes of the mishap.

### Accused arrested in Tarbela F.P. Report

TARBELA: In a drop scene of a heist in the power station house of Tarbela Dam, police on Thursday claimed to have arrested the main accused, the security advisor of the station. Police said unknown accused had stolen precious equipment, wires and other gadgets worth millions of rupees from the power station house of Tarbela Dam. An inquiry was initiated into the case while the police were also working on scientific lines to arrest the perpetrators as it was a matter of grave concern. Police said the tehsil security advisory committee in its inquiry had declared the security advisor, Inspector Nasrullah Khan as a security risk. Police said the suspect was arrested and during initial interrogation he confessed to committing the station power house heist and scores of other crimes including another big theft in 2009. Police said the accused also used to receive hundreds of thousands of rupees from the illegal fishermen. Hoping for further revelations during interrogation from the accused, police said recovery of the stolen goods from the power house was expected within the next 24 hours.

### Time to fight malnutrition F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: The seminar and awareness walk held at Agricultural University sub-campus Toba Tek Singh presided over by the Principal of the institution Prof. Dr. Zia ur Rehman. Deputy Director (Operations) Punjab Food Authority Muhammad Adnan Haider participated in the seminar as special guest, on Thursday. Faculty members, students and people from civil society also participated in the seminar and walk. Principal Professor Dr. Zia ur Rehman said that World Food Day is celebrated globally on October 16 every year. According to a survey, 44% of children are malnourished. The main objective of World Food Day is to address challenges like food security, food safety, poor nutrition and highlight the importance of safe and balanced diet. Punjab Food Authority and Agriculture University sub-campus Toba Tek Singh in collaboration with the nutrition program in educational institutions is going on successfully. Deputy Director (Operations) Muhammad Adnan Haider said that 733 million people in the world lack access to food while 2.8 billion people eat an unbalanced and unhealthy diet.

# By-polls on LG vacant seats to be held on 20th

## F.P. Report

SHANGLA: The district election commission office Shangla issued election schedule for by-election on 20th October, 2024. Amongst the 28 Union Council of district Shangla, 3 Union Councils as Union Council Khwar Kaley Lilownai, Union Council Barn Khowrgai and Union Council Maira Besham will contest election on General Councilor seats.

All the arrangements for conducting election under peaceful environment have been completed. The campaign for the election has already been started and tough election contest could be sought amongst the 8 candidates in different locality.

These seats were vacated in the general election 2024. Two candidates came to contest the provincial assembly election of 2024, and one candidate got job as government servant.

Meanwhile, the heavy downpour made the life of general public miserable. The district Shangla particularly the areas located in cold and lower temperate regions needs attention of the government. The cutting of wooden trees (mostly chier and deodar) has left the mountains as barren rocks.

The loss of precious forest has created numerous problems for the native flora and fauna. Right from Shangla Top to Ajmeer and Logai Sar the nude mountains created panic and suffered badly, the beauty and

green land. Most of the conifer's forest in Shangla had lost its presence in the last few decades and there is danger that a very few specious remaining will lost its validity if the situation continued the same way.

To save forest needs attention from stakeholders. The connection of Sui Gas pipe line will be the only option in this regard. The communities and general public demanded of the government to save forest and save future of the new generation, reduce the carbon emission in environment which is great threat to humanity. Awareness session can play productive role to grow, protect and generate new forest in Shangla.

# Seminar on World Mental Health Day at KKKUK

## F.P. Report

KARAK: The Department of Psychology at KKKUK, in collaboration with the District Youth Affairs Office Karak, organized a seminar to commemorate World Mental Health Day. The event aimed to raise awareness about mental health issues and promote understanding, acceptance, and support for individuals facing these challenges.

Distinguished speakers, including Dr. Siraj Ud Din, Head of the Department of Psychology at KKKUK, and other renowned experts in the field, addressed the audience.

Their insightful presentations shed light on various aspects of mental health, such as importance of mental well-being, Common mental health disorders, Stigma surrounding mental health, Effective coping strategies and treatment options.

The seminar provided a



valuable platform for participants to learn about mental health resources, seek support, and challenge negative perceptions associated with mental illness. The event was attended by students, faculty members, community leaders, and representatives from local organizations.

The Department of Psychology at KKKUK and the District Youth Affairs Office Karak remain committed to promoting mental health awareness and fostering a supportive environment for individuals in need, HoD Psychology Dr. Siraj Ud Din added.

# Candidates vow to resolve problems of clearing agents

## F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Candidates in All Torkham Clearing Agent Association election vowed that they will address problems of the clearing agents in clearing agents if elected.

Speaking in "Meet the Press" program held in Landi Kotal press club, district Khyber on Thursday candidates in the association election and former President of the union Aimal Khan Shinwari said that since long number of problems were being faced by traders and clearing agents and his last tenure, he strived hard to resolve it.

He added that a well-furnished office of All Torkham Clearing Agent Association had been set

up at the border besides he ensured supply of electricity and water to the agents. He pledged that he will utilize every forum to solve miseries of the clearing agents in Torkham.

Mujib Shinwari, another candidate, said that he had a one point manifesto of easing the process of Good Declaration (GD) in Torkham. The matter would be taken up with concerned highup to simple the GD process to enhance trade at the crossing.

He maintained that clearing agents and the custom departments lacked facilities and with compila-

tion of the trade terminal maximum issues would be solved. With passage of

time, clearing agents in Torkham availed knowledge as per need of time and in near future they will rise as well-informed agents, he added.

He further said that they would engage their Chambers of Commerce and Industries to tackle the long lasting problems of the clearing agents community in Torkham. Both the candidates pledged that they would work jointly if elected as President of All Torkham Clearing Agents Association. It is to be stated here that the Association election is scheduled to be held on Oct 26, 2024 and more than 700 voters will use their vote to choose a President for them for the next year.

# Elevating higher education in Pakistan

## Ghazala Anbreen

**PAKISTAN is facing a severe education crisis at the present times. According to an expert 97 percent of the Pakistanis who go abroad in Gulf countries for seeking jobs are semi-skilled or unskilled. At the level of higher education in Pakistan there are huge gaps and challenges.**

In 1971 Pakistan population was 50 million and Bangladesh population was 55 million. Today we are 240 million and Bangladesh population is 170 million. Bangladesh engaged their religious Ulemas and mashaikh for family planning. There were public awareness programs and comprehensive campaigns. In Pakistan the measures to keep population in manageable proportions as per the resources were perhaps somewhat missing out on achieving the targets. As a result the infrastructure got further deficient to cater to the requirements of masses.

Hiring of professors and assistant professors in other countries involves a thorough and rigorous process consuming considerable time. In Pakistan such recruitments are normally done taking very less time. Even 20 to 30 teachers are selected in a single day. But it has to be seen whether over a period of time they will be able to stay in touch

with the latest literature in their field as the knowledge is getting transformed rapidly. New theories are emerging and there is an advanced research in every field.

In Pakistan very less attention is given to the research. Mostly emphasis is on publication of research papers to meet the required threshold.

Our university graduates are mostly unable to meet the industry and market skills requirements and as a result there is an increasing disconnect and a huge gap. The way technological landscape is getting improvised has serious implications for the future job market. World Economic Forum Report 2023 reveals that 23 percent of the jobs are expected to change by 2027, 69 million new jobs created and 83 million jobs will be eliminated by 2027. It has to be seen if our youth is prepared to meet this challenge especially in the wake of potential disruptions and threats posed by climate change which may have serious repercussions.

Investment in education does not keep pace with economic growth. Learning outcomes and access related outcomes also invite attention. Concept of cross cultural learning is not delivering. In the 1960s and 1970s the same universities in Pakistan with less resources were delivering far better. Now in this age of post information when the information resources

are in abundance and there is an advanced technology, there is a considerable decline in the performance and quality of the public sector institutes. This issue needs to be addressed on emergency footings so that favorable environment may be provided along with good quality labs, libraries, sports facilities and most significantly good compassionate teachers who have the ability to empathize and can play to the gallery.

We lack a national vision. Mostly in Pakistan education was generally considered a stand-alone entity. But we have to understand that there is an interrelation of different factors. Economy, technology and social development all are interrelated and these areas should be examined in their entirety. Education must be linked with internet connectivity and health indicators. We have to go for a broader ownership of the educational system. Focus on human development and training side in the public sector should be increased.

We have to make sure that the standard of public sector institutes is enhanced to the level that the students start preferring getting enrolled in these instead of the private schools. IT labs, art rooms, simulation labs, and free books and minimal or no fee, proper sports facilities and good quality teacher training and investment on essential life

skills may lead to yielding better results. This is significant as consistent investment by the government in the public sector will benefit the low income groups which will be all the more appreciable.

The need for digital integration and adopting technology cannot be denied as well. Focus on Human development side should be there. One measure can be empowering the principals of schools and colleges as regards transfers and postings of their staff and funds utilization rather than soliciting permission from main ministries or directorates. Fostering of an inclusive governance system is required. Quality and accountability go together. For quality standards there is a need to know whether the professors know how to prepare syllabi and design curriculum. A higher education data repository should be there in which major academic activities are displayed on their websites. In this way they may be evaluated on the basis of this information. And universities would also be able to review by themselves.

Independent life-long learning skills should be imbibed in the students. This is required in order to make them cope with all kinds of situations even if they have to switch over their jobs multiple times. If we want to make students competitive globally then we have to make them independent learners and enable

them learn, relearn and sometimes unlearn too. Also we have to prepare them to stay consistent in face of threats of unemployment and benefit from AI. Making them good citizen and infusing good moral values should be given supreme importance alongside learning of the latest skill sets.

We should bring equity in our educational system. There is no dearth of brilliant and hardworking students in our country but normally highly accomplished teachers hesitate to get appointed in remote areas and avoid serving there. Bright students from such areas of the country can be given a chance to receive education in the mainstream national universities or their quotas may be increased. Such talented students should be brought in the public sector institutes in bigger cities and they should be exposed to all the employment opportunities. In the university syndicates and boards we need to induct professional businessmen so they can guide in light of their professional and real world experiences regarding curriculum and professional courses.

Internet of things refers to a network of physical devices which are embedded with network connectivity. It facilitates collecting and sharing data eventually leading to communicate with each other and with other internet enabled devices creating

smart environments. Adoption of international best practices can always help us produce good results. In this regard the faculty of IIT Madras with the assistance of industry experts designed, two online programs in data Science and Applications along with introduction of an advanced certification in Software Engineering for Cloud, Block chain and IoT (Internet of Things). This model can be replicated by Pakistan to its optimal utilization. Federal Secretary Education Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmed Wani has expressed resolve to replicate this international model to address the market needs which is a good step.

Addressing higher education needs a complete overhaul and is rightly ascribed as a 360 degree effort. What is required is quality and excellence in higher education and for this a national narrative has to be built.

The Colleges and universities should also start working on maintaining the data about employability of their students who graduate out of their institutes. This data may comprise the details as what is the employability rate, what salary they are earning currently and they are being properly gratified for the time and money which their parents spent during their education. This will add to the value addition of their work.



FAISALABAD: Rescue 1122 Faisalabad CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) performing rescue skills during annual CERT Challenge competitions at Central Rescue Station GTS Chowk.

## Ex-minister Asia Jahangir joins PPP F.P. Report

BANNU: Former provincial minister, Asia Jahangir along with other included in Pakistan People's Party, President of Zardari's sister women's wing, Faryal Talpur, the party's leader, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Benazir support chairperson of the program, Senator Rubina Khalid, formally congratulated her on joining the People's Party.

She expressed her determination to fight hard to strengthen the People's Party at the grassroots level in the southern districts, according to the details of the Pakistan People's Party Women's Department In the presence of Faryal Talpur, the wife of the President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, the chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program, the provincial president of the Women's Department, Senator Rubina Khalid, a prominent social leader and the representative of the influential political family in the politics of the southern districts, former provincial minister Ms. Asia Jahangir formally joined the Pakistan People's Party.

Meanwhile, the central president of the PPP Women's Wing Faryal Talpur congratulated Asia Jahangir on joining the PPP and said that the history of the Pakistan People's Party consists of sacrifices for the development of the country. And there is a complete history of the People's Party, from whips to prison sentences for democracy, who have always fought against the power of the martyrs of the struggle for the restoration of democracy and the rule of law. But no one could destroy this party with the power of the youths.

People's Party is always struggling, but the workers of Shaheed Bibi sacrificed their lives to bring democracy to the country. There is a voice for the classes and relief in every sector from the labor to the common man, the party is in the hearts of the people.

# Cleanliness of water supply line directed

## F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah during his ongoing campaign to review the performance of various departments under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Program "Awami Agenda" along-with the Deputy Commissioner Hangu Gohar Zaman Wazir, conducted a surprise inspection of the Water Tank and Supply Line Scheme in Juzara village, on Thursday.

He on this occasion found the top cover of the water tank which is built on the hill top was completely open which could have caused any major human accident. Similarly, the pipe of the supply line was also broken and a huge chunk of drinking water was being wasted. During the inspection, a lot of dirt and dust was found inside the tank.

Commissioner Kohat on the spot ordered to the District Head of Public Health to clean the water tank and repair supply line, which he did. He also

ordered strict disciplinary action against the concerned officers and subordinate staff of Public Health Department.

The Commissioner was informed by the Locals that more than 2 thousand houses are benefiting from this tank. The residents of Juzara expressed their happiness and satisfaction over this entire action of Commissioner Kohat. It may be noted that Commissioner Kohat has already warned the authorities concerned in the entire Division that any lapse/negligence in any department will be followed by disciplinary action against the District Head of that Department.

Meanwhile, an important meeting of District Development Committee (DDC) was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram at his office which besides the ADC F&P was also attended by the authorities concerned of the Social Welfare, Education, Public Health, C&W, TMA Gumbat and other related departments.

The meeting approved a total of 31 developmental schemes including 12 of Public Health, 2 of Irrigation, 13 of PPC street, 3 of Education and one project of Poverty Reduction Sectors. Deputy Commissioner Kohat directed the authorities concerned to complete the Developmental Schemes within stipulated time in accordance with the required standards to ensure provision of better services to the people.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner Kohat along-with the District Election Commissioner Kohat visited Government Primary School and Government Girls High School Alizai to review the security and other arrangements regarding the upcoming local government by-elections. DC Kohat also presided over a meeting on the preparations and other arrangements of the said elections and directed the authorities concerned to ensure holding of transparent elections and complete implementation of the code of conduct.

# Critical thinking, dialogues key for personality development

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Mardan Javed Marwat said that developing critical thinking among students and encouraging them towards positive dialogue play an important role in their personality development. Educational institutions should focus on character building of the new generation.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the swearing-in ceremony of the Students' Council at Roots Millennium Marble Arch Campus Mardan. Deputy Commissioner Mardan Mian Behzad Adil and

school principal Subia Saifullah also addressed the ceremony. Secretary to Commissioner Sara Tawab and faculty members of the institution were also present on this occasion.

The chief guest also distributed shields among the officials of various societies while the school principal gave a briefing regarding the activities of the organization and administered the oath to the officials of the students' council. Commissioner Mardan in his address to the students and teachers on this occasion said that our new generation has immense potential, but to

bring out their potential, they need guidance and productive dialogue with them.

The commissioner said that while avoiding imposing his opinion on the new generation, they should be given a chance to move forward. He visited various classes, library and conference room of the school, he interacted with the students and teachers and appreciated the educational quality of the school. In the end, the principal of the school presented commemorative shields to Commissioner Mardan and other guests.





# Palestinians starving in Gaza as Israel presses assault

GAZA: Palestinian health officials have called for a humanitarian corridor to three hospitals in northern Gaza that have come close to collapse after Israeli troops have cut off the area during almost two weeks of a renewed ground assault.

Doctors at the Kamal Adwan, al-Awda and Indonesian hospitals have refused to leave their patients despite evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military at the start of the offensive into the Jabalia area of northern Gaza 12 days ago. "We are calling on the international community, the Red Cross and the World Health Organization, to play their humanitarian role by opening up a corridor towards our healthcare system and allow the entry of fuel, medical, delegations, supplies and food," said Hussam Abu Safiya, director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital.

"We are talking about more than 300 medical staff working at Kamal Adwan Hospital, and we can't provide even a single meal for them to be able to offer medical services safely," In addition to Jabalia, Israel's ground assault in ravaged northern Gaza has also targeted Beit Hanoon and Beit Lahiya. The area has been repeatedly bombarded and invaded by Israeli ground troops since Israel launched its assault on Gaza last October. Since the latest incursion, it has been completely sealed off, according to Palestinian Civil Defence spokesman Mahmoud Basal.

The UN estimates that some 400,000 people are trapped in northern Gaza and have been unable to leave due to intense bombardment, as well as the presence of Israeli snipers and ground troops. For 12 days, no food has been delivered to the area, Basal said. "They are not only trapped, but also lacking food, drink, and medicine," he said, adding that scarce medical supplies are also dwindling. The Gaza Ministry of Health said the continuing Israeli offensive has killed around 350 Palestinians in Jabalia and nearby areas.

In Gaza City, an Israeli air strike on a house killed 13 people, medics said. In its daily update, the Gaza Ministry of Health said Israeli military strikes had killed at least 65 Palestinians across the enclave in the past 24 hours. Munir al-Bursh, the director-general of Gaza's Ministry of Health, said more than half of the dead are women and children and many bodies remain in the streets and under the rubble, with rescue teams unable to reach them because of Israeli strikes. "Entire families have disappeared," said al-Bursh. The dire humanitarian situation has prompted

worldwide alarm, with the United States issuing one of its strongest warnings to Israel that it must improve the situation or face potential restrictions on military aid.

"A policy of starvation in northern Gaza would be horrific and unacceptable and would have implications under international law and US law," said Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the US ambassador to the United Nations, during a UN Security Council meeting. The US has previously vetoed multiple resolutions that called for a ceasefire in Israel's war on Gaza. France and China also called for an end to the war and immediate humanitarian relief in Gaza's north. The Israeli military meanwhile said it has killed more than 50 Palestinian fighters in air strikes and close combat in recent days. It has told people to evacuate to what it claimed were safer areas in the south, fuelling fears among Palestinians that the drive is aimed at clearing them from northern Gaza permanently.

The Israeli military denies restricting aid supplies, saying that since October 1, more than 9,000 tons of humanitarian aid including food, water, gas, shelter equipment, and medical supplies have entered Gaza through various crossings. It said some of that aid was transferred directly into northern Gaza. Gaza's Government Media Office refuted the claim, saying Israel's "lies" about allowing trucks in are completely false. "Nothing entered northern Gaza. People in northern Gaza are starving," said Hadeel Obeid, a supervisor nurse at the Indonesian Hospital, where 28 patients were being treated.

"Our administrative manager provides just one meal for all persons including doctors, nurses, patients, and their companions. It's a small amount, not enough for an adult person," she told Reuters news agency via a messaging app. Like Basal, she said medical supplies were running out due to the daily demands of caring for the wounded. Al Jazeera's Tareq Abu Azzoum, reporting from Deir el-Balah, said at least 50 humanitarian aid trucks from the Jordanian capital, Amman, had arrived in Gaza City, but they "did not reach besieged areas, including Jabalia, Beit Hanoon and Beit Lahiya". He said Israeli strikes have also continued across Gaza, including the central areas. Meanwhile, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) said that on day two of a polio vaccination campaign in Gaza, more than 64,000 children had received the drops and 51,000 vitamin A doses. — Aljazeera

# Niger drops French place names to honour heroes

NIAMEY (BBC): Niger's military leaders have renamed streets and monuments bearing French names, in the latest move to cut links with the country's former colonial power. Avenue Charles de Gaulle in the capital, Niamey, is now Avenue Djibo Bakary in honour of the Nigerian politician who played a key role in the West African country's struggle for independence.

"Most of our avenues, boulevards and streets... bear names that are simply reminders of the suffering and bullying our people endured during the ordeal of colonisation," said junta spokesman Maj Col Abdramane Amadou, Niger's relationship with France and other Western allies deteriorated after President Mohamed Bazoum was ousted in a coup last year. Like its military-led neighbours, Mali and Burkina Faso, Niger has courted Russia for military support as a jihadist insurgency threatens the region - and the three countries have clubbed together to form what they call the Alliance of Sahel States. Under Bazoum, France had more than 1,500 troops sta-

tioned in Niger to help fight jihadist groups linked to both al-Qaeda and Islamic State. They all withdrew by the end of last year. A ceremony was held in Niamey to mark the various name changes, including the avenue once named after a French general, as well as a war memorial that was built to remember those who died in World War One and World War Two. It now pays "homage to all civilian and military victims of colonisation to the present day". Charles de Gaulle was a soldier and politician who formed a French government in exile during World War Two when the Nazi German forces overran France. He became leader of the Free French Forces. Many Africans in French colonies volunteered to fight for the Free French Forces, though many were also drafted into service.

About 400,000 came from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and more than 70,000 from Senegal and other sub-Saharan colonies. They took part in the Allies' landings in the south of France in August 1944, which were crucial to ousting the Nazis from the area.

In fact as part of a reappraisal of its colonial past, France began to rename some of its streets and squares after African World War Two heroes four years ago. Another place to have been given a facelift in Niamey is a stone monument that had an engraving of French colonial officer and explorer Parfait-Louis Monteil. He had travelled from Senegal in 1890 across West Africa, writing a book about his two-year journey. His image has now been replaced by a plaque with a portrait of Burkina Faso's iconic revolutionary leader Thomas Sankara, a charismatic pan-Africanist who was assassinated in 1987. During his time in power, he adopted an anti-imperialist foreign policy that challenged the dominance of France, which retained huge influence in many of its former colonies in Africa. Another significant name change is Niamey's Place de La Francophonie, named after the group of French-speaking states. Instead it will be known as Place de l'Alliance des Etats du Sahel, after the country's new confederation with Burkina Faso and Mali.

# Columbia University suspends outspoken pro-Israel professor

COLUMBIA: A divisive and outspoken pro-Israel professor at Columbia University in New York City was temporarily suspended after the prestigious school said he "repeatedly harassed and intimidated University employees in violation of University policy".

Shai Davidai, an assistant professor in the business school, has become a fixture on campus and on social media for his aggressive, pro-Israel advocacy and criticism of pro-Palestine students and faculty, whom he regularly accuses of supporting "terrorism". Davidai announced his temporary suspension on his Instagram account. In an expletive-laden video, he said "the university has decided to not allow me to be on campus anymore. My

job. Why? Because of October 7. Because I was not afraid to stand up to the hateful mob".

He said he was suspended in retaliation for posting multiple videos online of his conversations with university public safety officials last October 7, during a protest by the pro-Palestine Columbia University Apartheid Divest student group. He suggested he would sue the university over the suspension and said that he was "not going anywhere". "I don't care about my future", he later wrote on X. "I care about what this acceptance of anti-Jewish, anti-Israeli, and anti-American terrorism means for the students on campus". Davidai has recently used his X account, which has more than 100,000 followers, to accuse prominent

Columbia professor Rashid Khalidi of being a "spokesperson for Hamas", and to share the name and email of another professor he suggested was "OK with rape, murder, torture and kidnapping".

Davidai has also harassed and doxxed countless students, many of whom have denounced his abuse over the last year. Some of those students took to social media after Davidai's suspension to criticise the university for belatedly taking action against him. "I have been reporting him nonstop since October 2023 for many things including making video edits of me and only now that he absolutely lost his mind at Columbia administrators did they finally take action against him," one student wrote on X. — Aljazeera

## Ex-ANC spokesperson charged with fraud

JOHANNESBURG (BBC): Seven suspects - including local government officials and a former African Nation Congress (ANC) spokesperson - have been charged with fraud in a South African court. The defendants appeared in court following an investigation into a 27 million rand (£1.2m; \$1.6m) government tender.

The investigation found that five years ago the provincial government in Gauteng signed a contract with a company named Enviro-Mobi for waste management services. Enviro-Mobi did not disclose that it had links to ex-ANC spokesperson Pule Mabe, who was an MP at the time, a police statement said. The suspects were not asked to enter pleas but Mabe and his wife denied the allegations. The court hearing took place after the seven suspects had handed themselves into South Africa's elite police unit, the Hawks.

Alongside Mabe and his wife, the defendants included two executives from Guateng's provincial government. All seven accused were awarded bail at the hearing, which took place in Ekurhuleni, a municipality just east of the city of Johannesburg. Outside the courthouse, Mabe told local media he was stepping down from the ANC's executive committee, but "not because he is guilty".

The contract in question stipulated that Enviro-Mobi should receive upfront payments and that money should only be handed to the company after a portion of its work was completed, police spokesperson Thandi Mbambo said. However, the Hawks' investigation found that Gauteng's Department of Agriculture paid Enviro-Mobi 25 million rand for 200 vehicles, even though the goods were "still in the possession of the service provider". It is not the first time Mabe, who served as the ANC's spokesperson from 2018 to 2023, has been accused of corruption. Along with two others, he was arrested in 2013 over allegations he had defrauded the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa). The trio were later cleared of all charges. And in 2017 Mabe was fined after a parliamentary committee found that he had benefited from a contract with the state-owned rail company.

## Long-ruling party leads in Mozambique's election

MAPUTO (AP): Mozambique's ruling party candidate held a clear lead in early presidential election results as his main challenger said he would not accept them and called them fraudulent. Daniel Chapo of the ruling Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, or Frelimo, is on course to win the vote, according to the provincial results, and succeed President Filipe Nyusi, who has served a maximum two terms. Frelimo has been in power in the southern African nation since independence from Portugal in 1975.

Opposition candidate Venancio Mondlane, who is running as an independent, was second behind Chapo in the early count but repeated his claims that last week's election was marred by fraud and manipulation by Frelimo. Mondlane has also called on Mozambicans to hold a national strike in protest at what he called the "deceit of the most shameful level of the regime."

Frelimo has often been accused of election rigging, which it denies. Many analysts raised concerns ahead of this election, saying Frelimo manipulates voter lists and traditionally has officials loyal to it working at polling stations. Mondlane and his supporters held a march in the northern city of Nampula, which was broken up by police. Police said Mondlane did not keep to an agreed route for the march and also accused him of encouraging his supporters to confront officers. Four people were arrested, police said.

# Rights groups demand end to asylum seeker detentions

WASHINGTON (AP): Dozens of rights groups have urged the United States government to stop holding asylum seekers at a detention facility at its Guantanamo Bay military base in Cuba, claiming its conditions are illegal and inhumane. The coalition of 125 rights organisations, led by the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) and Haitian Bridge Alliance, made their plea in an open letter to US President Joe Biden.

"We demand that your administration close the Guantanamo Migrant Operations Center (MOC) and process asylum seekers encountered at sea in a manner consistent with US human rights obligations," the letter stated. "The US government cannot continue to hide its diversion and mistreatment of asylum seekers by exiling them to Guantanamo, out of reach of their families, advocates, public consciousness - and the law," it added.

The groups also called on the US government to stop intercepting sea-bound migrants from Haiti and sending them back to "war-like" conditions in their country, a fate shared by hundreds of unaccompanied children between 2021 and 2023, according to a ProPublica investigation. "All forced returns of people to Haiti, by air or by sea, must end now," said Guerline Jozef, executive director of the Haitian Bridge Alliance, which signed the open letter. The US treatment of sea-travelling migrants, including interdicting them and keeping them in Guantanamo, has drawn new scrutiny following a report published in September by the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP).

The report alleges asylum seekers are subjected to inadequate, "prison



like conditions" in Guantanamo, where there is "little to no transparency or accountability". According to former MOC staff cited by the IRAP report, detained migrants are denied private calls and "punished" if they complain of mistreatment. Traumatized children are deprived of education or professional psychiatric treatment, they say. The US State Department denied the report's conclusions, telling the Miami Herald that the Guantanamo facility is "humanitarian" and that people inside it are not detained because "they can go to places like the base's grocery store".

Immigration and border security have become hot-button issues leading into the November 5 elections, with both presidential candidates Donald Trump and Kamala Harris pressing for more border checks and deportations. While immigration rose to record levels under the tenure of US President Joe Biden - an issue

seized on by Trump - the Biden administration introduced new asylum restrictions over the summer, causing irregular crossings from Mexico to drop to their lowest levels in years. Migrants trying to cross by foot into the US face a deadlier journey than ever before, according to The Associated Press.

In the last year, 10 times more migrants died trekking into New Mexico than in the previous three years, AP reported, citing data from the New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator. Smugglers often lead migrants into rugged terrain in extreme temperatures, contributing to the rise in deaths. "It should not be a death sentence to come to the United States," said Sheriff's Major Jon Day, with New Mexico's Dona Ana County, at a recent community gathering. "And when we push them into the desert areas here, they're coming across and they're dying."

# Climate change worsened deadly Nepal floods, scientists say

KATHMANDU (AFP): Climate change, along with rapid urbanisation and deforestation, turbocharged floods in Nepal that killed more than 240 people last month, scientists said on Thursday. Nepal suffered its worst flooding in decades in late September after ferocious monsoon rains swelled rivers, swamping entire neighbourhoods in the capital Kathmandu and other districts.

World Weather Attribution (WWA), a network of scientists who assess the role of human-induced climate change on extreme weather events, said the link between the intense rainfall and a warming planet was clear. "If the atmosphere wasn't overloaded with fossil fuel emissions, these floods would have been less intense, less destructive and less deadly," said

researcher Mariam Zachariah, from Imperial College London. Their analysis found the relentless rain, which fell on saturated ground in the late monsoon, was made at least 10 percent heavier and 70 percent more likely by climate change. They warned that such "explosive" rain bursts will "become even heavier, risking more destructive floods" if the world does not stop burning fossil fuels. Lashing rain from September 26 sparked floods and landslides that killed 246 people and left 18 missing, according to Nepal's government.WWA, which uses modelling to compare weather patterns in our world and one without human-induced climate change, said there was a high level of uncertainty in the results because of the complex rain dynamics in the small, mountainous

region affected. However, the results were in line with growing scientific evidence on large-scale extreme rain in a warming climate, in which the atmosphere holds more water. The role of climate change was also compounded by other man-made problems, they said, including rapid urbanisation, with a nearly four-fold increase in built-up areas in Kathmandu since 1990. That was coupled with major deforestation that disrupted the natural flow of water, with tree cover slashed by more than a quarter since 1989.

The floods smashed hydropower plants, washed away homes and ripped away bridges. It was the latest disastrous flood to hit the Himalayan nation this year. "Climate change is no longer a distant threat," said Roshan Jha, Researcher at the Indian Institute of

Technology in Mumbai. "With every fraction of a degree of warming, the atmosphere can potentially hold more moisture, leading to much heavier downpours, and catastrophic floods like these."

Nepal has embarked on a giant hydropower dam building spree, generating 99 percent of its power, with output increasing four-fold in the past eight years. It has signed deals to export surplus power to neighbouring coal-dependent India. Earlier this month, the UN's World Meteorological Organization said that increasingly intense floods and droughts are a "distress signal" of what is to come as climate change makes the planet's water cycle ever more unpredictable. WMO chief Celeste Saulo called water the "canary in the coal mine of climate change".

# Are North Korean troops joining Russia's war in Ukraine?

SEOUL (BBC): Russia's army is forming a unit of some 3,000 North Koreans, a Ukrainian military intelligence source has told the BBC, in the latest report suggesting that Pyongyang is forming a close military alliance with the Kremlin. So far the BBC has yet to see any sign of such a large unit being formed in Russia's Far East, and Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has dismissed reports of North Korean involvement.

"This is not only British intelligence, it is also American intelligence. They report it all the time, they don't provide any evidence," he said. There is no doubt Moscow and Pyongyang have deepened their levels of cooperation in recent months. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sent Vladimir Putin a birthday message only last week calling him his "closest comrade".

Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky has spoken of North Korea joining the war, and South Korea's defence minister said this

month that the chance of a North Korean deployment in Ukraine was "highly likely". The biggest question mark is over the numbers involved. A military source in Russia's Far East confirmed to BBC Russian that "a number of North Koreans have arrived" and were stationed in one of the military bases near Ussuriysk, to the north of Vladivostok. But the source refused to give a precise number, other than that they were "absolutely nowhere near 3,000".

Military experts have told us they doubt Russian army units can successfully incorporate North Korean soldiers in their thousands. "It wasn't even that easy to include hundreds of Russian prisoners at first - and all those guys spoke Russian," one analyst - who is in Russia so didn't want to be named - told the BBC. Even if they did number 3,000, it would not be big in a battlefield sense, but the US is as concerned as Ukraine. "It would mark a significant increase in their relationship," said US state department spokesman Matthew

Miller, who saw it as "a new level of desperation by Russia" amid battlefield losses. It was back in June that Vladimir Putin toasted a "peaceful and defensive" pact with Kim Jong Un.

And there is mounting evidence that North Korea is supplying Russia with ammunition, as recently demonstrated by the recovery of a missile in Ukraine's Poltava region. In fact, reports of mines and shells supplied by Pyongyang date back to December 2023 in Telegram chats involving Russia's military communities. Russian soldiers, stationed in Ukraine, have often complained about the standard of ammunition and that dozens of soldiers have been wounded. Kyiv suspects that a unit of North Korean soldiers is preparing in the Ulan-Ude region close to the Mongolian border ahead of deployment to Russia's Kursk province, where Ukrainian forces launched an incursion back in August. "They could guard some sections of the Russian-Ukrainian border,

which would free Russian units for fighting elsewhere," said Valeri Ryabkyh, editor of the Ukrainian publication Defence Express.

"I would rule out the possibility that these units will immediately appear on the front line." Ryabakh is not alone in this thought. North Korea may have some 1.28 million active soldiers but its army has no recent experience of combat operations, unlike Russia's military. Pyongyang has pursued the old Soviet model in its armed forces but it is unclear how its main force of motorised infantry units might fit into the war in Ukraine. Then there is the obvious language barrier and an unfamiliarity with Russian systems that would complicate any fighting roles. That does not preclude North Korea's military taking part in Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine, but they are most recognised by experts for their engineering and construction abilities, not for fighting. What they do both have are shared incentives.

# China accuses Japanese vessel

BEIJING: China's coastguard said it ordered a Japanese fishing vessel to leave the country's territorial waters after it "illegally" entered an area surrounding a disputed group of islands in the East China Sea. A spokesperson for Beijing's coastguard said on Thursday it "took necessary control measures in accordance with the law, warned [the ship] and expelled it" during the incursion into waters around

the Diaoyu Islands - which Tokyo calls the Senkaku Islands - on October 15-16.

"We urge the Japanese side to immediately stop all illegal activities in these waters," spokesperson Liu Dejun said in a statement. Japan has yet to comment on this latest incident near the disputed islands. Tokyo rejects China's claim over the tiny, uninhabited islands in the East China Sea but beneath which there are

believed to be potential undersea oil and gas reserves. Japan and China have been involved in several confrontations in the disputed waters in recent months. In April, China's coastguard confronted Japanese lawmakers conducting an inspection visit to the area. The lawmakers spent three hours near the islands and used drones to observe the surroundings, in what China called an act of "infringement

and provocation".

In June, Japan lodged a protest against Beijing after it said Chinese vessels, carrying what appeared to be cannons, entered what it claims as Japanese territorial waters surrounding the islands. China also maintains expansive maritime claims in the South China Sea which overlap with several Southeast Asian nations. — Aljazeera



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## The GCC and EU were born amid conflict; Now they can help end it

**Y**ESTERDAY'S summit between the European Union and the Gulf Co-operation Council in Brussels was a milestone moment during which leaders from the 27 EU and six GCC countries came together for the first time. But this historic meeting took place amid a backdrop of international turmoil that both regional organisations are sadly familiar with.

Established in Riyadh on February 4, 1981, the GCC was born into a volatile Middle East. The Iran-Iraq War started less than six months earlier. Eight months later, Egyptian president Anwar Sadat would be assassinated and in the following year Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon. It is little surprise then that the 2024 iteration of conflict in the Levant dominated the EU-GCC summit's agenda.

In the EU, the GCC has a valuable partner that understands the need to pursue regional peace, making such meetings particularly valuable. Like the GCC, the EU also came about in a time of conflict. As the November 1993 Maastricht Treaty replaced the European Economic Community with the new European Union, the disintegration of Yugoslavia had already led to the continent's worst armed conflict since the end of the Second World War. That devastating war in the Balkans has been replaced by the instability unleashed by the war in Ukraine.

Both sides meeting in Brussels therefore understand the pressing need for diplomatic solutions to violent conflict while maintaining security. A draft version of a final communique circulating in Brussels yesterday reflected this, stating that the blocs would "actively explore and seek enhanced co-operation on security through the definition and implementation of joint priorities and co-operation initiatives on security". Another joint meeting could take place in Riyadh next January.

The organisations' continued diplomatic partnership is vital, particularly at a time when the US is largely focusing on its coming election. It is a partnership that goes back years – a co-operation agreement signed in 1989 established the EU-GCC Joint Council that provides a forum for dialogue on energy, climate change and economic ties, among other issues. The GCC and the EU are also unequivocal in their agreement that a two-state solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict is essential, and many European states have recognised Palestinian statehood.

But solid economic, energy and trade relations buttress this political consensus. The EU is the GCC countries' second-largest trade partner, generating 170 billion (\$185 billion) in trade last year. In 2023, imports of mineral fuels accounted for more than 75 per cent of EU imports from GCC countries. Hundreds of thousands of Europeans live and work in the Gulf, and in May an EU decision to harmonise Schengen visa rules for GCC citizens seems likely to encourage more Gulf students, entrepreneurs and tourists to visit the continent.

The challenges that face the Middle East, Europe and the wider world are too immense and complex to be tackled by any one nation acting alone. Taken together, the GCC and EU represent 33 nations; the collective political, diplomatic and economic influence they can exert by working together is considerable. Yesterday was a good step forward on the road towards a level of co-operation that can not only weather the storm of current events but can calm them too.

### Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



## Syria at risk of being dragged into regional war

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

**T**HE ongoing Israeli war on Hezbollah in Lebanon poses a critical question: Will Syria be drawn into this conflict as it escalates? As the violence intensifies, the geographical proximity of Syria to Lebanon makes it almost inevitable that events in the latter will affect the former. Historically, Lebanon and Syria appear to have had intertwined fates, politically, economically and socially, due to their shared border and cultural ties. This raises concerns that the current conflict in Lebanon could spread across the border, especially given the complex alliances and rivalries in the region, which involve not just local actors but also global powers like Iran, the US and Russia.

Conflicts in Syria and Lebanon have often spilled over from one to the other, especially during times of civil strife. The Syrian civil war, for instance, had devastating effects on Lebanon, causing severe economic strain and altering the social fabric.

Over the past decade, Lebanon has absorbed nearly 1.5 million Syrian refugees, placing enormous strain on its infrastructure and public services. Now, as violence erupts in Lebanon, the reverse could happen, with refugees flooding into Syria, further destabilizing this already fragile country. The social, economic and political ramifications of this are vast and Syria is unlikely to escape the fallout if this conflict worsens.

Israel's war against Hezbollah is already having a significant impact on Syria, though it has not yet drawn the country into direct conflict. One of the first effects is an influx of

refugees, with more than 250,000 Lebanese civilians reportedly fleeing to Syria. For a country still recovering from a brutal civil war, this influx exacerbates Syria's already dire humanitarian crisis.

In addition to this, Israel has launched multiple airstrikes into Syrian territory, targeting locations said to be linked to Hezbollah and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. So far, the Damascus government has limited its response to condemning these strikes verbally, avoiding military retaliation. However, continued Israeli military operations in Syrian airspace could eventually provoke a stronger reaction, pushing Syria closer to open involvement in the conflict.

From the perspective of the Syrian leadership, directly entering the conflict in Lebanon would not serve its strategic interests. The Syrian state is still grappling with its own internal challenges, including the fact that its authority remains contested in some areas. The government appears to be focused on consolidating its power internally and engaging in a war with Israel could unravel the fragile gains it has made since the end of large-scale civil war. Furthermore, Syria is not yet fully stable, with much of the country still under reconstruction and grappling with international sanctions, making any involvement in a regional war a potentially catastrophic miscalculation.

There are several other reasons why Syria is likely to avoid entering a direct military confrontation with Israel. From an economic perspective, Syria is struggling to rebuild after years

of war and another military conflict could crush what little recovery is underway. Militarily, Syria is no match for Israel's sophisticated and well-funded defense forces. While Syria does maintain a military presence and it has some alliances with Hezbollah and Iran, its capabilities are nowhere near those of Israel.

Moreover, the Syrian government is aware that a war could lead to renewed insurgencies within its own borders. Some groups could use the chaos of war as an opportunity to regroup and challenge the government's rule once again, risking a return to civil war conditions. In addition, history has shown that Syria tends to avoid direct involvement in conflicts between Israel and Hezbollah. In the 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel, Syria refrained from entering the fray, even though it supported Hezbollah diplomatically and logistically. This strategic neutrality allowed Syria to avoid the devastating consequences of direct warfare with Israel. It is likely that the same approach will be followed now.

However, the influx of refugees from Lebanon is already taking a toll on Syria's fragile stability. With more than 250,000 Lebanese refugees entering Syrian territory, the already stretched resources of the country are being tested. In a country that has not yet fully recovered from its own refugee crisis during the civil war, this new wave of displaced people could further destabilize Syria's economy, weaken public services and strain social cohesion. The country's infrastructure is still

fragile and the addition of a large refugee population could exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, potentially leading to unrest.

It is also important to point out that wars are inherently unpredictable and, while Syria may not be directly involved in the conflict with Israel at the moment, there is always the possibility that the war in Lebanon could fully spill over into Syrian territory.

Moreover, Syria could become a battleground for proxy conflicts between Israel and Iran. Instead of engaging in direct warfare with Israel, Iran may opt to use Syrian territory as a staging ground for attacks against Israeli targets, further entangling Syria in the conflict. Such a scenario could inadvertently draw Damascus deeper into the war, even if the government tries to avoid it.

In conclusion, while Israel's war on Hezbollah will most likely have a negative impact on Syria, it is expected to continue avoiding direct military involvement. Engaging in a war with Israel does not serve Syria's interests at this time. The country is still recovering from its civil war and its military and economic capabilities are too weak to handle a full-scale regional conflict. However, the ongoing war in Lebanon and the influx of refugees could create spillover effects that Syria cannot ignore, potentially drawing the country into a wider conflict against its will.

The region remains volatile and the situation could rapidly change depending on how the war evolves and how external actors like Iran and Israel choose to maneuver within this complex geopolitical landscape.

## Police autonomy under threat ?

Ilyas Sadozay

**P**OLICE force has always been very much operative in keeping peace and order in any type of society. The police force has always been active in maintaining law and order in the society and for best results the police department should function as an autonomous body to ensure the rule of law. However, the amendments to the Police Act 2017, the new Police Act 2024 are in the news, raising alarm and concern among the public as any such changes (by reducing police autonomy) are likely to affect police performance.

It was previously governed by the Police Act of 1861 which was enforced during the British rule. However, in the year 2002 Pervez Musharraf had introduced the Police Act 2002 whereby Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police were fully vested. Though amendments had been brought in this act, this altogether did away

with the political interface and the police were allowed to deliver with complete freedom. This made KP's police a bright spot and they were often considered a exemplary police. But when the amendments are proposed, there is a fear that making the police answerable to provincial government or establishment will take away much of its autonomy and expose it to politics and administrative pressures. This will, in turn, be reflected in its performance as well.

The proposed act would involve a number of administrative issues, for instance, more political and administrative interference with the decision-making. Thus, the police officers will be forced to give first priority to the political interests instead of justice. Therefore, the political dictates will limit the police; this denies impartiality in the course of justice.

After all solemn declarations of the provincial government about good intentions apart, the Police Act 2024 proposed will provide scope for future provincial governments/administrations to use the police as an easy tool for political convenience.

More particularly, more political control over the police makes it entirely impossible for officers to act independent and neutral. In this instance, it would raise new issues of police impartiality;

In general, fears of a breach of public trust in the integrity of the criminal process will increase. This will further frustrations at the hands of citizens and such extreme measures may then lead people into taking the law into their own hands, thereby worsening public safety issues.

This new provincial decision can de-moralize

the police officers. It will not just degrade their professional commitment, but also their performance in fighting terror. Police officers must operate in an environment of independence and autonomy to make unbiased and impartial decisions. Without it, pressure will always mount against them and they will be unable to perform their duties free from all influence.

This clearly indicates that political pressure, loss of neutrality and the loss of public confidence will reduce the performance of police. Unless complete autonomy is granted to the police, peace and order cannot be ensured or the rule of law proved.

As the rule of law and the establishment of law and order can be ensured only by making the police independent and fully empowered. Therefore, a police system based on transparency and justice can be the solution to the problems.

## Trauma and Resilience Among Pashtun Women: Psychological Impacts of Conflict and Social Norms

Fatima Saeed Khan

**T**HOUGH I spent much of my childhood in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), this part of my life is something I've often kept hidden. My connection to my village runs deep through my parents, who spent their entire life there. As a child, I was surrounded by stories that have remained with me throughout the years. The women in my mother's community had faced immense struggles—conflict, displacement, and rigid societal norms. While I was fortunate enough to avoid these hardships myself, hearing their stories helped me understand the quiet strength required to endure them. These experiences have shaped how I see resilience, trauma, and the courage it takes to keep going.

Pashtun women live in a world where conflict and patriarchal traditions shape their daily lives. In the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan, political instability and violence have been part of life for decades. On top of this, Pashtun women face the challenge of navigating a culture shaped by longstanding social norms that limit their freedom and independence. The combination of these two forces, conflict and patriarchy takes a heavy toll on their mental health.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been plagued by conflict for decades. War, military operations, and insurgencies have led to the loss of countless lives, displacement of families, and constant uncertainty. Pashtun women often bear the brunt of this violence. Many have lost loved ones or been forced to flee their homes, leaving them traumatised by what they've experienced. Anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are common, but mental health remains a taboo subject in their communities. This leaves women to cope with their trauma in silence, without the support or care they need. To really understand these challenges, it helps to look at the personal experiences of the women themselves. One story from our village shows just how deeply conflict can affect someone's life:

*She was only a child when gunfire and explosions tore through her village in Tirah in the middle of the night. Her family fled, leaving everything behind. Over the years, they moved from place to place, never finding real stability. She grew up constantly looking over her shoulder, always wondering when the next disaster would strike. Even now, as an adult, she struggles with panic attacks and nightmares that take her back to those terrifying nights. But in her community, nobody talks about mental health. Everyone is too busy trying to survive. So she keeps her suffering to herself, quietly enduring her pain.*

Pashtun women, like many living in war zones, are expected to carry on with their lives—nurturing their families and protecting their households—despite their own emotional scars. The burden of this silent suffering, combined with the lack of space to express their grief, makes the trauma all the more devastating.

Apart from the psychological toll of conflict, Pashtun women must also contend with the strict expectations of a patriarchal society. Pashtunwali, the traditional code that dominates life in many Pashtun communities, places men in charge of the family and society, while women are expected to play submissive roles, focused on domestic duties. For women who have already endured the trauma of conflict, the emotional weight of patriarchal norms can feel unbearable. They are expected to quietly bear their pain, not only for themselves but also for the honour of their families. The result is often a deep sense of isolation, depression, and a struggle to find one's own identity in a culture that limits women's freedom. On top of the trauma from conflict, many Pashtun women have to deal with a rigid society, where their roles are tightly controlled by tradition. Another woman's story shows how deeply these norms can shape their lives:

*She had already lost her husband to war when her family began pushing her to remarry her husband's disabled elder brother. They told her it was necessary to secure her future and uphold the family's honour. But she*

*wasn't ready—she was still grieving, still trying to process the trauma of losing someone she loved. On the day of her second wedding, she felt numb, going through the motions of a ceremony she didn't want. The people around her celebrated, but inside she felt hollow. It was as if she had no control over her own life, just a series of decisions made for her by others. Years later, the grief remains, but there's no space to talk about it. She's expected to move on, to bury the pain and live for the sake of her family's reputation.*

This story is unfortunately not unique, rather more common than we think. The psychological strain of having little control over one's own life, combined with the pressure to maintain family honour, leaves many women feeling trapped in their roles, disconnected from their own emotions and desires.

Despite the overwhelming challenges they face, Pashtun women are remarkably resilient. Their strength comes from a deep sense of responsibility, not just to their families but to their own survival. Even in the face of war, displacement, and societal pressure, many women find ways to endure and adapt. They may not always have the resources or support to fully heal, but they show resilience in the way they carry on, often supporting one another in informal ways. In many Pashtun communities, women build strong support networks within their families and villages. These connections become lifelines, offering emotional support and solidarity in times of crisis. Though the larger society may not acknowledge their pain, these small acts of kindness and mutual care provide the strength needed to keep going. One woman's journey shows how these bonds not only bring comfort but also the strength to carry on:

*She had lost almost everything—her brothers in the war, her home to a raid, and any sense of normalcy to the chaos that followed. But what she didn't lose was her connection to the women around her. They gathered together every evening to drink Kehwa and share their stories, finding comfort in each other's company. They laughed, cried, and sometimes just sat in silence, knowing that someone else understood their pain. These gatherings didn't erase the trauma, but they made it bearable. They reminded her that she wasn't alone. It was in these moments that she found the strength to keep going, knowing that, no matter what, the women of her community had her back.*

This quiet strength, built on connection and community, is what allows many Pashtun women to endure in the face of overwhelming hardship. While Pashtun women's resilience is admirable, it should not be a reason to ignore the need for healing and support. The trauma they experience is real and deserves attention. Global awareness of mental health in conflict zones is growing, but much more needs to be done to address the specific needs of women in these regions.

Providing culturally sensitive mental health care is essential. Programs that integrate local cultural practices with mental health support can help reduce the stigma around seeking help. It's also important to educate communities about trauma and its effects, so that women don't have to suffer in silence. Empowering women through education and opportunities for self-expression can give them the tools they need to rebuild their lives, even in the face of trauma and adversity. While these stories show just how resilient Pashtun women are, they also remind us that more needs to be done to support and understand them. Their strength is inspiring, but it's important to remember that healing is just as necessary. By exploring the experiences of Pashtun women, we not only gain insight into the challenges they face but also into broader issues of mental health and social justice in conflict zones. Their stories remind us of the importance of providing care and creating spaces where healing is possible, even in the most difficult circumstances. Ultimately, their resilience is a testament to human strength, but we must also work toward a world where they don't have to carry these burdens alone.



# Harris clashes with Fox as she tries to peel away some GOP voters

**K**AMALA Harris didn't get her second debate with Donald Trump — so she went on Fox News instead.

The vice president clashed heatedly with the pro-Trump network's top anchor Bret Baier on Wednesday night in the kind of adversarial, unscripted scum that Republicans have long accused her of avoiding.

Harris and Baier squabbled and interrupted one another, as he exposed her policy flip flops and reversals and she rammed home her talking points. The contentious clash, conducted in a swinging state Pennsylvania, had more in common with the vice president's sole debate showdown with the former president than forensic, formal interviews where she's often stumbled.

"May I please finish, you have to let me finish," Harris said early in the interview, using a technique she has employed against male rivals in congressional hearings and debates in the past.

The vice president's trip to Fox News showed how she's trying to conjure new turning points in a contest with no clear leader and with most swing states regarded as toss-ups. Trump's decision to decline a second debate with his rival has meant that the final weeks of the campaign lack big scheduled moments that could change the race.

In the end, on Wednesday, both Harris and Fox News probably got what they wanted.

The vice president looked combative after daring to walk into the conservative media lair and struck a contrast with Trump, who is largely avoiding television news interviews in which he will be cross-examined. She singled out his extreme rhetoric and threats to use the military on "enemies from within" — in a way the channel's viewers rarely see. Her performance bolstered her new

campaign tactic of raising fresh alarm about a second Trump term that she said in a speech earlier Wednesday would see the ex-president sit in the Oval Office "plotting retribution, stew in his own grievances and think only about himself and not you."

Harris also did some damage control after saying in an interview last week that there wasn't much she would have done differently from the unpopular commander in chief over the past four years. "My presidency will not be a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency," Harris said. "Like every new president that comes into office, I will bring my life experiences and my professional experiences and fresh and new ideas."

Fox, meanwhile, got hours of post-interview content for its commentators. Its post-debate analysis, for instance, seized on Harris' non-answer to one of Trump's charges — how many undocumented migrants let into the country on her watch. As the network spooled highlights of the interview, it ran a chyron that read "Kamala continues her tirade against Trump." Baier pressed Harris on issues important to the conservative audience, including tragedies of young American women murdered by undocumented migrants — for whom the vice president expressed deep sympathy — and her previous support for using taxpayer dollars to fund gender-affirming care for transgender inmates, including undocumented immigrants. (She said she would follow the law on such policies as president).

And in case Harris changed the minds of any of its viewers, Fox followed her appearance with searing rebuttals from Trump's older sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, and his former ultra-hardline political adviser Stephen Miller.

The tightrope that Harris was walking as she sought to show steel and presidential mettle was evident

**Stephen Collinson**

from critiques of her performance on social media that often played into tropes directed at strong, Black women.

But before the interview, Harris spokesman Ian Sams explained her thinking. He noted Fox's high ratings include some undecided voters and Democrats. And he said that Harris wanted those viewers to hear from her directly.

Another day of courting distinct voting blocs

The Fox interview capped another day Harris used to try to peel away potentially small numbers of voters who could make a difference in tightly fought battlegrounds less than three weeks before the neck-and-neck election.

After courting Black male voters on Tuesday, she traveled to the Keystone State to try and appeal to Republicans who are disaffected with Trump's anti-democratic behavior. Appearing with Republican former law-makers and officials driven out of their party by Trump, the vice president noted that finding her in such company would normally be surprising.

But she added, "Not in this election, because at stake in this race are the democratic ideas that our founders and generations of Americans before us have fought for. At stake in this election is the Constitution of the United States."

Democrats believe there may be significant numbers of GOP voters, including some who voted for former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley in the Republican primary, who could be persuaded to vote for Harris next month. If only a few thousand Fox viewers or traditional conservatives swapped sides, it could push some swing states in the vice presidential direction. Still, the risk for Harris is that her display in her first formal Fox interview could alienate some of those voters.

And the 100 or so Republicans who appeared with her on Wednesday in Bucks County, a critical Philadelphia suburb, in many cases represented the GOP's past — left behind in the populist transformation engineered by Trump.

Trump plays into Harris' claims he's unhinged

At that Pennsylvania rally, Harris reinforced her newly tough tone against Trump, blasting him as "increasingly unstable and unhinged." She's also been raising questions about his age and faculties — turning the tables on the 78-year-old ex-president who often used the same strategy against Biden when he was in the race.

In many of his recent appearances, Trump has seemed to play into Harris' claims. On Wednesday, for instance, he doubled down on his false claims that Haitian migrants were eating cats and dogs in Ohio. He said in a Univision town hall with undecided Latino voters that the refugees, who are in the country legally, were "eating other things too that they're not supposed to be."

The Republican nominee also proclaimed himself "the father of IVF" in his latest attempt to distance himself from the chaos in women's reproductive health after the Supreme Court's conservative majority, which he built, overturned the constitutional nationwide right to an abortion. Harris later told reporters that the comment was "bizarre," as she seeks to use subsequent state-level abortion restrictions to widen the gender gap that could help her beat Trump.

And as Democrats increasingly highlight the perceived threat to American democracy from Trump, the Republican vice presidential nominee, Sen. JD Vance, insisted that the former president did not lose the last election. "I've answered this question directly a million times: No. I think there are serious problems in 2020,"

the Ohio Republican said. "So, did Donald Trump lose the election? Not by the words that I would use, OK?"

Trump, meanwhile, insisted in a Univision town hall, that January 6, 2021 — one of the most notorious days in American history — was a "day of love" and that there was "nothing done wrong at all."

Any one of Trump's recent comments would have disqualified a conventional candidate. But it is a mark of how he's transformed American politics that his support base is impervious to scandalous or outlandish behavior.

And there is no doubt that Trump, for all his crudeness and tearing at the constraints meant to rein in demagogic leaders, is the authentic voice of tens of millions of Americans.

Harris is also hampered by a daunting political environment. She's a member of an unpopular administration at a time when many Americans are still feeling the after effects of the high inflation that the White House often downplayed and are frustrated by still high prices for rent, cars and groceries.

It's taken her several months to arrive at the assurance that she'd strike a strong contrast with Biden's administration, which she unveiled in the Fox interview. In itself, that's a reflection of her struggles as a presidential candidate. And her difficulty at the start of the Fox interview to effectively parry some of Baier's questions on immigration showed that the issue remains a weakness and may be a significant impediment to her efforts to win over GOP defectors.

Still, the fact she braved the interview at all might help her with undecided voters. And if nothing else, her appearance served to highlight how the conservative media machine and Trump's are all but indistinguishable from one another.

# How cooperation can keep MENA businesses competitive

**R**ECENT global events have reinforced the urgency of addressing climate challenges head-on, and there are few regions where this is more apparent than in the Middle East and North Africa. From record-breaking heat waves in Iraq and Kuwait to unprecedented wildfires in Algeria and severe flooding in Libya, the region is experiencing the increasingly visible effects of climate change, which are intensifying existing vulnerabilities.

At the same time, the region is under mounting pressure to advance its sustainability efforts. During the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai, known as COP28, the region was put under the microscope, as global actors and activists called for a new, accelerated era of climate action. And with the high-profile commitments made at the

**Maroun Kairouz**

Indeed, more than 90 percent of the global economy is now covered by country-level net-zero targets and a growing number of companies are disclosing climate-related information in financial filings or annual reports.

Meanwhile, global markets are putting pressure on companies to cut the carbon footprint of their products and MENA's private sector must be equipped to respond. The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, for example, will impose a carbon tariff on products from non-EU countries from 2026. This will likely affect Egypt, Algeria, the UAE and Morocco due to their significant export volumes in targeted sectors such as fertilizer, aluminum and cement.

Therefore, MENA companies looking to tap into global financing or to serve a global cus-

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**Now is the time for MENA's private sector to mobilize as well and do its part in the transition to more sustainable business models. But doing so in a way that is truly sustainable — including within the social and economic context of the region — requires a coordinated approach that spans the entire value chain. As climate change accelerates, the need to act goes beyond environmental responsibility alone — it has become an imperative to remain competitive in the global marketplace. Sustainability is now a key aspect of corporate strategy and global investment decisions worldwide, with companies expected to report on their sustainability performance to meet both regulatory requirements and rising stakeholder demand for transparency and accountability. Indeed, more than 90 percent of the global economy is now covered by country-level net-zero targets and a growing number of companies are disclosing climate-related information in financial filings or annual reports. Meanwhile, global markets are putting pressure on companies to cut the carbon footprint of their products and MENA's private sector must be equipped to respond. The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, for example, will impose a carbon tariff on products from non-EU countries from 2026. This will likely affect Egypt, Algeria, the UAE and Morocco due to their significant export volumes in targeted sectors such as fertilizer, aluminum and cement.**  
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conference — including but not limited to the COP28 Presidency's historic UAE Consensus to transition away from all fossil fuels in energy systems in a just, orderly and equitable manner to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 — the region succeeded in outlining a vision to lead this movement.

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As climate change accelerates, the need to act goes beyond environmental responsibility alone — it has become an imperative to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Sustainability is now a key aspect of corporate strategy and global investment decisions worldwide, with companies expected to report on their sustainability performance to meet both regulatory requirements and rising stakeholder demand for transparency and accountability.

tomor base should not only plan to improve the sustainability of their operations, but also their sustainability reporting efforts in order to stay competitive within these global markets. Yet, despite having the motivation, many companies struggle with this due to the complexity of global reporting frameworks, a lack of regional regulatory clarity, and financial constraints.

Despite the launch of significant sustainability policy programs by some of the region's governments in recent years, there is a perception among many business leaders that regulations are still evolving and are often unclear. This lack of clarity adds complexity to strategic planning and sustainability efforts.

MENA governments can play a central role in developing policies and frameworks and providing incentives to first-movers.

Their leadership is pivotal to inspire best practice and guidelines setting and in creating an enabling environment that fosters sustainable business practices across industries and sectors to drive impactful outcomes.

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and the UAE

Energy Strategy 2050 are both ambitious national strategies that integrate renewable energy targets, waste management and ecosystem conservation.

At the same time, a shift from traditional to innovative solutions is also imperative and knowledge-sharing is key to addressing common challenges. Initiatives such as Egypt's National Initiative for Smart Green Projects, the UAE's Circular Economy Policy and Saudi Arabia's Sustainability Champions program highlight how collaborative efforts can successfully mobilize local solutions to transform all steps of the value chain.

The next step of this collaborative model would be to connect the dots between national initiatives across the region. A unified MENA-wide approach to sustainability reporting standards — that aligns with global sustainability

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goals but also enhances the region's capacity to meet the evolving demands of economic transformation and environmental stewardship — would help companies demystify complexities and lay the groundwork for sustainable climate action. In a bid to help address these challenges, the World Economic Forum's Leaders for a Sustainable MENA coalition will next month release new research that aims to provide a roadmap for how companies can navigate the complex sustainability landscape. The findings will also provide an intellectual framework for early efforts to establish a regional reporting framework, aligned to global Sustainability Accounting Standards Board standards, but adapted to the regional landscape. By focusing on key material issues, fostering the combined efforts of the private and public sectors and embracing knowledge-sharing, MENA businesses can take the lead on creating a new era of sustainable economic growth and innovation — change that will benefit everyone.

# EU must act quickly to prevent Serbia looking elsewhere

**I**vividly remember a friend's story of how, when Yugoslavia broke up, the European identity was a salvation for many after an extremely difficult period of war and devastation. He would passionately explain that, as the Yugoslavia umbrella dissolved, Europe gave them hope and promised to fulfill their aspirations for freedom and better life opportunities. Since then, only Croatia and Slovenia have joined the EU. The path has proven longer and harder for others, particularly Serbia.

This delay has created frustration both on the level of the political leadership and among the citizens. Last week, expressing this frustration, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vulin positioned the BRICS grouping as a compelling alternative to the EU, emphasizing its attractiveness for Belgrade. He noted that, unlike the EU, BRICS does not impose political conditions, such as demanding recognition of Kosovo's independence, or other internal political changes.

Vulin compared the two blocs and said that BRICS controls more than 51 per-

cent of the world's gas and 47 percent of its oil. He then emphasized the main topic of tension: the fact that Serbia will not impose sanctions on Russia or go to war just to join the EU, stressing that Belgrade values cooperation based on mutual respect, neutrality and equality.

Some analysts saw Vulin's remarks as a potential shift in Serbia's global alliances, particularly as BRICS is seeking to expand its influence. The reality is more nuanced. I would disagree on the benefits BRICS could bring to Serbia versus EU access. BRICS in no way, shape or form has the benefits or strong ecosystem the EU offers its members. This is something Serbia needs to be aware of and know to appreciate. It is, in my opinion, well worth some sacrifices.

If we look at the issues still hindering Serbia's access, they are political: the status of Kosovo and its relations with Russia. It is worth noting that those same issues are also major geopolitical risks for the future stability and integrity of the EU and Europe. Therefore, Belgrade's accession to the EU should not be put aside or met with aggression from EU officials. It is not the time

**Khaled Abou Zahr**

to sink into a tit-for-tat exchange, but a time to find acceptable solutions that preserve the interests of all parties.

There is no doubt that the main issue that needs to be resolved is the relationship between Serbia and Kosovo. This is the source of a direct security risk and outside interference in European affairs. In other words, this should be a top priority for European leaders. It should not be delayed. Indeed, what can be mended today might not be fixable tomorrow in this rapidly changing conflict world map. On the other hand, if this first issue is put at the forefront, I do not think Serbia's stance and good relations with Russia should be something to put in the limelight, or fear that Belgrade is Moscow's Trojan horse. It is damaging and purposeless. There are historical and religious links that cannot and will not be erased. What is more important is to make the citizens of Serbia feel that their core is in the EU.

Sometimes, when reading some European leaders' declarations, there is an underlying note that indicates that they still hold Serbia accountable

for the war of the 1990s. That somehow it has not paid for its crimes and its attachment to Moscow symbolizes this. Hence, it presents a risk for the future of Europe. And so, they have placed Serbia in EU purgatory. But this situation will increase frustration and encourage greater links with non-EU powers — and this is what presents much greater risks.

The EU has proven its capacity to integrate and create opportunities. It has been highly successful in its enlargement efforts, expanding from its original six founding members to 27 countries as of 2024. Through its enlargement process, the EU has promoted stability, democracy and economic growth in regions once divided by Cold War tensions or authoritarian rule. One of the most notable successes that can serve as an example was the inclusion of former communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, which joined in 2004, marking a significant shift toward European integration.

There are good economic initiatives attached to the new "Growth Plan" for the Western Balkans. A

# WEF's Dubai summit reminds us of the case for 'knowledge collisions'

**O**UR world is becoming increasingly fragile. It is being shaped by complex challenges ranging from growing geopolitical volatility to trade protectionism, societal polarisation and urgent climate and nature crises. At the same time, the "Intelligent Age" — anchored in exponential advancements in technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, bioeconomy, quantum computing and robotics — offers unprecedented opportunities.

While new technological advancements are key to addressing immediate challenges — as demonstrated by Sustainable Development Goals-relat-

ed innovative solutions showcased during the UN High-Level week in New York — they also allow us to reexamine global issues through different lenses and can help foster long-term, system-level solutions with new economic paradigms and tools.

Historically, technology has provided a path to growth and productivity, and it is no different today. It offers a means to avoid the prospect of the weakest economic half-decade in 30 years. Yet, for its potential to be fully realised for the benefit of all society, effective and productive collaboration is required — both horizontally, in terms of geography, industry and discipline, and vertically, by generation.

As the Bell Labs model demonstrated already in the mid-20th century, it is only through "creative collisions" that we can break silos, delve deeper into the interlinkages of today's challenges and advance collective expertise to shape long-term system-level solutions. Inspired by a similar philosophy, the World Economic Forum brings together the world's foremost multi-stakeholder and interdisciplinary knowledge networks at the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils each year.

This week, more than 500 leaders from more than 30 Global Future Councils came together in Dubai to explore the implications of the "Intelligent

Age" for industries, productivity and innovation. Delving deeper into areas, such as cybersecurity, data equity, growth, trade, biology and tourism among others, leaders across councils will help generate insights and innovative thinking to support decision-making in years to come and shape system-level solutions for a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable future.

The work conducted during the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils in Dubai in the past has sparked some of the Forum's flagship initiatives. One example is the Global Lighthouse Network, inspired by the

**Mirek Dusek**

former Global Future Council on the Future of Advanced Manufacturing and Supply Chains. This network aims to expedite the widespread adoption of cutting-edge technologies in manufacturing — today it operates in more than 30 countries, with 170 members across 150 sites.

One of the direct consequences of applying technological advancements across industries is rapidly changing workforce demand, which calls for major investment in education, reskilling and upskilling as well as social support structures that ensure inclusive economic growth, while empowering workers. Cognisant of such

a need, the Global Future Council on the Future of Job Creation delves deeper into the mechanisms that could unlock job creation across both emerging markets and developed economies in the context of the Intelligent Age.

Related to this mandate is the growing Accelerators network, which has now reached more than 30 countries and counts close to 120 partners across the world. Shifting mindsets, increasing collaboration and promoting new policies and practices, the network drives systems-level impact in education, jobs, skills and gender equality.

At the same time, the Forum continues to advance its work to safe-

guard the planet and drive global climate action. In Dubai, the Global Future Council on the Future of Nature and Security will look at the interconnections between security risks for people and nature degradation. Building on interdisciplinary collaborations, the Council has been analysing the opportunities that spatial intelligence offers to set science-based targets for businesses and identify scalable opportunities across their value chains for a nature-positive economy. Key philanthropic organisations will also come together as part of the Global Future Council on the Future of Philanthropy for Climate and Nature to explore how philanthropy can catalyse

action and unlock private capital to meet global climate ambitions.

As we stand at the crossroads of two contradictory forces — fragmentation and technological renaissance — greater public-private collaboration is key to creating innovative and scalable solutions for future generations and to capitalise on opportunities while trying to minimise the attendant risks facing an increasingly complex world. Ranging across the above and many other important topics, the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils in Dubai helped generate systems-level solutions that can guide businesses and governments in their future strategies.





# SCCI, ICMAP decide to hold awareness sessions on rules and regulations

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Pakistan (ICMAP) have decided to jointly hold seminars and sessions to create awareness among the business community and guide them regarding rules and regulations.

The decision was taken during a meeting between SCCI president Fazal Moqem Khan and ICMAP president/chairman Strategic Ziaul Mustafa Awan and Joint Director and Campus Incharge

Peshawar Adeel Zeb Khan, held at chamber house on Thursday. Secretary General of the chamber Muqtasid Ahsan was also present on the occasion.

Meeting was informed that the decision to hold joint awareness sessions was taken in light of a memorandum of understanding that had been signed between SCCI and ICMAP.

Participants also agreed to work together for enhancing professional skills and capabilities of the business community on modern lines through train-

ing programmes and joint initiatives and research.

Fazal Moqem while speaking on the occasion lauded the ICMAP for its step to launch awareness sessions about rules/regulations.

The SCCI chief hoped the step would not only remove apprehensions of the business community and provide better guidance about the rules.

Fazal Moqem emphasized that government and relevant institutions need to make consultation with chamber and business community before framing policies and rules so that there

will be no hurdle to implement them.

The chamber president talked about ordeals of the business community under the prevailing circumstances and asked the government to announce special incentives to flourish business, industry and trade.

Earlier, the ICMAP president/chairman Strategic Ziaul Mustafa briefed the meeting about his institution and various interventions/programmes, especially joint collaboration with Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industry under the MoU.



PESHAWAR: President/chairman Ziaul Mustafa Awan and Joint Director & Campus Incharge Peshawar Adeel Zeb Khan meeting with SCCI president Fazal Moqem Khan.

## PSX raises over Rs1 trillion through via GOP Ijarah Sukuk

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) announced a significant achievement on Thursday, surpassing the Rs 1 trillion mark through the issuance of Government of Pakistan (GoP) Ijarah Sukuk (GIS).

This breakthrough was achieved following the successful conclusion of the 13th GIS auction on September 16, 2024 through which an additional Rs 207 billion was raised for the Ministry of Finance (MoF), said a news release.

The GIS Auctions started on December 8, 2023, and have since witnessed robust participation from the banks, mutual funds and brokerage fraternity, with each auction attributing to the growth of the Shariah-based Government Securities market.

PSX has been instrumental in the offer of GIS through provision of a state-of-the-art auction sys-

tem and support for the entire lifecycle of the GIS, from issuance till maturity.

PSX enjoys a unique position amongst global exchanges that offer primary issuance of Government Debt.

PSX plays a pivotal role in enabling the GOP to raise funds through the Capital Market Infrastructure Institutions (CMIIs). A driving factor for its success is the diverse range of Sukuk on offer; these include discounted, fixed rate, and variable rate instruments.

This is accompanied by a wide range of tenors on offer – 1 Year, 3 Year, 5 Year, and 10 Year GIS – that were added after the inaugural auction to meet the varying needs of the government and investors alike.

In addition to facilitating an active primary market for GIS, PSX also hosts an equally efficient secondary market and is committed to

enhancing its liquidity which aligns with PSX's broader goal of market development.

This effort of market development includes enhancing the market depth and investor participation in the primary and secondary markets.

Speaking about this landmark achievement, Nadeem Naqvi, Acting CEO of the Pakistan Stock Exchange, remarked, "Reaching the PKR 1 trillion mark in the issuance of GIS is a testament to the trust investors have placed in PSX and the ongoing demand for high-quality Shariah compliant instruments. Our commitment to innovation and market infrastructure has helped us grow rapidly in less than a year, and we continue to improve the experience for all our market participants. The primary and secondary markets for GIS at PSX, are supported by the robust PSX Auction

system and the New Trading System (NTS) respectively. We are confident that the market for GIS will continue to thrive in the years to come. We extend our gratitude to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) for their trust placed in PSX, National Clearing Company of Pakistan Limited (NCCPL) and Central Depository Company (CDC) to handle these auctions and to the apex Regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), for their invaluable guidance and support throughout this process. Lastly, but very importantly, I would like to extend my appreciation and due acknowledgement that this initiative of conducting GIS auctions through the PSX platform began under the leadership of our respected Chairperson, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, when she was the caretaker finance minister."

## TPL Trakker partners with Mux to enhance smart automation

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: TPL Trakker, Pakistan's pioneering telematics and (IoT) service provider, with over 24 years of expertise, is excited to announce a new collaboration with Mux Pakistan, a leader in providing turnkey automation solutions. This strategic partnership aims to bring cutting-edge Internet of Things (IoT) solutions to a wider audience, transforming everyday lifestyles with a seamless blend of automation and connectivity.

Trakker's extensive experience in (IoT) and telematics, combined with Mux Pakistan's robust automation capabilities, sets the stage for a collaboration that promises to enhance the lifestyle experience of Pakistani consumers. By focusing on IoT-driven innovations and leveraging strong research and development, TPL



Trakker aims to bring advanced solutions to market. This partnership is strategically positioned to seamlessly integrate smart technology solutions for everyday use.

The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to a vast ecosystem of interconnected devices that communicate and share data, enabling remote monitoring and control over vari-

ous functionalities. Pakistan's future is increasingly shaped by the Internet of Things (IoT), which is revolutionizing connected living and working environments.

Through this partnership, TPL Trakker and Mux Pakistan will work together to leverage (IoT) for a smart lifestyle upgrade, driving technological advancement and enhanc-

ing convenience for users nationwide.

The collaboration promises an enhanced user experience and a lifestyle shift, making automation an everyday convenience for Pakistani customers. Together, TPL Trakker and Mux Pakistan aim to redefine smart living as the ultimate, one-stop solution for a connected, upgraded lifestyle.

## Eurozone stocks climb as ECB rate cut looms

LONDON (AFP/APP): Paris and Frankfurt stock markets climbed and the euro traded mixed Thursday before an expected interest-rate cut from the European Central Bank as the eurozone faces weakening economic activity and falling price pressures.

Outside the eurozone, London gained in midday deals after Asian stock markets mainly struggled, with Beijing's latest plan to boost China's troubled property sector coming up short of expectations. Investors are expecting the ECB to cut its benchmark rate by 25 basis-points Thursday, after two previous reductions this year.

Eurozone inflation for September has been revised down to 1.7 percent from 1.8 percent, official data showed Thursday. The rate is below the ECB's two-percent target.

A weak economy has also added pressure on the ECB to reduce borrowing

costs. "A rate cut today might not be an isolated event as it could take a lot more cuts to regain positive momentum in the economy," noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

"Economic data from the region has been weak of late, meaning the central bank needs to lower the cost of borrowing to encourage more businesses and consumers to spend."

Hong Kong and Shanghai stock markets closed down, with property stocks tumbling after traders were left disappointed by fresh measures from China's housing minister to ease a real estate crisis.

Housing minister Ni Hong said Thursday that officials would almost double the amount of credit available to complete unfinished housing projects to \$562 billion and also help renovate a million homes.

However, "there was no

new initiative to excite markets about a meaningful revival in a sector", said Patrick Munnely, market strategist at traders Tickmill Group.

China, the world's number-two economy, has struggled to recover since lifting strict Covid controls at the end of 2022, battered by a debt crisis in the property sector and torpid consumer demand.

Tokyo also closed lower Thursday, while focus around the world was also on the latest earnings season.

Taipei and New York-listed TSMC, which controls more than half the world's output of chips, announced a bigger-than-expected increase in net profit for the third quarter.

Analysts hope the announcement will offset fears over the tech sector after Dutch powerhouse ASML this week cut its 2025 guidance and forecast a slump in sales bookings.

## Officers visit SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): A delegation of under-training officers of the 41st Mid-Career Management Course, National Institute of Management (NIM), Lahore, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Thursday.

SCCI President Ikram-ul-Haq, Senior Vice President Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi and Vice President Omer Khalid welcomed the guests.

Addressing the participants, President SCCI Ikram-ul-Haq said: "An effective management and governance are crucial for driving our nation toward growth and development".

He said that for businesses to thrive, a conducive environment was essential, and responsibility for creating this environment lies with both the government and the bureaucracy.

The president said it was imperative for the government to take steps to improve the ease of doing business in Pakistan, thereby promoting sustained growth in private sector and attracting higher levels of foreign direct investment.

## 77 illegal connections disconnected

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: In its ongoing effort to curb gas theft, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has intensified its crackdown in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad, disconnecting 77 additional illegal connections and imposing fines amounting to Rs 2.2 million.

In Lahore, the team disconnected 14 illegal connections, imposing fines totaling Rs 0.51 million. In Gujranwala, 2 connections were cut off, with a fine of Rs 0.05 million imposed for gas theft. In Faisalabad, 4 illegal connections were terminated, with a fine of Rs 0.03 million. The Sheikhupura team disconnected 1 connection and imposed a fine of Rs 0.97 million.

The Multan region saw 9 disconnections for illegal gas use and 18 for the use of gas compressors. In Sahiwal, 3 connections were terminated for illegal usage, while Bahawalpur's team disconnected 1 illegal connection and another 7 for compressor use.

In Mardan, 18 illegal connections were severed, with Rs 0.67 million in fines imposed for gas theft.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships, APL Qingdao, Maersk Kensington, Haj Muhammad, Akti-A, San Nicolas and Qing Quan Shan scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Palm oil and Coal, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, Marginal Warfage-4 and Pakistan International Bulk Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containership 'APL Qingdao' left the port on today morning while another containership 'Maersk Kensington' is expected to sail on today afternoon.

## PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 620 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Thursday, losing 620.23 more points, a negative change of 0.72 percent, closing at 85,585.43 points against 86,205.66 points on the last trading day.

A total of 513,288,944 shares were traded during the day as compared to 474,333,405 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs21.612 billion against Rs26.942 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 450 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 173 of them recorded gains and 208 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 69 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Pak Refinery XD with 57,826,783 shares at Rs26.45 per share, Fauji Foods Limited with 57,329,465 shares at Rs9.34 per share and The Searle Company with 30,393,539 shares at Rs63.25 per share.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs79.66

per share price, closing at Rs876.21, whereas the runner-up was Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs73.02 rise in its per share price to Rs7,332.73.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs100.00 per share closing at Rs6,800.00 followed by Ismail Industries Limited with Rs86.63 decline to close at Rs1,710.95.

**Rupee gains 05 paise against dollar** Pakistani rupee on Thursday appreciated by 05 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.79 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.84.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.90 and Rs279.40 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 81 paise to close at Rs301.52 against the last day's closing of Rs302.33, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.85, whereas a

decrease of 26 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs360.83 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs361.09.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 02 paise and 04 paise to close at Rs75.62 and Rs73.96 respectively.

**Gold prices up by Rs.700 per tola**

The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.700 and was sold at Rs.277,900 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs277,200 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.600 to Rs238,254 from Rs237,654 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs218,400 from Rs217,850, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs3,050 and Rs2,614.88, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$7 to \$2,682 from \$2,675, the Association reported.

## LDA asked to revamp its regulations

## F.P. Report

LAHORE: In a bid to accelerate Lahore's development, Sheikh Muhammad Nabeel, newly-elected Chairman of Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD) North Region, urged the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) to revamp its regulations.

During a high-profile meeting with LDA Director General Tahir Farooq on Monday, Nabeel stressed the need for streamlined

processes, citing the significant contributions of ABAD members to the city's growth.

He was accompanied by former ABAD Chairman Sultan Gohar Ijaz, Irfan Ilahi, Usman Anwar, Sardar Adil Umar, Saad Nazir Chauhan, Nazir Ahmad Chauhan, Waheed Ahmad Butt, Khalid Mahmood Sheikh, and Kamran Shuja.

Nabeel highlighted the crippling impact of escalating taxes on the real estate industry, seeking

relief to stimulate economic activity.

ABAD members presented comprehensive recommendations to simplify approval processes for housing societies, aiming to reduce bureaucratic hurdles.

DG Farooq assured ABAD Chairman that the LDA would consider ABAD's proposals, pledging to implement IT-driven reforms and establish a robust mechanism to address public grievances.

## RDA inflows rise to \$8.749b in Sep-2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$8.749 billion by the end of September 2024 as compared to US \$8.581 billion by August (2024) end.

The data showed that the inflows of remittances during September were recorded at US\$168 million as compared to US\$ 165 million in August and US\$ 161 million in July

2024, according to the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs), including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card (POC) holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment, and investment activities in Pakistan.

The number of accounts

registered under the programme also rose by 11,138 to 746,251 in September 2024 from 735,113 accounts in August 2024.

By the end of September, overseas Pakistanis have invested US \$380 million in Naya Pakistan Certificates, US \$656 in Naya Pakistan Islamic Certificates, and US \$41 million in Roshan Equity Investment.

## Türkiye's house sales rise 37.3% in September

ISTANBUL (APP): Türkiye recorded 140,919 house sales in September, marking a 37.3% increase year-on-year, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) reported on Thursday.

Istanbul accounted for the largest share of sales, with 21,314 units sold, followed by the capital Ankara with 13,205 units, and the Aegean city of

Izmir with 7,612 units.

However, house sales to foreigners fell by 31% year-on-year to 2,022 units. Istanbul led in foreign sales with 783 units, followed by the Mediterranean cities of Antalya and Mersin, with 548 and 210 units, respectively.

Russian citizens purchased the most properties among foreigners in

September with 346 units, followed by Iranian citizens with 163 and Iraqis with 139, TurkStat noted.

Between January and September, overall house sales in Türkiye rose by 5.2% to 937,236 units. During the same period, sales to foreigners dropped by 39.1% compared to the previous year, totaling 17,090 units.

## Lost & Found

I have lost original stamp paper of my 7 Marla plot at Blue World City # BWOX 54860-1 Islamabad. If anyone find please contact Hazrat Hussain S/o Badshahi Malik R/o Ghandero Shah Tehsil & District Dargai Malakand. 03459123733

## Court Notice

In the court of Khrrum shahzad civil judge-IV/Illaqa Qazi matta swat. Case #. 288/1 institution Year 04/09/023. Next Hearing date 31/10/2024. Bahadar sher s/o Muhammad Hanifa r/o tota khandar showar matta swat VS Akhi jan etc r/o tota khandar showar matta swat. Notice to:-defendant (3/3) Ayub khan s/o Khan Zada r/o tota khandar showar tehsil matta ( Presently Riyadh Saudi Arabia) In above mentioned case the respondent can't be served in the ordinary way, it is therefore proclaimed that if said respondents will not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 31/10/2024.ex-parte proceeding will be held against the mentioned respondents under my hand and seal of this court.





# Sajid Khan the star turn as Pakistan eye end to winless run

MULTAN (ESPNCricinfo): With a twinkle in his eye and a twirl of his moustache, Sajid Khan helped turn the Multan rematch Pakistan's way. A first-innings seven-for was followed up by crucial lower-order runs to help set England a daunting target of 297 to win the second Test. Sajid then struck with his third ball to remove Ben Duckett, England's centurion on day two and a key man in their hopes of a successful chase.

Sajid may be an unassuming offspinner on paper, and something of an afterthought in selection - he described himself as "always the first to be kicked out" after taking four England wickets during the second evening to put his side on top. But with his shaved head, luxuriant facial hair and colourful celebrations he has brought some much-needed character to Pakistan's attempts to break a winless run at home that stretches back to 2021.

Having claimed three of the four England wickets to fall during the first hour on day three, securing a 75-run lead for Pakistan and per-

sonal figures of 7 for 111 - the best for an innings in Tests at Multan - Sajid came to the crease during the evening session with the scoreboard reading 156 for 8. England were eyeing up a chase in the region of 230-240, only for Sajid to join Salman Agha in putting on a bristling stand of 65, by far the highest of a day on which 16 wickets fell and the spinners prospered.

Salman did the bulk of the scoring, making his third 50-plus score of the series to steer the target up towards 300, and England's pain in the field was only increased by the knowledge that he could have been dismissed twice in single-figures. Brydon Carse was the unlucky bowler, as two chances went down in the space of three balls; Jamie Smith failing to hold a regulation nick behind the stumps before Joe Root shelled another to his right, the fact he was wearing a helmet and standing in close only partial mitigation.

Pakistan's recent issues in the third innings have been well-documented,

failing to capitalise on positions of varying promise against Australia and Bangladesh, and it seemed as if they were primed for another stumble after losing three wickets to Shoaib Bashir to be 43 for 3 at lunch. Saud Shakeel helped steady things, although he too had a life off Carse as Root couldn't get his hands up to a flashed out at slip.

When Shakeel was trapped lbw by Jack Leach, the first of three wickets to fall in the space of five overs after tea, England had hopes of wrapping up the innings quickly. But Salman immediately countered, hitting three fours from his next seven balls and going on to his half-century by lofting Leach clean over long-off for six. The ninth-wicket pair took less than eight overs to raise the 50 stand, as England's target rose rapidly - eventually leaving them needing the second-highest successful chase in Pakistan, and by far their highest overall in Asia.

Sajid survived being caught at long-on, when Duckett was forced to throw the ball back in as he



crossed the rope, then overturned being given out lbw to a Matt Potts full toss when UltraEdge detected an inside edge; he might have been out on 20, but with the DRS momentarily

down, England couldn't review for caught behind.

Carse eventually broke through when Salman spliced a pull to midwicket, belated reward for the fast bowler's perseverance and

skill in demanding conditions, and Potts bounced out Sajid. But the spinner took centre stage again with the ball in hand, eyes bulging like a cartoon supervillain after Duckett had top-edged a sweep straight up to depart for a two-ball duck in the first over of the chase.

Noman Ali then produced a beautifully flighted delivery to have Zak Crawley stumped by a distance, the opener collapsing to his knees even as he turned to see Mohammad Rizwan break the bails, as England slipped to 11 for 2. Ollie Pope and Root saw them through to the close but there was plenty of work still to be done on a pitch that has increasingly taken spin if England are to extend their winning run in Pakistan.

It was all a far cry from the first Test at this ground, when only 13 wickets fell across the first three days - the count now up to 32 at the same stage in the pitch second's incarnation.

England's prospects had been undermined by the four-wicket burst from Sajid on the second

evening, and he did not have to wait long for his second Test five-for when play resumed. Carse held out to long-on before Potts got in a tangle trying to work off his pads to be bowled between his legs. Noman then claimed his 50th wicket in Tests as Smith, looking to hit out in the company of the tail, could only miscue high to long-off.

A last-wicket stand of 29 between Leach and Bashir cut into the lead, before Sajid's seventh brought the innings to a close. It was then Pakistan's turns to get the jitters, as the top three all departed in the space of 15 overs before lunch.

Bashir had not enjoyed much success on tour to date but rose to the occasion after being thrown the new ball by Ben Stokes. His third over produced the breakthrough, with Abdullah Shafique adjudged to have feathered a catch behind down the leg side - although it took some lengthy deliberations by the third umpire, Sharfuddoula, after England had gone to the DRS. Shafique's dismissal brought an end to

Pakistan's opening stand at 9 - the ninth time in ten innings that he and Saim Ayub have failed to reach double-figures together.

Shan Masood did not last long, squared up by one that ripped away off a length to hit the splice for a sharp catch to Pope, in close under the helmet at second slip. There was turn and bounce aplenty for England's spinners and with the final delivery before the break, Bashir dislodged Ayub, who propped forward to provide a simpler chance to Pope.

Pakistan needed solidity and they got it in the form of three dogged stands in the 30s featuring Shakeel. The debutant Kamran Ghulam provided further signs of his ability, following his first-innings hundred, before being trapped plumb lbw by Leach. Rizwan then resumed his battle with Carse, eventually falling to him for the third innings in a row after England got the ball to reverse swing. Whether they can reverse the course of this Test may depend on keeping Sajid from top billing on day four.

## India all out for 46 against NZ in first Test

BENGALURU (BBC): India were bowled out for 46 by New Zealand on day two of the first Test in Bengaluru.

After the entire first day was washed out by rain, India chose to bat on a lively, seaming pitch and were dismissed for the third-lowest total in their Test history.

Virat Kohli, Sarfaraz Khan, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin were all out for ducks, with seamers Matt Henry and Will O'Rourke taking 5-15 and 4-22 respectively.

Rishabh Pant with 20 and Yashasvi Jaiswal, who made 13, were the only batters to make double figures for India, who are top of the World Test Championship standings.

It was India's lowest total in a home Test, only beaten by their 36 all out against Australia in Adelaide in 2020 and 42 against England at Lord's in 1974.

New Zealand reached 180-3 by the close, giving them complete control of the Test with a lead of 134.

Tom Latham and Devon Conway went beyond the

INDIA'S LOWEST TEST TOTALS	
36 v Australia, Adelaide 2020	
42 v England, Lord's 1974	
46 v New Zealand, Bengaluru 2024	
58 v Australia, Brisbane 1947	

hosts' score with an opening partnership of 67 and Conway continued to make a 105-ball 91.

"You see the pitch and try and make a judgement. Sometimes you make the right call and sometimes, you don't," India captain Rohit Sharma said.

"I'm hurting a little bit because I made that call... the challenges that were thrown at us, we didn't respond to well and found ourselves in a situation

where we got bowled out for 46.

"As a captain, it definitely hurts to see that number." Jaiswal and Sharma had edged to 9-0 in the seventh over when Rohit was bowled by Tim Southee as he advanced to attempt a wild drive.

Kohli did not score in his nine balls before gloving 23-year-old O'Rourke, playing his fifth Test, to leg slip.

Sarfaraz was caught one-

handed by Conway diving at mid-off attempting a counter-attack and, after a short rain delay and a 10-over partnership returning just 21 runs with Pant, Jaiswal cut O'Rourke to point.

Rahul was caught down the leg side in O'Rourke's next over and an over later, Jadeja skied a catch off a leading edge and Ashwin edged to gully in consecutive balls off Henry.

Henry's next over returned the wicket of Pant, who poked an edge to second slip, and it was Henry who produced a fine sprawling catch soon after to pouch Jasprit Bumrah's top-edge at fine leg.

Henry then claimed his fourth Test five-wicket haul by having Kuldeep Yadav caught in the gully.

India's total was the joint 18th-lowest by any team in Tests.

"We were going to bat first too so it was a good toss to lose," Henry said.

"It was nice when the clouds rolled in when the toss was done.

"We were expecting it to be a flatter wicket but there was plenty of assistance this morning."

## VAR errors down 80%: referees' chief

LONDON (BBC): Referees' chief Howard Webb says there has been an 80% reduction in the number of video assistant referee (VAR) errors this season.

It has now been five years since VAR was introduced in the Premier League, but the system and the way it is used continues to attract plenty of debate.

According to the independent Key Match Incidents panel (KMI), there were 31 incorrect uses of VAR during the 2023-24 season.

In June Premier League clubs voted 19-1 in favour of keeping VAR after Wolverhampton Wanderers triggered a vote to scrap it. An independent survey commissioned by the Premier League suggested that four out of five fans want to keep VAR in the league.

The Premier League has started explaining VAR decisions using a dedicated social media channel, but the introduction of semi-automated offside technology (SAOT) - originally scheduled for after either the October or November international break - has been delayed until 2025.

Webb - chief refereeing officer at Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL) - has claimed that mistakes are down 80% this season.

"I don't think we managed expectations well in terms of VAR," the former Premier League referee told the Stick to Football podcast, external.

"We knew it was always going to be a situation where it was going to do well on those clear situations, the ones where you think, 'that's clearly wrong on first view'. We're good at spotting those most of the time.

"We have this independent panel which has got ex-players on it, and they judge each decision each week, and according to the panel - which is independent from us [PGMOL] - there has only been two VAR errors this season compared to 10 at the same time last year."

Webb added that greater emphasis has been placed on reducing the time taken to reach decisions. "We've been better at hitting the mark but that can change and we're not going to get complacent, but it's been better," said Webb.

"For me, the biggest thing of all is that it's been quicker. The average delay last season through VAR was 70 seconds per game and this year it's 25 seconds. It's way better.

"I said to the guys, 'don't ponder for too long, if you see a situation that jumps off the screen at you then get involved, but if you're having to think about it too much and analyse it too many times then just say check complete because we'll leave it with the referee on the field'. That's why the term, 'referee's call' is useful."

## Tuchel: How did we get here so quickly and quietly?

LONDON (BBC): A whirlwind week has seen the England men's team go from the leadership of a once untroubled interim manager to the appointment of serial winner Thomas Tuchel as their permanent head coach, for an 18-month period from January 2025 until the summer of 2026.

The speed at which the story developed, with very few leaks until news started to break on Tuesday, surprised many. Through a combination of BBC sources, interviews and news conferences, we've pulled together what we've learned about the process that led the Football Association chief executive Mark Bullingham to announce Tuchel as "the best candidate for the job" to give England the "best chance of winning the 2026 World Cup".

The job advert published in July said the FA wanted someone with "significant experience of English football, with a strong track record delivering results in the Premier League and/or leading international competitions". That appeared to leave the door open for Newcastle boss Eddie Howe, former Brighton and Chelsea head coach Graham Potter and U21 European Championship-winning boss Lee Carsley. But with the FA always making clear it was open to appointing a foreign manager, the feeling was a big international name was the preferred option.

The reality is there are only three English head coaches in the Premier League, plus out-of-work Potter. The homegrown choices were limited.

Questions have been asked of what Tuchel's appointment means for the St George's Park pathway of developing young British coaches, and whether there is a shortage of elite managers. Bullingham put it simply: "We wanted to get the very best for the job".

There had been conflicting media reports around the process of recruiting Gareth Southgate's successor. The FA was not guiding journalists either way on specific candidates, which meant speculative reports were published without any official comment from the FA.

Tuchel told the BBC the FA first approached him in late August. Until very recently there had been a sense the FA was in no rush to name a replacement for Southgate, with interim Carsley in place for the autumn Nations League matches, and World Cup qualifying not starting

until March.

Indeed, there were some reports within the past fortnight that Bullingham and McDermott - who led the recruitment process - had not even spoken to potential candidates such as Howe, Potter and Jurgen Klopp.

When pressed by BBC Sport at Thursday's news conference at Wembley, Bullingham said "approximately 10 people", including "English candidates", were interviewed.

Potter has given nothing away in recent TV appearances and Newcastle boss Howe may well be asked about the England job at his Friday news conference.

Earlier in the week - just before Tuchel's FA talks were reported - BBC Sport was told by two sources that the FA did make an approach to Guardiola earlier in the summer. Both Manchester City and the FA declined to comment.

Former Newcastle striker and BBC pundit Alan Shearer told Radio 5 live that he understood there was no approach to Howe.

Match of the Day's Gary Lineker told the Rest is Football podcast he understood the FA had spoken to Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti. BBC Sport has not been able to verify either claim.

It is hard to know what chance of the job any English candidates had. But Bullingham told us "any federation will always want to look at an appointment like this and have a really strong candidate pool of five to 10 domestic candidates who are winning trophies at both club and international level. We're not in that position at the moment".

Speaking to BBC Radio 5 Live's football correspondent John Murray, Bullingham said the FA "did a lot of work before the Euros" to identify "the ideal characteristic and profile of an England manager" to help them try to win a tournament, and that Tuchel "fitted that really well".

Sources have told BBC Sport that McDermott met Tuchel in Munich before a second meeting with Bullingham.

Bullingham said Tuchel was "always on our target list" and so they made a "proactive approach to speak to him".

Tuchel said the "idea" was presented by McDermott and Bullingham "very fast, [and] confidential" and in a "very straightforward" way. At that point, the FA was still speaking to other people "in the industry", Bullingham said.

Bullingham added: "He [Tuchel] was outstanding,

he gave a really strong presentation, outlined how he felt he could help us win and the chemistry felt really good, and we concluded the partnership quite soon after that."

Sources have told BBC Sport that there was a real sense of keeping it personal between a group of four and to limit the chat over messages.

Bullingham told BBC Sport's Murray that Tuchel "fitted within" the FA's "really tight salary structure" - in the same way Southgate did on a reported £5m-6m a year.

A senior FA source told BBC Sport Tuchel is being paid slightly more than Southgate's most recent deal.

Bullingham said the FA "cannot afford to match the salaries the top clubs pay" but that the talented, young England squad and the structure around it was "something special to offer".

"To be fair, there were quite a few coaches interested who saw the opportunity way beyond financial measures," said Bullingham.

"Thomas absolutely bought into that. This is about far more than money for him and the team."

During this two-week international break interim manager Carsley gave two confusing news conferences, on Thursday, 10 October and again on Sunday, 13 October.

Both were after England games in front of the media. Both times he seemed to tie himself in knots over whether he was in the running for the full-time England job and whether he even wanted it.

BBC Sport was told by a senior FA figure 10 days ago - before the damaging Greece defeat - that the recruitment process was going "very well".

Perhaps that was a reference to the secret talks with Tuchel.

Maybe they had been stung by reports of inertia, or the risk of Tuchel being a target for Manchester United, who spoke to the German coach in the summer. Could the fact United stuck with Erik ten Hag - despite their poor start to the season - have pushed Tuchel towards England?

There was a convenient theory that with Carsley's candidacy effectively over after the defeat by Greece last week, the FA's hand was forced.

But we now know Tuchel signed his contract with the governing body two days before that match.

Astonishingly, in the era of 24-7 media coverage and the interest in the England role as one of the biggest jobs in world football, Tuchel's appointment did not leak.

## Ball returns after nearly three years out injured

WASHINGTON (BBC): NBA star Lonzo Ball made his first appearance in almost three years after recovering from multiple knee surgeries.

Chicago Bulls point guard Ball scored 10 points in 15 minutes in the Bulls' 125-123 pre-season victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Thursday.

Ball, 26, also registered an assist, a steal and a block in his first appearance since 14 January 2022.

"It felt a lot better playing than watching, I'll say that much," said Ball, who

was restricted to 16 minutes of game time.

"I can't even really put into words how I felt out there," Ball had a cartilage and meniscus transplant in his left knee in March 2023, his third knee operation in just over a year.

He also received a bone allograft, a procedure where the replacement bone comes from another person.

Ball said on his What an Experience, external podcast that the issues began when he tore his meniscus in 2018 while playing for the Los Angeles Lakers.

On Wednesday Ball said

he "was moving great" and that his knee gave him no trouble "at all".

Ball will start the season on a minutes restriction and will not play games on back-to-back days.

He is expected to feature in the Bulls' final pre-season game against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Friday, before their season-opener against the New Orleans Pelicans on Wednesday.

"I had a goal to get back on the court," Ball said. "I know it was a long journey, a long process, but it all paid off because this was what I was looking

forward to. I'm just glad it's here now. I can finally go out and do what I love to do.

"There were a lot of people that helped me get here, not just myself. Just to see the crowd and all the love I get from the city, man, you cannot replicate that in any type of way. And it's real."

Ball was selected by the Lakers with the second overall pick in the 2017 NBA Draft.

He was traded to the Pelicans in 2019 before a sign-and-trade deal took him to Chicago before the 2021-22 season.

pulled for the positive test.

Pogba remains under contract with Juventus, his deal is set to expire in the summer of 2026, and is looking forward to getting back to training with the rest of the squad.

"I would just like to be on the pitch, any pitch," Pogba said.

"First it's with Juventus. I want to be on the training with team mates, it's tough to be alone, playing passes on to the wall.

"My main focus is to get back training, be fit and to be on the pitch doing what I love."

plement," Pogba added. "I didn't triple check, let's say it like that, even if it came from a professional. If I have to be punished, I am fine with it, but it should never be four years."

Pogba joined Juventus, reuniting with the Italian club in July 2022 after his contract at Manchester United expired.

He featured just 12 times across all competitions after returning to Turin, with injuries restricting his gametime in 2022-23, while he played just twice last season before he was

PARIS (BBC): Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba said he is "not a cheater" but accepted responsibility for the failed doping test that led to a ban.

Pogba's four-year ban was reduced to 18 months earlier this month after the Court of Arbitration for Sport accepted his ingestion of a banned substance "was not intentional".

The 31-year-old was suspended by Italy's national anti-doping tribunal (Nado) in February after a drugs test found elevated levels of testosterone - a hormone that increases

endurance - in his system. "This is not me, I'm not a cheater," Pogba told Sky Sports.

"I'm someone that loves my sport, I love the game and I would never, ever cheat. I like to win fairly.

"I'm a bad loser but I'm not a cheater."

The reduced ban started from 11 September 2023, with sources close to the Pogba telling BBC Sport that he can resume training in January and will be eligible to play again from March.

"I take some responsibility because I took the sup-





## In brief

### 3 passengers burnt alive

ISLAMABAD (INP): Three passengers were burnt alive and two sustained burns when a gas cylinder exploded in a van near M-1 Toll Plaza. On information, police and rescue teams scrambled to the site and started rescue operation. According to initial report, three passengers lost their lives whereas two passengers sustained burns. The injured and the dead were shifted to hospital. The condition of the injured was stated to be critical. Further investigation was underway. LPG cylinder blasts are common. Innocent lives were lost in these explosions. Mostly, these explosions take place due to sub-standard cylinders. Authorities concerned have failed to check such incidents. Several times, successive governments announced crackdowns on the mafia involved in making sub-standard LPG cylinders to stop such incidents. But unfortunately, the incidents of cylinder blasts keep occurring. There is a need to come up with a solid policy to save lives of people in such incidents.

### ANF seizes 68 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (INP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to recover 68 kg drugs worth Rs 4.7 million and arrested three suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that in an operation, 48 kg hashish was recovered from bushes in coastal line, Gwadar. In second operation, 20 kg hashish was recovered from three suspects rounded up near Sumingli Road, Quetta. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

### 99,300 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (INP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 99,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 70,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.73 feet and was 137.73 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 37,600 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1200.80 feet, which was 150.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,300 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 45,700, 65,400, 54,900 and 19,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 15,600 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### CDNS achieve Rs210b target

ISLAMABAD (APP): CDNS has realized a target of Rs210 billion in fresh bonds and achieved 12 percent of the annual target in the first quarter of current fiscal year, from July 1 to October 16. The CDNS has set an annual target of Rs 1650 billion for the current Fiscal Year, 2024-25, which will promote the saving culture in the country, the senior official of CDNS told APP on Thursday. CDNS has set a target of Rs170 billion in investment in Islamic finance for the Current Fiscal Year, which will lead to growth of Islamic economy in the country.

# At least 150 violent protesters arrested

RAWALPINDI (INP): At least 150 violent protesters were arrested in Rawalpindi as police used tear gas to disperse students demonstrating against the alleged rape of a Lahore student.

Last week, reports related to the alleged rape of the private college student went viral on social media, prompting the police to arrest a security guard at the college who was allegedly involved in the incident.

Enraged by the alleged incident, students mobilised on social media and staged protests outside different colleges in Lahore in the past few days. On Monday, at least 28 were injured due to clashes with the security guards of the college and police.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has declared that the alleged rape was "fabricated news", blaming the PTI for spreading the "fake reports" on social media. Punjab Group of Colleges (PGC) group Director Agha Tahir and other office-holders

have termed the incident "baseless".

Speaking to a private TV Channel, Rawalpindi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operation Hafiz Kamran Asghar said around 150 violent protesters had been arrested, adding that the situation was now completely under control.

SSP Asghar said that they did not want to arrest students, however, if anyone tried to take the law into their hands under the guise of protests, legal action would be taken against them.

"All the angles of the protest are being investigated," the SSP said, adding that a heavy contingent of police has been deployed on the main roads outside the colleges in different areas of the city.

"All the closed roads have also been opened," SSP Asghar added. According to a post on Rawalpindi Police's X account, police personnel have been deployed at various locations across the city.

"Rawalpindi Police is

fully prepared to deal with any law and order situation," it said.

"Parents are requested to keep their children away from illegal activities, the future of children can be ruined in case of legal action," the police added.

The violent protests had already spread to other Punjab cities on Wednesday, where students of public as well as private institutes resorted to ransacking and torching different Punjab Group of Colleges (PGC) campuses.

The protests also claimed the life of a college security guard in the Gujrat district, for which at least 185 people were booked in a murder case.

In Lahore, students gathered outside the Punjab College's Campus 11, where they set fire to the parking area, shattered windows, and damaged doors.

More than 450 people were named in cases filed over attacking and damaging PGC campuses in Gujrat's Lalamusa and Kharian cities.

## Officers of 41st MCMC visit BISP office

ISLAMABAD (APP): The officers of 41st Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC) of the National Institute of Management (NIM) Peshawar visited the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) headquarters on Thursday.

Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad welcomed the officers. The purpose of the visit was to gain insights into the operations of the program and its impact on disadvantaged communities across the country.

Secretary BISP briefed the delegation on the core initiatives of BISP, including Benazir Kafaalat, Taleemi Wazaif, Nashonuma, the Undergraduate Scholarship program, and the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER).

He explained that the Benazir Income Support Program provides financial assistance to poor families across the country, helping them meet their daily expenses.

The program has empowered poor women in Pakistan by ensuring their inclusion in the financial system.

The Secretary also informed the delegation about the introduction of a new payment model to ensure transparent disbursement of funds to deserving women. As part of this model, six new banks are being hired.

He added that further improvements, with the support of the State Bank of Pakistan, will allow women beneficiaries of BISP to

choose the bank of their preference to receive their quarterly stipends in a transparent and dignified manner.

DG (OM) Dr Asim Ijaz briefed the participants on the utility of the NSER database, stating that both public and private organizations use this database for various social security projects.

He also highlighted that BISP's international development partners recognize the credibility of the database.

The visit concluded with a question-and-answer session, where participants expressed their gratitude for the detailed briefing and appreciated BISP's efforts to support underprivileged communities.

## AAOU moot proposes measures for promotion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) on Thursday proposed measures for promotion of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) education.

The three-day 37th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities, held at Allama Iqbal Open University, concluded here.

A 10-point declaration was issued at the concluding ceremony of the conference to enhance the development of open and distance education system worldwide, particularly in Asia, and to align it with contemporary demands.

Delegates from 14 countries attended the conference in person, while education experts and researchers from six other countries participated online. A total of 180 papers were presented across various sessions during the three days.

Key points of the declaration included efforts to achieve sustainable development goals through the distance education system, aligning distance education with blended learning policies, promoting the positive use of AI, providing faculty training on AI and digital skills, encouraging research

and innovation in the distance education system, introducing online courses, and working towards bridging the digital divide.

The closing ceremony was presided over by Executive Director of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Professor Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum.

In his address, he emphasized that modern technology especially Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT, LLM, AR, and VR are gaining importance in education. However, he noted that the role of teachers remains indispensable, with technology acting as a support tool rather than a replacement. He stressed the need to train faculty members in utilizing these technologies.

He urged upon the President of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU), Ojat Darajat, and the Secretary-General, Dr. Rahmat Budiman to establish an endowment fund to support the education of poor and deserving individuals in member countries.

He also recommended the introduction of collaboration and exchange programs among open universities in Asia.

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Dr. Nasir

Mahmood, Vice-Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University said that this conference had created opportunities for collaboration among open universities in Asian countries.

He highlighted the widespread impact of AI on all aspects of life and emphasized the need to work on its positive use in distance education.

Other speakers included the President of the Asian Association of Open Universities and Rector of Indonesia's Terbuka Open University, Professor Dr. Ojat Darajat; AAOU Secretary-General Dr. Rahmat Budiman; Executive Dean of Holmes Institute, Australia, Hamish Coates; President of the Commonwealth of Learning, Canada, Professor Dr. Peter Scott; and Research Professor at the University of South Africa, Paul Prinsloo.

At the end of the conference, certificates were distributed among the speakers and committee heads who contributed to the success of the event.

The Asian Association of Open Universities honored Conference Coordinator Professor Dr. Zahid Majeed with the Meritorious Honor Award for his outstanding services.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan presiding over first working group meeting of Generation Unlimited Strategic Advisory Council.

## DC revives open-door policy

ISLAMABAD (INP): After the successful completion of the SCO summit in the Federal Capital, the activities in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration offices have returned to normal.

In this regard, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Thursday listened to issues of various complainants and issued directives to the department concerned for their resolution.

DC Memon assured that all citizens would have the opportunity to voice their concerns under the district's open-door policy.

On the occasion, he instructed the relevant authorities to address these issues without delay, highlighting that resolving public problems is the district administration's primary focus.

Memon emphasized that no case would be left unattended, and action would be taken against any officer found delaying the resolution of citizens' complaints.

The DC reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that the administration works efficiently to serve the masses.

## IHC judges' cause list cancelled

ISLAMABAD (INP): Several judges of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) are unavailable for hearings as they take leave due to illness and other reasons.

The cause list of Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb has been cancelled after he was diagnosed with dengue fever. Doctors have advised him to rest, and he will not hear cases for the next two days.

Similarly, the one-week cause list for Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri has also been cancelled. He will not be available to hear cases until October 23.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir is also unavailable today, and Justice Babar Sattar is on a month-long leave, returning at the end of October.

In their absence, Justices Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani and Sardar Ejaz Ishaq are continuing to hear cases in the court.

## Death anniversary observed

ISLAMABAD (INP): The 26th death anniversary of Hakim Muhammad Saeed, a distinguished scholar, philanthropist, and former governor of Sindh, was observed on Thursday.

He was born on January 9, 1920, in Delhi and, along with his family, migrated to Pakistan following the country's independence in 1947.

He is best known for establishing Hamdard Dawakhana, a known institution that eventually extended its reach throughout Pakistan.

In addition to his contributions to healthcare, Hakim Muhammad Saeed authored numerous books covering a wide array of subjects, including religion, health, science, literature, social issues, and travelogues.

During his term as the governor of Sindh in 1993, Hakim Saeed chose not to occupy the official state residence.

## CDA Chairman lauds field workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Thursday praised the dedication and hard work of all field workers and officers involved in the successful hosting of the 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Randhawa referred to the CDA's field workers as the "true heroes" for their tireless efforts in ensuring the event's success, which not only brought pride to

Islamabad but also elevated the nation's reputation.

He commended the exemplary coordination and collaboration between all CDA wings, which made it possible to smoothly host the prestigious event.

"The commitment and dedication with which all officers and field workers performed their duties are unparalleled," said Randhawa.

In his remarks, the CDA chairman highlighted the sacrifices made to enhance the beauty and honor of

Islamabad, saying, "We worked with body, mind, and soul for the city's prestige."

He further added that their collective efforts brought CDA to the forefront as a model institution, enhancing its reputation nationwide.

"The exceptional work done has not only bolstered CDA's image in Islamabad but across the entire country," Randhawa noted, extending congratulations to all involved for their remarkable contributions.

## 50 Years of Tarbela Dam: Commemorative postage stamp issued

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Post issued commemorative postage stamp worth 50 Rupees to mark 50 years of Tarbela Dam.

A ceremony was held at WAPDA House for showcasing the commemorative postage stamp with Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) as the chief guest.

Additional Director General (Operation) Pakistan Post Rizwan Javed Hashmi unveiled the commemorative postage stamp.

The ceremony was attended by Post Master General (Central Punjab), Deputy Post Master General (Admn), WAPDA's Member Finance, Member Water, Member Power, Secretary and GMs from across the country.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman thanked the Pakistan Post for issuance of the commemorative postage stamp.

He said that Tarbela Dam is a testament to Pakistan's engineering prowess and commitment to the socio-economic development of the country. The commemorative postage stamp is a fitting tribute to this iconic project.

The postage stamp will serve as a reminder of Tarbela Dam's significance for generations to come.

Later, Additional Director General (Operation), on behalf of the Pakistan Post, presented album of the commemorative postage stamp to the Chairman.

It is important to note that Tarbela Dam, completed in 1974, has been playing an instrumental

role for economic development and social uplift in Pakistan during the last 50 years.

The contribution Tarbela Dam Project has made towards progress in the country can be judged from the fact that it has released 406 million acre feet (MAF) of stored water from the reservoir for agriculture and contributed 590,361 million units of low-cost and environment friendly hydel electricity to the National Grid.

Economic and financial benefits of one MAF of water in Pakistan are estimated at US\$ 1,000 million (US\$ 1 billion). Therefore, total benefits accrued from Tarbela Dam during the last 50 years stand at more than four hundred billion dollars.

## Metro bus service suspended in Capital

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad district administration has announced the suspension of the Metro Bus service in the city until Friday due to security concerns.

The administration stated that most delegations of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting have returned to their home countries, and the temporary suspension of service is part of heightened security measures.

In a statement, the district administration also said that the buses of the

feeder routes connected to the Metro Bus service will also be suspended. The suspension of the Metro Bus service has been implemented to ensure the safety and smooth travel of the visiting dignitaries.

Traffic plan Earlier, the government had announced a comprehensive traffic plan for Rawalpindi and Islamabad for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference, from October 14 to 16. The plan included several road closures and diversions to ensure smooth traffic flow

during the high-profile event.

From October 14 to 16, all types of heavy traffic was prohibited within the city. Over 1,100 traffic officers had been deployed to manage and facilitate traffic during this period. The Expressway from Zero Point to Koral Chowk was closed to traffic. The Rawalpindi-Islamabad Metro Bus Service had also been completely suspended from October 14 to 17. The Metro service will not operate between Sadar Station and Pak Secretariat during this time.

## Funeral prayers in absentia offered

ISLAMABAD (INP): Funeral prayers in absentia were offered on Thursday at the New Campus of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) for Prof. Dr. Nabi Bux Jumani, the former Vice President of the university.

A condolence reference was also held to honor his memory, with participants reflecting on his significant contributions to the institution.

President IIUI, Dr. Muhammad Sarwar, Vice Presidents, Deans, Faculty members, DGs administrative officers and a large number of employees offered funeral prayers in absentia.

The solemn occasion was marked by heartfelt

prayers for eternal peace as the congregation, led by the President, prayed for Dr. Jumani's maghfirah (forgiveness) and high ranks in the afterlife. The dua, following the Namaz-e-Janaza, emphasized the sense of loss felt by the university community at the passing of a man they regarded as a visionary leader.

Prof. Dr. Jumani, aged 58, passed away last Saturday during a surgery and was laid to rest in his native village in Sindh. His sudden death has left a void in the hearts of many, particularly within the academic community.

Following the funeral prayers, a condolence refer-

ence was held, where participants shared their memories of late Dr. Jumani's affectionate personality and dedicated vision. Speakers paid glowing tributes to his services, which have greatly contributed to the betterment of IIUI. They praised his pivotal role in driving reforms aimed at advancing the university and improving educational standards.

President of IIUI, while addressing the gathering, expressed deep sorrow, stating, "The university has lost a great asset. His passing is not just a personal loss but a collective grief for all of us who have benefited from his leadership and commitment."



ISLAMABAD: A tractor trolley on way loaded with dry branches of tree near Zero Point.



### Shaheen meets Mustafa

KABUL (BNA): Mohammad Suhail Shaheen, Chief of Political Office of IEA, announced his recent meeting with Dr. Mustafa Göksu, Turkish ambassador to Qatar. The meeting took place in Doha, where both officials engaged in discussions aimed at strengthening bilateral ties between Afghanistan and Turkey. Shaheen highlighted the key areas of focus during their discussions, which included education, health, agriculture, and potential investment opportunities in Afghanistan.

## The Frontier Post

Rabi-us-Sanni 14 1446 — Friday, October 18, 2024

### Afghan situation discussed

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced that Lolwah Al-Khater, Qatar's Minister of State for International Cooperation, met with Andrew McCoubrey, UK's Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, on the sidelines of the Global Humanitarian Forum in London. According to the statement released by the Qatari Ministry, the meeting focused on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, particularly the healthcare and education sectors.

# 170,000 tourists visit Bamyan's historical and natural sites

BAMYAN (TOLONews): Around 170,000 tourists visited the historical sites, natural attractions, and ancient areas of Bamyan in the first six months of the current solar year. The Bamyan Department of Information and Culture stated that nearly 1,000 of these visitors were foreign tourists. Safiullah Raed, head of the Bamyan Department of Information and Culture, said: "In the past few months, we have had approximately 170,000 domestic tourists who visited historical and recreational sites, with most of them visiting Band-e Amir. Additionally, about 990 foreign tourists have visited the historical and recreational sites." Lakhsham Fortress is

one of the remaining historical sites located 48 kilometers east of Bamyan, in the village of Bolola, within the Shibar district of this province. This symbol of Bamyan's ancient civilization has played a key role in attracting tourists to the region in recent years. Local residents say that Lakhsham Fortress was built about 500 years ago on 10 acres of agricultural land with unique architecture. However, over time, parts of this historical structure have been damaged due to rainfall and local neglect. They urge the authorities to preserve and restore these historical sites in order to further develop the tourism industry in this province.

Abbas Safari, a resident of Shibar district, said: "This fortress was built with great effort and is one of the historical fortresses with over 500 years of history." Qurban, another resident of Shibar district, said: "Many tourists, both domestic and foreign, come to visit this place. This fortress is very historic, but it has now turned into ruins." Meanwhile, hundreds of historical landmarks and natural attractions in Bamyan's central and district areas have turned this province into one of the most important tourist destinations in the country, though many of its historical and ancient sites are in dire need of maintenance and restoration.

## Reactions to deadly shooting of migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): The recent shooting of migrants by Iranian border forces has sparked widespread reactions. In a recent statement, Australian Senator Claire Chandler described the Iranian regime as "murderous and savage," criticizing Western officials for their conservative stance toward Tehran. She referenced the reported massacre of Afghan migrants at the Iran-Pakistan border, asserting on the social media platform X that the Iranian regime will not undergo any reform. Zalmay Khalilzad, the former US envoy for peace in Afghanistan, also responded to the shooting incident involving Iranian border forces targeting Afghan migrants. He stated, "If the reports are accurate, this would be horrifying and warrants consequences." Khalilzad emphasized the need to await the results of credible investigations before making any judgments, despite the Iranian government denying the occurrence of such a deadly event.

Previously, the human rights organization "Halvash," which focuses on issues in Sistan and Baluchistan and the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in Iran, reported accounts from migrants regarding the deadly shooting by Iranian border forces. According to their report, on the evening of October 13, Iranian border guards opened fire on Afghan migrants attempting to enter Iran at night, resulting in approximately 260 fatalities. This shocking figure has yet to be confirmed by any independent media or organization, and the Iranian government has denied that such an event took place.

Richard Bennett, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan, has stressed the need for an immediate investigation into the incident. The Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the UN condemned the shooting of Afghan migrants by Iranian border guards, calling for a thorough investigation of the event. The mission stated that they had received reports of hundreds of Afghan migrants being killed by Iranian border forces. In its initial response to the news, the Taliban announced that it would utilize all its resources to investigate the matter thoroughly.

# Bayat Power's CEO in talks with DABS on collaboration opportunities

KABUL (Ariana News): Senior officials from Afghanistan's power utility company Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) met Wednesday with directors of Bayat Power to discuss enhanced cooperation in generating electricity for the country. According to a statement issued by DABS, their CEO Abdul Bari Omar met with Ali Kasemi, Bayat Power's CEO, in Kabul. Omar expressed gratitude for the company's contributions as a national investor. Bayat Power is Afghanistan's largest private Electric Power Production and Development Company.

The company owns and operates Bayat Power-1, the first in a new generation of Gas to Electricity power generation plants that provide affordable, reliable and environmentally sustainable electric power to homes and businesses in Afghanistan. During the meeting, Omar highlighted the growing interest from investors in power generation while Kasemi "affirmed his commitment to cooperate with DABS and indicated his intention to expand production capacity." DABS said this move was welcomed by Omar, who said in turn that Bayat Power's services had a positive impact on the Afghan people. Omar also outlined various opportunities within Afghanistan's power generation sector and encouraged Bayat Power to pursue further investments as a national investor.



"The meeting underscored a shared commitment to enhancing electricity services and growth in energy sector," DABS said in its statement. **Phase 2 of Bayat Power-1 on the cards** In August, Bayat Power officials said they are hoping to start work soon on Phase 2 of Bayat Power-1 in northern Jawzjan province in order to increase electricity production output for Afghanistan. Company officials said at the time they were in discussions with relevant government departments to start the project. Mohammad Shoaib Sahibzada, the technical head of Bayat Power, said that once Phase 2 is complete, electricity production will increase from 40 to 100 megawatts. Sahibzada said Bayat Power's natural gas to electricity generation project will eventually produce up to 250

megawatts of electricity once Phase 3 is complete. "Currently, it has a production of 40 megawatts, and in the second phase, it will produce 100 megawatts. Bayat Power is in contact with the relevant officials regarding the start of the second phase, the discussions are ongoing," said Sahibzada. Bayat Power has produced over one billion kilowatt hours of electricity in just under five years after starting commercial operations in late 2019. Sahibzada said that over the past five years, the company has also worked on capacity building of its technical employees. **Leading the way** After 40 years, Bayat Power is the first private company to produce electricity from natural gas in the country and the multi-million dollar plant uses Siemens Energy's SGT-A45 mobile gas turbine for

its economic efficiency, flexible deployment, and power density. Currently providing electricity to hundreds of thousands of end-users and generating more than 300 million kWh annually, the project was structured as an innovative public-private partnership between Bayat Power, Siemens Energy, and Afghanistan government entities such as the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the Ministry of Energy and Water, and the General Directorate of Afghan Gas Corporation Company. Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), and international partners. The Bayat Group is the largest private investor in Afghanistan and Bayat Power is currently the only gas-powered plant in the country. The Siemens Energy's SGT-A45 mobile gas turbine used by the company is the only one in operation in the world.

# Team appointed to probe reports of massacre

KABUL (Ariana News): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) has appointed a delegation to investigate reports of Afghans being killed on the Iran-Pakistan border. Hamdullah Fitrat, deputy spokesman for the Islamic Emirate, said the delegation is headed by Mullah Mohammad Ibrahim Sadr, the deputy interior minister for security. He said the delegation has been tasked to investigate the matter thoroughly and comprehensively and submit its report to the prime minister's office and receive necessary instructions for further



action. Fitrat added that the delegation began its work on Wednesday and is trying to find out the truth as soon as possible. On Tuesday, an Iranian-based human rights organi-

zation, Haalvsh, claimed Iranian forces had gunned down at least 260 Afghan migrants near the Kalgan Saravan region in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province on Sunday evening.

# WFP delivers life-saving food to nearly 250,000

KABUL (Ariana News): The World Food Programme (WFP) has announced in a report that the organization was able to reach nearly 250,000 food-insecure people across Afghanistan with the assistance from China in the past few months. The report said WFP was able to procure more than 2,000 metric tons of food, including fortified wheat flour and fortified vegetable oil, yellow split peas and salt which was distributed to more than 35,000 families or nearly 250,000 people across the country. "Entire communities across Afghanistan experience despair and hunger,"

said Ma Chen Guang, Counsellor of Economic and Commercial Affairs of the Chinese Embassy in Afghanistan, at a ceremony in Kabul on Thursday. "China will continue to work with the World Food Programme to provide food assistance to hungry Afghan families in need of assistance for survival." The report stated: "The contribution from China came at a critical moment when a massive funding shortfall put at risk WFP's work in Afghanistan. Last year, WFP had to cut 10 million people from assistance and this summer, due to the ongoing funding crisis, 11 million people did

not receive emergency food assistance. "This included more than 2 million mothers and their children who received no specialized supplementary food to combat malnutrition." "Afghanistan remains a global hunger hotspot and more than three-quarters of all people across the country cannot afford a nutritious diet that keeps them from falling into malnutrition," said Hsiao-Wei Lee, Country Director of WFP Afghanistan. "Families across the country need continued emergency food assistance to get through the winter months."

# Kandahar exports 9,500 tons of onions

KANDAHAR (TOLONews): For the first time in the past two months, 9,500 tons of onions, valued at more than two million US dollars, have been exported from Kandahar to India and Pakistan. The Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Investment says they are working to increase the level of agricultural exports from the province to foreign markets. Abdul Baqi Bina, Deputy of the Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Investment, said: "Fortunately, this year in the past two months, we were able to export 9,500 tons of onions worth two million and one hundred thousand dollars from Kandahar to India and Pakistan. Our goal is to find more markets for Kandahar's products." Farmers in Kandahar view the export of their agricultural products to global markets as beneficial for their economic growth. Mohammad Younis, a farmer, said: "All our hard work throughout the year is for this. The onions must be sold at a good price and



exported abroad to help our economy." Abdul Rahman, another farmer, said: "This year, good onions have been grown in Kandahar. Our request is that they be sent to foreign countries so that the farmers' economy can be further strengthened." The Kandahar Department of Agriculture and Irrigation says that in the current solar year, onions have been cultivated on 1,900 hectares of farmland in the province, and based on their estimates, 68,000 tons of onions will be harvested. Shamsur Rahman Musa, head of the agricultural

department of the Kandahar Department of Agriculture and Irrigation, said: "This year in Kandahar, according to our estimates, onions have been planted on 1,900 hectares of land, and approximately 68,000 tons of produce will be obtained. We can say that this year's onion harvest is good." According to information from the Kandahar Department of Agriculture and Irrigation, farmers in the districts of Daman, Arghandab, Zhari, Shawalikot, Takhtapul, Khakrez, and Spin Boldak have cultivated onions in this province.

# Over 9 billion Afghanis paid to disabled persons and orphans this year

KABUL (TOLONews): Faisal Khamoosh, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, stated that since the beginning of this solar year, 9 billion and 469 million Afghanis have been paid to disabled persons, women, and orphaned children. The spokesperson for the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled also mentioned the start of the second round of salary payments for mar-

tyrs and disabled persons, adding that this process has begun across the country. Khamoosh said: "From the budget allocated to the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, approximately 9 billion and 469 million Afghanis have been distributed to orphans, disabled persons, and widows." At the same time, a number of disabled individuals have complained about the challenges in their lives and

have demanded the timely disbursement of their allowances. Islam Gul, a resident of Paktia province, has come to Kabul to receive his disability pension. He is the sole breadwinner for his family and faces numerous economic challenges. Islam Gul told TOLONews: "We haven't received our salaries for the past six months, and now they should pay us for the

previous six months." Other disabled individuals also spoke about the economic hardships they face. They said their rights should be paid as soon as possible by the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled. Abdul Saboor, one of the disabled individuals, said: "Our disability salaries have not been paid on time; only the first round has been paid, and nothing since then. Winter is

approaching, and we will face difficulties." Ahmad Munir, another disabled individual, said: "Our request is that they also pay us for the second round because winter is coming, and we have nothing to prepare for it." According to officials from the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, there are 653,000 disabled individuals, widows, and orphans across the country.

# Over 156,000 Afghan refugees returned home from Pakistan in first half of 2024

KABUL (Ariana News): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced Thursday that more than 156,000 Afghan refugees have returned to their country in the first six months of 2024. The organization said in a report that the situation for Afghans in neighboring countries has become increasingly challenging, with "economic fragility reducing livelihoods opportunities, a spiralling cost of living crisis, and rising instances of xenophobia." According to the report, over 1.6 million Afghans have sought safety and protection in Iran and Pakistan, adding a significant addi-

tional burden to the two host countries which now host over eight million Afghans. "As Afghans become the largest refugee population globally this year, surpassing Syrian nationals, the principal host countries who have hosted Afghans for decades need to be adequately supported," it said. UNHCR has stated that Iran currently hosts 3.8 million Afghan refugees and is the largest refugee-hosting country in the world. 2.8 million Afghans live in Pakistan, of which 1.3 million are registered as refugees. The report states that since Pakistan started the process of repatriation of illegal nationals in 2023,



some 647,000 Afghans have returned to their coun-

try. Numbers of returns in 2024 have significantly pause in the process.



# PPP invites all parties to join constitutional amendment process

## F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Senior Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Excise Taxation Sharjeel Inaam Memon addressed a press conference regarding the PPP convention on October 18 at Hatri Bypass. Sharjeel Inaam Memon honored martyr Benazir Bhutto's bravery, citing her return to Pakistan on October 18, 2007 despite threats. The PPP convention in Hyderabad aims to pay homage to martyrs, with Hundred Thousands are expected to participate.

On constitutional amendments, Sharjeel Inaam Memon aligned Bilawal Bhutto's stance with Benazir Bhutto's manifesto. He highlighted PPP's fulfillment of promises, including a historical housing scheme for flood victims and the upcoming Farmer Card. Sharjeel Inaam Memon welcomed Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi's participation in the convention. Sharjeel Inaam Memon further said that their party are inviting all parties including Akhtar Mengal party and PTI to join the constitutional amendment process. He clarified that water distribution is not part of the amendment.

Responding to questions, Sharjeel Inaam Memon criticized the justice system of past PCO judges and emphasized Bilawal Bhutto's commitment to justice. Governor Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Faisal Kareem Kundi termed October 18, 2007, a "dark day" for PPP and praised Hyderabad's role in the democracy struggle.

Governor KPK Faisal Kareem Kundi contrasted PPP's development work in Sindh with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's sit-ins and protests, underscoring PPP's commitment to lawful actions. He attributed provincial autonomy and NFC awards to President Asif Ali Zardari. Governor KPK added that People's party in convention tomorrow aims to make history, honoring martyrs and promoting democratic values. Later on, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inaam Memon along with Governor KP and Provincial Home Minister Sindh Zia Lanjar visited the convention Spot and inspected the Situation.

**Bilawal pays tribute to martyrs of Karsaz:** Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid a heartfelt tribute to the martyrs of the Karsaz tragedy on its 17th anniversary, solemnly commemorating the horrific attack that occurred on October 18, 2007. Reflecting on the tragic day when 180 brave Jiyalas laid down their lives, he expressed profound sorrow and reaffirmed the PPP's unwavering commitment to the ideals of democracy, justice, and sacrifice in the service of the people of Pakistan.

In a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP stated, "The Karsaz bombing was a calculated conspiracy where dictatorship and terrorists joined forces, targeting the truck carrying Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and the central leadership of PPP, amidst a sea of millions who had come to welcome her. Those who attempted to silence the voice of

democracy with terror and violence have failed, and their efforts were in vain."

He further remarked, "The Karsaz tragedy is a solemn reminder of the ultimate price paid by our brave Jiyalas, who sacrificed their lives for the noble cause of democracy. Their courage and selflessness remain etched in the history of our ongoing struggle for a peaceful, democratic Pakistan—a struggle led by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto."

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari emphasized that the blood of the Karsaz martyrs continues to inspire the fight against extremism, injustice, and the few forces that have historically sought to suppress the rights of the people. "Our commitment to the vision of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto remains steadfast. We will continue to defend the rights of every Pakistani and uphold the values of democracy."

He called upon the nation to honor the sacrifices of the Karsaz martyrs by continuing their legacy and reaffirming their dedication to a democratic and just Pakistan. "As we mark this solemn day, we renew our pledge to safeguard democracy, to combat extremism, and to ensure that no force can derail the progress of our beloved country," he added. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari concluded his message by extending his deepest condolences to the families of the victims, promising that the PPP will forever honor the memory of their loved ones and carry forward the mission for which they laid down their lives.



RAWALPINDI: A view of clash between police and students during a protest against alleged rape of girl in Lahore.

## Barrister Saif approaches PHC for transit bail

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Advisor on Information Barrister Saif, Special Assistant Mashal Yousafzai along with former Member Provincial Assembly Wazir Zada approached Peshawar High Court (PHC) seeking protective and transit bail, on Thursday.

According to petition, Barrister Saif and Wazir Zada face cases in Islamabad and Punjab. They wish to attend court proceedings but fear arrest. They request protective bail to ensure safe passage. Moreover, the petition argued for provision of details of all registered cases against the applicants. The seeks to ensure no arrest until court appearances.

Barrister Saif stated that we've filed for protective bail; this is political victimization. Such tactics won't deter us; the nation now sees the federal government's true intentions. This he said while talking to media personnel and added that the government is risking everything.

Special Assistant Mashal Yousafzai claimed that cases against us are politically motivated. We'll exercise our right to peaceful protest, she added.

**Court stops disqualification proceedings against MNA Sohail:** A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed stopped Election Commission of Pakistan from disqualification proceedings against Member National Assembly Sohail Sultan, on Thursday.

The counsel argued that Sohail Sultan won NA-4 Swat seat in Feb 8 general elections. Speaker National Assembly received complaint from citizen Nasrullah while forwarded to ECP for further proceedings, the lawyer added.

The complaint alleged Sohail Sultan served as Assistant Advocate General from 2019-2023. Nasrullah claimed Sohail Sultan's two-year service period wasn't complete. The lawyer argued that Election Commission issued notice to Sohail Sultan on 21st September. The petitioner's disqualification reference is politically motivated, the counsel stated.

No objections raised during nomination papers submission. The complainant Nasrullah should've filed election petition instead of approaching Speaker National Assembly, the lawyer argued.

## 28 dead in Gaza strike on school-turned-shelter

CAIRO (Reuters): At least 28 Palestinians including children were killed on Thursday in an Israeli strike on a shelter in the northern Gaza Strip, a Gaza health ministry official said, while Israel said the attack targeted tens of militants at the site.

Dozens were also injured in the strike, said the official, Medhat Abbas, adding: "There is no water to extinguish the fire. There is nothing. This is a massacre." "Civilians and children are being killed, burned under fire," said Abbas. The Israeli military said in a statement the strike targeted militants from Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups, who operated from within the Abu Hussein School in Jabalia that had been serving as a shelter for displaced people.

It said dozens of militants were present inside the compound when the strike took place, and provided the names of at least 12 of them, which Reuters could not immediately verify. The military said it took precautions to mitigate harm to civilians and accused Hamas of using them as human shields — a practice Hamas denies.

Hamas said in a statement that allegations there were fighters at the school were "nothing but lies," adding this was "a systematic policy of the enemy to justify its crime." The Hamas-run Gaza government media office put the

number of dead at the school at 28. It said 160 people were wounded in the attack. Earlier on Thursday, Palestinian health officials said at least 11 Palestinians were killed in two separate Israeli strikes in Gaza City, while several others were killed in central and southern Gaza areas.

Footage circulated by Palestinian media of the Abu Hussein School and which Reuters couldn't immediately verify, showed smoke coming from tents that caught fire, as many displaced people evacuated casualties including children to ambulances. Residents of Jabalia, in northern Gaza, said Israeli forces blew up clusters of houses firing from the air, from tanks and by placing bombs in buildings then detonating them remotely.

The area has been a focus for the Israeli military for the past two weeks, which says it is trying to stop Hamas fighters from regrouping for more attacks. Residents said Israeli forces had effectively isolated Beit Hanoun, Jabalia, and Beit Lahiya in the far north of the enclave from Gaza City, blocking movement except for those families heeding evacuation orders and leaving the three towns.

"We have written our death notes, and we are not leaving Jabalia," one resident told Reuters via a chat app. "The occupation (Israel) is punishing us for

not leaving our houses in the early days of the war, and we are not going now either. They are blowing up houses, and roads, and are starving us but we die once and we don't lose our pride," the father of four said, refusing to give his name, fearing Israeli reprisal. The Israeli military said on Thursday that it seized many weapons in the area, some of which were stashed in a school, and that its forces have killed dozens of militants in airstrikes and combat at close quarters, as troops try to root out Hamas forces operating in the rubble.

Northern Gaza, which had been home to well over half the territory's 2.3 million people, was bombed to rubble in the first phase of Israel's assault on the territory a year ago, after the Oct. 7 attacks on southern Israel by Hamas-led fighters, who killed 1,200 people and captured 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. More than 42,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israel's offensive so far, according to Gaza's health authorities. The United States has told Israel that it must take steps to improve the humanitarian situation in northern Gaza in 30 days or face potential restrictions on military aid. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened an emergency meeting on Wednesday to discuss expanding humanitarian aid to Gaza, officials said, with aid likely to increase soon.

## 200 arrested in Pindi as protests turn violent

### F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Police spokesperson on Thursday confirmed the arrest of as many as 250 people after students' protest turned violent in the city's Dhoke Ganga area. The students, demonstrating against the alleged rape of a college-going girl in Lahore, ransacked a hostel after forcefully entering the hostel premises, pelted stones and damaged the vehicles there.

Meanwhile, the police used tear gas to disperse the students and evacuated the teachers and staff who were initially trapped in the building. Demonstrations came amid the ongoing unrest across the province over rape allegations which went viral on social media platforms prompting students to hold multiple

demonstrations across various cities in recent days.

More than two dozen people, including four policemen, were injured in violent protests in Lahore on Tuesday. The turmoil eventually warranted a strong response from Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz who, while speaking to the media on Wednesday, announced a crackdown on those spreading fake news regarding the rape of a student.

Rawalpindi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Hafiz Kamran Asghar said that the police had dispersed the protestors and the situation was fully under control. "Several protesters have been arrested. All angles of the protest are being investigated," said the cop, adding that heavy police contingents have

been deployed at various locations.

Meanwhile, Elite Force troops have also been deployed on the Sixth Road to maintain law and order situation. Rawalpindi Deputy Commissioner Hassan Waqar Cheema also reiterated that the overall situation in the city was under control.

"Negotiations with student leadership have been successful. After the protest, the students left for their homes," he said. Cheema stated that many protesters who damaged property under the guise of protest have been arrested, while an additional police force has been stationed outside educational institutions. As many as 274 people have been booked in a case of vandalism at the Shalamar Campus of a private college in Lahore.

## Zain Qureshi's wife returns home safely

F.P. Report

MULTAN: In a dramatic turn of events, Zain Qureshi's wife has returned home safely after being reportedly abducted by masked men.

The news was confirmed by Zain Qureshi's sister, Mahman Kabir, who took to social media to announce her sister-in-law's safe arrival. PTI leader Mehrbanu Qureshi also shared a photo of her sister-in-law, reinforcing the news of her safe return. The incident occurred yesterday when Mehrbanu Qureshi reported that her sister-in-law was forcibly taken from her vehicle by unknown individuals dressed in plain clothes.

According to her account, two cars blocked the vehicle of Zain Qureshi's wife near their residence, and the masked assailants forcibly pulled her out. This alarming incident has drawn significant attention, especially given the context of ongoing threats faced by the Qureshi family over the past year and a half. Mehrbanu emphasized the resilience of their family, stating, "Despite all the threats and cruel measures, we will not be broken. They may use such tactics, but we will not be afraid of them. We will hold them accountable for their actions." The abduction of Zain Qureshi's wife marks a troubling episode for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party and raises concerns about the safety of its members amid a tumultuous political landscape. Further investigations into the incident are expected as authorities respond to the public outcry surrounding the case.

Meanwhile, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar condemned "the way" through which the government wanted to bring constitutional amendment. Speaking to media, the PTI chief lashed out at the government for abducting PTI leader Zain Qureshi's wife in the dead of night.

## KP govt decides construction of motorway

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Following the successful launching of "Awami Agenda" in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, is set to launch eight flagship projects in the province with the aim to build an inclusive, empowered and thriving Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by ensuring accessibility, fostering socio-economic development, providing social security and unlocking new trade opportunities for sustainable prosperity.

These flagship projects include provision of Life Insurance for All, establishment of a Provincial Islamic Takaful Insurance Company, launching of Solarization Program, Homestay Tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Construction of Peshawar-D.I.Khan Motorway, Construction of 120 Km long Transmission Line, Trade Corridors Hub and establishment of Debt Management Fund. All these flagship projects would be completed by the end of year 2027.

This was decided in high level meeting held here the

other day with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair. Advisor to Chief Minister for Finance Muzamil Aslam and administrative secretaries of the concerned departments attended the meeting.

Briefing about the propose flagship projects, it was informed in the meeting that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was first in the country to introduce universal health coverage for entire population of the province. Now raring to take leap in the same direction, the provincial government is going to unfold the facility of providing life insurance to everyone in the province, through which the government will provide compensation ranging from 5 lac to 10 lac for death of the head of family.

It was decided in the meeting to establish a Provincial Islamic Takaful Insurance Company to meet the growing demand for Islamic insurance within the province, and to run the social protection initiatives of the provincial government on sustainable basis with wider coverage.

It was further decided to construct Peshawar-

D.I.Khan Motorway as an international trade corridor that will traverse through 12 districts of the province spanning over 365 Km and connect the province with the provinces of Balochistan and Punjab. As integral western route, it will provide direct access to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics.

The meeting also Okayed the project of 120 Km long 220 KV Power Transmission Line to be constructed from Swat to Chakdara. This project will facilitate evacuation of clean and environment friendly power to be produced through Hydro Power projects of the provincial government. It will generate Rs. 54 billion annually for the provincial kitty leading self-sustainability of the province. Moreover, it will not only boost economic activities by providing electricity at cheaper rates to the industries but will also provide relief to the poor people through provision of electricity at discounted prices. Moreover, it was also decided to establish Trade Corridors Hub at Torkham aimed at facilitating and streamlining the trade activities with Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Minister for Excise and Transport Sharjeel Inam Memon and KP Governor, Faisal Kareem Kundi addressing a press conference.

## SBP releases annual report on economy

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) released the Annual Report on the State of Pakistan's Economy for the fiscal year 2023-24 today. According to the Report, Pakistan's macroeconomic conditions improved, supported by stabilization policies, successful engagement with the IMF, reduced uncertainty, and favourable global economic environment. The increase in domestic agricultural productivity also contributed to relatively better macroeconomic outcomes during the year, the Report added.

The real GDP registered a moderate agriculture-led recovery in FY24. A record harvest of wheat and rice, and a rebound in the production of cotton mainly provided boost to agricultural output during FY24. The Report highlights that despite a recovery in real economic activity, the current account deficit further narrowed to a 13-year low as strong growth in remittances and exports

more than offset a slight increase in imports. This, coupled with the Stand-By Agreement with the IMF that catalysed inflows from other multilateral and bilateral sources, helped in the build-up of FX reserves and calming sentiments in the foreign exchange market. The gradual exchange rate appreciation during the year, together with higher-than-envisioned fiscal consolidation, led to a notable decline in public debt to GDP ratio in FY24.

The Report notes that the SBP maintained a tight monetary policy stance by keeping the policy rate unchanged at 22 percent for almost the entire FY24. The SBP also introduced reforms in foreign exchange companies, following administrative actions by the government to bring order in foreign exchange and commodity markets. The government continued the fiscal consolidation,

with the primary balance posting a surplus for the first time in 17 years.

These, together with the decline in global commodity prices amid improved global economic activity and trade, had positive bearings on key macroeconomic indicators, the Report highlighted. The inflation dropped from its peak of 38 percent in May 2023 to 12.6 percent in June 2024. It averaged at 23.4 percent during FY24, considerably lower than 29.2 percent in FY23. A consistent decline in headline and core inflation in the latter half of FY24, created room for the SBP to reduce the policy rate by 150 basis points to 20.5 percent in June 2024.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, the Report highlights that a host of structural impediments continue to pose challenges to sustaining macroeconomic stability. Falling investment amid low savings,

unfavourable business environment, lack of research & development, and low productivity, alongside climate change risks continue to constrain the economy's growth potential. In addition, longstanding inefficiencies in the energy sector have resulted in the accumulation of the circular debt. While the government has started to address energy sector challenges through substantial price adjustments, there is a need to broaden the scope of these efforts by introducing sectoral policy and regulatory reforms. These reforms are also necessary to address the issue of inefficiencies in the State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) that continue to be a drain on fiscal resources, which are already constrained by low tax-to-GDP ratio.

In this backdrop, the Report also includes a special chapter on 'Reforming SOEs in Pakistan' that sheds light on the country's historical

and current experience of SOE reforms. The chapter also suggests measures for successful reform agenda, based on international best practices. In addition to necessary focus on sectoral policy, these also include effective implementation of the recently introduced corporate government reforms, creating competitive environment, ensuring effective regulation, supported by broad political consensus, the Report said.

The Report highlights that the improvement in Pakistan's macroeconomic conditions in FY24 is expected to maintain the momentum in FY25 as well. The approval of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program with the IMF in September 2024 is anticipated to further strengthen the country's external account position, improve sovereign credit rating, and enhance investor confidence. At the same time, the country is expected to benefit from

a conducive global economic environment, as inflation is falling in advanced economies, while global economic growth is expected to remain steady. Moreover, while there are upside risks to global commodity prices due to rising geo-political tensions, commodity prices continue to be low. These factors would keep the current account deficit within the range of 0.0 - 1.0 percent of GDP in FY25.

According to the Report the continuation of fiscal consolidation efforts and the lagged impact of tight monetary policy stance are anticipated to further weaken the inflationary pressures in FY25. Further, the recent outturns suggest the average inflation to fall below the earlier projected range of 11.5 - 13.5 percent in FY25. In addition, the continued fiscal consolidation is also expected to support further decline in inflation. Furthermore, relatively lower borrowing cost, and a gradual recovery in LSM and services sector is projected to support real GDP growth in the range of 2.5 - 3.5 percent in FY25.