

# Senate approves 26th constitutional amendment bill

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Sunday approved long-awaited 26th constitutional amendment with two third majority (65 votes) aimed at ensuring speedy justice in the country and bringing transparency in judicial system, by incorporating all amendments proposed by Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F).

Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar piloted the Constitution (Twenty-Sixth Amendment) Bill, 2024 in the House. The House passed the bill through clause by clause reading.

In the bill having 22 clauses, amendments to various Articles of the constitutional have been proposed.

A new Article 9 A regarding clean and healthy environment is also incorporated in the bill under which every person shall be entitled to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

As many as 65 members voted in favor of the bill while only four voted against it.

Kamran Murtaza of JUI-F moved amendments one by one which were incorporated in the bill after not opposing by the government.

Earlier, speaking in the House, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar said that the government, its allied parties and JUI-F reached a consensus on the draft of the constitutional amendment bill. As part of the government's efforts, a special parliamentary committee comprising representatives of all the political parties including the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) discussed the proposed constitutional package.

He went on to say that the procedure to appoint judges in the superior judiciary had been changed in the 18th Amendment. Both the prime minister and the president surrendered their powers and handed over their authorities to the parliament to bring more transparency in the appointment of judges, he added.

He said the parliamentary committee was empowered to approve or reject nomination of judges. However, he said the 18th Constitutional Amendment was challenged in court of law and message was given to the then government during the proceeding of the case that the amendment would be struck down.

The minister conceded that 19th Amendment was passed in haste to change the composition of the judicial commission (JC) and parliamentary committee on appointment of judges. Hence, the powers of parliamentary committee were reduced, he added. Azam Nazeer said even the bar councils and other lawyers representative organizations including Pakistan Bar Council criticized and demanded to revisit the decision. They demanded to make appropriate amendments in Article 175-A of the constitution, he said.

Now, he said that the JC, responsible for the appointment and confirmation of judges would consist of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), three senior Supreme Court judges, four parliamentarians, the Law Minister, an advocate having at least 15 years experience, and the Attorney General. Out of four parliamentarians, two members each from Senate and National Assembly, he added.

He said one member of the JC would be either a women or a non-Muslim qualified to become a senator on a technocrat seat, clarifying the nomination would be made by the Speaker National Assembly.

He said no changes have been made to the provincial Judicial Commissions, where the Chief Justice of the High Court, a senior judge, and the provincial law minister would continue to assess judges' performance.

The minister said that the amendment outlines the procedure for appointing the CJP, clarifying that the Prime Minister would no longer exercise this authority, instead delegating it to the Parliament.

A 12-member committee would finalize the nominations and forward them to the PM, with the CJP serving either until retirement or for a maximum of three years, he said.

He said that the appointment of the CJP was a part of the reform package, with three senior judges being considered for the position, from which one would be selected as Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP).

The minister said that the mechanism for forming constitutional benches at the Supreme Court and provincial levels had been clarified, with logistical preparations needed at the provincial level.

Provincial assemblies, with a 51 percent majority, could pass a resolution to establish a provincial constitutional bench, he said.

He said the formation of these benches would be under the authority of the JC headed by the CJP.

He said setting up constitutional court was part of Charter of Democracy (CoD) signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2006. The Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto also took up the matter which was pending agenda part of the CoD, he added.

He said in past, elected prime ministers were removed from their offices by exercising Article 184 of the Constitution although there was clear procedure given in the Article 195 of the constitution. In 2022, the elected prime minister was removed under the Article 195 devised in the constitution through vote of no confidence, he added.

He clarified that incumbent CJP Qazi Faez Isa was not interested in any extension adding, "during the pre meetings that I had held with the top Judge, he reiterated his disinterest in his extension of his tenure, saying that any amendment would come into effects after his retirement".

Azam Tarar said that the JC would have the authority to draft rules and establish a clear process for evaluating judges' professional capabilities.

The JC, in collaboration with the CJP and provincial high courts, would regularly review judges' performance, he added.

He said that the JC would provide reports on judges' professional skills, and five technical advisors could be appointed in the National and Provincial Assemblies under the constitution.

He said Kamran Murtaza of Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI) proposed five amendments which have already been included in the draft.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs meeting of the Federal Cabinet on Sunday.

## Tarar terms constitutional package a milestone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said that it was a historic day and a milestone for the state and people of Pakistan as the supremacy of Parliament was established.

Talking to media outside Parliament House, along with Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar here, he said the Constitution was clear about the supremacy of Parliament. "It was stipulated in the Charter of Democracy to facilitate the delivery of cheap and speedy justice", the minister added.

He said that consultation with all political parties was the beauty of the democratic process and no political party has been left out in this process. He said that prolonged but constructive consultations were held on the constitutional package and no urgency had been shown in this regard. The minister said that the constitutional package was an important step towards speedy delivery of justice in the country.

He said that Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister of Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah and other leaders had played an important role in finalising the constitutional package and the cabinet appreciated their efforts.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked all coalition parties especially PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President Asif Zardari, Naveed Qamar and Sherry Rehman for their positive role.

He said the amendments to the package being introduced on Sunday were originally envisaged in the Charter of Democracy signed between Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif in 2006.

**JUI-F's proposals included in draft of constitutional amends: Tarar**

Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar Sunday said that the federal cabinet has approved the comprehensive draft of the 26th constitutional amendment unanimously which also includes the proposals of JUIF.

Talking to the media outside of the Parliament House, the minister said that according to the amendments the chief justice of Pakistan would be appointed amongst the most three senior judges of the Supreme Court.

He said that the Jamiat Ulama Islam (JUI-F) has suggested five proposals in the 26th constitutional amendments which were linked to the Islamic law and Islamic Ideological Council (IIC). The law minister said that the draft was prepared after a threadbare discussion and broader consultation with all political parties and their leaders in the House as well as their legal representatives.

He said that multiple meetings were held among different stakeholders, including Chairman Pakistan People Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, JUI-F's Chief Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, and other political leaders.

The law minister said he had briefed the cabinet members about the threadbare discussion held in the special committee on the draft and its salient features.

Azam Nazeer said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif believed in mutual consultation, which has been underway for the last four weeks on the constitutional amendment.

He said that a constitutional bench would be constituted at the federal level.

The minister asserted that constitutional benches mechanism is also suggested for the provinces and the evaluation of the performances of High Court Judges was suggested in this constitutional package. He said that as per the amendments, the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) would head the Judicial Commission of Pakistan while the four most senior judges and a member from a minority would also be part of it.

The mechanism of appointment of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court would be the part of constitutional package, he said.

The minister said that the 26th constitutional amendment's draft has been finalized with the political consensus after a detailed discussion in the Parliamentary committee having representation from the coalition partners including PPP, IPP, PMLQ, ANP, PML- Z, MQM, BAP and others.

## Harris, Trump duel over endurance

LATROBE (Reuters): Kamala Harris and Donald Trump invited star power to the campaign trail Saturday, as they took shots at each other's endurance and urged early voting in battleground states key to the ever-tightening US presidential race.

At rallies in Detroit and Atlanta Harris brought out pop stars Lizzo and Usher respectively to warm up her crowds, while painting her rival Trump as exhausted and unhinged.

The Republican running for a second go in the White House countered those accusations with a marathon speech in Pennsylvania, as billionaire Elon Musk campaigned for him elsewhere in the state.

Both candidates are fighting on every front to seal up voters' support in a race that polls suggest is effectively tied with fewer than three weeks to Election Day.

Harris told voters in Detroit that her opponent's platform is "self-consuming" while repeating vows to invest in the working and middle classes.

"We stand for the idea that the true measure of the strength of a leader is not based on who you beat down, it's on who you lift up," said Harris.

Later in Atlanta Harris, who turned 60 on Saturday, accused the 78-year-old Trump of "ducking debates and canceling interviews because of exhaustion."

"When he does answer a question or speak at a rally — have you noticed he tends to go off script and ramble, and generally, for the life of him, cannot finish a thought?" she said.

"He's called it the weave. But we here we will call it nonsense."

Trump began his more than 90-minute rally with a lengthy monologue on the late golfer Arnold Palmer, for whom the regional airport in Latrobe, where the Republican appeared, is named.

He went so far as to praise Palmer's genitalia.

"When he took the showers with other pros, they came out of there, they said, 'Oh my God. That's unbelievable,'" Trump said with a laugh. "I had to say it."

He then launched into his routine, meandering speech that includes attacking migrants, personally denigrating Harris and repeating false claims about the 2020 election.

But his was a show of onstage endurance, which also included a number of guests and screenings of his filmed campaign ads.

Shortly after recalling his own expensive education at the private Ivy League University of Pennsylvania, Trump vied to appeal to working class voters by bringing a parade of steel workers in hard hats onstage.

He also underscored the importance of the eastern US state's electoral college delegates to the overall election: "If we win Pennsylvania, we win the whole damn thing."

At rally in Las Vegas, former US President Barack Obama took aim at Trump, comparing him to a grandfather whose bizarre behavior would spark worry after his rambling speeches and a strange dance party.

"So you would be worried if your grandpa started acting like this. You would,... right? You'd like, call up your brother,... be like, have you seen grandpa lately? What we gonna do?"

"But this is coming from somebody who wants unchecked power, wants the most powerful office on Earth, with the nuclear codes and all that," said Obama.

Earlier in the day the pop star Lizzo noted that "whether you're a Democrat or Republican or neither, you deserve a president who listens when you speak."

"You deserve a president who respects when you protest. You deserve a president who understands that their job is to be a public servant," she said before emphasizing that Harris offers just that.

Lizzo — who sported a suffragette-white pantsuit as she addressed the crowd in Motor City — also drew cheers when urging listeners that America was more than ready for its first woman president, dropping a reference to her own hit song: "It's about damn time!"

One of Atlanta's major stars, Usher, told voters there that "I'm counting on you" to get Harris's "campaign across the finish line" in Georgia.

Both candidates are spending their final campaign days in pivotal battleground states where early voting is already underway.

Musk, who endorsed Trump in July, is one of the Biden administration's fiercest critics and has emerged as a loud voice in US politics since taking over Twitter, now known as X.

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO has taken an increasingly visible role in Trump's campaign and has donated almost \$75 million to his political organization America PAC.

## PM for efforts against breast cancer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday emphasized the importance of raising awareness and promoting early detection of breast cancer, particularly among women.

Highlighting the global prevalence of breast cancer as the most common form of cancer affecting women, he noted that a significant number of deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, including Pakistan.

In a message on the occasion of International Day against Breast Cancer, the prime minister acknowledged the challenges the country faced in providing adequate screening and treatment facilities for breast cancer. However, he stressed that these obstacles could be overcome through a strong focus on early diagnosis.

"There is a 98% chance of permanent recovery when breast cancer is detected at an early stage," he remarked, urging women to take proactive steps by performing regular self-examinations.

The prime minister noted the positive impact of awareness campaigns in Pakistan, citing an increase in the reporting of early-stage breast cancer cases. He praised the media for its pivotal role in spreading information and urged all stakeholders, particularly media outlets, to strengthen efforts towards a comprehensive and well-coordinated national campaign.

"I call upon all stakeholders, especially the media, to galvanize efforts towards a holistic awareness campaign at the national level," the prime minister said adding "With our collective efforts, we can significantly reduce breast cancer mortality in Pakistan and provide hope for a healthier future for all women."

## Israel intensifies offensive in Gaza, 87 more dead or missing

BEIRUT/CAIRO (Reuters): Israel said it had struck Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters in the Lebanese capital Beirut on Sunday, while officials in Gaza said they were still trying to recover bodies from the rubble after an Israeli strike that killed dozens.

At least 87 people were dead or missing following the airstrike on Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza late on Saturday, the health ministry in the Palestinian territory said, one of the highest death tolls reported for months from a single attack. Israel said it was investigating reports of the incident.

It marked an intensification of Israel's offensives against Palestinian militant group Hamas in Gaza and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon, days after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar had raised hopes of an opening for ceasefire negotiations to end more than a year of escalating conflict in the Middle East.

With U.S. elections approaching, officials, diplomats and other sources in the region say Israel is seeking through military operations to try to shield its borders and ensure its rivals cannot regroup.

Israel is also preparing to retaliate for an Iranian missile barrage earlier this month, though Washington has pressed it not to strike Iranian energy facilities or nuclear sites.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was the subject of an assassination attempt by "Iran's proxy Hezbollah" on Saturday when a drone was directed at his holiday home. In a call with former U.S. President Donald Trump, the prime minister reiterated that Israel would make decisions based on its own interests, according to a statement from Netanyahu's office.

Israel's government has rejected several attempts by the United States, its main ally and military backer, at brokering ceasefires in both Gaza and Lebanon.

**E V A C U A T I O N ORDERS**

In Gaza, the health ministry said rescue operations following the strike in Beit Lahiya were being hindered by communications problems and by ongoing Israeli military operations.

The strike came two weeks into a major assault around the town of Jabalia, just to the south of Beit Lahiya, where Israeli troops backed by tanks have been trying to root out remaining Hamas fighters.

Israel said the strike hit a Hamas target, questioning an earlier death toll of 73 released by the Hamas media office.

Over 5,000 Palestinians left Jabalia via designated routes, Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee said on social media platform X.

Evacuation orders directing people south have fuelled fears among many Palestinians that the operation is intended to clear them out of the northern part of Gaza to help ensure Israeli control of the area after the war.

Israel has denied any such plans, saying it is trying to protect civilians and separate them from Hamas fighters.

The Israeli offensive, triggered by the Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, has made most of Gaza's 2.3 million people homeless, caused widespread hunger and destroyed hospitals and schools.

"Horrible scenes unfolding in Gaza, amidst conflict, relentless Israeli strikes & an ever-worsening humanitarian crisis," U.N. Middle East peace envoy Tor Wennesland posted on X.

**BEIRUT STRIKES**

In Lebanon, Israel stepped up its bombardment of southern Beirut from Saturday afternoon. On Sunday, it said its air force attacked Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters in Beirut as well as an underground workshop for the production of weapons.

Fighter jets killed three Hezbollah commanders, including Alhaj Abbas Salameh, a senior figure in the group's southern command, the Israeli military said in a statement.

Reuters witnesses saw smoke rising from Beirut's southern suburbs, once a densely populated zone that also housed Hezbollah offices and underground installations.

The Lebanese military said on Sunday three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on an army vehicle in southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah made no immediate comment on the strikes, but said it had fired missiles at Israeli forces in Lebanon and at a base in northern Israel.

Cross-border fighting between Israel and Hezbollah erupted a year ago when the Iranian-backed group began launching rockets in support of Hamas.

At the start of October, Israel launched a ground assault inside Lebanon in an attempt to stabilise the border region for its citizens who had fled rocket attacks in northern Israel.





KARACHI: Police arrest the activists of Baloch Yakjehti Committee during a protest rally outside the Karachi Press Club.

## Rewards for top position holders announced

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Education, Syed Sardar Ali Shah has announced rewards for students who achieved top positions in the Karachi Matric Board exams.

He stated that the expenses for the higher education of Hafiz Abdul Raffay, the student who secured the first position, will be covered until he completes his education.

Addressing the event organized by the Delhi School Old Boys Welfare Association to honour Hafiz Abdul Raffay and other top-ranking students, Syed Sardar Ali Shah praised the achievement of a government school student securing a position after 28 years, calling it a positive beginning.

He highlighted that students from middle-class backgrounds have proven that it's not necessary to

have luxuries to showcase one's talents, even in the face of challenges. The event was held at the Karachi Medical and Dental College auditorium in North Nazimabad.

Attendees included the Vice Chancellor of Karachi Metropolitan University Dr. Waseem Qazi, Director of School Education Karachi Mirza Arshad Baig, head of the Association Masroor Hussain Warsi, Secretary of the Delhi Association Farhat Hayat, Delhi School Principal Ali Khan Mirjat, as well as students, teachers, education officials, and others.

In his speech, Syed Sardar Ali Shah said, "These children have made their parents and me proud." He expressed satisfaction with the positive news regarding his promise to improve education, which he had made to his party.

The Minister also emphasized that a government school student securing a top position has set a precedent, and he acknowledged the history of people in this region who established schools with love and dedication, such as Sindh Madrasa School, Noor Muhammad High School, DJ Science College, and Dow University.

He applauded former students who continue to support their schools and emphasized the importance of remembering those institutions where children of the poor are still studying, despite the constitutional promise of free education.

Sardar Ali Shah also made it clear that the Education Department is not just a means of employment, urging teachers to teach with honesty. He was pleased to note that elected representatives have begun

to take ownership of schools. He expressed support for private schools that prioritize the welfare of both students and their parents.

On this occasion, the Minister announced a reward of 200,000 rupees for Hafiz Abdul Raffay, who secured first position, 150,000 rupees for Rumaisha Imran from Al-Khalil School, who secured second position, and 100,000 rupees for Rukhsar Soomro from Little Folks School, who secured third position. He also committed to covering Abdul Rafi's higher education expenses.

Vice Chancellor Dr. Waseem Qazi highlighted the need for content enrichment, stressing the importance of creating online platforms to provide students in rural areas access to the same resources as those in urban centers.

## Green Tractors to be given to 9,500 farmers

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has announced distribution of 9,500 green tractors under Kisan Programme, but more than 15 lakh applications had been received.

The government received more than 1.5 million applications under the Green Tractor Programme announced for farmers. The CM office sources told APP that following the directions of the Punjab CM, the list of those who would be included in the draw would be posted on Oct 20.

Meanwhile, the scrutiny of application had been completed. The applicant's land was verified by the Patwar Circle concerned. CM Maryam Nawaz ordered for draw of green tractor scheme as soon as possible.

## DC chairs price control committee

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Deputy Commissioner (DC) Syed Musa Raza chaired a meeting of the price control committee aimed at addressing inflationary pressures and enforcing official price lists across the city.

The meeting held at DC's Office on Sunday specifically focusing on the enforcement of government-fixed prices and ensuring relief for the public, highlighted strict measures to combat price inflation, particularly for essential items such as bread.

The DC expressed strong discontent with vendors selling bread above the official rate of Rs14, ordering stringent action against violators.

To enhance transparency and efficiency, he directed that price control magistrates must personally be present in the field for inspections. He emphasized that no representatives would be acceptable, and every magistrate must personally issue fines for violations. Additionally, magistrates were instructed to upload images from each inspection checkpoint, ensuring accountability.

Daily price control meetings were scheduled to maintain oversight, and the DC warned that any negligence or failure in duty would lead to strict punitive action against the responsible officials.

## Dr Fowzia for proactive steps to prevent diabetes

KARACHI (PPI): Noted neurophysician of the country Dr Fowzia Siddiqui has stressed the need for proactive steps towards prevention and management of diabetes.

Addressing the Euro Endocrine Conference in Istanbul where Dr Fowzia Siddiqui represented Pakistan on the prevalence of neurological issues in diabetes in Pakistan and its complex effects on the body, she expressed concern over the alarming rise in cases of diabetes in Pakistan.

In her keynote presentation on "Diabetes: the neuro-endocrine overlap", she said that Pakistan has become the world's number one in diabetes prevalence, which is a worrisome trend.

She said that diabetes is no longer considered just an endocrine disorder, but

its effects are far more complex, involving the brain and other systems.

Dr Fowzia said the center for blood sugar control lies in the brain, and any disruption in the pathway can cause diabetes, including stress, depression, and anxiety.

She said high blood sugar levels can cause micro vascular changes in the brain, leading to debilitating strokes and dementia. There is also a strong link between Alzheimer's disease and diabetes, with poor blood sugar control leading to worse outcomes.

Dr Siddiqui said that peripheral neuropathy is a neurological complication of diabetes, causing burning, stabbing pain, numbness, and tingling sensations in arms and legs.

Stress reduction and

management are crucial in addition to diet and exercise for effective diabetes management, suggested Dr Fowzia Siddiqui, who is also President of Pakistan Epilepsy Foundation.

However, Dr Siddiqui told the moot that new medications and appropriate usage of available medicines are important for managing diabetes.

It's essential to raise awareness about diabetes and its complexities to encourage people to take proactive steps towards prevention and management. By highlighting the importance of stress reduction, diet, exercise, and proper medication usage, we can work towards mitigating the effects of diabetes and improving overall health outcomes, she concluded.

## Govt to provide quality education for youth

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Sports, Labour and Human Resources Faisal Ayub Khokhar has said that the government was committed to providing quality education for youth while also creating opportunities for them to participate in extracurricular activities.

He emphasized that initiatives like "Khelta Punjab" and the Lahore Youth Festival were crucial in this regard, noting, "When grounds are filled with players, hospitals become empty."

He expressed these views during a media briefing as the chief guest at a talent hunt program organized for Lahore Qalandars at a private university's high-performance center

here on Sunday.

The minister remarked that such programs play a significant role in providing opportunities for talented athletes to showcase their skills. He expressed hope that these trials would reveal new talent that could contribute to both the Lahore Qalandars and the national cricket team in the future.

He highlighted the importance of organizing similar talent hunt programs not only for cricket but also for other sports, ensuring that youth have the chance to demonstrate their abilities alongside their academic pursuits. He emphasized that if young people excel in both education and sports, parents would undoubtedly support

them at every level.

Earlier, the minister inaugurated the auto show in expo centre Lahore, where he inspected the participating cars, motorcycles, and stalls. He noted that such events not only inform car and motorcycle enthusiasts but also provide entertainment. He stressed the need for public awareness on road safety during the show.

Faisal Khokhar announced that the government would soon take steps to promote motor sports, including the construction of an official race track in Lahore. Additionally, he mentioned efforts to tackle environmental pollution by promoting electric cars and motorcycles.

## Hundreds of protected wild birds recovered

LAHORE (APP): Hundreds of protected wild birds were recovered from various places of the province, including Lahore city, on the orders of Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. The Wildlife Department official sources told APP that 13 suspects were arrested during the operations, while 10 arrested suspects were fined more than Rs. 2 lakh.

In this connection, three challans would be sent to local courts. Operations were carried out in Lahore, Narowal, Bahawalnagar and Mianwali, added sources. As a result of the crackdown in Lahore, two bird dealers were arrested. Parrots and hundreds of birds were recovered from them and released into the natural environment. However, parrots were shifted to Jallo Park. Likewise, eight hunters of ducks, quails, rabbits and wild pigeons were also arrested from Lahore region.

## Dengue cases surge with 97 new infections reported

LAHORE (APP): Punjab continues to face a rise in Dengue cases as the Health Department reported 97 new infections on Sunday. Rawalpindi remains the epicenter, accounting for 84 of the new cases, while Lahore and Sialkot each recorded 3. Other districts like Attock and Chakwal reported 2 cases each, with one case each in Gujranwala, Sargodha, and Bahawalnagar.

Over the last week, a total of 826 new cases were identified, raising the cumulative count for 2024 to 4,217 in the province.

The health authorities reassured the public that hospitals are fully stocked with medicine and necessary resources to manage the outbreak. In an effort to curb the virus, the department urged citizens to keep their surroundings clean and eliminate stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed.

Officials also called for public cooperation with ongoing efforts to prevent the virus from spreading further. For assistance or to file Dengue-related complaints, the Health Department has set up a toll-free helpline at 1033. The department stressed the need for continuous vigilance as the province battles the ongoing outbreak.

## Peace lamp sent to India from Gurdwara Baba Nanak

LAHORE (APP): In celebration of the 555th birth anniversary of the great Sikh leader, Baba Guru Nanak, a "Peace Lamp" has been sent to India from his birthplace, Gurdwara Baba Nanak.

The initiative was led by Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs/ Pradhan Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak committee, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, along with other Sikh leaders. Speaking to the media on this occasion, the provincial minister said,

"The peace lamp symbolizes a clear message from darkness to light, aiming to establish peace worldwide.

This lamp is being sent from Pakistan to India and will travel through various countries before reaching Malaysia."

Sardar Arora emphasized that the purpose of the initiative is to promote the message of peace, love, and religious tolerance across the globe. He highlighted that this lamp not only conveys a message of peace between the two countries but also fosters harmony among all religions.

He reiterated that the peace lamp is an effort to spread light and a message of love, bringing new hope to humanity.

During the event, Sikh leaders also prayed for the cessation of aggression in Palestine and Gaza and the restoration of peace.

## Chefs play vital role in flavours: Governor

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Sunday lauded the chefs' vital role in introducing new flavours and traditions in their cooking delights.

He expressed these words on the occasion of International Chefs Day being observed today (Sunday), adding that the training of young chefs could help this profession in highlighting its prominent place.

While paying tributes to the chefs, he said this year's theme was "Growing Great Chefs". The Governor Tessori said that the Chefs bring a pleasant change to the society with innovative cuisines. He further said that the cuisine of Pakistan was very famous all over the world, which was the result of the hard-work of the chefs.

## PMA concerns over rising polio cases

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) has said that there has been an increase in polio cases and it is concerned about the situation.

It is said in the press release issued by the Secretary General of PMA (Center) Dr Abdul Ghafoor Shoro. The statement said that the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) is deeply concerned about the recent surge in polio cases, particularly in Sindh.

The confirmation of two more children affected by the polio virus, a girl in Sanghar and a boy in Mirpurkhas, brings the total number of cases in the country to 39, with 12 cases now reported in Sindh alone.

According to a statement, the polio virus was reported across nine districts in Sindh, with 12 lab-confirmed cases and numerous environmental samples testing positive for the virus. The PMA calls on the government to take immediate and decisive action to address this critical situation. PMA stand ready to support the government in its efforts to eradicate polio from Pakistan.

## Moj Darya Urs starts

LAHORE (APP): The 462nd annual Urs celebrations of Hazrat Moj Darya Bukhari started Sunday under the auspices of the Punjab Auqaf and Religious Affairs Department.

Auqaf Secretary Dr. Tahir Raza Bukhari inaugurated the three-day Urs celebrations by laying a traditional chadar on the shrine of the saint. Deputy Director Administration Asif Ijaz, Administrator Lahore (West) Zone Ayaz Ahmed Lashari and a large number of pilgrims were also present in the opening ceremony, besides the chairman, members of the religious affairs committee.

## Preparations completed for artificial rain: Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has announced that the Punjab government has launched an aggressive initiative to combat smog, with preparations complete for artificial rain to mitigate its effects.

The minister revealed that, under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's leadership, a collaborative strategy has been developed by the Department of Environment, Army Aviation, Civil Aviation, PCSIR, and the Meteorological Department. Artificial rain will be deployed when needed to

reduce smog intensity, with resources already allocated for this and other measures.

The plan, backed by international standards, has been finalized under the guidance of the Chief Minister, and the Meteorological Department will assist in carrying out the artificial rain when necessary.

Each instance of artificial rain was expected to cost Rs. 5 to 7 million. Simultaneously, a strict crackdown on vehicles, factories, and other sources emitting toxic fumes was underway to address pollution at its root.

Marriyum Aurangzeb

stressed that if pollution control measures were effective, the need for artificial rain could be avoided.

She called on the public to actively support the government's anti-smog efforts, noting that public cooperation was key to overcoming the issue and improving air quality.

The minister urged citizens to report incidents of crop residue burning, industrial smoke, or vehicles emitting excessive fumes by calling 1373. She emphasized that every citizen's contribution can help protect public health and reduce the impact of smog.

## CCPO for resolution of pending cases

LAHORE (APP): Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamyana presided over an important meeting of the Investigation Wing at his office here on Sunday to review the progress of cases involving both nominated and unidentified suspects under investigation.

The CCPO Lahore directed the SSP (Investigation) to closely monitor these cases on a daily basis, while instructing SP (Investigation) Cantonment area to expedite the resolution of pending cases.

He emphasized that SDPOs must consistently assess the performance of investigating officers to ensure timely and effective case disposal.

Addressing the meeting, the CCPO asserted that no case involving a nominated suspect older than one month, or an unidentified suspect older than three months, should remain unresolved. He underscored the pivotal role of the Investigation Wing in delivering justice and urged the officers to

prioritize providing timely relief to the plaintiffs.

He stressed that justice must be served strictly on merit, without discrimination, and reiterated that no recommendations or external influence would be tolerated in the line of duty.

He called on police officers to uphold professionalism, competence, and a commitment to public service as they contribute to building a safer society.

The meeting was attended by SSP (Investigation) Muhammad Naveed and DSPs (Investigation).

## Arrangement for IRC & APERE-2024 reviewed

LAHORE (APP): Emergency Services Secretary Dr. Rizwan Naseer reviewed final arrangements for International Rescue Challenge (IRC) and Asia Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise (APERE-2024) in Emergency Services Academy in which 274 international delegates from 23 countries are participating.

He also met with the Pakistan Rescue Team, representing Pakistan in the International Rescue Challenge, encouraged them, offered his best wishes to the team. Dr. Rizwan Naseer urged the Registrar of the Emergency Services Academy and the Administrator of Headquarters to ensure the

utmost comfort and hospitality for the international delegates.

He expressed that hosting of 274 highly professional delegates from 23 countries is great honor for Pakistan. He said that there is no doubt that IRC & APERE will provide a platform to strengthen emergency preparedness and improve coordination between national and international Emergency Services.

The Registrar of the Emergency Services Academy and Team Leader of the Pakistan Rescue Team briefed the Secretary ESD that all arrangements for the IRC and APERE 2024 have been completed and most of the international

delegates have already arrived in Pakistan.

Over 274 international delegates from 23 countries including China, Russia, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Switzerland, Malaysia, South Africa, The Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Nepal, Singapore, Indonesia, Samoa Islands, Belgium, Cooks Islands, Fiji, Mongolia, Tunisia, Tuvalu Island and Vanuatu Island are coming to participate in International Rescue Challenge (IRC) and Asia Pacific Earthquake Response Exercise (APERE-2024) scheduled from 21st to 26th October, 2024 in Lahore.

## Garbage heaps in megacity spreading diseases

KARACHI (PPI): Expressing serious concern over poor cleanliness conditions in Karachi, Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor here Sunday said that garbage heaps and overflowing gutters are spreading viral, fungal and bacterial infections in the megacity at an alarmingly high rate.

He said almost every household has a patient or two suffering from various diseases, especially viral ones. He said emergency rooms of every government and private hospital are overcrowded. He said dengue fever and other vector diseases are on the rise, but the government is not taking any action to mitigate the situation.

He said the poor people especially have to suffer a lot due to missed workdays besides bearing costs of doctors' fees and medicines. He said the government hospitals have no suf-

ficient medicine stock or manpower to cater the growing number of patients. He said special medical camps should be arranged in poor localities to help the patients and their families. He said children are especially suffering from these diseases due to their weak immunity.

Shakoor said municipal conditions in the whole megacity are very poor. Heaps of uncollected garbage, overflowing gutters and excessive dirt on roads due to road construction projects have made life miserable for the Karachiites, as all these factors are spreading germs and causing diseases.

He said mosquitoes and houseflies are everywhere due to highly unhygienic conditions. He said the KMC, town and UC administrations are sitting idle instead of playing their due role to improve cleanliness.

Shakoor demanded from the government authorities

to take notice of the situation. He asked the local government department minister, commissioner Karachi and city mayor to wake up from the deep slumber and discharge their duties with a sense of emergency to help the poor people suffering from diseases. They should ensure proper collection of garbage and repair of choked gutter lines.

He demanded from the health minister to ensure proper supply of medicines to government hospitals and arrange evening OPDs in them also to cater the growing number of patients. He demanded of the Sindh chief minister to take stock of this pathetic situation and do the needful. He said the PDP has been demanding since long to establish freestanding emergency rooms in different parts of the megacity to reduce the patient burden in main hospitals of the megacity.



# Meeting between Governor KP, UK’s Education delegation held

PESHAWAR (APP): Professor Sarah William, Dean of the University Business and Law School in Buckinghamshire, UK, met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi along with a delegation here on Sunday to focus on enhancing educational collaboration.

The meeting, which also included Chairman of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter, Malik Habib Malik Orakzai, and vice chancel-

lors from various universities in the province, focused on enhancing educational collaboration and addressing modern educational needs.

Governor Kundi emphasized the importance of aligning provincial universities with global standards, saying that while students possess talent, they require guidance and encouragement.

He expressed regret over the lack of attention given to education and stressed the need to develop an exemplary educational system for future growth and prosperity.

He highlighted the necessity of acquiring and promoting quality education to achieve goals like women’s empowerment and youth engagement.

Discussions also centered on fostering international cooperation in education.

Sarah William committed to strengthening ties with educational institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while Governor Kundi underscored the significance of establishing robust connections with the British education system.

Vice-chancellors exchanged ideas on opportunities for development and collaboration with international institutions.

The meeting was seen as a positive step towards enhancing education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and fostering international collaboration. During the visit, Professor Sarah William presented Governor Kundi with her book, “Women Work in Public Relations.”



PESHAWAR: A man frying fish at his shop in Qissa Khwani Bazaar. The demand of such fried items increases manifold during winter season.

## KP-BOIT welcomes new Vice Chairman



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade officials welcomed the newly appointed Vice Chairman of the board Hassan Masood Kanwar, upon his arrival for assuming the responsibilities.

According to the board officials this development is a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to promote trade and investment activities in the province.

The board officials hoped in a statement that as

Vice Chairman, Hassan will play a pivotal role in attracting investors, identifying potential projects, and advocating for investment-friendly policies. With years of experience in the industry, Masood brings invaluable expertise to the table, ensuring that KP-BOIT continues to thrive under their leadership.

Hassan Masood Kanwar upon his arrival at his office, was warmly welcomed by KPBOIT officials and briefed on progress made by KPBOIT

in the last few years, its challenges and future plan.

On this occasion he appreciated organisations' efforts and commitment while issued directives on certain burning issues.

He further added that well coordinated efforts are required to foster economic growth/ stability in the region.

The new Vice Chairman emphasised on creating strong liaison with all stakeholders for a brighter future of the province.

It is merit to mentioned that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BOIT) is a government agency established to promote investment, trade, and economic development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and key objectives of the organisation included facilitation of Investors, streamline processes for local and foreign investors to enhance investor confidence, Identify potential projects, focus on sectors like tourism, ICT, mines and minerals, and hydel power ?to foster economic growth and job creation.

Similarly to advocate for Investment-Friendly policies, collaborate with government departments to create an enabling environment and promote Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a preferred investment destination.

The board Director Business Facilitation Iqbal Sarwar said hoped that "We are confident that Masood will make significant contributions to KP-BOIT's mission.

He added that their expertise will be instrumental in driving economic growth and prosperity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### Sarhadi congratulates GM PTV Peshawar

#### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, Senior Vice President, Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry congratulated Ibrahim Kamal for assuming the office of General Manager, Pakistan Television Centre (PTV), Peshawar.

In a message of facilitation here, Ziaul Haq Sarhadi said that Ibrahim Kamal was highly competent and professional and expressed the hope that under his leadership PTV Peshawar Centre would achieve a new height of success.

He said that Ibrahim Kamal would fulfill the expectations of PTV Management and utilize his energies for betterment of the national organization and its employees.

He said PTV Peshawar Centre has produced outstanding dramas, musical and cultural programs over the years for people of KP in different languages, hoping that new education, information and entertainment programs would be telecasted under leadership of the newly posted GM PTV.

### PFMA wants issue resolved

#### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chairman of Pakistan Flour Mills Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Naem Butt, has expressed deep concern over the restrictions imposed by the Punjab government on the supply of wheat to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the pretext of permits and checkpoints.

He said that Punjab's oppressive approach involves taking bribes of Rs 40,000 to 50,000 per truck for allowing wheat shipments to leave Punjab, and if truck drivers refuse to pay, FIRs are filed against them and their trucks are seized.

## Security breakdown in Hayatabad

### Rising crime and illegal taxis create chaos

#### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Ghulam Bilal Javid, President of the Peshawar Traders Chamber, has voiced serious concerns over the deteriorating security situation in Hayatabad, calling attention to the increasing criminal activities and unchecked operation of illegal taxis in the area. He emphasized the urgent need for immediate action to protect residents and restore order.

Javid highlighted the alarming rise in theft and snatching incidents, stating that citizens now feel unsafe even in this upscale locality.

He expressed particular concern over the security conditions along Hayatabad Medical Complex Road, which serves as a critical route for thousands of patients and their families. Despite its importance, the road remains inadequately secured, with minimal police presence and poor lighting, making it an easy target for criminal activity.

He also pointed out the rampant issue of illegal taxis operating without permits, which not only disrupts traffic flow but also poses a security risk.

"These unregulated vehicles are a threat to public safety, and the constant traffic jams caused by them are making life difficult for both residents and patients," Javid stated.

To address these issues, Javid proposed that the empty plot near Masjid Muhammad on the HMC Road be designated as an official taxi stand by the PDA and traffic authorities. This would help regulate taxi operations and ease traffic congestion.

He also urged the administration and police to increase security personnel on the road and take strict action against illegal taxis. In closing, Javid called for immediate intervention from the authorities to ensure the safety and well-being of Hayatabad's residents.

## Olive grafting: Achieving self-sufficiency in edible oil

PESHAWAR (APP): As the government embarks on agricultural transformation shifting to corporate from traditional farming, peasants are embracing to novel technologies and techniques to enhance cash crops productivity for attaining food sufficiency and economic stability.

This voyage to economic resilience, like other parts of the country can also be seen in merged districts of erstwhile FATA where in Bajaur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the farmers opted for olive grafting for locally enhancing olive oil production.

Taking advantage of land and climate suitability in Malakand division, farmers like Barkat Shah have started uncovering the potential for significant financial gains from their limited mountainous land.

His five-acre lush green olive grove on Mohmand-Bajaur road not only present an eye catching view but also makes him confident to earn sufficient dividend for his family.

"Bajaur's climate and soil conditions are ideal for wild olive grafting," Barkat Shah said. "Response from farmers is overwhelmingly due to grafting technique's cost-effectiveness and high oil yielding efficiency."

Known locally as 'Ustad' for his expertise in olive grafting, Haji Barkat reveals, the process of olive grafting involves a precise and skilled technique where a scion—a young, healthy olive variety—is joined to a robust rootstock, typically an older olive tree, resilient to diseases.

"This method enhances health and productivity of olive trees and ensures farmers to maximize gains from their land," he said. "We select a scion at growth stage, cut the scion and rootstock carefully for a snug fit and bind them together securely."

This careful union, he said, leads to formation of a strong new branch, capable of yielding high-quality olives in just four to five years. "The optimal period for grafting is from February to April and July to September."

As the region provides suitable land environment, Ziaul Islam Dawar, Director, Agriculture Extension appreciates people's response in Malakand towards olive grafting.

"Growers are getting aware of this farming and start using best quality olive varieties," he informed. "A good quality scion can easily be grafted onto a rootstock of rare variety to prepare a high-yielding and disease-resistant olive tree in a few years."

He stated that by grafting these rare varieties, the farmers can ensure better productivity for a longer period. "Besides their personal food and nutritional needs, olive also helps them earn living for their families and reduce import burden on national kitty."

"What they need to ensure, is to graft properly to avoid unproductive trees and financial losses," he advised.

Ahmad Saïd, former Project Director, Promotion of Olive Trees Cultivation on Commercial Scale informed that entire Malakand division including Bajaur and Dir, other merged areas like South Waziristan, Orakzai and Khyber are also suitable for olive grafting.

He said around 4.4 million hectares land in Pakistan's KP, Punjab and Balochistan provinces was suitable for olive cultivation but still we import 75 percent of oil edible. "On the other hand, Spain having 2.6 million hectare olive cultivation land exports 45 percent of the world's total edible oil exports."

According to Ahmad, around 70 million wild olive plants were suitable for grafting in KP including 1.3 million in Bajaur district as grafting of 400,000 wild olives trees has been completed with earlier grafted trees at 400 acres in Bajaur already producing fruit.

He said normally one kilogram olive fruit produce 200 milliliter oil and from 100 kilogram 17 to 20 liters oil can be extracted with one liter extra virgin olive oil pricing Rs2200 to Rs2500 per liter. "One tree can return a farmer Rs15,400 to Rs20,000 income per year while olive fruits can also be sold for Rs120 per kilogram easily in the local market." The rising interest in olive grafting is significant in light of our economic challenges while its enhanced local production could offer a sustainable solution to meet domestic demand.

Under KP Govt's olive promotion project, grafting of over 250,000 wild olive trees has been carried out in the province while olive orchards on 150 acres have successfully been raised in Bajaur.

Meanwhile, the federal government had also launched Promotion of Olive Trees Cultivation on Commercial Scale (POTCCS) Project worth Rs 3.82 billion. Under this project, around 6.5 million wild olive plants were naturally raised in thickly olive-covered mountains and plains areas of KPK, Punjab and Balochistan provinces.

Similarly, more land in the country is being brought under olive cultivation as approximately 1.3 million olive plants and orchards on 14,000 acres land would be raised in areas of KPK and Pothohar region of the Punjab province.

The Punjab Government has declared Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Jehlum, Attock and Khushab districts as Olive Valleys and there is an urgent need to facilitate farmers in these areas to fully benefit from this initiative.

In a situation when Pakistan is struggling to steer out of economic turmoil, measures to promote corporate farming especially in areas where precious foreign exchange is spent on imports were urgently required.

Such initiatives would not have positive effects on our economy but also pave way for farmers to enhance earning, flourish country economically and achieve the goal of food security.

## PPC Media Cricket League

### Defending champions Qabails outplayed Panthers



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: PPC Qabails and PPC United secured victories in the ongoing Media Cricket League organized by the Peshawar Press Club with the collaboration of DHA Peshawar and RMI.

The first match of the league held at Gymkhana Ground was played between PPC Qabails and PPC Panthers.

PPC Qabails' captain Bilal Afridi won the toss and invited PPC Panthers to bat first. PPC Panthers scored 77 runs for the loss

of four wickets in the allotted eight overs with Israr scoring 25 and Kamran 21 being the top scorers.

For PPC Qabails Bilal Afridi, Shahid Khan and Naveed Jan took one wicket each. In reply PPC Qabails chased down the

target with the loss of just two wickets.

Shah Faisal played a brilliant innings of 43 runs and was declared the Man of the Match.

Secretary Local Council Waheed awarded the medals accompanied by Peshawar Press Club Vice President Tayyab Usman, General Secretary Irfan Musa Zai, Sports Committee Chairman Abid Khan, senior journalist Kashif Uddin and Saif Islam Seifi.

In the second match PPC Bulls faced PPC United. PPC United won the toss and opted to bat first scoring a total of 156 runs in the allotted eight overs with Wajid Shehzad contributing 48, Arsalan 43, and Ehsan 41 runs.

In response PPC Bulls' entire team was dismissed for 43 runs giving PPC United a commanding victory by 113 runs.

## Lawmakers call for collective action to protect human rights, promote gender mainstreaming

PESHAWAR (APP): Members of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday called for a collaborative approach to advance gender mainstreaming and protect human rights.

This call to action was made during a Networking Forum organized by the Shaor Foundation for Education and Awareness (SFEA), a non-profit civil society organization dedicated to advancing socio-political peacebuilding, democracy, governance, women's empowerment, and entrepreneurship.

The forum took place here at local hotel under the title "Towards Inclusive Governance: A Networking Forum for Legislative Actions on Gender Rights."

The event was attended by key members of the Provincial Assembly,

including PTI MPA s Sher Ali Afridi, Fazal Elahi, Ex Speaker KP Assembly Kiramat Ullah Khan chagharmati, and ANP MPA Nisar Baaz, along with representatives from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women, health department officials, educators, civil society organizations, media representatives, and political leaders from various parties. SFEA presented a comprehensive overview of the current state of gender rights in Pakistan, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The organization emphasized that gender mainstreaming is a critical issue that must be prioritized.

During the forum, Nisar Baaz remarked that human rights and gender rights are constitutionally protected

but remain inadequately enforced due to various challenges.

He stressed the importance of implementing existing legislation to achieve gender balance in society and acknowledged that women have equal rights to men but often lack access to these entitlements.

Nisar Baaz highlighted the necessity of freedom of expression, allowing individuals to voice their rights.

He said that while the issue of women's rights is raised in the assembly, opposition members often struggle to have their voices heard.

Sher Ali Afridi expressed his commitment to ensuring rights for women, minorities, and transgender individuals, saying that the government is introducing new legislation aimed at protecting human rights.

He assured participants that the government's proposed laws would be reviewed through a gender lens, with necessary amendments to the existing legal framework to provide relief to citizens.

Afridi also announced plans to establish district-level Public Safety Commissions that will include representation from both treasury and opposition members, as well as transgender individuals.

He acknowledged the historical challenges of implementing legislation in Pakistan but emphasized a commitment to learning from past experiences to create sustainable laws that reflect the needs of the province's citizens.

Additionally, he announced an upcoming conference focused on women's, transgender, and

human rights to address ongoing challenges and propose solutions.

Fazal Elahi reiterated that Islam provides clear guidelines for the rights of women and other genders, asserting that applying these principles within the system could enhance access to rights for marginalized groups.

Kiramat Ullah Khan chagharmati voiced his concerns regarding government policies on women's education and employment, emphasizing the need to educate girls and place them in the workforce.

Participants raised concerns about the government's progress in addressing gender disparities and advocated for a collective, non-partisan approach to tackle this critical issue impacting society in the long term.





## In brief

### CM, Governor grieved

QUETTA (APP): Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti and Governor Balochistan Shaikh Jajjar Khan Mandokhail have expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Balochistan MPA Patrick Saint Masih. In their separate condolence messages, they said that with the demise of Patrick Saint Masih, the province has lost a sincere and dedicated public representative. His services will always be remembered they said extending their heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family.

### AJK prepares for founding day

MIRPUR (INP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) will celebrate the 77th anniversary of its founding on October 24 with flag-hoisting ceremonies across the state. Flag-hoisting ceremonies will take place at all district and tehsil headquarters across AJK, marking this historic occasion. The AJK government was established on October 24, 1947, after local forces liberated the territory from Dogra rule. In Mirpur, a grand flag hoisting ceremony is scheduled for 9:00 AM at the Municipal Corporations lush green lawn. Similar ceremonies will occur simultaneously in other districts and in Muzaffarabad, the state's capital. The celebrations will include the cutting of a special anniversary cake and well-dressed contingents from the AJK Police, Boy Scouts, civil defense volunteers and Rescue 1122 will salute the AJK flag during the events. People from Jammu and Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control, as well as communities worldwide are also gearing up to celebrate the 77th Founding Day, reinforcing their commitment to the struggle for self-determination. The Founding Day is an annual event that commemorates the establishment of the AJK government, formed 77 years ago in a fight against oppressive rule.

### Action against pollution F.P. Report

H A F I Z A B A D : Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq has said that district administration Hafizabad has formed special squads and quick response teams for taking action against smoke emitting bricks kilns, factories, vehicles and burning of crops bustles in the district. While visiting bricks kilns in Kassoki area, DC warned farmers to refrain from burning residues of crops and owners of bricks kilns running kilns without zigzag technology otherwise punitive action would be taken against them including to impose fines on farmers and to seal bricks kilns running without zigzag technology. He also reviewed process of preparing bricks at kilns and zigzag technology during the visit. He further said that special monitoring was being made to supervise burning of crops alongside Motorways M-2 and M-4 to avoid spread of smoke on motorways. Meanwhile, AC Hafizabad Sohail Riaz visited different bazaars and markets and checked petrol pumps, chicken shops to review prices of essential commodities. He imposed Rs. One lakh and twenty thousand fines to petrol pumps having less measure and other shopkeepers for extorting arbitrary prices from customers.



**KOHAT:** The 77th 3-Day Annual Urs Mubarak of Ghamkul Sharif Kohat ended on Sunday evening. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Provincial Minister for Religious Affairs Muhammad Adnan Qadri, Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafi Jan MPA and millions of pilgrims from all over Pakistan attended the final prayer ceremony. The final prayer was offered by Pir of Ghamkul Sharif Pir Habibullah Shah. On this occasion, a special prayer was also offered for the integrity, solidarity and security of the country. In the light of the directions of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Kohat district administration had made full-proof security and other arrangements.

## Six of a family injured in Bannu cylinder blast

BANNU (APP): At least six members of a family including women and children were injured when an LPG cylinder exploded in a house in Bannu district on Sunday morning.

Police said the incident occurred in Baghban Nagar area of Bannu district where a gas cylinder exploded during breakfast

making.

Six members of the family including women and children were injured in the blast and shifted to DHQ Hospital Bannu.

## FESCO issues shutdown program

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued shutdown program for Monday due to necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines.

According to the program issued by the company, power supply from Siddhpura, Mustafa and Faiz Abad feeders linked with 132-KV Narwala grid station, Saleemi Chowk, Gate Chowk and Jhal Khannuana feeders attached with 132-KV GIS grid station, Roshan Wala, MGM, Chenab Garden, Four Season, Miani, Niamoana, Dasoha, Elyas Garden, Samanabad, Pepsi, Maqsood, Falko, Defense, Paradise and Textile feeders connected with 132-KV Sammundri Road grid station, Khuda Yar feeder originating from 132-KV Mamunkanjani grid station, Darya Bal, Torian Wala and Islam Pura feeders linked with 132-KV Mureedwala grid station, Dhandra, Ali Housing, Judge Wala and al-Rehman feeders attached with 132-KV Jhang Road grid station, 466 Road and Naradada feeders connected with 132-KV Sammundri grid station, Zafar Chowk feeder originating from 132-KV M. Bagh grid station, Fateh Abad and Rafhan feeders linked with 132-KV Old Thermal grid station, Sufi Di Kothi feeder attached with 132-KV Lundianwala grid station, Chishtia Park feeder connected with 132-KV S-Road grid station, Babar Chowk originating from 132-KV Khannuana grid station, Gate Chowk feeder linked with 132-KV GIS grid station, Zulfiqar Colony feeder attached with 132-KV Factory Area grid station, Raza Abad and Bahlak feeders connected with 132-KV Tandlianwala grid station, al-Bahadur feeder originating from 132-KV Garh grid station, Maanpur feeder linked with 220-KV Sammundri Road grid station, Raja Chowk, Saeed Abad and Munir Abad feeders attached with 132-KV University grid station, new Langrana feeder connected with 132-KV Aminpur grid station and Ali Town.

## Absconder among four outlaws held

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police, taking action against drug dealers, have arrested four outlaws including an absconder recovering a quantity of drugs from their possession here in the limits of the City police station.

According to a police spokesman, the police were taking indiscriminate actions against criminals following the instructions of District Police

Officer Nasir Mehmood.

He said a team of City police station led by SDPO City Circle Muhammad Adnan along with SHO Muhammad Sibtain arrested drug dealer Kaleem Ullah son of Shahjahan and recovered 3610 grams of hashish from his possession. Similarly, two other drug dealers namely Fazal ur Rehman son of Gul Mehboob and Muhammad Bilal son of

Qayyum Nawaz were arrested with recovery of 290 grams and 310 grams of heroin from their possession. The police registered separate cases against the arrested accused and started further investigation.

Meanwhile, the same police arrested an absconder named Hidayat Ullah alias Huda son of Rabnawaz, a resident of Bilalabad, who was wanted to Cantt police station.



**CHINIOT:** A young girl crafts quilts at her home to earn a livelihood for her family during the winter season.

## Tourism Potential – Reviving glory of Multan’s walled city

MULTAN (APP): Boasting of its past glory and pride for a vibrant history spanning over around 5000 years, the important city of South Punjab, Multan stands tall among the world's oldest living cities.

Also known as the city of saints, Multan's cultural and architectural heritage is encapsulated within its Walled City; a 1.2 square kilometer area that houses scores of historic buildings, each with a unique story to tell.

These ancient structures, many of which are well-preserved, offer immense potential for hosting cultural events, turning Multan into a hub of heritage tourism.

The Walled City's monumental landmarks reflect the city's rich spiritual and historical importance. Some of its most iconic buildings include the Masjid Wali Muhammad, Masjid Hazrat Sakhi Yahya, Shrine of Hazrat Musa

Pak Shaheed, Tarkhana Wali Masjid, Bohar Gate, Jain Mandar, and the Tomb of Shah Yousuf Gardez.

Other renowned sites like the Shrine of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya and Shrine of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam are revered for their religious importance, drawing visitors from far and wide.

The city's ancient gates; Delhi Gate, Lohari Gate, Bohar Gate, Haram Gate, Daulat Gate and Pak Gate, as well as key streets like Mohalla Jatoo Shah, Mohalla Kamnagrah, Sabunwali Gali, Maharaja Mohalla, Mohalla Jamna Das, Mollaha Mori Patta, Kafrawali street and dozens others, further elaborate the area's cultural landscape.

Despite city's architectural marvels and spiritual treasures, the Walled City presently attracts around a 100 foreign tourists and a bit more locals every month.

However, the authorities can fully capitalize on its potential attracting thousands of tourists every year by improving existing facilities and jurisdictional complications involving multiple departments.

These complications coupled with inadequate funding hinder the development and maintenance of the Walled City, slowing down its restoration and promotion of area's unique assets.

Ten year ago, in an important step forward, the Italian government had allocated US\$251 million for the restoration of key heritage sites and the Walled City Authority had successfully restored areas like Haram Gate, Sarafa Bazaar and the Shrine of Musa Pak Shaheed, renewing their historic essence.

This step has set stage for a broader revitalization of the Walled City, promising to enhance both its aesthetic appeal

and tourist experience.

"Each street and every home in the Walled City has a unique history," said Umair Ghazanfar, Assistant Director of Walled City Multan. "It is among the ancient cities and offers ample opportunities to culture and heritage lovers."

Excited about its uplift and restoration, Umair highlights the potential for further growth, hoping for visit of more tourists to this historic and cultural city.

"We welcome an average 100 foreign tourists monthly and our tricycle tours are exciting for visitors to explore these historic streets and buildings," he said. "By uplifting and rekindling this heritage, we can attract more tourists and earn revenue."

Local enthusiasts are equally optimistic about the future of Multan's Walled City as Dr. Sajid, a medical practitioner and passionate lover of

Multan's ancient beauty, sees immense potential for tourism in the area.

"We need to improve infrastructure of the Walled City, including small hotels, cafés and entertainment spots," he suggested. "By renovating and making it more attractive, we can turn it into an attractive destination for local and foreign tourists."

Similarly, Dr. Muzzamal, a local tourist suggests to hold cultural events in the walled city to highlight its importance locally and internationally. "Cultural events and festivals in Walled City must be made a regular feature to celebrate city's history."

He was confident that these events would attract more tourists and develop deeper connection among local residents and the visitors. "We should also train local residents to act as guides to promote a culture of hospitality and engage local community

# Grand Jarga decided to form peace council

### A R Abid Bunery

BUNER: The Buner Loya Jirga decided to establish the Buner Aman(peace) Council. The Buner Aman(peace) Council will include two nominated leaders of every political, social, and union organizations and associations.

The Buner Aman(peace) Council will soon announce the time and place for the Aman Passon(peace rally). The district police and administration will also take up the demand to ensure security with the government and state institutions.

The big jirga of Buner Loya Jirga(Buner Grand Jirga) for the establishment of peace was held in College Masjid Swari.

The Buner Loya Jirga president Mian Syed Laiq Bacha chaired .

All the political, social and religious personalities, union and association leaders, former and present elected members

and local elders have participated in the Loya Jirga in large numbers.

Buner Loya Jirga president Mian Said Laiq Bacha, former MNA Sher Akbar Khan,Pakhtun Khwa minister Syed Fakhar Jihan former MPA Qais Khan.

Usman Fanus Gujjar Nasir Abbas Bacha Naeemuddin Bacha Haji Rauf Karim Babak Nasib Khan Bakhrad Khan Irshad Khan Iqbal Khan Kamran Khan Afsar Khan Wahab Rashid Shah Bakht Rawan Khan and dozens of other leaders have given suggestions for Aman (peace).

Finally all of the participants have agreed upon the establishment of the Buner Peace Council and have expressed their commitment that no one in Buner will be left free to disturb the peace and that they all will respond to the call of the Buner Peace Council and whenever If called, they will come out and give every sacrifice for Aman

(peace).

In a media briefing, Loya Jirga President Mian Syed Laiq Bacha has also announced Aman Passon(peace rally) in a week, for which the time and place will be decided by the Aman (peace)Council.

He added that the police will be asked to be vigilant to fulfill their responsibility and not allow any miscreants to enter into the Buner area. He asked police to trace and arrest the militants involved in the attacks in Chaghorzai and Ambela police.

He assured, where the people need it, the Buner Peace Council will give full support by calling the people. But it has been emphasized that the police and administration government and state agencies should listen, let's say that it is their responsibility.

Otherwise, the people will held them accountable for any kind of negligence, he concluded.

## Law minister attends KCCL Sports Festival



### F.P. Report

KOHAT: The Kohat Cement Company Limited (KCCL) has announced the holding of KCCL Sports Festival 2024 at Kohat Sports Complex which will include the Tap Ball Cricket, Hard Ball Cricket and Football League.

It will be held at district level and more than 110 teams will participate in it highlighting the local talent.

In this regard, a formal function was held at Kohat Sports Complex in which Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam was the chief guest while Chairman

DDAC Kohat Shafi Jan MPA, Daud Shah Afridi MPA, Chairman Tehsil Gumbat Sajid Iqbal and Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram participated as guests of Honors.

The CSR Head of KCCL Ijaz Hussain on this occasion presented a check of Rs.1.5 Million to the District Sports Officer Kohat Zeeshan for the said Festival 2024.

In the said event, the distinguished guests also distributed 100 Cricket Kits among the local players donated by Saad Afridi of Kohat and Irfan Bangash of Parachinar, the Owners of the Perth Phantoms franchise in Australia, which promotes

talent in the area. It shows their commitment to promotion of Cricket in the Region.

Saad Afridi and Irfan Bangash also announced the holding of Free T-10 Cricket League for the Kohat Division. This generous initiative shows their team commitment and interest in promoting cricket at the grass-root level and encouraging the youth.

The minister while welcoming the efforts of the Australian Franchise Owners for promotion of regional cricket assured full support on behalf of the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for promotion of all sports including the cricket

## Toxic liquor kills three in Nowshera

NOWSHERA (APP): At least three people were killed after consuming toxic liquor in a wedding in Nowshera district, police and hospital sources informed on Sunday.

Police said the incident occurred in Toha area of

Nizampur tehsil in Nowshera where three people died and three others hospitalized in critical condition after consuming toxic liquor during a wedding party.

Those who died were identified as Atif (25), resi-

dent of Kahu, Luqman (25), resident of Toha and Asif (25), resident of Attock.

Hospital sources said the condition of Altaf (55), resident of Kahu and Alamgir (32), resident of Khairabad was critical.





# ‘Everything is lost’: Senegal repatriates citizens escaping Lebanon

DAKAR (Reuters): Hussein Hachem hugged his injured daughter as she arrived in Senegal on a flight repatriating citizens escaping the escalating conflict in Lebanon. His 14-year-old son was not with her - killed, he said, when their home was bombed.

As Israeli forces pounded southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs in a broadening offensive against Hezbollah, Hachem's daughter Mariam, 11, who had suffered a broken foot, was among 117 Senegalese flown to Dakar on a government-organised flight.

"I lost everything. I lost my son. I lost my house. All my dreams," he said, speaking amid emotional scenes outside the Leopold Sedar Senghor International Airport, where families

were reunited with loved ones late on Saturday.

"We have a 14-and-a-half-year-old son who just disappeared like that. Ten minutes before, I was talking to him. 'Hello?' He said, 'Dad, you're going to come get me?' I told him 'yes' ... Ten minutes later, they called me: 'there's no more house, no more son'."

Senegal has a significant Lebanese diaspora community, and has historical ties to both Lebanon and Palestine.

"The Senegalese government, of course, is condemning the Israeli army's bombardment in Lebanon, the bombardment of civilians... the destruction of infrastructure," the country's foreign minister, Yassine Fall, said in an interview with Reuters on Saturday evening. She said there had been about 1,000

Senegalese nationals in Lebanon but that some had left by their own means before the repatriation flight.

Fall also highlighted her country's longstanding relationship with the Palestinian people, dating back to 1975 when Senegal chaired the United Nations Committee for the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

"We are very, very disappointed to see the world watching a genocide happen under our eyes, children being killed, children being shot in the head, hospitals being bombarded, sick people not being able to be evacuated, people in refugee camps that are not fighting, that are civilians, being maimed and killed," she said in reference to the war

between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

"So Senegal, with other countries, we are really side by side condemning this and calling it what it is: it is a genocide."

Israel has strongly rejected accusations of genocide, including in a case brought by South Africa at the World Court.

It says it is acting in self-defence after an Oct. 7, 2023, attack by Palestinian Hamas militants. The Hamas attack killed 1,200 people with about 250 also taken as hostage, according to Israeli tallies, and triggered a conflict that has since spread from Gaza to Lebanon. Earlier on Saturday, demonstrators marched through Dakar to protest against Israel's actions in Gaza and Lebanon and call for a ceasefire in the widening Middle East conflict.



## Ex-general Prabowo takes oath as Indonesia's 8th president

JAKARTA (Arab News): Indonesia's former defense minister Prabowo Subianto was sworn in as the country's eighth president on Sunday morning, becoming the new leader of the world's third-largest democracy.

The 73-year-old former special forces commander and former son-in-law of Indonesia's late dictator Suharto won the Feb. 14 election with almost 60 percent of the vote. He succeeded Joko Widodo, who stepped down on Sunday after serving two five-year terms.

Subianto took the oath of office during a nationally televised special session of the People's Consultative Assembly, followed by his vice president and Widodo's eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka.

The ceremony was attended by heads of state and special envoys of more than 30 countries.

In his first presidential speech, Subianto vowed to work toward achieving food and energy security, while promising to eradicate corruption.

"We will lead the leadership of Indonesia ... sincerely, by prioritizing the needs of all Indonesians, including those who did not vote for us," he said.

Indonesia's new leadership will face a number of challenges, analysts say, including a shrinking middle class and regional security issues.

The Subianto presidency will begin amid a period of democratic backsliding that Widodo oversaw, marked by a rise in old-time patronage and dynasty politics, and a dent in the independence of the judiciary.

**DEMOCRACY IN DECLINE**

"Our democracy has seriously declined ... we are not doing alright at all. There are many democratic institutions that were quashed during Jokowi's presidency," constitutional law expert Bivriti Susanti told Arab News. "I don't think we can separate between Jokowi and Prabowo. Take note of how Prabowo ran for the

presidency three times, and he won only now, after Jokowi gave his son as a running mate ... the upcoming administration will be tied because its victory was guaranteed through unconstitutional acts."

Susanti was referring to how Raka's candidacy only became possible after the Constitutional Court, which at the time was headed by Jokowi's brother-in-law, made a controversial decision to decrease the minimum age requirement for the role.

**SHRINKING MIDDLE CLASS**

While one of Subianto's election promises was to accelerate economic growth to 8 percent from a current rate of 5 percent, the number of Indonesians classified as middle class has declined from about 57.3 million people in 2019 to 47.8 million this year, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency.

This decline means more people are in the "aspiring middle class," which now comprise about 50 percent of the Indonesian population, or more than 137 million people.

The numbers indicate a decrease in purchasing power across Indonesia. "There is a purchasing power problem we are facing and there's the raising of the big question about the structure of the Indonesian economy right now, as the industry is slowing down and (there are) a lot of layoffs in the manufacturing sector," Bhima Yudhistira, director of Jakarta-based think tank the Center of Economic and Law Studies, told Arab News.

**'MORE ACTIVE' FOREIGN, DEFENSE POLICY**

Jokowi, who never attended the UN General Assembly during his time in office, was not known as a "foreign policy president," as he focused more on economics and domestic developments, said Pieter Pandie, international relations researcher at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta.

But that leadership style is likely

to change under Subianto, who has already visited a number of countries as president-elect, including China, Australia and Saudi Arabia.

"In the transition to Prabowo, we'll see a more active president, a more hands-on president in foreign policy and defense policy," Pandie said.

Indonesia's active support for Palestine, which under Widodo was driven by the foreign minister, Retno Marsudi, is also likely to continue. In his inaugural speech, Subianto again declared Indonesia's support for Palestinian independence.

"I think the difference will be Prabowo will likely be a little more active in inserting a role for Indonesia in the region, although it remains to be seen what kind of role." As Indonesia holds control over critical sea lanes, including in the Malacca Strait, Lombok Strait and Sunda Strait, the government will need to prepare for possible regional security issues such as conflict in the South China Sea or Taiwan Strait. Beijing has overlapping claims over the South China Sea with a number of countries, and has increased its activities over the strategic waters, despite a 2016 international tribunal ruling that rejected Chinese claims.

The East Asian giant also has claims over self-governed Taiwan, and has launched major military drills around the island, sparking concerns of a bigger conflict.

"We've seen increasing incidents between China, the Philippines, Vietnam and others that could very well erupt into a conflict," Pandie said, adding that conflict spillover, refugee crises and disruptions to maritime routes are several potential issues that Indonesia may have to contend with. "Given our non-alignment and neutrality we won't be involved directly in a conflict, but should a conflict arise so close to our borders ... many things could happen."

## Senior Tanzanian opposition party official abducted and seriously injured

DAR ES SALAAM (Reuters): Unidentified people abducted, beat and seriously injured a senior Tanzanian opposition party official before dumping her in a forest, her party said on Sunday, a month after a similar abduction and murder of another of its party leaders.

The reported cases may taint the reformist image of President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who has been praised for easing repression since succeeding John Magufuli, who died in office three years ago.

Rights campaigners say Hassan's government is targeting opponents ahead of local elections in December and a national vote in 2025. The government denies the accusations.

CHADEMA, the leading opposition party, said its women's wing publicity secretary, Aisha Machano, was abducted in Kibiti town in the eastern part of the country while she was on official duties.

"Bodaboda (motorcycle) riders found her in a very bad health condition and in severe pain," the party said on social media platform X.

CHADEMA said Machano's abductors wanted details on who instructed them to burn clothes provided by President Samia Suluhu Hassan during 2023 commemorations of World Women Day in Kilimanjaro region.

"She was rushed to hospital for treatment and she has been admitted to the theatre for further medical care," the party said.

Police spokesperson David Misime said that after receiving information that Machano was found in a forest in Kibiti, officers had launched investigations into the incident.

"We are requesting the public to be calm as the investigation will provide details on what happened to her, the reasons for the incident and the people who were involved, and we will take legal actions according to available evidence," he said.

Machano is the second senior opposition official to be abducted and tortured within two months. Ali Kibao, a member of CHADEMA's secretariat, was abducted from a bus by armed men early last month while travelling from Dar es Salaam to the coastal city of Tanga.

Kibao's body was later found on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam with signs he had been beaten and acid had been poured on his face, his party said then. In September, CHADEMA organised demonstrations against Kibao's death and other reported abductions and disappearances of individuals and opposition party officials in Dar es Salaam, which police thwarted.

Last month Hassan ordered an investigation into Kibao's death and all related cases.

## Cuba suffers third major setback in restoring power to island, millions still in dark

HAVANA (Reuters): Cuba's efforts to restore power to the island were derailed for a third time late on Saturday, Cuban authorities said shortly before midnight, leaving millions in the dark and raising fresh questions over the viability of the government's bid to reestablish electrical service.

Cuba's national electrical grid first crashed around midday on Friday after the island's largest power plant shut down. The grid collapsed again on Saturday morning, state-run media reported.

By early evening, authorities reported some progress restoring power before announcing the grid had once again collapsed.

"Tonight at 10:25 p.m. the total disconnection of the national electro-energetic system occurred again," the Havana Electric company said on Telegram late on Saturday.

The post was later removed from the company's Telegram feed. It was not immediately

clear why the post was removed, but millions were still without power on early on Sunday.

Cuba's energy ministry said shortly after the Havana Electric post that it was working to reestablish service, adding that "another disconnection" had occurred in the "western sub-system," which includes the capital Havana.

"The process of reestablishing the electrical system continues to be complex," the ministry said on X.

A third grid collapse marks a major setback in the government's efforts to quickly restore power to exhausted residents already suffering from severe food, medicine and fuel shortages.

Reuters reporters witnessed two small protests overnight, one in Marianao and the other in the Cuatro Caminos area of Havana. Various videos of protests elsewhere in the capital began to crop up on social media late on Saturday, though Reuters

was not able to verify their authenticity.

Internet traffic dropped off sharply in Cuba on Saturday, according to data from Internet monitoring group NetBlocks, as vast power outages made it all but impossible for most island residents to charge phones and get online.

"Network data show that Cuba remains largely offline as the island experiences a second nationwide power outage," NetBlocks said on Saturday.

Even before the grid failures, a dire electricity shortfall on Friday had forced Cuba's Communist-run government to send non-essential state workers home and cancel school for children as it sought to conserve fuel for power generation.

The government has blamed weeks of worsening blackouts — as long as 10 to 20 hours a day across much of the island — on deteriorating infrastructure, fuel shortages and rising demand.

Cuba also blames the

## German authorities arrest Libyan man

### F.P. Report

BERLIN: German authorities said Sunday that they have arrested a Libyan national with suspected ties to the extremist group Islamic State who was allegedly planning a firearms attack on the Israeli Embassy.

Police and other security forces detained the man on Saturday evening in Bernau, a town just outside of Berlin, and searched his home there, the Federal Prosecutor's Office said in a statement.

"This shows that protecting Jewish and Israeli institutions in our country is vital and of the utmost importance to us," she added.

The suspect was expected to be brought before an investigating judge at the country's

Berlin," the statement said. In his planning, the statement added, "the accused exchanged information with a member of IS in a messenger chat."

Security forces also searched the home of another person who is considered a witness and not a suspect, the prosecutor's statement said.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said that German security authorities "struck in time to thwart possible plans to attack the Israeli Embassy in Berlin."

"This shows that protecting Jewish and Israeli institutions in our country is vital and of the utmost importance to us," she added.

The suspect was expected to be brought before an investigating judge at the country's

highest court, the Federal Court of Justice in Karlsruhe, on Sunday, the prosecutor's office said.

Israeli Ambassador Ron Prosor thanked the German security authorities "for ensuring the security of our embassy," dpa reported.

News of the case first came from the Bild newspaper, which reported that a heavily armed elite police unit stormed the suspect's home in Bernau. It said German authorities acted after receiving a tipoff from an unspecified foreign intelligence agency.

"We are acting with the utmost vigilance and attention in view of the high threat posed by Islamist, antisemitic and anti-Israel violence," Faeser said.

## UAE President, EU chief urge Gaza ceasefire

DUBAI (Arab News): UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, held a phone conversation to address the urgent need for a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

Both leaders emphasized the importance of protecting civilians in line with international law and ensuring the safe and sufficient delivery of humanitarian aid to alleviate their suffering in the conflict zones.

They also discussed efforts to prevent the fur-

ther escalation of tensions in the Middle East, stressing the need for collective action to contain the conflict, which poses a serious threat to regional security and stability.

The two leaders reiterated their support for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region, grounded in the two-state solution.

Sheikh Mohamed underscored the UAE's commitment to working alongside international and regional partners, including the EU, to prevent the expansion of conflict in the Middle East and provide humani-

tarian aid to civilians.

Sheikh Mohamed and President von der Leyen also reviewed relations between the UAE and the European Union, exploring ways to strengthen ties and achieve shared interests.

Sheikh Mohamed reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to enhancing strategic relations with the EU and its member states, with a focus on mutual development and cooperation in areas such as trade and investment. He also expressed his support for further Gulf-European collaboration to benefit both regions.

## No clear winner in British Columbia election



OTTAWA (Reuters): The two main parties contesting an election in the western Canadian province of British Columbia were tied after most votes had been counted, provisional results showed on Sunday, and it could be days before a winner emerges.

The incumbent left-leaning New Democratic

Party (NDP), in power for seven years, had won 40 seats and was leading in six while the right-leaning Conservative Party had won 40 and was leading in five. The Green Party had won two.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp said the result could depend on out-of-district votes and mail-in ballots, with

the latter not due to be fully counted until Oct. 26. A party needs 47 seats in the provincial legislature to capture a majority in what is traditionally one of Canada's greenest provinces.

The Conservatives, who benefited from voter fatigue with the NDP government, promised to scrap a longstanding tax on carbon emissions and

clean fuel standard and also expand the liquefied natural gas export industry. The result could mirror that of the 2017 election, when the Green Party held the balance of power after neither of the main parties won a majority. The then Liberal Party won more seats but the NDP took power after signing a deal with the Greens.



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## Shelling out billions for clean energy ahead of polls

**T**HE Biden administration is shelling out billions of dollars for clean energy and approving major offshore wind projects as officials race to secure major climate initiatives before President Joe Biden's term comes to an end.

Biden wants to establish a legacy for climate action that includes locking in a trajectory for reducing the nation's planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions.

Former President Donald Trump has pledged to rescind unspent funds in Biden's landmark climate and health care bill and stop offshore wind development if he returns to the White House in January.

Vice President Kamala Harris, who became the Democratic nominee after Biden dropped from the race this summer, has said she will pursue a climate agenda similar to Biden's, focused on reducing emissions, deploying renewables and creating clean energy jobs, according to the Associated Press. Announcements of major environmental grants and project approvals have speeded up in recent months as White House Deputy Chief of Staff Natalie Quillian said Biden is "sprinting to the finish" and delivering on promises to promote clean energy and slow climate change.

The Environmental Protection Agency made \$20 billion from a federal "green bank" available this summer for clean energy projects such as residential heat pumps, electric vehicle charging stations and community cooling centres.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management approved the nation's 10th large offshore wind farm, the Maryland Offshore Wind Project, in September, reaching the halfway mark for Biden's goal of 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030. On Oct.1, the agency gave a key approval to an offshore wind farm project in New Jersey. In the past month alone, the energy Department has made six announcements of a billion dollars or more, including more than \$3 billion for battery manufacturing projects and a \$1.5 billion loan to restart a nuclear plant in Michigan. And just last week, Biden set a 10-year deadline for cities to replace their lead pipes, with \$2.6 billion available from the EPA to help communities comply, the AP report adds.

Besides the climate law, formally known as the Inflation Reduction Act, Biden is seeking to spend billions in projects approved under the bipartisan infrastructure law in 2021 and the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act. The climate legislation put the country on a path to cutting greenhouse gas emissions to try to meet targets in the Paris climate accord. The investments are expected to reduce US emissions by about 40% by 2030. A new analysis by global consultant Baringa found that Trump would stall the transition from fossil fuels, though by how much would depend on whether the House or Senate is controlled by Democrats who could temper climate rollbacks.

Trump, if unrestrained, could permanently alter the trajectory of the energy transition by repealing the climate legislation, substantially slowing renewable rollout and leaving the US wedded to coal and gas for far longer, said Caspian Conran, an economist at Baringa who co-authored the analysis published on Wednesday.

As vice president, Harris cast the tiebreaking vote on the Inflation Reduction Act, which was approved with only Democratic support. As a Senator from California, she was an early sponsor of the Green New Deal, sweeping proposals meant to swiftly move the United States fully to green energy.

Trump's policies, meanwhile, could raise emissions by about 12% by 2030 compared to those favoured by Harris or Biden, Baringa's report said, equivalent to roughly 660 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

The US is the world's second-largest emitter of planet-warming carbon dioxide. Baringa says Trump's first-term policies caused emissions to rise 9%, while Biden's policies lowered emissions by 11%.

Companies have announced about 340 major clean energy projects across the country in the past two years, according to E2, a nonpartisan environmental research group. Sixty per cent of those, representing 82% of the investments and 69% of the jobs, are in Republican congressional districts despite unanimous GOP opposition to the law, E2 said.

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## Is Israel getting itself into another Lebanese quagmire?

Yossi Mekelberg

**T**he sight of Israeli ground troops crossing into Lebanon, and not for the first time, reminded me of what the Spanish-American philosopher George Santayana said more than a century ago: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." It always baffles me why leaders do not learn from history, even the recent history that many of them have lived through.

Admittedly, Israel and Lebanon do not have a natural border, such as a river or a mountain range, but rather a political one, the Blue Line — a demarcation established by the UN as a temporary border that the UN Interim Force in Lebanon peacekeeping operation could monitor after Israel finally withdrew from its northern neighbor in 2000. This border is more or less consistent with the Anglo-French accord of 1923, which provides a partial explanation for the volatility of this border.

As a matter of fact, previous Israeli military and political attempts to establish the Litani River as a security border all ended in disaster. It took 18 years for the Israeli army to get out of the quagmire following its invasion of 1982, while in the process inflicting enormous damage on Lebanon and its people and contributing to the country's instability. Israel also suffered many casualties during years of holding to a buffer zone before it eventually withdrew to the international border, leaving the situation even more fragile and unstable.

Israel's objective of ensuring the security of its northern border in order to allow 60,000 displaced citizens to return safely to their homes after being forced out by Hezbollah's constant onslaught of rockets, missiles, and drones since last October is justifiable. But the way it is pursuing it is increasingly worrying, as it is beginning to resemble the way it is dealing with Gaza.

There is no fundamental border dispute between the states of Israel and Lebanon and their two armies have not confronted each other on the battlefield since 1948. The disagreement over the 28 sq. km of the Shebaa farms, most of which is generally agreed to belong to Syria and not Lebanon, and which is now occupied by Israel, is at best an excuse for Hezbollah to maintain its raison d'être in Lebanese politics and society.

At the end of the day, what justification is there for Hezbollah to continue as a well-armed militia that is capable of overshadowing the Lebanese army and that serves Tehran's interests more than those of the Lebanese people? It was also unconvincing in its declared support for the Palestinian cause before Oct. 7 of last year, as well as in its subsequent half-hearted military attempt to force Israel to change its war tactics in Gaza.

Nevertheless, it has done enough for Israel to eventually turn its atten-

tion to its northern border and to what might develop into an excessive use of force to match that of its onslaught in Gaza.

The Hamas attack last year shuffled the strategic cards for Israel. Until then, it had regarded the threat from Hezbollah as a greater concern in terms of its capabilities and inten-

drones targeting military bases and civilians deep inside the country.

Yet, despite the recent and persistent bombardment by the Israeli military of this Lebanese movement's arms storage facilities, the elimination of most of its senior leadership, including Hassan Nasrallah, and the launch

**Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his far-right coalition are setting themselves up to fail because their war objectives are maximalist, relying on military force without a political horizon that could be facilitated by diplomacy. Since the widespread explosions of Hezbollah operatives' booby-trapped pagers and walkie-talkies last month, events have unfolded rapidly and equally dangerously. It initially seemed that Israel was intending to compel Nasrallah to agree to return to the 2006 UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which was aimed at creating security arrangements that would prevent the resumption of hostilities along the Israel-Lebanon border. However, with Nasrallah's assassination, it appears that Tel Aviv is attempting to enforce at least one aspect of UNSC Resolution 1559 of 2004: that of the dismantling of militias in Lebanon — in this case, of Hezbollah in its entirety. If this is the case, it means that Israel is about to enter into a prolonged war unless the international community intervenes — and does so quickly — especially since the threat of an Iranian-Israeli escalation looms large. Every generation thinks that it can do better than the last, but military incursions that are not surgical and clinical, not limited in time and have no clear political objective are bound to go wrong — badly wrong. It is incontrovertible that Hezbollah has suffered massive losses over the last few weeks, but it is not defeated and is signaling that it is ready for a deal if one is achieved with Hamas in Gaza. This might be the opportunity to end the war, see the release of the hostages, and pave the way to ending the humanitarian disaster. And, with it, regional de-escalation followed by a plan to restart the reconstruction of Gaza and an Israeli-Palestinian peace process.**

tions, as well as because of the Iran nexus.

For years, Israel's security forces have spent much of their energy and resources attempting to slow down the transfer of weapons and ammunition from Iran into the hands of Hezbollah out of concern for what it is currently facing: rockets, missiles, and

of a ground campaign inside Lebanon, Hezbollah is still capable of firing rockets and launching drones into Israel.

While there was international recognition among Israel's friends and allies that it had the right to respond to what Hamas and Hezbollah have inflicted on its citizens and

to ensure that Israelis could return safely to their homes close to the border, this was not and should never have been a license to sow death and devastation on a vast scale, let alone with no obvious strategic endgame.

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At this point, such a sequence of events sounds unrealistic, mainly because there are no leaderships capable of compromise or who have the vision, imagination, and courage to change direction. The Netanyahu government — because it has turned the military tide in its favor, despite being far from defeating Hamas and even further away from crushing Hezbollah — now has the opportunity to accelerate negotiations for a deal in Gaza, which would make one in Lebanon easier. It must translate its current advantageous military position into a tangible and lasting political settlement, and do so before its amnesia sends the Israeli army into an endless downward spiral in both Gaza and Lebanon.

## Biden's bittersweet last presidential trip to Europe

Andrew Hammond

**O**f all the 27 EU nations, it is the bloc's most powerful state and largest economy. Germany, that may have the most at stake in November's US election. This was clear on Thursday and Friday, when Joe Biden made what is likely to be his last presidential trip to Europe.

Biden's relationship with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has been far from disagreement-free over the last few years. Nonetheless, the relationship between the two men has been significantly more constructive than the one between their respective predecessors, Angela Merkel and Donald Trump.

That the four-year period of overlap between Trump and Merkel from early 2017 to early 2021 saw the biggest flux in bilateral ties in decades is unquestionable. There

Boeing. Both sides announced in 2021 that they would suspend retaliatory tariffs on billions of dollars in non-aviation goods and ensure that future research and development funding would not favor each other's aviation industries.

Moreover, Biden has also dialed down US rhetoric on several long-standing irritants in the bilateral relationship, especially trade and defense spending, which Trump regularly emphasized. On trade, for instance, Trump repeatedly called Germany "very bad" because of its significant trade surplus, while he castigated Germany's failure to spend 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense, a key NATO goal.

These remain important for Biden too. Yet, they are ultimately subservient to his broader strategic goal of reconsolidating the

**Merkel and many other politicians in Berlin, including Scholz, who served in her final government as finance minister, were thankful to see the back of Trump in 2021. Biden, a long-standing Atlanticist, was expected to bring back much of the stability of traditional post-war bilateral ties with Germany — and this has largely proven to be the case. A centerpiece of Biden's restoration of relations with Germany has been over Ukraine, on which, by and large, there has been alignment with Scholz following Russia's invasion in 2022. During his trip, the US president played to this theme by hosting a meeting with Scholz, French President Emmanuel Macron, and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer.**

were not only major policy challenges, but also very poor personal relations between the two leaders.

To be sure, there have been previous significant disagreements between Germany and the US in the postwar era. One example was the 2003 Iraq War, which created a significant schism in the transatlantic alliance, as then-Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder opposed US President George W. Bush's decision to topple Saddam Hussein's regime.

However, Germany has generally had strong ties with the US since 1945. Indeed, for much of her long chancellorship from 2005 to 2021, Merkel was seen by numerous American presidents, especially Barack Obama, as the go-to European leader during times of trouble.

Merkel and many other politicians in Berlin, including Scholz, who served in her final government as finance minister, were thankful to see the back of Trump in 2021. Biden, a long-standing Atlanticist, was expected to bring back much of the stability of traditional postwar bilateral ties with Germany — and this has largely proven to be the case.

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Beyond the key issue of Ukraine, Biden and Scholz have also found significant common ground in wider areas.

These include close cooperation on a range of challenges, including ending the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing the threat of climate change, and promoting economic prosperity.

The diplomatic mood music between Berlin and Washington has also improved since the end of a 17-year transatlantic aerospace trade war over alleged government support for Airbus and

Western alliance in the face of growing security challenges, including from Russia.

So, Biden has done all he can to stabilize the bilateral relationship with Berlin. For, in the post-Brexit era, the US president sees Germany as an increasingly important anchor point in the transatlantic relationship, especially at this time of increasing geopolitical flux.

Yet, for all that Biden's trip lifted spirits in Berlin, there is much concern about the pending US election. Scholz and most other mainstream politicians in Germany would strongly favor a win for Biden's Vice President Kamala Harris. This is not necessarily because of wild enthusiasm for Harris, but out of concern for the consequences for Berlin of a second Trump administration.

During Trump's presidency, bilateral relations sometimes appeared to go into freefall, including the possibility of a trade war. A range of bilateral irritants plagued relations, from foreign policy issues such as the Iran nuclear deal through to Trump's trade sanctions on steel and aluminum imports.

The personal factor was also important, with Merkel's style and values colliding with those of Trump, who relished his role as a disruptor of the established Western order that she embodied. This was symbolized in March 2017, when Merkel first met Trump, as he appeared to refuse to shake her hand at a press conference.

In the case of a second Trump presidency, these tensions would likely resurface, possibly even in an intensified form in some cases. Potential flashpoints include China policy, which would probably be a key focal point for Trump. He would likely be critical of the continuing strong business ties between Beijing and Berlin.

So, for all the warm words exchanged between Biden and Scholz, November's election is keeping Berlin on edge. While few EU states would welcome a second Trump presidency, it may be Germany that has the most to lose.



# For US universities, Arab and Muslim lives do not matter

# How modern conflict weaponizes food

On October 7, the Tahrir Coalition, a union of pro-Palestinian organisations at the University of Michigan, posted on social media what it said was a recording of the university’s president, Santa Ono.

In the audio file, a man’s voice can be heard talking about pressure from “powerful groups” and the threat of withholding federal funding if the university administration does not focus almost exclusively on combating anti-Semitism.

He states: “The government could call me tomorrow and say, in a very unbalanced way, the university is not doing enough to combat anti-Semitism. And I could say it’s not doing enough to combat Islamophobia, and that’s not what they want to hear.”

Although the Tahrir Coalition did not explain how they obtained the recording or when and where it was made, neither Ono, nor the university disputed its authenticity. Instead, the university administration issued a statement to the local newspaper Metro Times, saying: “The University of Michigan is steadfastly committed to ensuring our community remains a safe and supportive environment, where all students – regardless of race, religion, ethnicity or other identities – have the opportunity to learn and thrive.”

The problem is that the university is not committed to the safety and support of Muslim and Arab students. Of course, we did not need the leaked recording to know that, but it does provide the general public with an explanation of the university’s utter failure to support marginalised students.

Over the past year, we have watched in shock as mass slaughter has unfolded in Palestine – and, since September, in Lebanon. Israel has killed more than 42,000 Palestinians, including more than 16,000 children, and more than 2,300 Lebanese, including more than 120 children.

For Palestinian and Lebanese students, the pain is acute. We have watched our homelands destroyed, our people slaughtered, tortured and starved. Yet, as we, along with many allies,

have tried to process this trauma and advocate for human rights, we have been vilified and silenced on campus. Our existence has been reduced to a problem, our grief weaponised, our calls for justice criminalised.

The same cannot be said about students who have actively advocated for Israel’s “right to self-defence” – a right that Israel does not have when it comes to resistance from a population it is occupying.

The effect of this “unbalanced” approach is that today Muslim and Arab stu-

Ahmad Ibsais

was reported to the administration, who took no action.

As the greater Michigan student body started organising and protesting on campus, the university’s discrimination against marginalised students became even more apparent. It repeatedly sent campus police to disperse our protests and sit-ins, with students being physically assaulted, pepper-sprayed and arrested, while hijabs of female students were ripped off.

It also ramped up surveillance. Police presence

of expression. Instead, it seemingly accepted the false equivalence of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

Over the summer, the Department of Education released a report about the supposed “failure” of the university to act on accusations of anti-Semitism. Among them were claims that anti-genocide protests created a “hostile environment” which the university did not investigate.

The university easily succumbed to pressure and unilaterally changed campus policies to facilitate its crackdown on students

portable with our people being slaughtered and our land being carpet-bombed.

This attitude isn’t unique to the University of Michigan. Nationwide, more than 3,000 people have been arrested for pro-Palestine advocacy on college campuses in just six months. Universities that once championed free speech have become hostile environments for Muslim and Arab students and their allies.

The chilling effect this has had is palpable. Many Muslim and Arab students now feel unsafe expressing their identities or views, fearing academic, legal and job prospect repercussions. For Palestinian students, this silencing is particularly traumatic – we are denied the right to mourn publicly or call for justice.

Adding to our pain is the fact that our tuition dollars are invested in companies supporting violence against Muslims and Palestinians abroad. Despite protests, the University of Michigan maintains investments in companies linked to Israel, even though it was quick to divest from companies linked to Russia after its invasion of Ukraine.

In response to the leaked audio, the Council on American-Islamic Relations – Michigan Chapter (CAIR-MI) filed a complaint with the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. The complaint calls for an investigation into whether the University of Michigan has followed “its obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act as well as its obligations under a Consent Resolution the University entered into with the Office of Civil Rights in June of this year”.

However, given that the pressure on universities to focus on the wellbeing of Jewish students comes from the federal government itself, it is doubtful this complaint will yield any significant results.

Ono’s leaked comments reveal a broader abdication of moral leadership by university administrators nationwide.

By yielding to external pressures, they fail to protect all students equally, sending a clear message that some lives matter more than others.

Conflict-driven hunger is not a new phenomenon, but it has taken on increasingly alarming dimensions in recent years, particularly in regions such as the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Middle East. Gaza has more than 2.1 million Palestinians battling extreme food insecurity, while in Sudan, 25.6 million people face unprecedented hunger levels, the worst in its history. These distressing realities are not incidental fallout from wars, but are calculated strategies designed to subjugate and displace civilian populations.

Throughout history, from the Bolsheviks’ manipulation of grain in the Russian Civil War to America’s grain embargo during the Cold War, the functionality of food as a weapon has been evident. The players in today’s conflicts have perfected these tactics, with food used as a political and military tool in ways that disrupt global supplies and exacerbate civilian suffering. The war in Ukraine is a prime example, with Moscow’s blockades and bombings impacting global food prices and elevating the risk of starvation for millions of people worldwide.

The widespread use of such tactics highlights an urgent need for international treaties prohibiting the weaponization of food, encompassing modern complexities that historical frameworks never anticipated. Understanding the historical trajectory and modern escalation of this malicious strategy reveals a deliberate pattern of exploitation critically affecting millions of the most vulnerable worldwide.

The proliferation of proxy conflicts from the Sahel and the Horn of Africa to the wider Middle East has accelerated the use of starvation as a weapon of war, overwhelmingly affecting civilians. Moreover, these regions are not plagued by conflicts involving just two opposing sides. Instead, they are often battlegrounds for multiple actors with competing interests, including newly assertive middle powers, regional rivals, and the occasional interference of global actors, complicating any path to lasting peace. The naval blockade by Israel of Gaza, insidious attacks on Sudan’s fertile lands by warring factions, and the strategic targeting of humanitarian corridors are clear manifestations of how enforced food insecurity has become a tactical asset in modern warfare.

These shifting dynamics make it even more challenging to mount effective responses to forced food scarcity. Worse yet, in today’s protracted conflicts, where fragmentation and the multiplicity of actors have become standard, the pursuit of distinct and often conflicting goals renders negotiated settlements impossible to achieve. The resulting shared antipathy toward conflict resolution aggravates humanitarian crises, leaving millions without access to food, clean water, and other necessities.

The situation in Gaza is emblematic of how food scarcity is fast becoming the wartime weapon of choice. Gaza’s long-standing blockade, exacerbated by recent escalations, represents a deliberate strangulation of resources. This blockade cuts off essential agricultural imports and limits fishing areas, ensuring that food insecurity remains chronic. When the conflict intensifies, these existing vulnerabilities are manipulated with surgical precision. Bombing raids target the infrastructure critical for food distribution and production, such as

Hafed Al-Ghwel

bakeries and food stores, leading swiftly to mass hunger.

These attacks not only weaken the current population but also cripple future aspirations for self-sufficiency, creating generational dependence and despair. With an estimated 41,200 Palestinians killed by direct violence since Oct. 7 last year, and indirect consequences potentially driving the total death toll above 186,000, enforced starvation and its deadly ramifications become horrifyingly clear. In this context, such “engineered starvation” goes beyond the battlefield by sowing long-term devastation within civilian life, turning food into a potent tool of war.

Meanwhile, in Sudan, a brutal power struggle between the Sudanese army

tunate by-product and more a deliberate objective of warfare strategy, effectively weaponizing the basic human right to food and amplifying the despair of the vulnerable. Such weaponization does not just escalate the immediate crisis. It also lays the groundwork for prolonged instability, necessitating a recalibration of international interventionism to protect and prioritize civilian welfare — not the “rights and interests” of belligerents — amid enduring conflicts.

Sudan also suffers its own crisis of humanitarian paralysis. Both factions continue to impose sieges, limiting the flow of food and aid to regions under rival control. Even when aid convoys attempt to bypass governmental constraints, they often face looting by militias, further curtailing the already scant

**Assuming the international community is engaged in concerted efforts to get food and nutrition to where it is needed, most conflict zones are rendered virtually inaccessible to aid. In Gaza, such a devastating reality manifests acutely. Despite international intentions to provide relief, systematic blockades such as the closing of key crossing points prevent the delivery of essential aid, reducing its distribution to intermittent trickles. These impediments are compounded by targeted attacks on humanitarian workers, curtailing the reach and capacity of key organizations that are already grappling with funding shortfalls and dwindling workforces. A further complication is the strategic use of food scarcity as leverage by conflicting parties that seek to control populations and political narratives.**

and the Rapid Support Forces has resulted in armed confrontations shattering agricultural cycles and driving farmers from fertile lands. These devastating strategies cripple local food production and thrust entire populations into acute food insecurity. In North Darfur’s Zamzam camp for internally displaced Sudanese, famine conditions have taken root, worsened by the intentional blockade of humanitarian aid, leaving nearly 800,000 people with minimal assistance. This orchestrated starvation renders civilians wholly dependent on fluctuating and restricted aid supplies, creating a cycle of dependency and fear.

Assuming the international community is engaged in concerted efforts to get food and nutrition to where it is needed, most conflict zones are rendered virtually inaccessible to aid. In Gaza, such a devastating reality manifests acutely. Despite international intentions to provide relief, systematic blockades such as the closing of key crossing points prevent the delivery of essential aid, reducing its distribution to intermittent trickles. These impediments are compounded by targeted attacks on humanitarian workers, curtailing the reach and capacity of key organizations that are already grappling with funding shortfalls and dwindling workforces.

A further complication is the strategic use of food scarcity as leverage by conflicting parties that seek to control populations and political narratives. As a result, humanitarian paralysis becomes less an unfortunate by-product and more a deliberate objective of warfare strategy, effectively weaponizing the basic human right to food and amplifying the despair of the vulnerable. Such weaponization does not just escalate the immediate crisis. It also lays the groundwork for prolonged instability, necessitating a recalibration of international interventionism to protect and prioritize civilian welfare — not the “rights and interests” of belligerents — amid enduring conflicts.

supplies reaching desperate populations. Excess mortality could be at about 2.5 million due to restricted aid access and compounded crises.

Moreover, the intentional denial of humanitarian aid thwarts peace-seeking efforts and vastly complicates conflict resolution. As ceasefire negotiations falter, a woeful humanitarian situation in Sudan will impede peace processes, revealing yet again the extent to which food weaponization is almost fully integrated into conflict strategies in today’s hotspots. It denies immediate relief, dismantles local supply chains, and decimates agricultural capacities. In Gaza, for instance, more than half the farmland has been destroyed, along with vital infrastructure. Meanwhile, soil contamination and ruined ecosystems will undermine the agricultural viability of what little farmland is left for generations to come.

In these scenarios, the weaponization of food goes beyond immediate starvation — it represents a long-term strategy for debilitating entire populations physically, economically, and psychologically. The immediate loss of life from hunger is apparent, but the enduring consequences include stunted growth in children, rampant diseases due to malnutrition, and the breakdown of social structures dependent on food production. The displaced in Sudan and survivors crowding makeshift camps in Gaza are now haunting testament to the enduring misery of food deprivation, stripping away any semblance of normality or dignity.

## Only a political solution can end Israel’s unjust wars on Jabalia

As much as one tries to understand the logic of the Israeli army and occupation forces in Palestine, one cannot find an explanation. The latest war on Jabalia is one example.

Yes, it is known that Israel would love to ethnically cleanse the north of Gaza. Before Benjamin Netanyahu, former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin dreamed of the Strip disappearing. It hasn’t yet and it won’t in the future either. A project called the “general’s plan” has been circulating in various forums. It describes the wicked Israeli plan to empty the north of Gaza of its Palestinian inhabitants. Clearly, the architect of the Oct. 7 attack on Israel, Yahya Sinwar, was not in the north of Gaza. Israel says he was killed in Rafah, the southernmost city in the Strip. And it is clear to all that the Israeli hostages being held by Hamas and others are spread throughout the territory.

The Israelis want to keep milking Oct. 7 to carry out such crazy ideas. The north of Gaza includes the economic and profes-

sional center of the Strip, namely the city of Gaza. It also includes several Palestinian refugee camps, including the largest and most populous, Jabalia.

Jabalia refugee camp has a population exceeding 100,000. Some of those might now have resettled to the south. However, according to numerous reports, the majority of the refugee population — having realized that once one leaves one’s home, even in a refugee camp, the chances of ever returning become slim — have opted to stay in Jabalia. The population of the camp, which was born out of the 1948 Nakba, is largely made up of second- and third-generation Palestinian refugees. And they have said on more than one occasion, “we were born in Jabalia and we will die here.”

For Palestinians at large, Jabalia has a powerful place in the relatively recent collective memory, as it is connected with the First Intifada. On Dec. 9, 1987, the Palestinian uprising erupted. It began when four Palestinian workers

were killed at the Beit Hanoun (Erez) checkpoint, where an Israeli truck collided with their car. Many Palestinians claimed it was a deliberate act after an Israeli was killed in Gaza just days before.

For Palestinians in Jabalia, the morning after the car crash saw anger that had been simmering for two decades boil over. The Israelis had mistakenly read the reaction of a quiet population under their military rule as having accepted they would live forever as an occupied people. But the Jabalia camp erupted in anger. The population was not armed and the only weapons that were readily available to them were stones.

Thus began a protest action that spread quickly, with mostly younger Palestinians pelting the occupiers and their illegal settlers with stones.

The camp has a history of anti-Israeli resistance and has been the scene of repressive Israeli measures. At the time of the First Intifada, Palestinians in Jabalia — like those in the

rest of the Occupied Territories — were becoming disillusioned with the political process aimed at ending the oppressive Israeli occupation. Increasing Israeli expropriation of Palestinian land and rising Palestinian birth rates led to a greater population density, accompanied by rising unemployment.

The situation was a powder keg in the lead-up to the First Intifada and the fatal car crash was the spark that lit the fire. Protesters pelted Israeli soldiers with stones and activists called for a boycott of Israeli products.

Today, a new generation has come of age. Thirty-seven years since the outbreak of the First Intifada, the camp and its surrounding areas are now facing a heavy Israeli onslaught. The UN says the humanitarian crisis is dire and food scarcity is rife as Israel limits nearly all access to humanitarian aid in what it claims is an attempt to hamper Hamas’ efforts to regroup.

Humanitarian workers and rights groups say that

Israel’s latest offensive is starving hundreds of thousands, with some 400,000 Palestinians trapped in the area.

The horrific pictures and videos coming out of Gaza — including recent footage of people in hospital beds being burned to death by Israeli bombs — have produced strong reactions from global leaders. The Biden administration has in recent days given Israel a 30-day window to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza and has threatened to curb the flow of weapons.

Like all previous attacks and clashes, this war will also come to an end sooner or later. But this brutal war on Jabalia, just like all previous wars in Palestine, will only plant the seeds of anger and hatred for future clashes unless a political solution is found that can give people hope. War only ends when the root causes are addressed. Palestinians, like all people, yearn for a peaceful and quiet future, free from occupation and the Israeli military dictating their lives. Jabalia is not and will not be an exception.

Allison Schrager

It is hard to be “the most pro-union president in American history,” as Joe Biden likes to claim, while also leading an effort to “reimagine and rebuild a new economy,” as he has also promised. That’s because these goals are fundamentally incompatible: America’s unions no longer fit the modern economy.

In fact, in many ways unions actually prevent the economy from evolving. The recently ended International Longshoremen’s Association strike is an illustration. The dockworkers went back to work after getting a 61.5% pay increase, but they are still

negotiating “language to protect us from automation,” in the words of the president of the Baltimore local.

Automation stands to make US ports and transportation of goods cheaper and more efficient. And it is easy to see why unions oppose it: Much of the decline in manufacturing employment over the last several decades was due to automation.

And it’s not just the dockworkers. Demands from trade unions are a big reason why upgrading infrastructure is so much more time-consuming and expensive in the US than other countries.

UAW and Boeing and machinists union both demanded reinstating defined benefit pension plans, which have made it harder for some firms to invest in innovation.

What explains all this recent friction between workers and management? Neither side is blameless. But unions are structured and collective bargaining is organized for an economy that no longer exists.

Unions have always tended to benefit their members at the expense of other workers. But even their members are not getting such a great deal these days. Union membership

peaked in the 1950s, at about one-third of the labor force. But the economy was very different then — one-third of the labor force worked in manufacturing. Technology was also less standardized, so each firm produced things its own way. This meant greater returns for longevity, but — since work was more routine — smaller returns to competence. In fact, it was harder for employers to know which workers were more productive.

Unions were built for this kind of economy. They provided job security and

set pay by essentially compressing the wages of high — and low-productivity workers.

Now the nature of work has changed; manufacturing jobs account for less than 10% of workers. Changes in technology mean higher returns to competence and employers are better at monitoring how hard and well people work. Workplace technology has also become more uniform, not just in office work but in manufacturing.

All of these trends make it easier and often beneficial to change jobs. This

means the old union model — built around protecting jobs — is less valuable to workers. This may be why, despite high public support for unions in general, few Americans actually want to join one and union membership has been declining.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Not all unions have resisted modernization. Countries such as France manage to complete public works projects with union labor at a reasonable price. And on a more theoretical level, unions still have value.

They should provide more job security, better pay and a stronger voice to workers. Better security

could be achieved by reforming unions to be more like guilds — more like the Screen Actors Guild than the UAW, negotiating contracts but leaving room for flexibility. A more modern union would provide not only health insurance, for example, but also wage insurance against job loss, temporary layoffs or reductions in hours.

Unions should also work with employers to offer retraining and apprenticeships. They should be willing to allow employers to cut members’ hours rather than lay them off during downturns, and do some bargaining about base pay

and hours, but still allow for high productive workers to be compensated for their contribution, the way movie stars are. Such a framework would fit better with the modern economy and serve workers who need downside protection — but also stand to benefit from a changing economy.

The port strike showed just how naïve and counter-productive it would be to revive unions in their original form while also expecting them to fit in a changing economy. To remain relevant in this 21st-century economy, unions are going to have to let go of some of their 20th-century thinking.





# SCCI asks KP govt to withdraw 2% cess on export

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) demanded the imposition of 2 percent cess on export from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as an unjust and cruel step of the provincial government and asked to immediately withdraw it.

Abdul Jalil Jan, Senior vice president of the SCCI in a statement issued here on Sunday, said the export had been shifted to other provinces after the imposition of cess.

He expressed fear that trade and export would be completely vanished if the cess wasn't withdrawn

immediately and also it would trigger massive unemployment in the province.

The SCCI SVP said that business and industry in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have already come to a standstill position due to imposition of heavy taxes.

Jalil Jan said after the collection of 2 per cent cess on export by provincial government, the businesses and industry would be completely packing up in the province.

Senior Office bearers said the entire trade and export process had been halted, which had brought an adverse effect on the economy and business.

He further said that no tax has been imposed on exports in any other province of the country, but 2% cess is being charged on exports in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is discriminatory step of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government with the business community.

The SCCI SVP said that such actions of the government are increasing the sense of deprivation among the people and business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Jalil Jan strongly demanded that the provincial government withdraw the 2% cess on exports immediately so that the

wheel of business and industry can be restored here and the economy can also get stability.

Senior office bearer said that the cabinet of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will soon meet the Chief Minister and the Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where the problems of the traders will be discussed and the problems of the business community will be informed in detail to amicably solve them.

Jalil Jan said the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) delegation would present effective suggestions and recommendations for solution of the traders' problems.



ISLAMABAD: People purchasing vegetables at weekly bazaar Aabpara in Federal Capital.

# Chairman PIAF invites overseas businessmen to invest in Pakistan



## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Chairman Fahimur Rehman Saigol has invited the foreign investors to visit Pakistan and to take advantage of investment opportunities in the country.

While talking to the media, on his return from the successful foreign business tour, he said that he had met with various groups of overseas Pakistanis during his visit to Taiwan, where he observed that with over 210 million inhabitants, Pakistan offers its investors a strong and large consumer market with an ever expanding middle class.

He said that Pakistan has an edge over all its regional competitors. The country offers equal opportunities

to foreign and local investors. As an emerging economy, Pakistan offers the opportunity of diversification to global players with strong intention to structural reforms in various sectors of the economy. Pakistan presents vast investment opportunities with lucrative returns to investors.

He said that the government, as a policy leader, has significant role of facilitating entrepreneurs to enhance ease of doing business.

He said that strategic location at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia and close proximity to the Gulf countries, makes Pakistan a promising regional hub and an important market for intra and inter-regional trade and investment. He said that Pakistan as an investment destination,

offers investor friendly policies with the commitment to resolve and enhance the business competitiveness in the region.

Faheem Saigol said that almost all sectors of economy are open to investment with attractive incentives and liberal policies to give investors a competitive and thriving business environment.

PIAF chief said that with its unique geo-strategic location, vast human resources and a huge untapped growth potential, Pakistan provides attractive incentives and liberal policies for investment in all sectors of the economy for foreign and local investors. The traditional as well as non-traditional sectors of our economy offer the business community great opportunities to invest in the country and to have

maximum dividends on their investments, he added.

Fahimur Rehman Saigol observed that the value-added textiles, food processing, information technology, logistics, automobiles and tourism sectors are some of the areas where great potential exists for investment to the mutual benefit of all. The government is cognizant of various challenges to its economy and is undertaking every possible effort to overcome these challenges and ensure a business friendly climate. Earlier, upon arriving in Taiwan, Muhammad Mujahid, the President of the Pakistan Business Community, warmly welcomed him along with a delegation. The delegation from the Pakistan Business Community included Muhammad Mujahid, Shaban Mujahid, Amjad Zafar, Asif Tanoli, Shehzad Khan, Raja Akhtar, Saif Sandhu, Mohammad Mushtaq, Umar Khan, and others.

He was on a private visit to China, Taiwan, and other countries, where he discussed bilateral issues and met with traders and investors. He also shared insights about the improving economic situation in Pakistan and informed them about the government's new investment and energy-friendly policies.

# DDG of Airports conducts inspection

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: The patch repair operations at the loop taxiway links J&H are currently underway. The pavement cutting and removal at both sites were completed.

Base preparation and compaction activities followed thereafter. Deputy Director General of Airports, Sadiq ur Rehman, visited BKIAP Peshawar to assess the repair work on taxiway links J and H.

He was accompanied by the Divisional Engineer Civil, Divisional Engineer Engineering and Maintenance, the Duty Terminal Manager and other airport officials. During the visit, he received a briefing from the Divisional Engineer Civil regarding the ongoing activities and provided specific instructions related to the work.

He instructed that the work be completed in accordance with the established deadline and standards.

A NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) has already been issued indicating that the repair work is scheduled to be carried out from October 18 to 22.

# Revival of diplomatic engagement could foster regional peace: Iftikhar

LAHORE (APP): South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik said on Sunday that reviving of diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan during SCO summit would not only benefit the two countries but also contribute to broader regional peace and stability.

Commenting on the recent visit of Indian Foreign Minister S.Jaishankar to Pakistan on the eve of 23rd SCO summit, he said if sustained, this could be a turning point in South Asia's political landscape, reducing tensions and creating a more conducive environment for collaboration in areas like trade and counter terrorism.

He said Jaishankar's gesture could set the stage for cautious optimism. Both countries, as nuclear

powers, have a responsibility to ensure peace and stability in the region. A move towards dialogue, even through multilateral settings like the SCO, could pave the way for future bilateral engagements that could address long-standing issues and open doors for economic cooperation, regional connectivity.

Iftikhar Malik said Jaishankar's outreach to Pakistan opens a window of opportunity for both countries to engage in meaningful conversations beyond the contentious issues that have dominated their interactions in the past. The SCO, with its focus on regional cooperation, counter terrorism, and economic development, provides a neutral platform where both nations can discuss shared concerns such as security, trade, and stability in South Asia.

He said S.Jaishankar

extended a symbolic hand of cooperation to Pakistan, signaling a potential thaw in the long-strained bilateral ties between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Relations between both countries have been tense for decades, marked by territorial disputes, particularly over Kashmir, and intermittent armed conflict.

However, the Indian participation in SCO provides an opportunity for constructive dialogue. His interaction with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and others is good omen.

On the other hand, former premier Muhammad Nawaz Sharif during interview with Indian journalists in Lahore has also advocated the cause of resumption of talks between two countries and hinted the chances of meeting of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in near future.

# E-commerce workshop for gemstones launched

LAHORE (APP): The Gold and Gem Art Promotion Council of Pakistan (GGAPCP) has taken a significant step towards the digital future by launching the first e-commerce workshop for the gemstones and jewelry sector.

In collaboration with Alibaba's authorized channel partner, Web Excel, this initiative aims to propel the industry into the global e-commerce arena. The workshop saw participation from business leaders across Lahore and other cities of Punjab. Speaking at the event, GGAPCP President and Sarafa & Jewellers Association Lahore division Chairman Muhammad Ahmed expressed his pride in this milestone. "It is a great honor for GGAPCP to lead this initiative for the gemstone and jewelry sector," he said and also highlighted the Council's previous achievements, such as the launch of the first website and magazine dedicated to gemstones and jewelry in 2000.

Ahmed emphasized that the e-commerce initiative would push the sector into the global marketplace, providing access to over 200 countries through platforms like Alibaba. "We are now placing this sector in the most advanced era of e-commerce," he added. To further support this

endeavor, GGAPCP has established a dedicated e-commerce department, appointing Nasir Arif Janjua as the Director of E-commerce and Strategic Research.

In his address, Janjua provided a comparative analysis of e-commerce markets in neighboring countries, noting that China ranks first and India sixth, while Pakistan stands at 46th.

He outlined the potential for Pakistan to accelerate its growth, particularly in the gemstone and jewelry sector, which has an annual global market potential of \$30 billion.

Janjua also discussed the opportunities for foreign direct investment (FDI) from China, which is interested in investing in this sector, thus creating a dual growth scenario for both e-commerce and FDI.

Shahbaz Siddiqui, CEO of Web Excel, welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of e-commerce for the gemstone and jewelry industry. He assured the business community of complete in-house services, from IT support to e-commerce solutions.

At the conclusion of the event, Siddiqui presented shields to Muhammad Ahmed and Nasir Arif Janjua in recognition of their contributions to the initiative.

# Boeing exploring asset sales to boost finances

NEW YORK (Reuters): Boeing (BA.N), opens new tab is exploring asset sales in a bid to boost its fragile finances by shedding its non-core or underperforming units, the Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday.

The planemaker last week reached an agreement to offload a small defense unit that makes surveillance equipment for the us military, the paper reported, citing people familiar with the deal.

Boeing has lurched from crisis to crisis this year, ever since Jan. 5 when a door panel blew off a 737 MAX jet in mid-air. Since then, its CEO has departed, its production has been slowed as regulators investigate its safety culture, and in September, 33,000 union workers went on strike.

The Journal reported that in recent financial-performance meetings, new CEO Kelly Ortberg asked the heads of the company's units to lay out the value of those units to the company.

Boeing's board recently met to discuss the next steps for the company, where directors questioned division heads and combed through reports to examine the state of each unit, the report said.

Boeing declined to comment on the report.

Striking machinists at the planemaker are set to vote Wednesday on a new contract proposal that includes a 35% pay hike over four years.

The work stoppage has halted production of the plane-maker's best-selling 737 MAX and its 767 and 777 wide-bodies, putting added pressure on its already weak finances.

Earlier this month, Boeing announced it would cut 17,000 jobs, or 10% of its global staff, and take \$5 billion in charges.

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq said on Sunday that Oman has evinced keen interest in world-class, hand-engraved Pakistani furniture.

Chairing a board of directors meeting here, he said PFC conducted successful two day visit to this gulf state a couple of days ago aimed at strengthening bilateral trade relations between the two countries, with a specific focus on the luxury furniture sector.

Oman's keen interest stems from the intricate craftsmanship and cultural richness that Pakistani furniture embodies, particularly the exquisite hand-engraved woodwork, which is highly regarded for its quality.

He hoped visit will open up new avenues for collaboration, with potential export deals in the pipeline. The growing demand in Oman for unique and hand-crafted furniture could lead to increased trade, benefiting both countries by fostering cultural exchange

and boosting economic ties.

Mian Kashif said Pakistani furniture, known for its fusion of traditional and modern designs, offers a unique blend of aesthetic appeal and functionality. The delegation showcased a range of products, including hand-carved wooden furniture, which resonated with Omani buyers looking for luxury and custom-made pieces. Oman's burgeoning real estate and hospitality sectors present a lucrative market for such high-end furniture, he concluded.

# 8 meters disconnected

MULTAN (APP): In a bid to curb gas theft and illegal activities, the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) UFG Control Task Force intensified its operation under the directions of the General Manager.

The task force disconnected eight gas meters and removed two illegal gas extensions in various areas of the city.

According to details, six domestic consumers had their meters disconnected for using gas compressors illegally. In one case, a domestic consumer's meter was found installed away from the main service line, which was immediately removed. Another consumer's meter was missing from its designated location, posing a risk of gas leakage; on which his meter

was also disconnected.

Additionally, two illegal extensions were dismantled, through which gas was being supplied to multiple homes in violation of OGRA regulations.

These actions were aimed at preventing gas theft and improving gas supply across the region, with the goal of reducing pressure-related complaints.

# Significant improvement in exports requires wide structural reforms

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: As the exports from Pakistan during Sept 2024 amounted to Rs790.12 billion against Rs769.4 billion in Aug 2024, showing a nominal increase of 2.69 percent the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) stressed the need for putting the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory by providing incentives to the industry, lamenting that the economy is facing multiple challenges of low growth in exports, with fiscal accounts under immense pressure due to heavy interest payments.

FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar lamented that the present situation shows the government

would find it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and high export target, leading to pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country. He asked the government to address the underlying structural vulnerabilities through smooth energy supply at competitive rates, as country's overall export proceeds continued to shrink.

Quoting the exports data, he said that Pakistan's revised trade deficit for September was \$1.83 billion, compared to \$1.772bn the previous month, reflecting a 3.39% rise.

Meanwhile, the trade deficit has widened by 20.69% compared to September 2023's deficit of \$1.52bn. Exports increased by 2.82% to \$2.84bn compared to \$2.76bn in August 2024. Likewise, imports in

September 2024 also rose 3.61% to \$4.67bn compared to \$4.51bn in the previous month.

According to the provisional figures compiled by PBS, in Pakistani rupees terms, exports from Pakistan during September, 2024 amounted to Rs790.12bn as against Rs769.4bn in August, 2024 and Rs735.69bn during September, 2023 showing an increase of 2.69% over August, 2024 and of 7.40% over September, 2023.

Main commodities of exports during September, 2024 were Petroleum crude (Rs143bn), Petroleum crude (Rs133.04bn), Natural gas liquefied (Rs87bn), Electrical machinery & apparatus (Rs75.91bn), Palm oil (Rs69.9bn), Iron & steel (Rs51.42bn), Plastic materials (Rs50.16bn), Fertilizer manufactured (Rs29.72bn), Mobile

phones (Rs28.56bn) and Medicinal products (Rs27.19bn).

As imports fell more than the decline in exports, the trade balance of goods and services improved. Exports are constrained by domestic production issues related to the slow-down of demand in the main export markets and high domestic production costs. Imports are currently constrained by sluggish domestic demand and administrative measures to protect the official foreign reserves level.

Since no immediate reversal of these developments is envisaged, the trade balance may further stabilize or further improve somewhat in the upcoming months.

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owing to multiple factors including high energy costs, stuck-up refunds and a slump in global demands despite the massive depreciation of the rupee. He believes that one of the main reasons behind low exports was the exchange rate instability. The discontinuation of duty drawbacks on local taxes and levies by the government has also created liquidity issues for the export sector.

Mian Anjum Nisar said that the government has increased the gas and electricity tariffs and, at the same time, also the subsidy has been phased out, which will further increase the cost of production. The overall money supply growth remains compatible with a return to low and stable inflation.

But the outlook of M2 is broadly dependent on

fiscal accounts which are under immense pressure on account of heavy interest payments and rehabilitation spending. Nonetheless, the first 6 months of CFY have ended with some developments; containing fiscal deficit and surplus in primary balance due to effective fiscal management. The State Bank of Pakistan is also enacting a contractionary monetary policy to contain inflationary pressure. However, a larger portion of volatility in the current price level is explained by supply-side factors.

He stated that a major enhancement in exports requires huge and wide structural reforms, urging the government to take business community on board, who are the real stakeholders in preparing policies to enhance

exports, which is prerequisite for economic growth.

As part of the agreement with the IMF, the government has announced discontinuing subsidies on energy for the export sector.

It is to be noted that while chairing a meeting of the National Export Development Board, the prime minister tasked the authorities concerned to take the country's annual exports to \$60 billion within three years.

The prime minister asked the commerce ministry and other relevant departments to take all necessary measures to achieve the given target. He said the country's exports crossed the \$30 billion mark during the previous fiscal year, and the government's policies also took the IT exports to over \$3.2 billion.





In brief

Scott wins 200m freestyle

S H A N G H A I (Agencies): Great Britain's Duncan Scott claimed victory in the men's 200m freestyle on the third and final day of the short course World Cup event in Shanghai. The 27-year-old put in a strong showing in the second half of the race to win in one minute 40.92 seconds, with Australia's Edward Sommerville second in 1:42.14 and Danas Rapsys, of Lithuania, third in 1:42.35. "It's a really tough three days, [we're] right at the end and it's a good quality field. I'm just really happy to be able to win it," said Scott. "This is very tough. The heats are more challenging than you want and the finals are tough as well." Leon Marchand added victory in the 400m individual medley to his win in the 200m individual medley a day earlier, before finishing fourth in the 200m breaststroke. "I think I forgot how hard the 400 IM is," said France's Marchand, who won in 4:00.03. "I think I just went out a little too fast on the fly and was just tying up in the last 100. "I started training a month ago so I'm trying to get new details and focus on my technique."

Marquez wins in Australia

PHILLIP ISLAND (Agencies): Six-time MotoGP champion Marc Marquez overcame a poor start to win the Australian Grand Prix, beating championship leader Jorge Martin into second place. Italy's defending champion Francesco Bagnaia moved up from fifth on the grid to finish third but lost ground on Pramac Racing's Martin in his quest for a third successive title. Martin, 26, who claimed victory in Saturday's sprint race, stretched his overall lead to 20 points over Ducati rider Bagnaia with three race weekends remaining. It was Marquez, however, who took the spoils at Victoria's Phillip Island circuit, despite falling from second on the grid to outside the top 10 after a tear-off from his own visor got stuck under his back tyre at the start. "I don't know where I was in the first corner but I overtook many riders and I thought that one time was impossible to catch Martin," said the 31-year-old, who remains third in the overall standings after completing his third win of the season. "Then in lap five or six I started to get the rhythm and it was more calm, it was a bit stressful but I'm super happy." Martin looked set to increase his championship lead even further after making a perfect start from pole and leading for much of the 27-lap race, but after being caught by Marquez in the closing stages the two riders swapped places a number of times in the final moments before the Gresini Racing rider finally came out on top. Racing now moves on to the Thailand Grand Prix, which takes place at the Chang International Circuit on Saturday and Sunday, 26-27 October. Australian Grand Prix results

1. Marc Marquez (Spa/Gresini Racing) 39mins 47.702secs
2. Jorge Martin (Spa/Pramac Racing) +0.997secs
3. Francesco Bagnaia (Ita/Ducati) +10.100
4. Fabio Di Giannantonio (Ita/Ducati) +12.997
5. Enea Bastianini (Ita/Ducati) +13.310

Overall standings

1. Jorge Martin (Spa/Pramac Racing) 424 points
2. Francesco Bagnaia (Ita/Ducati) 404
3. Marc Marquez (Spa/Gresini Racing) 345
4. Enea Bastianini (Ita/Ducati) 331
5. Brad Binder (SA/KTM) 192.

NZ claim first Test victory in India for 36 years

BENGALURU (Agencies): New Zealand captain Tom Latham said it was a "proud moment" after his side claimed their first Test victory in India for 36 years - and only their third ever. Latham had to watch from the dressing room after being removed for a duck by Jasprit Bumrah as the visitors chased 107 to win. But Will Young and Rachin Ravindra settled the nerves, guiding New Zealand from a

precarious 35-2 through to an eight-wicket win on the final day of the Test in Bengaluru. It gives New Zealand a 1-0 lead in the best-of-three series. New Zealand's previous Test victories in India came in 1969 at Nagpur and at Mumbai in 1988. Latham's side set up the victory by bowling India out for 46 - their lowest Test total on home soil - on the first day. "There have been a lot of teams that have come here over

that long period of time, so obviously it's a special feeling," Latham said. "The work we did in that first and second innings with the ball and with the bat set up the game for us." It was a resounding first win as full-time captain for the 32-year-old, who replaced Tim Southee earlier this month. India skipper Rohit Sharma took positives from the way his side battled back in the second innings, as they attempted to

become the first team to win a Test after conceding a first-innings lead of more than 350. "We didn't think we'd be 46 all out but due credit to New Zealand - it set us back and games like this will happen," he said. Sarfaraz Khan's 150 and 99 from wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant helped India to 462 in their second innings to give the home bowlers a small total to defend on a final-day pitch that had to be covered overnight

due to rain. And Bumrah gave India a glimmer of hope when he removed Latham lbw with the second ball of the day. He then trapped Devon Conway lbw after a successful review, but that was India's last breakthrough. First-innings centurion Ravindra hit six fours in his unbeaten 39 and was named player of the match, while Young hit the winning runs with his seventh four as he fin-

ished on 48. "We have got to take the good things forward," added Rohit, with the second Test scheduled to begin in Pune on Thursday. "We've been here before, conceding home losses, these things happen. We know what it takes and will give it all in the next two Tests." India have history on their side, having won 18 consecutive Test series on home soil, stretching back to 2012.



DUBAI: Sophie Devine of New Zealand lifts the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Trophy as she celebrates with teammates after defeating South Africa during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Final 2024 match.

Master Paints clinch Pink Polo Cup 2024 title

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Master Paints clinched the Pink Polo Cup 2024 title after defeating Diamond Paints 7-5 in an exciting final match held at Jinnah Polo Fields, Lahore. A large crowd of spectators gathered to witness the thrilling finale. The event's guest of honor was DG Rangers Punjab, Major General Muhammad Atif bin Akram. Also, in attendance were Major (R) Ali Taimoor, the club's Secretary, polo players and numerous families enjoying the event. Before the final, a girls' exhibition match was held, followed by the inauguration of Pakistan's first major animal hospital, Round Lake Hospital. Additionally, thrilling tent-pegging competitions also took place. In the finale of the prestigious event, Master Paints emerged victorious after a closely fought contest. Amirreza Behboudi led the scoring for Master Paints with four goals, while Sufi Muhammad Haroon and Maria Candelaria added two and one goals, respectively. For Diamond Paints, Jalal Arslan scored three goals, and Mir Huzafa Ahmed contributed two. Earlier in the subsidiary final, Sheikho Steel defeated Newage Cable by 5-4. From Sheikho Steel, Agha Musa played superb polo and thrashed in three goals while Sally Cactus and Osman Aziz Anwar converted one goal each. For Newage Cables, Omer Asjad Malhi struck two goals while Adnan Jalil Azam and Alman Jalil Azam scored one goal each.

New Zealand beat South Africa to win first T20 WC

DUBAI (Agencies): New Zealand were crowned surprise champions of the Women's T20 World Cup with a comprehensive 32-run win over South Africa in Dubai. The White Ferns had lost 10 successive matches coming into the tournament, and this is their first T20 title, after losing successive finals in 2009 and 2010. They were on top at the halfway point, but the Proteas started strongly in pursuit of 159 for victory, reaching 51-0 inside seven overs before slipping to 77-5 and then stuttering to 126-9. Leg-spinner Melie Kerr finished with 3-24, becoming the tournament's leading wicket-taker, and seamer Rosemary Mair took 3-25 in an emotional occasion for a team with so little expectation of triumph. Kerr also added a vital contribution with the bat, scoring 43 from 38 balls in a crucial partnership of 57 with Brooke Halliday to set up the White Ferns' imposing 158-5. In a fluctuating innings, New Zealand dominated the powerplay with 43-1 before South Africa fought back in the middle overs which included a spell of 48 balls without a boundary. But Halliday's 38 from 28 balls, alongside Maddy Green's six-ball 12, ensured New Zealand struck 48 from the final five overs to punish an ultimately wasteful bowling performance from South Africa, who gifted 10 wides and three no-balls. Captain Laura Wolvaardt scored a

fluent 33 at the top of the order as South Africa also capitalised on the first six overs, reaching 47-0, before New Zealand's spin trio turned the screw, including the prized wicket of all-rounder Marizanne Kapp for just eight. The rest of the batting order then succumbed to the growing run-rate pressure as opener Tazmin Brits' 17 was the second-highest score, with batters Anneke Bosch, Nadine de Klerk and Sune Luus all falling in single figures alongside Kapp. It is the second year running that South Africa have lost the final as New Zealand put in a complete performance when it mattered the most which resulted in tears of joy for two of the sport's most experienced campaigners in Suzie Bates and captain Sophie Devine. In the first year that the International Cricket Council (ICC) introduced equal prize money for it's men's and women's tournaments, New Zealand will take home \$2.34 million (£1.75m) with South Africa taking \$1.7m (£878,000). Kerr shines but South Africa fall short again In a tournament that has been dominated by low scores on bowler-friendly surfaces, it was New Zealand's batting intent from the beginning that was immediately eye-catching. When opener Georgia Plimmer skipped down the pitch to Marizanne Kapp's second ball - despite missing - the message was clear. They were not going to die wondering. Plimmer eventually fell for nine and Bates added 32, before Kerr and Devine were tasked with the rebuilding effort after a little wobble to 53-2. But when Devine was lbw to De Klerk for six in the 11th over, there was a danger of New Zealand wasting their positive start, where they had played with such freedom and found the boundary regularly with little sign of any big-occasion nerves. Kerr held firm, steadily rotating the strike at a run-a-ball while Halliday played more expansively around her, constantly pushing twos even when the boundaries were not flowing. This kept the pressure on South Africa's bowlers, who were struggling for consistency for the first time in the tournament. After Halliday's departure, Kerr was rewarded for her patience as she thumped back-to-back boundaries off Nonkululeko Mlaba in the penultimate over, before Ayabonga Khaka's horror final over conceded 16 - including the game's only six from Green - to put New Zealand firmly in the driving seat. The scoreboard pressure did the rest as South Africa wilted, unable to capitalise on Wolvaardt's knock, with Kerr taking her tournament tally to 15 - a new record in a Women's T20 World Cup, beating England's Anya Shrubsole and Australian Megan Schutt's previous record of 13.

‘Don’t leave tennis’: Djokovic tells Nadal after 'amazing rivalry'

RIYADH (INP): Novak Djokovic on Saturday requested long-time adversary Rafael Nadal to defer his planned retirement from the game as the duo faced each other in what was likely to be the final chapter of their "amazing rivalry" on the court through the years. "Don't leave tennis, man," said Djokovic in an on-court interview after beating Nadal in straight sets 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) at the "Six Kings Slam" exhibition in Saudi Arabia. He added that their battles over the years had been "very intense" and told Nadal he hoped they could one day "sit on a beach somewhere" and have a drink. The Serbian player's remarks follow Nadal's October 10 announcement where he said that he would bid farewell to the game after the Davis Cup Finals in Malaga next month. Organisers of the Saudi event billed Saturday's match as perhaps Nadal's last singles contest as a professional. Earlier, the Spanish player on Thursday said

that he was unsure whether he would be fit enough to play singles in Malaga. Djokovic and Nadal - two of the sport's famed "Big Three" along with Roger Federer - had faced each other 60 times on the main tour prior to Saturday's exhibition match, with Djokovic holding a narrow 31-29 edge. Their last encounter came during the Paris Olympics on the same Roland Garros courts where Nadal won 14 French Open titles, though Djokovic triumphed easily 6-1, 6-4. Djokovic has racked up 24 Grand Slam titles in his career, two more than Nadal. Saturday's match was mostly one-sided, with Nadal spraying errors and Djokovic wrapping up the first set in just 31 minutes. Feeding off the support of the partisan crowd who openly cheered Djokovic's double-faults, Nadal rallied to push the second set to a tie-break, reeling off winners and even treating fans to one last iconic fist pump before succumbing

to Djokovic. "It's great to see him still fighting even though he's had injuries and struggles," Djokovic, 37, told a post-match press conference. It was "a very emotional day, special day" because it was the "last time I play my biggest rival, Nadal," he added. "I've witnessed Andy Murray retiring this year, Roger [Federer] a few years ago as well. And now Rafa, you know. It's tough in some way to see them go, because all of my career, basically, I've played with them," he remarked. After being presented with a golden tennis racket, Nadal in turn thanked Djokovic for the "amazing rivalry" and "for all the moments that we shared on court." "Thank you Novak [Djokovic] for everything for all the moments we shared on court during our careers. It's been an amazing rivalry," said Nadal, whose men's record of winning 22 Grand Slam titles was broken by Djokovic.

Messi's Inter Miami to play in Fifa Club WC



FORT LAUDERDALE (Agencies): Major League Soccer side Inter Miami have been named as the latest addition to the Fifa Club World Cup in 2025. The expanded 32-team tournament will be held in the United States in 2025 from 15 June to 3 July next year. The tournament will be made up of 12 teams from Europe, six from South America, 12 from Asia, Africa and North America with the final two spots going to one club from Oceania and another from the United States - the host nation. Inter Miami, who are co-owned by David Beckham, have been awarded that spot after the club won the MLS Supporters Shield - which is given to the club in the

MLS with the best regular game season. The announcement came after Lionel Messi scored a hat-trick to help Inter Miami break the MLS's regular-season points record. "You have shown that in the United States, you are consistently the best club on the field of play," Fifa president Gianni Infantino said. "Therefore, I am proud to announce that as one of the best clubs in the world, you are deserved participants in the new Fifa Club World Cup 2025." Messi, Sergio Busquets and Luis Suarez could come up against Chelsea and Manchester City, who have already qualified for the tournament. Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Paris St-

Germain, Inter Milan, Porto and Benfica are other representatives from Europe. The 32nd spot in the tournament will be awarded to the winner of the 2024 Copa Libertadores. Matches will be played across eight venues in the US - including at Inter Miami's Hard Rock stadium - with the final to take place at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. Fifa's decision to expand the competition has drawn criticism from clubs and players, particularly after Uefa expanded the Champions League and Europa League group stages to include two further matches. Global players' union Fipfro and the European Leagues body, which represents 39 leagues and 1,130 clubs in 33 countries, filed a joint complaint to the European Commission in July to protest Fifa's "abuse of dominance" in the game. The last edition of the tournament in 2023 was contested between seven teams from six confederations, with Manchester City winning the trophy. The full Club World Cup draw will be made in December.

Stones bags controversial winner for Man City



WOLVERHAMPTON (AFP): Manchester City snatched a controversial 2-1 win at Wolves as John Stones' last-gasp goal was given after a VAR review to send the champions to the top of the Premier League on Sunday. Pep Guardiola's side trailed to Jorgen Strand

Larsen's surprise opener for Wolves early in the first half. Josko Gvardiol dragged City back on level terms before the interval and, with just seconds left in stoppage time, Stones headed the visitors to a dramatic sixth win in eight league games this season. Bottom-of-the-table

Wolves claimed Stones' goal should have been disallowed for offside and interference by Bernardo Silva on goalkeeper Jose Sa. But referee Chris Kavanagh ignored their protests after consulting the pitchside monitor. "Of course I didn't understand it. I don't know

the reason why the linesman did it, but Bernardo isn't disturbing the position. Sa had the perfect vision. The header by John Stones was magnificent," Guardiola said. Wolves boss Gary O'Neil added: "I'm trying to remain calm. I have been involved in a few of those and not had many go in our favour. "There is some grey area that can go either way and once it was like that I wasn't confident it would go our way." City are two points clear of previous leaders Liverpool, who can reclaim pole position with a victory against Chelsea later on Sunday. Chasing a fifth successive English title, Guardiola's men have set a new club record as their unbeaten run in the league reached 31 games since their loss to Aston Villa in December. In English top-flight his-

tory, only six times has a side gone more than 30 matches without losing, most recently Liverpool's run of 44 games from 2019 to 2020. "We are not used to winning games at the end, like Jurgen Klopp at Liverpool it many times happened. It is a good flavour for us," Guardiola said. "After 10 or 12 games in the Premier League you don't have to see the table, it is just the beginning. But of course it is nice to be winning, you are alive and in that position." The champions were rocked after just seven minutes when Nelson Semedo's pin-point low cross reached Strand Larsen at the far post and the striker eluded Stones for a simple close-range finish. City nearly hit back immediately as Ilkay Gundogan's dummy gave Silva space for a low shot from 12 yards that was pushed away by Sa.

Unusually sloppy at the back, Guardiola's side were almost breached again when Semedo sprinted through a gaping hole in the visitors' defence, only to be denied by Ederson's save. City relief Savinho's air-shot drew mocking cheers from Wolves fans, but Gvardiol silenced the locals in the 33rd minute. Taking possession on the edge of the Wolves area, the Croatian defender looked up to set his sights before unleashing a superb curler that whistled into the top corner. It was Gvardiol's fifth goal in his last seven away league games. Haaland had scored eight goals in his four previous league appearances against Wolves, averaging a goal once every 40 minutes. He was far more anonymous this time and it took 49 minutes before he finally had a chance, which the 24-year-old squandered

with a complete miskick from eight yards. Faced with Wolves' massed defence, City centre-back Ruben Dias tried his luck with a 25-yard drive that was well saved by Sa. Matheus Cunha was close to putting Wolves back ahead against the run of play with a fizzing drive that was just off target. Gundogan's free-kick deflected wide and Jack Grealish's drive was held by Sa as City kept probing away before finally snatching the winner. Stones rose to head home from a corner, with Silva initially blocking Sa's view and briefly making contact with the keeper before ducking down as the ball flew past him. The goal was initially disallowed but VAR told Kavanagh to check the pitchside monitor and he overturned his decision as Guardiola and his players danced a relieved jig of delight.





## In brief

## 95,000 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 95,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 68,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.57 feet and was 137.57 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 35,900 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1198.20 feet, which was 148.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 6,300 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 45,900, 50,600, 56,600 and 13,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 14,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,200 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

## Two held for street crimes

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two members gang involved in street crimes and recovered stolen amount Rs 169,000 from their possession during crackdown here on Sunday. Police have also recovered weapons used in the crimes. According to police spokesman, Race Course police held the gang involved in street crimes who were identified as Abdul Wahid and Zain. Police have registered separate cases against both of them and further investigation was in progress. Police official said that the suspects were shifted to jail for an identification parade, and further revelations expected. SP Potohar Nasir Nawaz praised the efforts of the police team, stating that those who threaten the safety and property of citizens will not escape the law. He made it clear that crackdown will be continued against organized and active gangs operating in the city.

## 1,000 unfit PSVs impounded

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have impounded 1,000 unfit Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) during an ongoing crackdown that has been initiated for more than 55 days, following the orders of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani, informed police spokesman. He said that during this period, challans were issued to 8271 vehicle owners and drivers, and fines exceeding Rs 8.9 million were imposed on violators. The operation focuses on ensuring PSVs are fit for the roads, along with checking route permits and driver licenses. A total of 697 drivers were fined for not having valid licenses, and 27 licenses were canceled due to negligence. Additionally, 52 cases were registered against drivers and vehicle owners. The police emphasized that the action being taken with aim to guarantee safe travel for the public. Police teams are also monitoring travel times to prevent reckless driving. The spokesman warned that strict action would be taken against those who endanger the lives of citizens, including PSV owners and bus terminal managers found to be negligent. A special squad from the City Traffic Police has been stationed at bus terminals to ensure compliance with safety standards.

## Nationwide polio vaccination drive to commence on Oct 25

ISLAMABAD (PPI): A nationwide polio vaccination drive is set to commence on October 25 to immunize over 4.5 million children across Pakistan.

According to a report, the campaign will be conducted in three phases, starting from Sindh province.

The first phase will begin on October 25 in Sindh, followed by the second phase on October 28 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The third phase will commence on November 11 in Punjab, Balochistan, and Islamabad.

The drive aims to vaccinate over 4.5 million children, including 2.3 million in Punjab, 1.6 million in Sindh, 730,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 265,000 in Balochistan.

Additionally, 461,125 children will be vaccinated in Islamabad, 740,000 in Azad Kashmir, and 281,232 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The vaccination drive will also include vitamin A supplements for children aged 6 to 59 months. A total of 455,504 frontline workers will be deployed for the campaign.

Yesterday, two new polio cases were reported from different areas of Pakistan, bringing the total number to 39 this year in the country.

Sources claimed that two new polio cases were reported from the Sanghar and Mirpur Khas districts of Sindh province. The National Reference Lab of National Institutes of Health (NIH) confirms

these cases.

Prior to this, three new polio cases were reported in Balochistan after which the number of cases has been reached to 20 in the province during the current year.

The Health Department of Balochistan confirmed the three new polio cases from the districts of Chaman, Pishin, and Nushki area of Balochistan.

The affected children include a nine-month-old from Chaman, an 18-month-old from Pishin, and a five-year-old from Noshki, all of whom have been left disabled due to the disease, according to health department sources.

Health authorities are intensifying efforts to combat the virus and protect vulnerable children.

## Rawalpindi reports 93 dengue cases in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI (PPI) Dengue surge is at its peak as more patients have been reported every passing day in Rawalpindi, Punjab, according to a report on Sunday.

During the last 24 hours, 93 new positive cases have been reported in Rawalpindi, making a total of 3,461 patients reported since January 2024. The health department spokesperson said that 11 deaths have been reported in Rawalpindi during ongoing year.

Yesterday, the dengue situation in Rawalpindi reached alarming levels as 96 new cases were confirmed within the past 24 hours, bringing the total number of cases in the city to 3,368. The Health Department reported that 11 people succumbed to the virus so far, and 4,537 dengue-related cases have been registered due to the presence of dengue larvae in various locations.

As a result, 1,716 build-

ings have been sealed to curb the spread of the virus. The department further added that a fine amounting to Rs 19.85 million has been imposed on premises where dengue larvae were discovered. In response to the crisis, the Deputy Commissioner declared a dengue emergency across the district, stating that patients have been diagnosed with a more dangerous strain of the dengue virus.

Emergency dengue counters have been set up in hospitals, and mobile teams have been deployed to intensify efforts to eliminate dengue mosquitoes and control the outbreak.

Dengue virus is a mosquito-borne viral disease that has rapidly spread in recent years around the world. Dengue virus is transmitted by female mosquitoes mainly of the species Aedes aegypti and, to a lesser extent, Ae. albopictus.

**Dengue cases keep rising despite ICT admin's**

**efforts:** Dengue cases continue to rise in the Federal Capital, despite the ongoing efforts by the district administration to control the outbreak.

Hospital sources reported that 20 patients have been admitted to Polyclinic Hospital, 25 to CDA Hospital and 72 to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS). Quaid-e-Azam Hospital has taken in 63 patients, while 12 are currently receiving treatment at Federal General Hospital.

As of last week, Rawalpindi reported a total of 3,220 dengue cases, while Islamabad recorded 2,276 cases while, the authorities have also found 1,143 positive dengue larvae samples across various parts of the city, indicating the persistence of the disease. In response, the district administration has ramped up fumigation operations across the city to prevent the further spread of dengue.

## Pak-Korea Cultural Week 2024 from Oct 23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister's Youth Program (PMYP) in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Islamabad, will observe the Korea-Pakistan Cultural Week 2024.

According to the PMYP office, the vibrant celebration will showcase the rich cultural heritage of both nations, strengthening their friendship and cultural exchange.

The event will feature two exciting programs including the Korea-Pakistan Cultural Gala on October 23 at Liaquat

Gymnasium which will showcase mesmerizing music, dance, and art performances from Korea and Pakistan.

Additionally, the Korea-Pakistan Movie Day will screen four critically acclaimed films from October 24 to 27 at PNCA, Islamabad. Korean movies "Ode to My Father" and "The Himalayas" would be showcased alongside Pakistani hits "Nayab" and "Superstar." These films would highlight the diversity and creativity of both countries' cinema.

Regarding the occasion,

Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashhood said "We are thrilled to partner with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to bring this cultural extravaganza to Pakistan. This event embodies the spirit of friendship and cooperation between two countries."

The Korea-Pakistan Cultural Week 2024 underscores the growing bilateral relations between Korea and Pakistan and promises to attract a diverse audience, including dignitaries, cultural enthusiasts, and students.

## 11 criminals arrested; drugs recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended 11 criminals involved in different criminal activities, including drug peddling, and possessing illegal weapons on Sunday.

The police also recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession. In this regard, the Islamabad Police Tarnol, Koral, Sihala, Humak, Ramna and Bhara Kahu police station teams took legal action against accused involved in drug

peddling and possessing illegal weapons and arrested six accused, a police spokesperson told APP.

Police teams also recovered 1,574-gram heroin, 1,090-gram hashish, 10 liter of liquor and two pistols along with ammunition from their possession. Moreover, four absconders were also arrested from various areas of the city during the last 48 hours.

DIG Syed Ali Raza, said that the Islamabad Police is actively working to ensure the safety of citizens' lives

and property in the federal capital, emphasizing that no elements will be allowed to disrupt citizens' peace.

Protecting the lives, property, and dignity of citizens is the Islamabad Police's top priority, Syed Ali Raza added.

Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or via the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.

## Pakistan-England Test 3,200 policemen deployed for security

RAWALPINDI (APP): As the Pakistan and England's final Test approaches in Rawalpindi, 3,200 policemen have been deployed to ensure the safety of teams and fans.

This substantial force will be supplemented by 370 officers tasked with managing traffic flow around the stadium.

To maintain law and order, senior officers will

be present on the ground to supervise and guide security personnel.

Mobile units, elite forces, and dolphin squads will conduct regular patrols in the area, while snipers will be strategically positioned on rooftops to provide an additional layer of security.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is taking no chances, implementing

foolproof security arrangements to guarantee smooth and safe practice sessions for the series.

This significant investment in security reflects the importance of the event and the need to protect players, officials, and spectators.

With these comprehensive security measures in place, cricket fans can focus on enjoying the thrilling matches ahead.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri calls on PM's Coordinator on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam discusses future action plans to promote climate justice agenda. —APP Photo

## Senator Zehri, Romina agree to promote climate justice agenda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, and Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam, have reached a consensus to advocate for the integration of human rights into climate change policies in Pakistan.

During a bilateral meeting with PM's aide Romina Khurshid here on Sunday, both sides also agreed to jointly work to roll out a viable action plan to ensure that climate actions not only address environmental issues but also uphold and protect the rights of vulnerable communities affected by climate change in the country, especially in the highly climate vulnerable Balochistan province.

"Integrating human rights into climate change policy is essential to ensure that actions to tackle climate risks do not exacerbate existing inequalities or infringe upon basic human rights," Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri highlighted during the meeting with the PM's climate aide.

She said, "Climate change significantly undermines' fundamental human rights, including the right to life, health, food, and water, reflecting an increasing awareness of these pressing issues."

The Senator Zehri remarked, "I personally believe as various studies show that managing human rights into climate risk management action plans and discourse is crucial for creating and promoting a more just and equitable approach to tackle the climate

crisis, particularly for resource-poor and marginalized communities in the vulnerable areas in Balochistan."

She pointed out, "Being a large and arid region in the southwestern part of the country, the Balochistan province is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to a combination of its geographic features, socio-economic challenges, and existing environmental stresses."

"The region's vulnerability is aggravated more due to its dependence on agriculture, water scarcity, and limited and shabby infrastructure, making it highly sensitive to adverse climate risks, particularly devastating hill torrents, flash floods, cyclones, sea-level rise, heatwaves, declining rainfalls, and droughts," Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri added. She called for strategies that prioritize equity and justice in confronting this critical challenge of climate change for both mitigating adverse fallouts of climate change and promoting a fairer society with access to equitable access to resources required for climate resilience building.

Senator Zehri urged for well-coordinated and cooperative national efforts that uphold and protect these rights, noting that human activities not only contribute to climate change but also threaten basic human rights.

"Marginalized groups, such as women, children, and economically disadvantaged communities, are particularly vulnerable, often lacking the means to adapt to climate impacts

and facing greater obstacles in accessing their rights," she added.

"Climate justice highlights how those least responsible for climate change frequently endure its most severe consequences." She called for fair distribution of resources and support for at-risk communities to address these inequities.

Meanwhile, PM's climate aide Romina Khurshid Alam remarked, "The ongoing climate crisis continues to affect a wide range of human rights, including the right to life, health, food, safe water and sanitation, shelter, and a healthy environment." "Integrating human rights into national climate change policies by recognizing climate change as a human rights issue will be a first key step towards ensuring advocating for the policies take into account the social and economic impacts on individuals and communities, particularly those who are most vulnerable parts of the country, particularly in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan," she highlighted.

The PM's climate aide Romina Khurshid Alam assured the Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri of her all-out support to achieve the goal of climate justice by ensuring that human rights-based climate policy and action plans were framed in consultation with vulnerable communities and implemented at grassroots levels for attainment of the people's human rights to healthy life and environment, particularly during disaster times.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Austria to Pakistan Ms. Andrea Wicke giving away certificates among winners during the closing ceremony of 3-day "Girls Sports Carnival 2024" organized by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training at Pakistan Sports Board. —APP Photo

## Labourers, the unsung heroes at SCO Summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): As Islamabad hosted the 23rd Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit this week, a dedicated team of workers and labourers transformed the city into a vibrant spectacle.

Their efforts in decorating, illuminating, and maintaining the city's landscape created a striking backdrop for the prestigious event, capturing the attention of visitors and residents alike.

Behind these impressive transformations were the unsung heroes, labourers who worked relentlessly, often under challenging conditions, to prepare the city for the global summit.

Over the past few weeks, teams of workers, contractors, and planners, hailing from various regions of the country, worked late into the night, sometimes risking their safety amidst peak-hour traffic congestion, to ensure that the capital met the high standards required for the summit.

Amanat Ali, a painter working on footpaths, shared his experience, "For the past 30 to 40 days, I've been decorating bridges, footpaths, and railings. It's been a tough job, working around the clock and at dangerous heights, often putting our lives at risk."

Thanks to their hard work, Islamabad's roads and bridges now sparkle with vibrant decorations, colorful lights, and fresh flowers, giving the city a welcoming ambience.

Fayaz Hussain, a contractor overseeing the illumination of overhead bridges, praised the team's resilience, "Despite challenging weather and tight deadlines, the workers stayed determined. Their extended hours and teamwork ensured we met the summit's timeline."

Farooq Ahmed, a motorist on the Islamabad Expressway, marveled at the transformation, "These bridges used to look so dull. Now, thanks to the SCO event, they look amazing and the whole city shines."

Adil Baloch, a site supervisor at the Zero Point Bridge, remarked that the beautification was not just for the summit, it was for the people of Islamabad, "This project is about improving the city's beauty and enhancing the quality of life for our citizens," he said. Umar Saeed, a painter from Lahore working on overhead bridges, took pride in contributing to the city's transformation: "It's fulfilling to know that our work has contributed to the nation's honour at such a significant event."

However, the labourers also faced financial struggles. Baba Razaq, an elderly worker, highlighted the difficulties of making ends meet with his daily wage of Rs 1,200, "It's tough to cover food and accommodation costs in Islamabad on such low pay,

even though some of us earn a bit more based on expertise."

Asiya Malik, a journalist, stressed the importance of acknowledging the labourers' contributions: "As the spotlight shines on the summit, they are still engaged in the completion of remaining job. We must recognize the dedication of those working behind the scenes. Their efforts embody the spirit of resilience and community, proving that Pakistan can host major events with greater honour and prestige."

Zara Khan, a local resident, expressed her support for the beautification efforts, "The transformation of Islamabad has been incredible. It not only reflects the city's hospitality and readiness for the summit but also uplifts the everyday experience of citizens. These improvements—bright lights, painted bridges, and well-maintained roads—make the city feel more vibrant and organized. It's clear that these beautification projects benefit everyone, both locals and visitors."

On the other hand, Anees Ahmed, an I-8 Sector resident, voiced concerns about the focus on beautification at the expense of other city needs, "While the city does look beautiful now, I feel that the money and energy spent on decorations could have been better used to address more pressing issues like traffic congestion and pollution."



Directorate reclaims of land

KANDAHAR (BNA): The Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock of Kandahar has successfully reclaimed 270 jeribs of government land from illegal usurpers. This operation was conducted in collaboration with local security forces and targeted areas in the districts of Shah Walikot, Zharay, and Nish. Mohammad Hanif Haqmal, the press officer for the directorate, announced the reclamation efforts to the Bakhtar News Agency.

Afghans hold protest

LONDON (Khaama Press): Afghan citizens protested in front of Iranian Embassy in London, condemning killing of Afghan migrants by Iranian border forces. The protesters demanded that the Iranian government be held accountable for the deaths of Afghan migrants and called on international organizations to investigate the matter. They also strongly criticized the Iranian government's mistreatment of Afghan migrants and urged immediate intervention by international bodies.

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

# IE officials explore trade opportunities at Kazakhstan’s inland port

KABUL (BNA): A high-ranking delegation from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, led by Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, visited Kazakhstan's largest dry port, marking a significant step in strengthening bilateral trade relations between the two countries.

According to the Ministry's Press Office, on the second day of their official visit to Almaty, the Islamic Emirate's delegation comprising government officials and private sector representatives, toured the Khorgos dry port, recognized as the world's largest inland port and a vital trade hub within the region's free trade zone.

The Khorgos dry port, strategically located at the China-Kazakhstan border, plays a pivotal role in the global Belt and Road Initiative, facilitating trade routes connecting China to



Europe. This infrastructure is key to boosting regional connectivity and expanding trade opportunities.

The delegation's visit comes as part of a broader mission aimed at promoting Afghanistan's products in international markets, with the delegation also participating in trade exhibitions,

official meetings with Kazakh officials, and business discussions.

Additionally, the delegation attended the Commercial Connectivity Conference, underscoring Afghanistan's commitment to enhancing economic cooperation with neighboring and regional countries.

## Ministry: Names of locations should reflect religious values

KABUL (TOLONews): Khubaib Ghufuran, spokesperson for the Ministry of Information and Culture, has announced that the fourth regular meeting of the Commission for Naming Sacred Places was held under the chairmanship of Atiqullah Azizi, the Deputy Minister for Arts and Culture at the ministry.

Ghufuran stated that during this meeting it was decided that newly opened roads and intersections would be named based on religious and national values.

He said: "This commis-

sion, in its meetings, reviews the naming of new places such as roads and intersections in light of the policies of the Islamic Emirate and traditional culture, and also addresses public requests for renaming places."

Some residents of Kabul have expressed different opinions about the renaming of intersections.

Abdul Hai Mohammadi, a Kabul resident, said: "The positive side of these changes is that the intersections, which were named arbitrarily, are now being renamed with cultural sig-

nificance. However, on the other hand, some people who are accustomed to the old names may face confusion in navigating."

Mohammad Daoud, a resident of Takhar, remarked: "Many intersections are named after individuals. I would be happy if an intersection were to be named with a religious and Islamic title."

In previous meetings of this commission, the names of several intersections in Kabul were also changed, such as renaming Deh Afghanan Intersection to Farhang Intersection.

## Union demands release of monetary guarantees



KABUL (TOLONews): The Union of Trade Companies and some Afghan investors held a program to share their challenges in areas such as banking, financial guarantees, and the release of the country's currency reserves.

Officials from the union and private companies announced that over the past four years, their financial guarantees have been frozen in private banks, causing significant disruptions to their business activities.

Mohammad Baz, the head of the Union of Trade Companies and Afghan Investors, told TOLONews: "The committee responsible for this money is pro-

gressing very slowly. We have made numerous efforts to speed up the work of this committee, but so far, it has not completed even 50 percent of its tasks."

Mullah Sangeen, a member of the Union of Trade Companies and Afghan Investors, stated: "The Ministry of Finance identified 26 departments in the year 1402 whose money is with us, and it's clean and transparent. However, 1402 solar year has passed, and 1403 is also passing, but nothing has been done yet."

In a resolution, the union has called for serious attention from the Islamic Emirate authorities on this matter.

Shahabuddin Ziar, a businessman, said: "Our financial guarantees have remained in the banks since the time of the Republic. According to the law, these funds should be canceled and transferred to the companies' accounts so that we can use them. Unfortunately, the Central Bank of Afghanistan has issued letters stating that this money should be paid to the companies, but so far, we have not received it."

Another businessman, Mahmood Arabzada, said: "Our request to the Islamic Emirate leaders is that if our work is expedited, our problems will be solved. Investors and businesspeople won't take their money out of Afghanistan; they will invest here. Each company had over 100 employees, but now they have reduced to just five or ten."

Participants also appealed to the international community and organizations that halted their projects after the return of the Islamic Emirate, asking them to release Afghanistan's assets and resume their incomplete projects to help boost economic growth and create job opportunities.

## Afghan migrants say deportations from Iran increasing

KABUL (TOLONews): Several Afghan migrants in Iran have told TOLONews that the arrests and expulsion of Afghan migrants from this country have increased more than ever before.

These migrants said that they are facing severe economic challenges and, in some cases, are detained and deported despite having legal documents.

Abbas, an Afghan migrant in Iran, told TOLONews: "Afghans are being deported, and even if you have a passport, some of their officers tear it up and say you have no documents at all, and then they send you to a detention camp."

Asadullah Zairi, another Afghan migrant in Iran, said: "Our request to Iran is to treat Afghan migrants with kindness and respect for human dignity. Certainly, these days and conditions are temporary and will not last."

Meanwhile, in recent months, restrictions on Afghan migrants have increased not only in Iran but also in Pakistan.

Qassem Rezaei, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Law Enforcement Force (FARAJA), has urged the people of this country to report the presence of illegal foreign nationals to the police.

Qassem Rezaei emphasized that, based on Iran's new policies, illegal migrants must return to their own countries.

Commander Qassem Rezaei said: "According to the country's new policies, illegal migrants must return to their own countries, and the police have facilitated their return. According to the law, if these individuals are seen anywhere, the police are obliged to identify, detain, and send them to the borders."

Fazl Rahman Orya, a political analyst, stated: "It is the duty of UNHCR to protect the rights of Afghan migrants in every corner of the world, especially in Iran and Pakistan, where unfortunately they have so far failed to fulfill their accepted responsibilities toward Afghans."

Previously, Iran's Chief Commander of Law Enforcement had stated that over 750,000 illegal migrants have been deported from Iran, and this number is expected to reach 2 million by the end of the current solar year.

## Kandahar exports over 9,000 tons of onions

KANDAHAR (BNA): Kandahar has successfully exported 9,950 tons of onions in the past two months, yielding over two million dollars in revenue.

Abdul Baqi Bina, deputy of the Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Investment, shared this news with the Bakhtar News, highlighting the province's growing agricultural success.

The onions were primarily exported to neighboring Iran and Pakistan, showcasing Kandahar's agricultural capabilities.

Bina attributed the increase in production to the hard work and dedication of local farmers, who have improved their practices compared to the previous year.

The increase in onion production is expected to contribute positively to the livelihoods of local farmers and the overall economy.

## Herat begins new road on Islam Qala route

HERAT (TOLONews): The Herat Municipality announced, with the aim of preventing traffic accidents and reducing congestion, the construction of a new road adjacent to the Herat-Islam Qala highway has begun.

This road will stretch for more than 2.5 kilometers and will cost 42 million Afghanis.

Nematullah Hassan, the mayor of Herat, said: "This is a public and international road connecting Islam Qala with the city of Herat, and several districts also rely on this road for transportation. It will provide great ease for the people and help reduce traffic incidents."

The Herat Municipality assures that this road will be built to a high standard.

Mohammad Nasir Sulaimankhail stated: "We, along with the municipality, have supervisors for this project,

and they have other supervisors. All the work is under the control of the relevant bodies to ensure quality."

Mohammad Ayoub Saif Jihad, the technical and professional director of the Herat Municipality, said: "This is one of Herat's wide roads, with a width of 80 meters. In the future, four roads will be constructed here, and this year, we have three projects in this area."

Some local residents and drivers said that this route is one of the busiest parts of Herat and has often witnessed deadly traffic accidents.

Mohammad Asif Naderi, a resident of Herat, said: "The construction of this road should be completed as soon as possible because many traffic accidents happen here due to the heavy congestion."

Rafiullah, a driver, said:

"When this road is built, it will create 100% ease for drivers and local people. Currently, this road is extremely crowded, and traffic accidents happen frequently. A traffic accident occurred here recently, and both drivers and residents are facing many difficulties."

Sulaiman, a resident of Herat, said: "Nighttime travel on this road is very dangerous. Three days ago, a major traffic accident occurred here, and one of our friends was injured. This road has no width or signs, making it very dangerous."

The Islam Qala port and three western districts of Herat are connected to the city of Herat via this route.

Every day, thousands of vehicles travel on this road, most of them being transit and freight vehicles.

## Deportation of Afghan criminals from Germany to be continued

KABUL (TOLONews): Olaf Scholz, the Chancellor of Germany, said on the sidelines of the European Union leaders' summit in Brussels, that the deportation of Afghan citizens who have committed crimes in Germany will continue.

In a press conference, the German Chancellor said that the deportation of migrants, including Afghan migrants, is an important issue and should be handled wisely.

Olaf Scholz added, "We had a large number of Afghan criminals whom we deported to Afghanistan. It has been complicated, but we were able to do it, and such returns will happen again. Criminals will be returned to Afghanistan."

The issue of deporting some Afghan citizens from Germany gained attention after an Afghan, during a protest organized by an anti-Islamic movement, injured several people, including a police officer who later died from his injuries.

Previously, some German officials, including the Interior Minister and the Chief Minister of the state of



Saxony, had also emphasized the deportation of certain Afghan citizens from Germany.

Najib Rahman Shamal, a political analyst, told TOLONews, "With the political and economic changes that occurred in Germany following the victory of right-wing opposition against the federal government, the central government has been forced

to impose more restrictions based on the Interior Ministry's recommendations to prevent the illegal entry of thousands of migrants, primarily from Afghanistan, Syria, and Turkey."

These statements come as Germany deported 28 Afghans accused of crimes at the end of August this year.

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## Exhibitors satisfied with agricultural, livestock exhibition

KABUL (TOLONews): The 31st Agricultural and Livestock Products Exhibition, held in Badam Bagh, Kabul, concluded.

Several stallholders expressed their satisfaction with the exhibition, stating that their sales thrived over the four-day event.

Mohammad Wali, a stallholder from Badakhshan, told TOLONews: "We showcased eleven types of products at this exhibition. With the blessing and help of God and the cooperation of the Islamic Emirate, all our products were sold, and our customers were excellent."

Ahmad Jawad, a stallholder from Baghlan, said: "We brought various products such as honey, sesame oil, flaxseed oil, cottonseed oil, and other organic products produced by our farmers to showcase here."

A total of 263 stalls were set up at the exhibition.

Meanwhile, some visitors found such exhibitions valuable for raising awareness about agricultural products and the country's local production.

Elham, a visitor, told TOLONews: "We are pleased that exhibitions like this are held in Kabul with participation from all the provinces, showcasing

Afghanistan's products."

Another visitor, Sonia, said: "More exhibitions should be organized so that we can become more familiar with our country's products."

On the other hand, some female entrepreneurs at the exhibition called on the Islamic Emirate to support women's products and provide more opportunities for them to showcase their goods.

Gol Makai, a stallholder at the exhibition, said: "Having these exhibitions is beneficial for us because we have fresh products

every month, and people get to understand that Afghan women are capable of working."

Nadima, a stallholder from Badghis, said: "Our request to the Islamic Emirate is to provide us with more opportunities so that we can sell the products we produce at home here."

At the same time, the Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock emphasized the need for more support for stallholders and those involved in local production.

Mirwais Hajizadeh, First

Deputy of the Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock, said: "Under the current circumstances, more of these exhibitions should be organized. Holding exhibitions encourages producers and introduces consumers to our products."

Senior officials from the Islamic Emirate had stated at the opening ceremony of the exhibition that farmers are the main suppliers of essential needs for the Afghan people and that this year's agricultural yield has been 65% higher than the country's needs.



## Five killed, as many injured in Afghansitan last week

KABUL (Pajhwok): At its latest summit in Islamabad last week, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) stressed the need for the resolution of disputes between countries through dialogue.

Germany provided \$11.2 million in aid to Afghanistan, reports emerged regarding the killing of dozens of Afghan refugees in Iran.

But Iran vehemently denied the claim of a human rights organisation, with the Islamic Emirate of

Afghanistan saying it had appointed a delegation to probe the reported killings.

**Casualties**

Last week, five people, including two security personnel and one woman, were killed, and five others injured in an armed attack on a passenger vehicle on the Faryab-Badghis highway in Faryab province.

During the previous week, three people had been killed and five others injured in two different incidents in Afghanistan.

Before the regime chan-

ge in 2021, hundreds of civilians, insurgents and security forces would be killed and maimed every week.

**SCO summit**

Pakistan hosted the 23rd meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government (CHG) of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on October 15 and 16.

A joint communique of the council of heads of government of SCO member states stressed the promotion of cooperation within

the framework of the SCO Year of Sustainable Development.

The participants considered it important to pursue sustainable and inclusive economic growth of member states, optimising on the region's potential in areas such as green development, digital economy, trade, e-commerce, finance and banking, investment, high technology, start-ups and innovation, poverty alleviation, health care, including traditional and folk medicine, agriculture, industry,

transport, logistics connectivity, energy, including renewable energy, communications, science and technology, environment and climate change.

The interim government of Afghanistan was not invited to participate in this summit. Before the meeting, IEA's deputy spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat said Afghanistan held observer status in SCO and maintained good relations with member states through bilateral mechanisms.

Deputy Prime Minister

of Pakistan, Ishaq Dar commented on Afghanistan's absence from the summit, saying, "The issue has been such since 2021. Although it was not a permanent member, it had observer status. However, since 2021, its observer status has also been suspended, and therefore they were not invited to this summit, Pakistan cannot make a decision on this issue alone."

**Reported killing of Afghans in Iran**

Haalvsh, citing two eyewitnesses, reported that at

least 260 Afghan migrants were killed while attempting to cross into Iran. However, this incident has not been confirmed yet by other sources.

Iran has rejected the reports as groundless. IEA says that claim regarding the killing and injuring of dozens of Afghans on the Iran-Pakistan border remain unverified, and a decision will be made following a thorough investigation.

Earlier, Khalil Rahman Haqqani, the acting minister of refugees, met Iranian

Ambassador Hassan Kazimi Qomi and said IEA intended to repatriate Afghan refugees but emphasised on the need for a joint strategy to ensure their return with dignity.

Recently, several Afghan refugees expelled from Iran told Pajhwok that Iranian police mistreated them and forcibly expelled them from the country.

**Continued aid**

During the outgoing week, Germany contributed \$11.2 million to the humanitarian fund for Afghanistan.



## 26th Constitutional Amendment

# Federal Cabinet approves draft

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Sunday approved the draft of the 26th Constitutional Amendment proposed by the government allied parties including the Pakistan Peoples Party.

During the cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Minister of Law and Justice, Azam Nazeer Tarar provided a detailed briefing on the amendment.

Addressing the cabinet, PM Shehbaz Sharif hailed the decision as a major achievement for Pakistan's development and progress. "The cabinet has made an

excellent decision for the development, prosperity and the betterment of the country's overall situation", he said.

The prime minister congratulated the nation on the approval of the 26th Amendment, emphasizing that it was made in the larger national interest.

He reiterated the government's commitment to public welfare and the constitutional integrity of the country.

"By the grace of Allah, after stabilizing the economy, we have now crossed a milestone for constitutional stability and the rule of law in Pakistan," he said.

Looking ahead, the prime minister assured that

the government would continue working diligently for the country's development, prosperity, and stability in line with the promises made to the people.

He also expressed gratitude to the heads of the government's allied parties for their support, particularly acknowledging the contributions of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Adviser to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah, and Minister of Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar.

## Musk's daily \$1m payouts at Trump rally draw legal scrutiny

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania (Reuters): Billionaire Elon Musk promised on Saturday to give away \$1 million each day until November's election to someone who signs his online petition, with the first prize awarded at a PAC event supporting Republican Donald Trump, raising questions about the legality of the payments.

Musk gave a \$1 million check to an attendee of his America PAC event in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, aimed at rallying supporters behind presidential candidate Trump. The winner was a man named John Dreher, according to event staff.

"By the way, John had no idea. So anyway, you're welcome," the Tesla founder said as he handed Dreher the check.

The money is the latest example of Musk using his extraordinary wealth to influence the tightly-contested presidential race between Trump and his Democratic rival Vice President Kamala Harris.

Musk started America PAC, a political action organization he founded in support of Trump's presidential campaign. The group is helping mobilize and register voters in battleground states, but there are signs it is having trouble meeting its goals.

Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro said on Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" that Musk's plan to give money to registered voters in Pennsylvania is "deeply concerning" and "it's something that law enforcement could take a look at."

Questions about the legality of these cash payments abounded on Saturday night, as election law experts pointed to various provisions in federal law that prohibited making cash payments to voters.

It is a federal crime to pay people with the intention of inducing or rewarding them to cast a vote, opens new tab or to get registered, opens new tab, an offense punishable by prison time. The prohibition covers not only monetary expenditures, but also anything of monetary value like liquor or lottery chances, a Justice Department election-crimes manual, opens new tab says.

The Harrisburg event was the third in as many days in Pennsylvania, where Musk is painting the November's election in star terms and encouraging supporters to vote early and get others to do the same.

## Bomb hoax threats to Indian airlines spark chaos

MUMBAI (AFP): More than 90 fake bomb threats have been made against flights operated by multiple Indian airlines this week, Indian media reported Sunday, sparking fear among passengers and global delays.

All flights landed safely, but the spate of threats has resulted in planes being diverted to Canada and Germany, and fighter jets scrambled to escort aircraft in the skies above Britain and Singapore.

India's government and civil aviation authorities have warned that "very strict action" will be taken.

New Delhi's civil aviation authorities have not said how many threats have been received in the past week, but The Times of India and broadcaster News18 reported more than 70 hoaxes targeting both domestic and international flights since October 13.

At least 30 hoax threats were made on Saturday alone, and at least 20 more threats were made to different airlines on Sunday. India's IndiGo airline confirmed threats were made against six of its flights on Sunday.

Two were on domestic routes, and four were international — linking Indian cities to Saudia Arabia's Jeddah and Dammam, as well as two separate flights to Istanbul in Turkey.

"The safety and security of our passengers and crew is our highest priority," IndiGo said in a statement. "We are working closely with the relevant authorities and taking all necessary precautions."



BEIRUT: Workers clean a street under the giant portrait of the late Hezbollah commander Imad Mughniyeh, as smoke rises from a destroyed building that was hit by an Israeli airstrike in Dahiye, in the souther suburb of Beirut, Lebanon on Sunday.

# US probes leak on intelligence about Israel's Iran attack plans

NEW YORK (Reuters): The United States is investigating the leak of a pair of highly classified intelligence documents describing Israel's preparations for a retaliatory strike on Iran, House Speaker Mike Johnson said on Sunday.

The documents appear to have been prepared by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, describing U.S. interpretations of Israeli Air Force and Navy planning based on satellite imagery from Oct. 15-16.

They began circulating last week on the Telegram messaging app. Israel has been planning a response

to a ballistic-missile barrage carried out by Iran on Oct. 1, its second direct attack on Israel in six months. Israel has intensified its offensive in Gaza and Lebanon, days after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar.

Asked about the leak of the documents during an interview with CNN, Johnson, the U.S. House of Representatives' top lawmaker, said an "investigation (is) underway and I'll get a briefing on that in a couple of hours."

"...We are following it closely," Johnson added. The National Geospatial-Intelligence

Agency and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The Pentagon said it was looking into the leak reports.

The New York Times reported that officials acknowledged privately that the documents were authentic, but that they likely only represent a portion of information the U.S. has on its close ally's planning.

The first document is titled: "Israel: Air Force Continues Preparations for Strike on Iran and Conducts a Second Large-Force Employment

Exercise". It describes activities including ballistic and air-to-surface missile handling.

The second is titled: "Israel: Defense Forces Continue Key Munitions Preparations and Covert UAV Activity Almost Certainly for a Strike on Iran". UAVs are also known as drones.

U.S. President Joe Biden, responding to questions from reporters, said last week he had a good understanding of when and how Israel would attack Iran. But he also said he sees an opportunity to end the two enemies' back-and-forth strikes.

# Russian missile strikes injure 17 in central Ukrainian city

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian missile strikes on the central Ukrainian city of Kryvyi Rih wounded 17 people, authorities said on Sunday, following an overnight attack on the country that included dozens of drones.

A police officer and rescue worker were among those injured in the strikes that damaged sites including an administrative building, a hotel and an educational facility, the National Police said on social media.

Regional governor Serhiy Lysak said in a later update that only 15 apartment buildings, stores, a cafe, a church, office spaces, a bank branch and a gas pipeline had been damaged in the city, which is President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown.

Kyiv's military said Russia had fired two ballistic missiles, and also reported that Ukraine had shot down 31 out of 49 Russian drones across the country.

Around 10 drones were destroyed near the capital Kyiv, the city's military administration said on the Telegram messaging app. There were no reports of destruction or injuries, it added.

Reuters could not independently verify the

reports. Russia has denied targeting civilians in its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, launched in February 2022, but has regularly fired missiles and drones at towns and cities far behind the front lines.

**Ukraine's 'victory plan' receives mixed reactions from Western allies**

**AP adds:** President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's plan to end Ukraine's nearly three-year war with Russia has received mixed reactions from Western allies so far.

The "victory plan" that Zelenskyy outlined at home and abroad includes a formal invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western long-range missiles to strike military targets in Russia — two steps Kyiv's allies have been reluctant to support before.

U.S. backing is crucial if Zelenskyy is to get support from other allies for proposals he believes are necessary to strengthen Ukraine's position on the battlefield and ahead of any peace negotiations. But analysts say the Biden administration is unlikely to make a decision before the U.S. presidential election on Nov. 5, as it may not appeal to voters.

"They seem to be just

doing very little now and waiting for the election," said Phillips O'Brien, professor of strategic studies at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. "So much of the strategy will live or die in Washington."

Analysts said the plan is a step in the right direction for Ukraine's military efforts. They also described it as ambitious, given allies' fears of escalation with nuclear-armed Russia. Ukraine has previously secured Western support for requests once deemed unrealistic, such as Patriot air defense systems and F-16 jets.

Presenting the plan now puts on the radar for the next U.S. administration, analysts said, though it's unknown how the next president will receive it.

After returning from making his case to the European Council, Zelenskyy said he expects the White House to provide feedback. "They will be here soon with some form of response," he said.

Zelenskyy laid out the five-point plan as Ukraine's troops struggle to hold back Russian slow but steady advances in eastern Ukraine. The plan includes three "secret annexes" that were presented only to some leaders. It also addresses part-

ners' concerns about Ukraine's strategy after the failed summer 2023 counteroffensive.

Zelenskyy described the main goal as "to strengthen us and force Russia to come to the negotiating table with all partners."

The plan won't immediately alter the battlefield situation, but it will help Ukraine wear down Russia and give more means to keep going in the attrition war.

"I think people were potentially expecting some sort of more operational plan on winning the war," said Justin Crump, a former British tank commander who heads Siblyline, a strategic advisory firm. "That's a naive opinion to have expected a plan to have provided operational details that would obviously be of use to the enemy."

Some Ukrainian analysts blame the name of the plan, adding that it was likely chosen for marketing purposes. Ukrainian analyst Yurii Bohdan said the goal is get resources.

"To win such war (of attrition), Ukraine needs to increase its resilience and exhaust its opponent," said Glib Voloskyi, an analyst from a Ukrainian think tank, Come Back Alive Initiatives Center. "The side that falls last wins."

## Passage of 26th constitutional amendment Incomplete agenda of CoD fulfilled: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday expressed his gratitude to all political parties for voting in favor of the 26th Constitutional Amendment and said that the incomplete agenda of the Charter of Democracy (CoD) had now been fulfilled.

After the passage of the amendment, Ishaq Dar thanked the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) and oth-

ers for their support in passing the amendment.

He called it a historic day, commending all political parties for demonstrating wisdom and political maturity.

He stated that the passage of the amendments was made possible due to the relentless efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

Ishaq Dar recalled that a parliamentary committee was formed to build consensus among political parties, including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He noted that several rounds of consultations were held with the leadership of JUI-F and PTI, and

the committee reached a consensus.

The Law Minister then briefed the committee on each clause. Dar also acknowledged PTI's active participation in the committee, noting that they showed unanimity on the draft.

However, despite reaching a consensus in the parliamentary committee, PTI did not support the amendment during the vote. Dar remarked that this was their democratic and constitutional right.

He praised Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman for his wisdom and commended his efforts in helping to build consensus on the amendment.

# Government wants to control judiciary: Naeem

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Sunday mocked the ongoing tussle on the 26th constitutional amendment saying "well done all".

In his message on social media site X, he wrote that Bilawal asserted that Maulana Fazlur

Rehman has 100 percent agreed with the PPP on the constitutional amendment. The PTI chairman also claimed to have consensus with the Maulana.

JI emir added that Rana Sanaullah declared that the Maulana supported the government's draft on the proposed constitutional amendment.

"It shows that all par-

ties are agreed that the next Chief Justice of Pakistan would not be Mansoor Ali Shah; the most senior judge would not be the CJP," Hafiz Naeem wrote.

These tactics showed that the government would control the judiciary, "well done all," he sarcastically berated all parties.

# CJP seeks explanation on clarification by 8 judges

ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, for a second time, expressed rephension over the clarification issued by eight judges on the reserved seats case.

According to the clarification, the amendments made in the Elections Act 2017 cannot overrule the apex court's July 12 judgment pertaining to the matter.

Seeking an explanation from the relevant department on the second clarification issued by the judges, CJP Isa on Saturday questioned how the eight judges issued a clarification without filing the original file of the case.

He has sought an explanation from Deputy Registrar Mujahid Mahmood, Assistant

Registrar Shahid Habib and Web Master Asim Javed.

The eight-member majority judges of the apex court in the reserved seats case on Friday held that the amendments made in the Elections Act cannot undo their judgment with retrospective effect, so the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was bound to implement the judgment in letter and spirit.

In response to the Civil Miscellaneous Applications (CMAs) filed by the ECP and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seeking clarification, the eight judges of the Supreme Court issued the clarification in chambers at Islamabad and Karachi.

The eight judges included Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice

Munib Akhtar, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A Malik, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan.

They held that the judgment of the apex court has a binding effect in terms of Article 189 of the Constitution and should have been implemented.

Meanwhile, CJP Isa also sought an explanation from the webmaster asking how the clarification was uploaded on the SC website without filing the original file of the case. Meanwhile, the Public Relations Department of the apex court has not issued any press release in this regard till the filing of this report.