

Imran's release unlikely
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ataullah Tarar stated that Imran Khan's release is unlikely, despite being granted bail in the Toshakhana case. Speaking to a media, Tarar explained that while the Islamabad High Court (IHC) approved Khan's bail in the Toshakhana case, the former prime minister remains in custody due to other pending cases.

Suicide attack on Bannu check post 12 security men martyred

F.P. Report

BANNU: At least twelve security personnel embraced martyrdom in a suicide attack on check post in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the ISPR, Khwarij attempted to attack a Joint Check Post in MaliKhel area. The attempt to enter the post was effectively thwarted by troops, which forced the khwarij to ram an explosive laden vehicle into the perimeter wall of the post.

The suicide blast led to collapse of portion of perimeter wall and damaged the adjoining infrastructure, resulting in martyrdom of twelve personnel including ten Soldiers of the security forces and two soldiers of Frontier Constabulary.

The ISPR in its statement stated that sanitization operation is being conducted in the area and the perpetrators of this heinous act will be brought to justice. The ISPR said security forces and law enforcement agencies are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism. It said that sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve.

he funeral prayers of 12 Shaheed personnel of armed forces who fought valiantly against Khwarij terrorists in MaliKhel were offered on Wednesday at Bannu Garrison.

The Corps Commander Peshawar along with senior military and civil officials, officers and, soldiers attended the funeral prayer, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release

The martyrs were included Subedar Imran Ahmad Farooqi, age 44 (R/O Gujranwala District), Havildar Muhammad Javed Iqbal, age 29 (R/O Sargodha District), Naik Tehmas Ahmad, age 34 (R/O Abbottabad), Naik Basit Fareed, age 39 (R/O Haripur), Sep Safdar Ali, age 33 (R/O Barkhan District), Sep Asad Bashir, age 32 (R/O Kuhl District), Sep Ejaz Hussain, age 38 (D G Khan District), Sep Atif Khan, age 23 (R/O Mianwali District), Sep Amanullah, age 30 (R/O Karak District), Sep Shah Zaman, age 22 (R/O Lower Dir District), Sep Haseebullah, age 22 (R/O Karak District) and Usman Ullah, age 33 (R/O Karak

District). Pakistan's security forces remain steadfast in their commitment to eradicating the scourge of terrorism, and the sacrifices of these brave soldiers only strengthen nation's resolve.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief over the martyrdom of 12 security forces personnel in a terrorist attack that took place in Bannu. In their separately issued statements, both the president and prime minister paid tributes to the armed forces personnel for sacrificing their lives and killing six terrorists while safeguarding the country.

"The whole nation salutes the soldiers for sacrificing their lives for the security of their motherland," the president said and reiterated the nation's resolve to wipe out terrorism from the country. He also prayed to for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks in paradise and for strength for the bereaved families to bear the loss.

"The sacrifices of the nation's soldiers will never be squandered. The Fitna Al Khawarij (terrorist) posing threats to the lives and properties of the people will have to pay a heavy price for it," Prime Minister Shehbaz said and reiterated that the fight against terrorism will continue till the complete elimination of this scourge.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the suicide attack by Khawarij terrorists on the check post of security forces in Bannu. In a statement on Wednesday, he paid homage to the 12 martyrs. He expressed heartfelt condolence to the families of the martyred personnel.

The Interior Minister said the brave sons of the soil sacrificed their lives to foil the nefarious intentions of the terrorists and sent six terrorists to hell. He said the soldiers, who laid down their lives for the establishment of peace in the country, are the heroes of the nation. He emphasized that the eternal sacrifices of the brave personnel of the security forces will be remembered forever. Mohsin Naqvi reiterated that nation will always be indebted to the martyrs. He said there is no precedent of Pakistan's unparalleled sacrifices in the war against terrorism.



KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir inspecting a latest rifle during his visit to International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024) at Expo Centre.

IHC grants bail to Imran in Toshakhana-II case

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday granted post-arrest bail to the PTI founder in Toshakhana-II case. The court accepted the bail against surety bonds worth Rs. one million and ordered the authorities to release the accused.

The court, however, said that the bail could be withdrawn if the accused didn't cooperate during the trial process. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict on the arrest bail petition of the PTI founder. During the hearing, the court questioned what action was taken against the three customs officers responsible for the wrong assessment of the Bulgarian Jewelry set.

The FIA's prosecutor said that it was a mistake on their part but it was not criminal misconduct by the officers. The NAB had not recommended any disciplinary action against these officers, he added. He said that the jewelry said was never submitted to toshakhana, adding that the accused managed to get a low-value assessment of the set and caused a loss to the national exchequer.

He said that the PTI founder and his wife both took benefit of it. He further said that this court had granted bail to Bushra Bibi but she was not appearing

before the trial court which is delaying the indictment process of the accused. He said that the PTI founder misused his position and threatened the person responsible for assessing the value of the set.

On the occasion, Defense Lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar argued that his client was accused of misusing his position for personal gains. He said that there was the name of Bushra Bibi on the receipt but in the case of challan, it was not clear who is main accused was. The role of both accused is not clear in the crime, he maintained. Barrister Salman Safdar responded that it was the responsibility of the prosecutor to inform court about that.

During the hearing, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) prosecutor said the media had been reporting as if the court had granted bail to the PTI chief. "If media doesn't create hysteria, then how will it be able to sell news," Justice Aurangzeb remarked. The court asked whose name was on the challan form to which the lawyer replied "Bushra Bibi's name is on the challan and Sohaib Abbasi has been made an approver whereas Inamullah Shah has been made witness by the prosecution."

Justice Aurangzeb

inquired from the prosecutor how was Khan a beneficiary of the gifts received by his wife to which the prosecutor responded "if the wife receives something in gifts, it also benefits her husband." In a seemingly displeased gesture, the judge said "how can his wife's possessions be linked to him".

Imran Khan is unlikely to walk free as his arrest has been shown in several other cases. On Oct 23, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) ordered release of Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana case. FIA Prosecutor Umair Majeed appeared before Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb of the IHC in the bail plea filed by PTI founder Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi in the second case of Toshakhana gifts.

The prosecutor argued that a gift received by the state must be submitted and declared. "The gift is the property of the state until it is legally purchased. The state-owned gift cannot be kept in private custody before purchasing it," the prosecutor continued.

Justice Aurangzeb asked him if Bushra Bibi did not submit the gifts, why PTI founder Imran Khan was made an accused. Prosecutor Majeed replied that because her husband was a public office-holder.

COAS visits IDEAS 2024 in Karachi

F.P. Report

KARACHI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024) at the Karachi Expo Centre.

During the visit, the COAS commended the active participation of defense manufacturers from friendly nations and observed an impressive display of arms and equipment by both domestic and international exhibitors. A total of 557 exhibitors are participating in the exhibition of which 333 are international exhibitors while 224 are domestic exhibitors. 36 countries established exhibitors' stalls of which 17 countries are participating for the first time.

Over 300 foreign delegates from 53 countries attended the event and showed full confidence in the exhibition and the defence industry of Pakistan. During the exhibition, COAS also engaged in meaningful interactions with foreign military officials and defense delegates present at the event.

A significant highlight of the occasion was the inauguration of the Shahpar-III, a state-of-the-art combat Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) developed by Global Industrial Defence Solutions (GIDS) Pakistan. The Shahpar-III boasts advanced capabilities, including an operational ceiling of 35,000 feet and an endurance of over 24 hours. It is equipped to carry a wide range of munitions, including bombs, missiles, and torpedoes.

12th Edition of IDEAS 2024 commenced on 19th November and will culminate on 22nd November 2024. Earlier, upon his arrival at Karachi, COAS was warmly received by Lieutenant General Babar Iftikhar, Corps Commander Karachi.

PPP formally seeks PAC chairmanship

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples' Party has officially demanded the chairmanship of Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Senator Saleem Mandviwalla wrote to National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, urging him a meeting on the requisition submitted by the 11 PAC members.

The PPP hinted at convening the session independently if the speaker delays. Mandviwalla requested the speaker's support, suggesting members elect an interim chairman until a permanent one is chosen. Meanwhile, the PTI insists on Sheikh Waqas Akram for the role. The PML-N has signaled support for the PPP's claim, prolonging the PAC's leadership stalemate since March.

Meanwhile, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has formed a committee to raise grievances with the Federal government.

As per details, the committee will comprise Raja Pervez Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Sherry Rehman, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, Makhdoom Ahmed Mahmood, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Hyder, Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi and Haider Gilani. The committee will interact with the Federal government to raise the different issues and will submit its report to the meeting of CEC to be held next month.

The notification in this regard was issued from the Chairman's Secretariat by his Political Secretary Jameel Soomro here on Wednesday.

Governor KP, Faisal Karim Kundi lauded Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to form a committee to raise issues with the federal government. The nine-member committee includes prominent figures such as Raja Pervez Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Sherry Rehman, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, Makhdoom Ahmed Mahmood, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider, KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, and Haider Gillani.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Polio Oversight Board called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Focus on to eradicate polio: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated the resolve of the government to make Pakistan a polio-free country and said that the federation along with all the provinces were taking steps at polio eradication.

He said all the provinces had been taken into confidence over the polio eradication measure and together they would efface the disease. A delegation of Polio Oversight Board comprising Christopher Elias, Representative of Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation, Dr Hanan Balkhy, Regional Director World Health Organization, UNICEF Regional Director Sanjay Wijesekera, Deputy Director Center for Disease Control and Prevention Andrea Fristedt, Rotary Foundation Trustee and National Chair Dr Aziz Memon, Dr. Ziyad bin Ahmed Meemish of King Salman Humanitarian and Relief Center and Health and Environmental Advisor KSrelief Dr. Abdullah bin Saleh called on the prime minister, PM Office Media Wing in a press release said.

The prime minister thanked the delegation for their visit and support to government's efforts to end polio. He also expressed his gratitude to King Salman Foundation, Bill and Malinda

Gates Foundation, Rotary Foundation, UNICEF and CDC that are partners to government in its anti-polio measures.

The prime minister observed that the part played by these organizations showed global efforts in the polio eradication drive and expressed the confidence that they would overcome the challenge of polio and would not rest till it was banished forever. The meeting was attended by PM Coordinator on National Health Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Bharath, PM's Focal Person on Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq and other senior officials.

The delegation praised the prime minister and the polio eradication team for their efforts. The representative of Bill and Gates said that the current strategy of the country against polio disease had effectively been implemented and its effects were being witnessed at the macro-level which hopefully would end the polio cases.

Dr Hanan Balkhy said that for the public health, the regional countries were required to strengthen their contacts and initiate dialogue. During the meeting, a briefing over the government's steps was given. Under the prime minister's directive, the team on polio eradication had visited the polio affected far flung areas.

Under the prime minister's direc-

tive, a third party audit of the anti-polio drive was carried out. The children diagnosed with polio were being looked after. The spread of polio was minimized in those areas where the vaccination ratio was better, it was added.

Meanwhile, Senator Irfan Siddiqui, leader of the parliamentary party of PML-N in the Senate and Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, briefed Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif about the performance of the parliamentary party in the Senate.

During a call on, he also briefed the prime minister regarding the performance of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. Irfan Siddiqui congratulated the prime minister for his excellent work in achieving the economic goals and bringing the economy of Pakistan on track, PM Office Media said in a press release. The prime minister said that senators of Pakistan Muslim League (N) under the leadership of Senator Irfan Siddiqui were playing a commendable role, adding being a symbol of the federation, the upper house should play a dynamic role in national unity and provincial harmony. He said the PML-N parliamentary group should maintain strong ties with all other parties in the House for this purpose.



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Turkish envoy calls on Speaker Sindh Assembly

KARACHI (APP): Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Irfan Neziroglu called on Provincial Assembly of Sindh Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah at his office on Wednesday. On the occasion, Turkish Ambassador Irfan Neziroglu was accompanied by Turkish Consul General in Karachi Cemal Sangu, said a statement.

They discussed trade and investment in Sindh, legislative processes and inter-parliamentary cooperation. Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah highlighted plans for training young parliamentarians and enhancing legislative skills. He emphasized the importance of Artificial Intelligence for the e-parliament program. Ambassador Irfan Neziroglu discussed Türkiye's commitment to strengthening ties and supporting Sindh Assembly's Strategic Plan. Speaker Shah invited the Turkish delegation to tour the historic Sindh Assembly building. He acknowledged Türkiye's support in relief, development, education, and health sectors. The ambassador thanked the Speaker for the invitation to visit the Provincial Assembly of Sindh. The Turkish Ambassador and Consul General were presented with Sindh caps, ajraks and a legacy shield.

3 drug dealers arrested

LAHORE (APP): The Sabzazar police on Wednesday arrested three drug dealers, while conducting operations and recovering four kilograms of hashish from them.

Sharjeel champions student innovation, urges nurturing talent at Isra University event



F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Sindh Senior Minister for Information and Transport Sharjeel Inam Memon has hailed students as the nation's future heroes, emphasizing the importance of nurturing young talent to drive Pakistan's growth.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony entitled World Sustainable transport Day, at Isra University's Faculty of Civil Engineering Science, Sharjeel Inam Memon praised the university's contributions to Hyderabad and encouraged students to showcase their innovative ideas on Sustainable public transport. He commended sustainable transport projects presented by students, acknowledging their potential to transform Pakistan.

Sharjeel Inam Memon highlighted the Sindh government's pioneering achievements, including harnessing wind energy projects in Thatta and Thar coal for electricity generation. The Coal project which initiated by the late Ms Benazir Bhutto and

revived by President Asif Ali Zardari in 2008. Today, thousands of megawatts are being produced from the Thar Coal project, recognized by economists as a prime source of affordable electricity.

Sharjeel Inam Memon reassured the youth that Pakistan offers numerous opportunities, urging them to capitalize on their skills. He outlined the Sindh government's initiatives under Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's leadership, including the People's Bus Service, EV buses, women's pink buses, and skills training under BISP.

The Senior Minister emphasized the government's commitment to expanding transport services, including the Yellow Line and Red Line BRT in Karachi, double-decker buses, and EV taxis for youth employment.

Senior Minister's message to the youth was clear: Don't be disappointed, we will make a strong country and nation together. With his inspiring words, Memon rallied the youth to

take charge and contribute to Pakistan's bright future.

Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized the importance of focusing on every sector to resolve Pakistan's problems, stating that if all departments work efficiently, many issues can be addressed. He also announced plans to discuss increasing student enroll-

ment with the Federation.

Speaking at ceremony, Sharjeel Inam Memon addressed the VPN issue, highlighting the dual nature of technology and advocating for introducing modern technologies like IT and AI to the younger generation, while cautioning against misuse by ill-minded individuals.

Regarding protests in country Sharjeel Inam Memon stressed the need for ethical demonstrations, condemning violence and damage to national institutions like Parliament, Radio Pakistan, and PTV. He warned that teaching violence to youth can lead to unintended consequences.

The Senior Minister also discussed transport reforms, announcing the removal of illegal bus stands in Karachi and plans to phase out others in Sindh, including

Hyderabad. Limited bus services have been launched in Hyderabad, with plans to expand the People's Bus Service to every major road in each city.

He reaffirmed the Sindh government's commitment

to combating drug abuse, urging youth and students to stay away from drugs. He sought media support in this endeavor and encouraged students to participate in politics, cautioning against exploiting youth for

short-term gains.

During the ceremony, Sharjeel Inam planted a sapling at Isra University Park and inspected sustainable transport projects by civil engineering students, praising their innovative ideas.

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Applications are invited from interested parties for allotment of plots of A1 and A categories measuring 24000 sft and 12000 sft respectively at Industrial park, Peshawar for establishment of Cold Storage (s). Application can be submitted online at www.kpsidb.gov.pk along with a copy CNIC and 25% down payment in the shape of Demand Draft/ CDR in the name of Industrial Park, Peshawar, SIDA. Following documents along with copy of online application form will be required to be submitted in the office of Incharge, Industrial Park, Peshawar, SIDA for processing of case for allotment of plot:

- I. Copy of CNIC/ NICOP,
- II. Business plan/ pre-feasibility report,
- III. Demand Draft/ CDR to be submitted in original,
- IV. Bank statement/ account maintenance certificate,
- V. In case of other than sole proprietorship:
 - a. Partnership deed duly signed by all partners of the firm and registration certificate with Registrar of firms,
 - b. Public Limited Company, Memorandum and Articles of Association and list of Directors on form 29 certified by SECP, or,
 - c. Private Limited Company, Certificate of Incorporation and list of Directors on form 29 certified by SECP.
- VI. NTN Certificate (not mandatory for overseas Pakistanis and applicants from PATA and Merged Areas),
- VII. Undertaking that the applicant is not declared default by any Bank/ financial institution/ Government Organization etc.

Plots categories and price:						
Categories	Size in Square foot	Size in Marla	Land lease price (PKR)	Non-refundable application fee (PKR)	25% down payment in PKR (refundable)	Total Initial Payable amount in PKR
Rate per square foot is Rs. 1028.831/-						
Category- A1	24,000	88	24,692,000	24,000	6,173,000	6,197,000
Category-A	12,000	44	12,346,000	12,000	3,086,500	3,098,500
Payment Plan:						
#	Down Payment		Schedule			
1	25% of the total developed plot price		At the time of application submission.			
2	25% of the total developed plot price		At the time of letter of acceptance.			
3	25% of the total developed plot price		After six months of letter of acceptance.			
4	25% of the total developed plot price		After twelve months of letter of acceptance.			

Maryam Nawaz meets CM Sarfraz Bugti

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met Chief Minister Balochistan Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti to discuss overall political situation of the country along with matters of mutual interest and steps being undertaken for the promotion of inter-provincial harmony. The CM Punjab while speaking on the occasion said, "People living in Balochistan are like our brothers. Terrorists want to impede development and progress of Balochistan. The progress of Balochistan is akin to development of Pakistan."

She added that the Punjab government will provide full assistance so as to solve the menace of terrorism. Mutual cooperation at the provincial level will be further promoted. The journey of development in Pakistan will continue by leaps and bounds. "We will work together to promote national unity and inter-provincial harmony," she added. CM Balochistan Sarfraz Bugti said, "CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif is rendering exemplary services to the people of Punjab. We have to work together under a comprehensive strategy for the progress of our dear homeland and prosperity of its people."

CM laptop program task to be accomplished in 90 days: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's 'Chief Minister's Laptop and Honhaar Scholarship Programme' has set a target of giving laptops to students in 90 days. Students would be given the latest Core i7, 13th generation laptops. The CM has ordered to give laptops to 2000 minority students. She ordered for giving laptops to Matric and FSC position-holder students, while a guard of honour would also be given to successful students.

Under the Chief Minister Laptop Program, 20,000 students of universities, 14,000 of colleges, 4,000 of industry and agriculture, while 2,000 students of medical and dental colleges would be given laptops. As many as 32 per cent of students would be from south Punjab. Moreover, within the limit of 30 days, students would be given 5,000 laptops, till February 20, 35,000 laptops would be given under the CM laptop scheme. Computer science, medical, science, engineering, social sciences, business, language, veterinary and agriculture students will also be given laptops. Apart from this, scholarships will be given to 30,000 government and 10,000 private educational institution students across the Punjab.

Meanwhile, full tuition fees for four to five year students will be paid under Honhaar Scholarship. In this connection, 68,329 applications have been received for Honhaar Scholarship, while verification of 34290 applications has been completed. 15.5 percent more enrollment than the target has been done in public sector universities of Punjab. It is worth mentioning here that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has appreciated the efforts of Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, Secretary Higher Education, Dr. Farrukh Naveed and their team to ensure transparency in the laptop scheme.

87 shops, 4 restaurants sealed

LAHORE (APP): A total of 87 shops and four restaurants have been sealed in Lahore for violating official business operating hours as part of the ongoing efforts to combat smog. The district administration Lahore remained active until late at night to enforce the orders for markets to close at 8 pm and restaurants to close at 10 pm. The crackdown continues across all tehsils without discrimination. In Model Town Tehsil, under the leadership of Assistant Commissioner Syed Yousaf, 15 shops were sealed. In City Tehsil, led by Assistant Commissioner Rai Babar, 10 shops were sealed. In Allama Iqbal Town Tehsil, under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Khawaja Umair, 14 shops were sealed for violating operating hours.

In Saddar Tehsil, under the guidance of Assistant Commissioner Abdul Basit Siddiqui, 14 shops and 1 restaurant were sealed. In Ravi Tehsil, led by Assistant Commissioner Tariq Bashir, 11 shops were sealed. In Raiwind Tehsil, under Assistant Commissioner Zainab Tahir, 8 shops and 3 restaurants were sealed for similar violations, and cases have been registered against violators. In Wahga Zone Tehsil, under Assistant Commissioner Amir Butt, 5 shops were sealed.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION, SOUTH WAZIRISTAN, TRIBAL DISTRICT AT TANK NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

Irrigation Department Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Irrigation Division South Waziristan Tribal District at Tank Invites Electronic Bids from the Eligible Firms / Contractors enlisted with Irrigation Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who have renewed their registration for the CFY (2024-25) and having registration with Pakistan Engineering Council for the CFY (2024-25) in the relevant category in accordance with KPRA Procurement Rules 2014 on **Single Stage Single Envelop** procedure for the following works:-

Last Date & Time of Tender: 11.12.2024 (12:00 AM)
Date & Time of Opening: 11-12-2024 (12:00 PM)
Completion period: As per work order
Required Category of PEC CE-04

ADP No	Name of Work / Sub Work.	Estimated Cost (Rs. in M)	Earnest Money + Stamp Duty with tender Fee (in Rs)
A	DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN TSD DARAZINDA, ADP No: 938/240319 (2024-25)		
	CONSTR: OF FLOOD PROTECTION WALL/BAND IN TSD DIKHAN & TANK .		
01	Construction of Flood Protection Band Hizbullah Kach TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
02	Construction of Flood Protection Band Falak Kheh Wam TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
03	Construction of Flood Protection Band Mateen Kheh Wam TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
04	Construction of Flood Protection Band Rahim Kheh Wam TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
05	Construction of Flood Protection Band Noor Jan Kheh Wam TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
06	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Haris Wam TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
07	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Hunar Wam TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
08	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Huzafa Kach TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
09	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Noor Kheh Wam TSD Darazinda	20.00	424750
10	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Saood Khan Kach TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
11	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Pir Ikhtiar Wam TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
12	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Shahzad Wam TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
13	Construction of Flood Protection Band for S. Aftab Wam TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
14	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Orhan Wam TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
15	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Zeeshan Kach TSD Darazinda	18.00	384150
16	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Nazir Ahmad Kach TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
17	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Haji Azam Jan Kach TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
18	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Muhammad Zaid Khadarzai TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
19	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Muhammad Sadiq Khadarzai TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
20	Flood Protection Band / Wall For Mustiq Suror Wam TSD Tank	10.00	221750
21	Construction of Flood Protection Band Zakar Kheh Ping TSD Tank	2.00	4650
22	Construction of Flood Protection Band Hurais Kheh Ping TSD Tank	5.00	107750
23	Construction of Flood Protection Band Naimat Lagari Mala Kheh TSD Tank	3.00	67150
24	Construction of Flood Protection Band Sher Zaman Kheh Wam TSD Tank	3.00	67150
25	Construction of Flood Protection Band Zeeshan Kheh Manglin TSD Tank	4.00	87450
26	Construction of Flood Protection Band Inam Ullah Ping TSD Tank	2.00	4650
27	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Akbar Ghazla Surarr Wam TSD Tank	10.00	221750
28	Construction of Flood Protection Band for Ajab Kheh Pewasar Ping Area TSD Tank	5.00	107750
29	Construction of Flood Protection Band at Gula Noor Dagar Ping Area TSD Tank	5.00	107750
30	Construction of Flood Protection Wall for the Land of Mehboob Shah Kach Matkai Pirtangi TSD Jandola Tank	10.00	221750
31	Construction of Flood Protection Wall Said Nawaz Kach TSD Jandola Tank	5.00	107750
32	Construction of Flood Protection Wall Aman Kach TSD Jandola Tank	5.00	107750
	CONSTR: OF WATER STORAGE RESERVOIR IN TSD DIKHAN & TANK		
01	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Tarin Kheh TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
02	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Harsal Kheh TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
03	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Waqar Kheh TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
04	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Zubair Kach Shashy Wam TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
05	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Kalami Shashy Kach TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
06	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Din Wam Shashy Kach TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
07	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Majid Shah Karona TSD Darazinda	2.00	4650
08	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Quresh Kach TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
09	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Shujat Karona TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
10	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Salim Kheh TSD Darazinda	3.00	67150
11	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir in Sadiq Kach TSD Darazinda	5.00	107750
12	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Marwan Kheh TSD Tank	2.50	57000
13	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Arham Kheh TSD Tank	2.50	57000
14	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Habib ur Rehman TSD Tank	5.00	107750
15	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Hanif Ullah Khecha TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
16	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Wali Jan Kach TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
17	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Sher Alam Kach Khesarai TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
18	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Qadir Khan Kach Khesarai TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
19	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Shahab ud Din Kach Saraghara Mosam KhanKorona TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
20	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir Ahtesham Alam Kach TSD Jandola Tank	1.00	22150
21	Const: of WSR at Alam Khan, Kamran Khan, Kiramat, Alam Jan, Malak, Bini Amin, Rifat Ullah	2.00	46850
22	Const: of WSR at Giaz Ullah, Noman, Ramzan, Malak, Jaili, Gafoor, Kalim Ullah	2.00	46850
23	Const: of WSR at Abdul Rehman, Asim, Afikhar, Abdul Manaf, Saif ur Rehman, Dil Soz, Gul Muhammad	2.00	46850
24	Const: of WSR at Haji Zer Jan, Dawood, Mamtaz Aba Kheh, Mukhtiar Nadir Zaman	2.00	46850
25	Const: of WSR at Ali Best, Shafi, Imran, Shokat, Naser King, Naser kanazai, Tahir Sur Kalai	2.00	46850
26	Const: of WSR Atta ur Rehman, Saib Noor, Mehtab, Arif, Gul Behram, Asmat Ullah, Khalid Abad Kheh	2.00	46850
27	Const: WSR Muhi ya Din, Ameer Ullah, Shahzada, Mushtaq, Bakhtawar Jan, Ayaz, Mehran	2.00	46850
28	Const: of WSR Mir Salam, Shadan, Shaid, Hassan, Saleem Baba, Rizwan, Mala, Waseem	2.00	46850

29	Const: of WSR Molana Muneer, Sala u Din, Sahban, Zubair, Haq Yar, Faisal, Mukhlis	2.00	46850
30	WSR Zeeshan, Shoaib Kari, Bakhtiyar, Azaz, Zaman, Rafiq, Taib, Wali, Ahmad Jan, Jawid.	2.00	46850
31	Const: of WSR Umar Daraz, Ayubi, Arsla Subdyar, Ali Khan, Zafraan Waheed, Khan Zala, Azal Din, Shah Wali, Hamoyun, Eid Gul	2.00	46850
32	Const: of WSR Wazir Quresh, Zahir Shah, Ali Marjan Aba Kheh, Mumin Khan, Noor Alam, Umar Khan, Muhammad Alam, Sulman Shah, Tahir, Jalani	2.00	46850
33	Const: of WSR Hussain Qureshi, Exn, Quresh, Ishfaq, Tahir Sadi Kheh, Sharam Wrooki, Zakhwan, Legi, Din Nawaz, Eid Muhammad, Dawood Kanazai	2.00	46850
34	Const: of WSR Gul Rehman, Now Shaid, Farman, Altaf, Farid, Alamgir Waror, Khalid Umar Hayat, Adnan Kirri, Asam Umar Kheh	2.00	46850
35	Const: of WSR Hussain Ahmad, Adnan Kanazai, Hamed Sary, Muhib, Rahat, Zakir, Umar, Ismail, Razi Ullah Farad Aba Kheh.	2.00	46850
36	Const: of WSR Naz Mir, Noran Shah, Sherak, Noorullah, Naser Gabar, Munir Gabar, Gul Marjan, Adam Gulsi	2.00	46850
37	Const: of WSR Haji Naqib, Bakhta Noor, Imran, Saeed, Riyaz, Haji Aslam, Palos	2.00	46850
38	Const: of WSR Ila ud Din, Muhammad Ameen, Shai, Dr. Hassan, Ma Shah Jan, Irfan, Momeen Babar malakheh, Ila ud din, Manglin, Waheed, Ashraf	2.00	46850
39	Const: of WSR Dawar Khan, Muhammad Gul, Awal Din, Khalil, Inayat Samarzai, Inayat Ullah Makhzai, Zar Khan Subedar, Zahir Shah, Ahmad Khan, Sifat Jani Kheh	2.00	46850
40	Const: of WSR Niyaz Khan, Shafi Ullah Bazi, Sinar Bazi, Malik Amin, Warisim, Ajmal, Akbar Jan, Sangheon, Gul Rehman, Naveed.	2.00	46850
41	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir at the Land of Gul Zaman, Nehar Khan, Zarif Khan, Rahim Hawaldar in TSD Jandola Tank	2.000	46850
42	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir at the Land of MaswarMamak Kheh Bandwam in TSD Jandola Tank	2.050	47865
43	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir at the Land of Wali Gul, Mosam, Shahab -ud-Din, Zaloo Malik in TSD Jandola Tank	1.300	32640
44	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir at the Land of Haji Awal Din, Nawaz Hassan Kheh, Raees, Nisar Shah in TSD Jandola Tank	1.300	32640
45	Construction of Water Storage Reservoir at the Land of Malik Nawaz Din, Dastagir S/o Bakhta Mir, Badshah Mir S/o Daulat Malik, Malik Saeed Dari Kheh in TSD JandolaTank	1.600	38730
	CONSTR: OF IRRIGATION CHANNEL IN TSD DIKHAN & TANK		
01	Construction of Irrigation Channel Shah Zain Wam TSD Darazinda	6.00	140550
02	Construction of Irrigation Channel Asharaf Ali Wam TSD Darazinda	1.00	22150
03	Construction of Irrigation Channel Madni Kheh TSD Tank	4.50	97600
04	Construction of Irrigation Channel Soban Kheh TSD Tank	2.50	57000
05	Construction of Irrigation Channel for Naik Muhammad Kach TSD Jandola Tank	5.00	107750
	CONSTR: OF CHECK DAMS IN TSD DIKHAN & TANK		
01	Construction of Check Dam for Hamza Wam TSD Darazinda	15.00	332350
02	Construction of Check Dam Shah Zeb Kach TSD Tank	10.00	221750
03	Construction of Check Dam Akbar Kheh BMK TSD Jandola Tank	20.00	424750
	CONSTR: OF IRRIGATION SOLAR BASED TUBE WELLS IN TSD DIKHAN & TANK		
01	Construction of Irrigation Tube Well in Noor Jan Kheh TSD Darazinda	10.00	221750
02	Construction of Irrigation tube well at Sadar Gul Dagar Ping area TSD Jandola District Tank	10.00	221750
03	District Tank Construction of Irrigation tube well at Sahil Nara Pewasar ar ea ping TSD Jandola District Tank	10.00	221750
04	Construction of Irrigation tube well at Shahid Noor Koorona Ping Area TSD Jandola District Tank	10.00	221750
05	Installation of Irrigation Solar Based Tube Well at Ghazi Malik Surghar TSD Tank	8.500	191300

TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR E-BIDDING:-

(Irrigation Department Web Site: www.irrigation.gkp.pk for E-Bidding Procedure and other requirements)

- The Bids shall be submitted electronically through E-Bidding on or before the fixed date/time.
- The Bidder Shall submit the bids with requisite documents through registry / courier services including 2% bids security of the estimated Cost + Stamp Duty in the shape of call deposit (Original) in sealed envelope before closing date and time.
- For Additional Security in case abnormally low bids KPRA Notification S.R.O. (14)/Vol: 1-24/2021-22, Dated 10th May, 2022 shall be enforced.
- The procuring entity may reject all bids at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid, the procurement entity shall upon request communicate to any contractor who submitted a bid, the ground for rejection of all bids as per KPRA Rules 47 (1).
- Tender shall be opened on advertised date and time in the presence of bidders or their representatives who may like to attend the session, In case of any unforeseen reason, public holiday, unrest or force majeure on the bid submission opening date, the tender shall be opened on the next working day at the same place and time.
- The bid security shall be forfeited if a bidder withdraws his bid, with in the validity period thereof or in the case of a successful bidder, who repudiates the contract or fails to furnish performance security.
- All federal and provincial duties / stamp duty / taxes including sales tax will be recoverable as per directive of the Government issued from time to time.
- Call deposit of schedule banks shall be acceptable. No Bank cheque or pay order shall be acceptable.
- If any document submits along with bid documents found false / Bogus the registration of the contractor firm shall stand cancelled / black listed.
- Incomplete, conditional and bids without 2% of earnest money or without additional security (if applicable) shall be considered as non-responsive.
- All bidders are required to be registered with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority, established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act, 2013 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No: XXI of 2013) for works, consulting and non- consulting services as listed in Schedule-II of the Act ibid.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Irrigation Division SWTD Tank
INF (P) 3095/24
Fax/ Phone No: 0963-512385



PESHAWAR: Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan Amuel Rizk meeting with Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry to discuss ongoing projects.

Shahid, Aleem appointed in EC KP in BPS 20

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Shahid Iqbal, former Additional Director General in Election Commission and Aleem Shahab, newly promoted from the post of Regional Election Commissioner, Rawalpindi, have assumed the charge as Joint Provincial Election Commissioner (Admin) and Joint Provincial Election Commissioner



(Election), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, respectively, in BPS-20.

Both the officers have practical expertise and outstanding knowledge in

elections matters, said Media Coordination and Outreach Wing Election Commission Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday.

Alkhidmat launches Bano Qabil free IT center



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Alkhidmat Foundation commenced free IT courses and online business classes for youth in Peshawar under its Bano Qabil program.

International cricketer Fakhar Zaman inaugurated the first IT center in

Nishtarabad at the Alkhidmat Foundation's district office.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Khalid Waqas, provincial President Alkhidmat Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. President Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan, Professor Dr.

Hafeezur Rahman, along with provincial Vice President Tajul Malik, Arbab Abdul Haseeb, and Malik Parvez Khan also joined the opening ceremony.

This new initiative follows the success of the Bano Qabil program in cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. Over 65,000 students in Peshawar have already signed up for the courses, part of a nationwide goal to train one million students, with 300,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa alone.

The first phase of the program will focus on IT centers in divisional headquarters across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with plans to expand to more districts in the future.

RTO's online open court for taxpayers on Friday

PESHAWAR (APP): An online open court for the redressal of the genuine problems of the taxpayers would be held on Friday at Tax House Peshawar from 12:00 P.M to 1:00 P.M said a press release issued here from the Regional Tax Office (RTO) on Wednesday.

The Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue RTO Peshawar Yasir Ali will participate as special guest while Commissioner (Withholding Zone) Ashfaq Masood, Commissioner Peshawar Zone Dr Farooq Jameel, Commissioner Mardan Zone Shaheed Mehboob, Commissioner (Withholding Zone) Mohammad Nawaz, Commissioner (Corporate Zone) Ajmal Khan, Deputy Commissioner (HQs) Riaz Ahmad Khan and Assistant Commissioner/Focal

Person Sherroz Rashid Khan will be present for the assistance of the Chief Commissioner.

For the resolution of their genuine problems, the trading community and other taxpayers could participate in the online open court through facebook website (www.facebook.com/rtopwr).

On this occasion, the officers of the Federal

Board of Revenue (FBR) will highlight the assistance and utilities of installation of the Point of Sale (POS) at mega stores and legal requirements.

Furthermore, the taxpayers would also be briefed regarding measures for the prevention of illegal transportation of cigarettes, prohibition of stock in the shops and other legal steps.

46 women completes sewing, embroidery training under WWB

PESHAWAR (APP): Workers Welfare Board (WWB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with NGO Bedari has trained 46 women in sewing and embroidery skills with an objective to empower them financially.

A ceremony in this connection was held at the Women Vocational and Polytechnic Institute. The event was also attended by Secretary WWB Muhammad Tufail, Director of Education WWB Amjad Khan and concerned staff. The women were also provided sewing machines and financial assistance package to start their own business. WWB has also planned training of women living in newly merged tribal districts.

26 children fall victim to diphtheria in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Health Dept

PESHAWAR (APP): The diphtheria infection among children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has turned into a dangerous epidemic, wherein at least 26 children have died during the current year, reported the provincial health department here on Wednesday.

It said that 380 children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been reported infected with Diphtheria.

Among the most affected districts, Peshawar remained at the top where the most 12 children lost their lives to the disease. In Nowshera and Charsadda districts three children each reportedly died of diphtheria followed by Mohmand district with two deaths.

Those who succumbed to the disease aged above 5 years, the authorities said, adding that 228 union councils of 27 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the most affected.

According to the health authorities, the victim children did not complete their course of prevention from the diphtheria infection.

Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Wednesday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Sheikh Muhammad-i-Tarbela Power House Circuit on 21st, 22nd and 25th November from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Consequently, it said consumers of Peshawar University, Peshawar Cantt, Peshawar Industrial, Jamrud, Regi Model Town, Hayatabad, Rehman Baba, Peshawar City, Musazai, 66 KV Badbe, 132 KV Shahi Bagh, Shabqadar and Warsak grid connected feeders will face inconvenience.

Likewise, it said that power supply will remain suspended from Kholian Bala Grid Station on 21st, 23rd and 25th November from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. respectively, consumers of Sajkot, City Havelian, Town Havelian, Khokhal, Industrial 1, Kohlian, Jabri, Thary AD, INF Brigade, Sarai Salah, Sungar, Rehana and Bagra feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will also remain suspended from Hangu grid station on 22nd November from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. respectively, consumers of Muslim Abad, Zargari, Kahi & Togh Sarai Samana feeders will face inconvenience.

UNDP Representative meet CS F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan, Mr. Samuel Rizk, along with a delegation met with the Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary on Wednesday.

The meeting focused on discussing ongoing development projects in the province and exploring key priorities for future collaboration.

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary appreciated UNDP's continued support and highlighted the provincial government's focus on inclusive development and effective project implementation.

PTI workers united for founding chairman's release

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and Member National Assembly Atif Khan has reaffirmed the party's unity, stating that there are no differences with founding Chairman.

This he claimed while talking to media outside Peshawar High Court and said that KP people have always stood by Imran Khan. Expecting massive public turnout on November 24 for Khan's release, he added.

MNA further added that government's raids on homes and arrests of

innocent people will prompt public protests. He claimed that Bushra Bibi has conveyed Imran Khan's message to the people. PTI assembly members will successfully mobilize public support. Regarding anti-corruption notices, Atif Khan reiterated that in-party differences exist, but none with Imran Khan.

He was unable to attend due to commitments in Mardan, MNA stated. Participation not mandatory; the goal is to mobilize public protests. Atif Khan's statements aim to quell speculation about PTI's internal divisions and reassure party loyalty to Imran Khan.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Barrister Dr. Saif being received a shield on occasion of Iqbal Literary Festival at Peshawar University.

Anti-encroachment operation conducted in areas of city

PESHAWAR (APP): Teams of Metropolitan City Government Peshawar here Wednesday confiscated four truckloads of goods during anti-encroachment operation conducted in var-

ious areas of the city.

According to details, teams of city government led by Chief Demolishing Operation West, Qaisar Bacha conducted raids in area of the city including

Qissa Khawani Bazar, Ashraf Road, Ghairabad and Gulbahar. During operation, four truckloads of goods were confiscated and cases have been registered against shopkeepers for

encroaching public land. City government has also warned shopkeepers to display goods in legal limits of shops and avoid hindering and encroaching public places.

National Centre of Excellence in Geology arranges one day seminar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The National Centre of Excellence in Geology (NCEG) at the University of Peshawar organized a one-day seminar today in celebration of World GIS Day, focusing on the theme of GIS awareness and Societal Impacts. The event was held Wednesday that brought together a diverse audience of academics, government officials, professionals, and students to explore the importance of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in modern society.

The seminar highlighted the vital role GIS plays in addressing natural and man-made challenges through advanced mapping, spatial analysis, and data visualization. Over 80% of information used in decision-making processes today involves geographical data, making GIS an essential tool for guiding policymakers and stakeholders in their actions.

The seminar was convened by Dr. Liaquat Ali, Professor and Director of NCEG, Peshawar and Yaseen Khan, Director General of Soil and Water Conservation, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was Co-convenor. Dr. Muhammad Ali, Assistant Professor at NCEG, served as the Chief Organizer, with Abid



Sarwar, GIS Specialist at Soil & Water Conservation, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, acting as the Co-Organizer.

The event was organized in collaboration with key partners, including the World Food Program (WFP), Secours Islamique France (SIF), and Muslim Hands Pakistan (MHP).

In his welcome speech, Prof. Dr. Liaquat Ali informed the audience about NCEG's significant achievements in GIS and Remote Sensing, emphasizing its crucial role in research and societal applications. Baton Osmani, the Guest of Honor, applauded the combined efforts of various organizations in advancing GIS technology across different sectors. Other notable speakers included Dr. Altaf Abro and

Muhammad Rehan Tahir, appreciated the progress made in GIS education and capacity-building, particularly for youth and local communities.

Dr. Farmanullah Khan from the Soil and Water Conservation Department presented discussion on the use of GIS for soil and water conservation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while Dr. Sarfraz Munir from IWMI discussed GIS applications in water resource management. Dr. Sawaid Abbas from Punjab University shared insights on forest area estimation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa using GIS, and Ms. Fareen Qazi from the Urban Policy Unit discussed urban and land-use planning activities in Peshawar District.

In addition, a session on

SUPARCO activities was presented by Dr. Said Rahman, highlighting the role of space-based technologies in geospatial data acquisition.

A panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Muhammad Ali, brought together experts from academia, government, and the development sector to discuss the future of GIS in addressing societal challenges.

The discussion emphasized the need to develop all five components of GIS: software, hardware, data, human resources, and policy.

The seminar concluded with Mr. Atta Ur Rehman, Secretary of Agriculture Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, addressing the seminar as a Chief Guest.

KP govt, UNICEF celebrate world children day with street children



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a significant step towards ensuring the protection and welfare of children in the province, Social Welfare Department

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with UNICEF on Wednesday celebrated the World Children's day with the street children here.

This event was truly spe-

cial in the sense that it focused on the issues of street children and how their lives are affected by working and living on the streets in Peshawar city. It was an acknowledgement

of their experiences and challenges while living and working on the streets.

The Chief Guest on the occasion was Minister for Social Welfare, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Syed Qasim Ali Shah while Secretary Social Welfare Department KP, Syed Nazir Hussain Shah, Director Social Welfare Department (MDs), Obaid ur Rahman, Commissionaire Peshawar, Riaz Mehud, Deputy Commissionaire Peshawar Sarmad Saleem, M Radek CFO UNICEF, Wasam Program Manager, UNICEF and Sohail Ahmad child Protection Specialist UNICEF.

Department of Social Welfare, KPSPWC and UNICEF organized this event, which on the one side highlighted the importance of the global commitment to make this world a better place for every child,

and, on the other side presented the true-face of hardships in which this huge number of children are earning their living from the streets in an age in which they should enjoy their childhood through education, cultural activities and making friends and friendships.

In his opening remarks, Secretary, Social Welfare, Department said hosting the event for street children was aimed to showcase their active participation in various project interventions, including life skills training, peer support networks, recreational and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) activities.

Additionally, the were invited to share their experiences with the government and stake-holders so that their problems and challenges could be

addressed by establishing clear policies, and reducing the risks of rights exploitation faced by them while working on the streets.

The event also presented a theatre highlighting the lived experiences of street children and what needs to be done to transform their lives.

The event also presented the art and creative work of the street children which they had developed during the project interventions managed by Social Welfare Department in support of UNICEF.

Speaking on the occasion, Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection Specialist from UNICEF said that a strategy should be calked out to provide all basic services to these children and their families and link them with child protection and social protection services for proper rehabilitation and

psychosocial support.

In his remarks, Radek, CFO UNICEF also appreciated the efforts of social welfare department for organizing the event on the occasion of World Children's Day and recommending to the international obligations and children's rights as given in the Child Rights Convention.

He also advocated to the government for reviewing its policy and strategy to the street children and all marginalized groups in the province and how to ensure they are mainstreamed in the society sooner than later.

The Minister for Social Welfare in his closing remarks, expressed his concerns on the conditions in which these children are living and how its impacts their lives.

He said, this is not the true face of a civilized

nation and a caring society. These children, often driven to the streets by poverty, family breakdown, or displacement, face numerous challenges and vulnerabilities on daily basis.

He said many are engaged in hazardous activities such as begging, scrap collection, child labor, or selling goods on the streets, often to contribute to their family's survival or sustain themselves.

He also said, "this event has made these children visible to all of us. They are the heart and soul of our communities, part of our today and our future."

The streets are not aimed for them this way; and these should not be used any more for them this way. It is our shared responsibility to change this reality and mainstream every one of them in our families and our society, he remarked.



In brief

One killed before court F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: A man who had just secured Bail Before Arrest (BBA) from a local court in Charsadda was shot dead by an opponent on Wednesday. Police said, a man named Arshad, son of Taj Muhammad, was shot dead by his opponent soon after he secured a BBA and came out of the Judicial Complex in Shabqadar tehsil. Body of the deceased was taken to Shabqadar hospital for medico-legal procedure. The assailant managed to flee the scene however, police have collected evidence and statements of the eye witnesses and started an investigation.

PFA wastes dead chicken

SARGODHA (INP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) on Wednesday wasted 1500-kg dead chicken during an action at Meena village of Bhera tehsil. According to official sources, the PFA team with police caught a vehicle loaded with dead chicken. The team wasted the 1500-kg dead chicken which was being transported to various hotels and restaurants of the city. On a report of the PFA, the police registered a case against the accused.

JAAC announces strike in AJK

RAWALAKOT (INP): The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) on Wednesday announced a shutdown strike in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on December 5 to protest against the Presidential Ordinance. As per details, the ordinance imposed by AJK government requires a administrative approval for any protest, which the JAAC believes restricts democratic freedoms. The strike is a response to the recent arrests in Rawalakot and Mirpur, and the JAAC demands the repeal of the Presidential Ordinance and implementation of their Charter of Demands. Moreover, the JAAC has called for a complete shutdown of businesses, educational institutions, and transportation, with only hospitals and emergency services remaining operational. In the past, similar strikes have resulted in clashes between protesters and police, with Section 144 being imposed to ban public gatherings.

Tug-of-war competition held

SARGODHA (APP): Female Intercollegiate tug-of-war competition was organised under the auspices of the Higher education Department at the Government Graduate College for Women, Farooq Colony, on Wednesday. Teams from eight women's colleges across the district participated in the event. After exciting matches, the Government Postgraduate College for Women, Chandni Chowk, clinched the first position and was awarded the winner's trophy. The Government Associate College for Women 75 SB secured second place, while the Government College for Women 36 SB claimed third place. Speaking at the event, Higher Education Sargodha focal person Amber Bashir highlighted the transparency and fairness maintained throughout the games. She also expressed gratitude to the principal of Government Graduate College for Women Madam Muntahi and Madam Sabah, for hosting the competition and ensuring excellent arrangements.

Seminar on historical Durand Line agreement arranged



F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The University of Malakand (UoM) on Wednesday arranged a seminar on Durand Line Agreement: Historical and Legal Perspectives to inform the participants about this historical move. The seminar was organized by Department of Political Science in collaboration with Youth Development Center, UoM. The speaker for the seminar was Dr Lutfur Rehman, Assistant Professor at Muslim Youth University, Islamabad and former controller at Radio Pakistan.

The speaker talked about Durand Line Agreement and later on implications on Pak-Afghan relations. The speaker discussed the issue in detail and presented his case with historical agreements and archival documents relating to the agreement. It was deliberated in the discussion that there is a lack of writing and reading related to the issue. The speaker said there was a need of joint Summit between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Another thing was added that states have security compulsions due to which most of the time they both fence their borders. The speaker asked the participants to read his book titled Revisiting the Durand Line: Historical and Legal Perspectives that was the result of span of two decades.

The VC, UoM Prof Dr Rashid Ahmad, Prof Dr Arab Naz, Dean of Social Sciences, Dr Murad Ali, HoD Political Science, Mr Sajid Khan, Lecturer in Department of Political Science, Team Members of Youth Development Center including Dr Muhammad Zahid Khan & Mr Jamil Anwar Abbasi alongwith Faculty Members, Students & Administrative Staff attended the seminar.

Schools' sports: The sports' competitions among government and private high and higher secondary schools concluded here the other day. According to the district sports' committee, government higher secondary school Lal Qila Maidan remained winner in cricket, Beacon House Public School Mayar in football, government centennial model high school Timergara in hockey, GHS Mian Banda in kabaddi, government Shahbaz Shaheed higher secondary school Ouch in volleyball, GHSS Samarbagh in handball, GHS Munjai in tug of war, GHSS Lal Qila in badminton, Alqalam Public School Khungi in table tennis, Iqra Public School Samarbagh in 100, 200 and 800 meter race, GHSS Malakand in 400 meter race, GHSS Saddo in 1500 meter race, GHS Dantal in high jump, GHS Khall Kandaro in long jump, Blue Chief Munda in triple jump, GHSS Ziarat Talash

in shot put, GHSS Samarbagh in discus throw and GCMHS Timergara in javelin throw. Principal Salahud Din, general secretary of the district sports' committee told local journalists that the winner and runner up teams would be awarded with trophies and shields during an annual function to be held at Timergara soon.

Anti-drugs operation: Pakistan Muslim League district secretary information Bahramand Syed has asked people of the Lower Dir district to support the district police officer Salim Abbas Kulachi in his efforts to curb drug selling and drug trafficking. Talking to local journalists at the Timergara press club, Mr Bahramand said the DPO had launched a crackdown against drug selling in the district. He said that so far, several notorious drug sellers had been apprehended.

The PML-N activist said that police alone could not eliminate the outlaws until they had the support of locals. He said that due to depression, anxiety and joblessness, many of the youth indulged in drug addiction. Mr Bahramand said that drugs ended the lives of educated youth and it was not less than a menace. He asked the people of Dir to extend their full cooperation to police in their bid to eradicate drugs from the society.

DPO awards policemen on performance

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: District Police Officer Lower Dir distributed prizes and certificates among competent police personnel to recognize their outstanding performance, on Wednesday. He stated that the tireless efforts and professional competence of the police officers have not only helped in combating crime but have also played a key role in ensuring public safety and maintaining peace.

DPO mentioned that the purpose of awarding these certificates and prizes is to further motivate and inspire the police personnel. He further added that these rewards set an example for other officers who are showcasing their abilities in serving the public and upholding the rule of law.

The recipients of the certificates included Sub-Inspector Hayat Muhammad, Head Constable Gohar Rehman, Head Constable Arshad Khan, Head Constable Niaz

Ali Shah, Head Constable Sadiq Hussain, Sub-Inspector Ameen Al-Wahab, ASI Muntazir Khan, Inspector Saleem Shah Khan, Noor Muhammad, Salman, Tahirullah, and others.

Commissioner chairs meeting on preventive measures during rains, snowfall: A meeting under the chairmanship of Commissioner Malakand Division Amjad Ali Khan on Wednesday discussed preventive measures to avoid possible losses from rains and snowfall during the winter season. All additional deputy commissioners (Relief) and Secretary to Commissioner Malakand attended the meeting. The meeting reviewed necessary measures in detail in view of possible losses due to rains and snowfall.

Commissioner Malakand directed the district administration to ensure provision of heavy machinery to all departments and stakeholders during rains and snowfall.

He said that all the institutions concerned should complete preventive measures timely to avoid losses in the wake of heavy rains and snowfall.

Additional Deputy Commissioners (Relief and Human Rights) and assistant commissioners should monitor the situation. The district administration should take measures in view of the arrival of tourists and inform them about the weather conditions in advance. He directed the district administration to continue operations against illegal constructions and encroachments along rivers and streams. Commissioner Malakand Division directed all the district administrations to ensure supply of medicines in hospitals and availability of heavy machinery to NHE, PKHA, C&W and TMEs to remove snow from roads in case of snowfall. Commissioner Malakand also directed for establishing control rooms at divisional and district levels.

Book competition on theme of Seerat-un-Nabi held

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Al-Khidmat Foundation Orphan Care, Hyderabad, organized a book competition on the theme of Seerat-un-Nabi for children. The test was conducted at Government Boys Degree College, Unit 11, Latifabad.

The guest of honor, Professor Muhammad Hanif, Principal of the college, praised the children and the Alkhidmat team for arranging such a meaningful competition. He highlighted that initiatives like these inspire children to develop a passion for reading.

President of Alkhidmat Foundation Women Wing Hyderabad, Ms. Farah Naz, also met the registered Shining Stars and their resilient mothers during the event, encouraging them for their efforts. Students from ZABIST University presented a special presentation

for the children and distributed gifts among them at the end of the program. During the ceremony, the General Secretary of Alkhidmat Foundation Hyderabad, Mr. Saleem Khan, presented a commemorative shield to Principal Muhammad Hanif. The event was also graced by the presence of Jinnah Higher Secondary School's Principal, Hafiz Irfan Qaimkhani.

Similarly, another book competition for children residing in the city was conducted at Government (N) Noor Muhammad High School. The guest of honor, Engineer Hafiz Tahir Majeed, Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Hyderabad District, inspected the test and appreciated the Alkhidmat team's dedication. At the end, the President of Alkhidmat Foundation Hyderabad, Mr. Muhammad Naeem Abbasi, presented a shield to him. The Nazim of

Islami Jamaat-e-Talaba Central Zone Hyderabad, Brother Shaheer Hassan, extended an invitation to the Shining Stars to participate in a two-day training workshop scheduled for November 23 and 24 at Mubarak Masjid, Unit 8.

Child killed

F.P. Report

SWABI: A child playing in fields near his home in Chota Lahore tehsil of Swabi district was crushed to death by a tractor on Wednesday morning. Police said the 10-year-old Farhan was playing near his home when he came under the cutter of a tractor working in fields. The child died at the scene and later his body was shifted by the Rescue 1122 to Chota Lahore hospital for medico legal procedure.

Minister mobilizing PTI workers for protest

F.P. Report

BUNER: The elected members provincial assemblies from Buner and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders held meetings in their respective constituencies for mobilization of party workers to ensure participation in 24th November protest scheduled in Islamabad, on Wednesday.

During the meetings party leadership from top to bottom along with workers participated. The representatives of Insaf Youth and Insaf Students and other wing leaders attended. The meeting discussed the preparations for the final protest call of party founder on November 24 and party office barriers and workers decided that all the workers of PK 25, PK 26 and PK 27 will actively participate by responding to this protest call.

On this occasion, the district chapter leaders instructed all local leaders that they should speed up their efforts for the mobilization of workers in their areas. They said that a convoy of thousands of people will leave Buner district on the protest call of PTI founder and led by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Sindhi poetess Majeedi work appreciated

F.P. Report

THATTA: Speakers paid a glowing tribute to eminent Sindhi poetess Mariam Majeedi, who gained widespread recognition for creating mass awareness through her progressive and creative literary work. The event, held at Makli Gymkhana in Thatta, aimed to honor and acknowledge the contributions of female poetesses.

Former Senator Sassui Palijo praised Mariam Majeedi as one of Sindhi's leading literary figures, who passionately advocated for the rights of Sindhi. "Majeedi became a role model for suppressed women in Sindhi," she added. Eminent scholar and writer Muhammad Ali Maji noted that amidst notable Sindhi poets, Majeedi established herself as a unique and highly skilled poetess.

Veteran poet Taj Joyo credited Mariam Majeedi's husband, Muhammad Khan Majeedi, for nurturing her talent. Joyo particularly praised Majeedi's book "Hirana Hi Her," which gained provincial recognition. The event celebrated Mariam Majeedi's enduring legacy, solidifying her position as a pioneering female voice in Sindhi literature.

Int'l Children Day celebrated in DI Khan

F.P. Report

DI KHAN: Zamung Kor Dera Ismail Khan campus has organized a colorful event to celebrate International Children Day here on Wednesday. The event was filled with vibrant performances and meaningful messages highlighting the importance of children's rights and welfare.

The celebration began with heartfelt speeches by the children, emphasizing their dreams, aspirations, and the significance of education and equality in their lives. Following the speeches, the children performed tableaux depicting the themes of hope, unity, and the power of education in shaping a brighter future.

The participants were captivated by the skit performed by the students, which creatively portrayed the challenges children face, including child labor, neglect, and abuse, and how society can work together to overcome these issues. ZamungKor Assistant Director Rafi Ullah, while addressing the event, reminded the children of their fundamental rights, including the right to education, protection, and a safe environment. He emphasized the importance of raising awareness about violations of children's rights and urged the children to speak up against injustice.

AWKUM organizes Aman Fun Fair



Anees Takar

MARDAN: A two-day Aman fun fair organized by the Department of Political Science of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) has begun at the main campus. City Mayor Himayatullah Mayar inaugurated the fun fair. Besides the students of the university, various institutions had set up stalls, which included food and drink items, various traditional products and consultancy firms in various fields.

The students and families of the university took keen interest in the fun fair. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, City Mayor said that in the objective conditions of the country, such activities in the name of peace are tantamount to a breath of fresh air. He said that experts in social sciences, especially political science, should play their role in ending the ongoing wars and extremism trends in the world so that respect for human rights and freedom of expression are recognized.

The Mayor congratulated Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zahir Shah, the faculty of the Department of Political Science, students and organizers for organizing the successful peace fun fair. He said that AWKUM has made significant progress in a short period of time and its services are recognized at the provincial, national and international levels. He distributed certificates of appreciation among the faculty members of political science department and organizers on this occasion.

World Toilet Day observed: A National Conference on Sanitation held on the occasion of World Toilet Day at a local hotel in Sukkur. Experts termed wastewater disposal and provision of clean drinking water as major challenges for the

country. They demanded for implementation of the National policy of Sanitation and Water to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

Civil society representatives, environmentalists and leaders of social organizations have said that sanitation has become a challenge for the country, while most of the country's population was deprived of clean drinking water and Sanitation.

They have demanded from the federal and provincial governments that in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, it is necessary to get cabinet approval for the draft policy on clean drinking water and sanitation in the 2006 Conference on Sustainable Development and implement it practically.

CEO Khairpur Rural Development Organization Ikhtiar Ahmed Khaskheli said that the issue of sewage has become a challenge for the country, the majority of the country's population is deprived of clean drinking water. He said that cleanliness is half of faith, generally the impression of a civilized family is taken from the cleanliness of their house and washrooms.

Cleanliness campaign launched: Additional Assistant Commissioner Sahar Anwar along with Chairman Tehsil Government Katlang, Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) Katlang, TMA staff organized a cleanliness campaign walk.

This campaign was launched under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Mardan with the aim of the campaign is to make people aware of cleanliness and ensure their participation. Additional Assistant Commissioner Sahar Anwar has said that cleanliness is half faith. Initiation of cleanliness awareness in Tehsil aims to make Katlang more beautiful.

DC directs to accelerate work on uplift projects

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram has directed the authorities concerned to accelerate work on uplift projects in the merged Tehsil Dara Adam Khel, adjacent to Kohat district, as well as the future action plan.

Deputy Commissioner Kohat gave clear directions that each department and institution should prepare and submit its report and future action plan according to the timeline. He declared that no negligence will be tolerated in the implementation of the decisions taken in the meeting and its full implementation will be ensured at all costs.

Education, Health, C&W and other relevant departments and institutions.

The meeting discussed in detail the new, ongoing and proposed developmental projects of the merged Tehsil Dara Adam Khel, adjacent to Kohat district, as well as the future action plan.

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Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram also visited Dar-ul-Amaan and Shelter Home where he was given a detailed presentation by the District Officer Social Welfare and Manager Dar-ul-Amaan Kohat Amjad Afridi about the mandate and services of the institutions respectively.

Deputy Commissioner Kohat on this occasion also checked the attendance, cleanliness, menu and other related facilities and directed the authorities concerned to provide maximum relief to the deserving persons as per the commitment of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

IBA Sukkur distributed prizes among students

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The annual award ceremony was held at the government high school village Wikia Sangi near Larkana under the management of Institute of Business Administration IBA University Sukkur.

The special guests were Director Community Colleges Schools Dr. Noor Hussain Shar, Mayor Larkana, SP Training PTS, SP Legal, DEO Secondary Gulbahar Magsi, DEO Primary, District Manager along with police and education department officers

participated in large numbers.

In the ceremony, the school children gave speeches on the importance and greatness of education, the value of humanity, the bright face of Pakistan, Umar Maree, women's education, solidarity with Palestinians, and patriotism, and received great applause.

Addressing the event, Director of Community Colleges Schools, and others said that like every year, students and teachers who demonstrate the best performance are given an

award so that the students and female students. Be encouraged, this village is small, but the children here have the best skills, who have proved that these children are not only in the field of education but also in extra-curricular activities.

The future of our country is in strong hands because these children today expressed their love for their country, nation and education and proved that they want to contribute to the development of the country and nation through their education.

Tribesmen demand provision of healthcare facilities

F.P. Report

WANA: The public sector hospitals in South Waziristan are grappling with a dire healthcare crisis due to the acute shortage of funds, essential staff, and medical resources. The district headquarters hospital South Waziristan stands on the brink of closure, overwhelmed by staff shortages, an inadequate number of doctors, and insufficient financial support.

Sheikh Fatima Hospital in Sholam, once a key healthcare facility for the region, is now in shambles.

According to local sources, the District Health Officer (DHO) has failed to address these issues, with allegations that he has never visited the hospital or assessed its worsening condition.

Local residents have voiced their frustration, accusing the authorities of systematically sidelining the healthcare needs of Waziristan. They argue that while provincial funding flows generously to major cities, South Waziristan is left to struggle with a lack of even basic medical services. Residents further allege

that for over 77 years, civil administration and health officials have misused funds under the pretext of "security concerns," exacerbating the plight of the already marginalized community.

Healthcare advocates emphasize that ensuring equitable access to medical services is not only a moral responsibility but also a constitutional right of the people of South Waziristan. The neglect of this region's hospitals highlights the stark inequalities in Pakistan's healthcare system, urging policymakers to address this disparity with urgency.



French farmers threaten ‘chaos’

PARIS (AFP): French farmers stepped up their protests against a proposed trade pact between the European Union and four South American countries, blocking a key motorway on the border with Spain and vowing to sow "chaos."

The French government is leading resistance against ratification of the trade agreement with the Mercosur bloc of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, which would create the world's largest free-trade zone. The new wave of action comes after farmers across Europe, including France, mounted rolling protests last winter over a long list of burdens they say are squeezing revenue.

Dozens of farmers backed by Coordination Rurale (CR), a hard-line farming union, set up a roadblock on the A9 motorway at the southern town of Le Boulou, close to the border with Spain, blocking lorries but allowing cars through, an AFP journalist saw. "We're going to block the A9, as well as fuel depots, ports and purchasing centres," said Serge Bousquet-Cassagne, a CR representative in the southwest. "We want to cause chaos and food shortages," he said, adding that the blockade could last several days, pointing to "a river of fruit and vegetables arriving from Spain".

The A9 motorway is a crucial trade route between the Iberian peninsula and the rest of Europe. In the southwestern town of Agen, demonstrators dumped tyres in front of the prefecture. The FNSEA and Jeunes Agriculteurs ("Young Farmers"), the more moderate unions that together represent most farmers in France, also backed the protests.

According to the authorities, more than a dozen protests were under way just before noon, bringing together nearly 900 farmers and more than 300 pieces of farm machinery. Farmers staged more than 80 protests across the country, setting up mock gallows and wooden crosses to symbolise the death of French agriculture. They also blocked the Bridge of Europe,

which links France and Germany, to protest against the European Commission's plan to conclude the Mercosur treaty following two decades of talks. In Bordeaux, on the banks of the Garonne, several dozen farmers burned uprooted vines. France's political class is unusually unanimous in its opposition to the Mercosur deal. Government spokeswoman Maud Bregeon said the government would propose a parliament debate followed by a vote, to "reinforce the position of the president and the prime minister."

Bregeon said the government would "continue to fight as long as necessary" with the European Commission to oppose the treaty. French farmers complain about excessive bureaucracy, low incomes and poor harvests. They say they have been waiting for the authorities to deliver on the promises of support made by the government before President Emmanuel Macron dissolved parliament's lower house in the summer, sparking a political crisis. The proposed Mercosur pact has provoked fresh anger. Farmers fear any agreement would open European Union markets to cheaper meat and produce from South American competitors, who are not forced to adhere to strict EU rules on pesticides, hormones, land use and environmental measures. Cyriac Blanchet, 18, a third-generation farmer in the southwestern town of Monsegur, said there had been no progress since last winter's outpouring of anger.

"It's always getting more complicated, it's always hard, I don't want to do it any more, it disgusts me," Blanchet said. Macron said that France was not alone in opposing the accord. "Contrary to what many people think, France is not isolated and several countries are joining us," Macron said in Brazil, where he was attending a G20 summit. He said the agreement had been in the works for several decades and was "based on preconditions that are now obsolete".

Senegal's navy searching migrants

DAKAR (AP): As dawn arrived off the coast of Senegal, navy commander Assane Seye scanned the horizon. He is captain of the Niani, one of three new patrol vessels tasked with patrolling waters off the West African nation in search of a rapidly growing number of vulnerable boats carrying migrants on one of the world's deadliest migration routes.

Dozens of people pile onto the wooden fishing vessels known as pirogues and risk their lives on a journey toward Spain's Canary Islands, which have become the preferred landing point for West African migrants dreaming of a better life in Europe.

The Associated Press had rare access to one of the navy's night patrols. At a glance, Seye and his colleagues can tell whether a boat is out for fishing or for migration. The number of people crammed on board is their clue. "Since Jan. 1, 2024, the navy has saved 4,780 people," he said. That's up from 2023. Oumar Ndiaye, a lieutenant, said they intercepted a wooden boat with more than 200 people on board a month ago.

"There were a large number of people on this pirogue in really difficult conditions, who had already spent two or three days at sea," he said. Intercepting such boats is a humanitarian mission, he added. Seye said the navy

is obliged to get the migrants to safety, whether they call for help or not. "All that has to happen is a weather change, or one wrong move taken by the captain, for the pirogue to turn over and for people to be in danger," he said. The patrol teams bring the migrants on board and take them to shore.

Once there, they are free to walk away - and perhaps try again. But if they're from another country, they are repatriated. Until recently, the Mediterranean was the main migrant route from West Africa to Europe. But the European Union has sent money to Libya and Tunisia, popular departure points in North Africa, aiming to curb migration from there. Now the route via the Canary Islands is well-traveled. As of June, the number of "irregular" migrants landing in Spain was almost double that of the same period in 2023, according to the Spanish interior ministry. Spain registered nearly 25,000 such arrivals in the first half of 2024.

Earlier this year, the EU signed a 210 million euro deal with Mauritania, which neighbors Senegal, to stop smugglers from launching boats for Spain. Both the Mediterranean route and this one toward the Canary Islands can be deadly. While there is no accurate death toll because of the lack of information on departures from West

Africa, the Spanish migrant rights group Walking Borders estimates the victims on the Canary Island route are in the thousands this year alone.

Some boats in trouble have drifted across the Atlantic, with the bodies inside posing a mystery for those who find them. Migration is a contentious issue in Senegal. New President Barriou Diomaye Faye campaigned on promises of reforms to improve the living standards of ordinary Senegalese, in an effort to keep them at home. Those proposed reforms include renegotiating fishing permits for foreign countries - often accused of crowding out local fishermen - and securing a bigger share of Senegal's natural resources for the local population.

Over 60% of Senegalese people are under 25, and 90% work in informal jobs. They have watched for years as money made from natural resources has gone overseas. Senegal went to the polls in legislative elections that were called in September after the president dissolved the opposition-led parliament. Winning the majority in parliament would allow him to push through the reforms he promised. But some young people in Senegal remain undeterred by the risks posed by the journey to Europe. They say the economic situation in Senegal gives them no choice.

28 gang members killed in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE: The Haitian National Police have reported that 28 alleged gang members were killed by state security forces and armed residents in the latest clashes in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. A attack targeting the upscale suburb of Petion-Ville overlooking the capital had been announced over social media by Jimmy Cherizier, a former elite police officer turned leader of the powerful gang coalition calling itself Viv Ansanm (Haitian Creole for "Living Together").

The latest violence comes in the wake of the collapse of Haiti's government last week and more than three years of constant turmoil following the assassination of President Jovenel Moise in 2021. Cherizier has called for the resignation of the Presidential Transition Council (CPT) now leading the country. "The Viv Ansanm coalition will use all its means to achieve the departure of the CPT," Cherizier said. The police say that two vehicles carrying alleged gang members tried to enter Petion-Ville at 2am (08:00 GMT), with one blocking off the main road. In recent weeks, gangs have pushed into various previously safe districts to expand their control of the capital. Details about exactly what happened next are not clear, but Lionel Lazarre, deputy spokesman for the Haitian National Police, said that at least 28 suspected gang members were killed by law enforcement and vigilante groups set up in opposition to the gangs.

Reports from the ground depict a gruesome scene, with vigilantes decapitating the bodies of alleged gang members, cutting off limbs, and setting piles of bodies on fire with rubber tyres. Harsh reprisals by vigilantes have become a disturbing feature of the fight against the powerful gangs that violently control large swathes of the Haitian capital.

Last year, dozens of alleged gang members were stoned and burned alive in the capital. Criminal groups, which became more powerful amid the political turmoil following Moise's assassination, have fuelled widespread violence, instability, and the mass displacement of residents. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service announced that it would resume aid flights to the country following a weeklong pause that began after three commercial planes were struck by gunfire. — Aljazeera

Brazil arrests five suspects

BRASILIA (AFP): Five people have been arrested in Brazil for their suspected involvement in an alleged attempt to assassinate then President-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and his vice president in December 2022, according to police.

The police said in a statement that most of those investigated in the alleged coup attempt are military personnel with special forces training. "A detailed operational plan called 'Green and Yellow Dagger' was identified, which would be executed on December 15, 2022, aimed at the murder of the elected candidates for president and vice president," the statement said, in an apparent reference to the colours of the Brazilian flag.

This was the first time in the alleged coup attempt investigation that federal police have mentioned a plot to kill Lula and Vice President Geraldo Alckmin. Federal police officers carried out five arrest warrants, the police said without providing any names. The four "were arrested in Rio (de Janeiro), where they were participating in the security operation for the G20 leaders meeting", a federal police source told the AFP news agency, adding that a police officer was also taken into custody. Lula won the presidential election in October 2022, defeating the far-right incumbent Jair Bolsonaro, and took office in January last year. Thousands of Bolsonaro supporters stormed government buildings in Brasilia on January 8 last year.

Fury in Russia at missile move but Putin so far silent

MOSCOW (BBC): President Biden's decision to allow Ukraine to strike inside Russia with long-range missiles supplied by the US has sparked a furious response in Russia. "Departing US president Joe Biden... has taken one of the most provocative, uncalculated decisions of his administration, which risks catastrophic consequences," declared the website of the Russian government newspaper Rossiyskaya Gazeta.

Russian MP Leonid Slutsky, head of the pro-Kremlin Liberal-Democratic Party, predicted that the decision would "inevitably lead to a serious escalation, threatening serious consequences". Russian senator Vladimir Dzhabarov called it "an unprecedented step towards World War Three". Anger, yes. But no real surprise. Komsomolskaya Pravda, the pro-Kremlin tabloid, called it "a predictable escalation".

What really counts, though, is what Vladimir Putin calls it and how the Kremlin leader responds. He said nothing. But Russia's president has said plenty before. In recent months, the Kremlin has made its message to the West crystal clear: do not do this, do not remove restrictions on the use of your long-range weapons, do not allow Kyiv to strike deep into Russian territory with these missiles. In September President Putin warned that if this were allowed to happen, Moscow would view it as the "direct participation" of Nato countries in the Ukraine war. "This would mean that Nato countries... are fighting with Russia," he continued. The following month, the Kremlin leader announced imminent changes to the Russian nuclear doctrine, the document setting out the preconditions under which Moscow might decide to use a nuclear weapon.

This was widely interpreted as another less-than-subtle hint to America and Europe not to allow Ukraine to strike Russian territory with long-range missiles. Guessing Vladimir Putin's next moves is never easy. But he has dropped hints. Back



in June, at a meeting with the heads of international news agencies, Putin was asked: how would Russia react if Ukraine was given the opportunity to hit targets on Russian territory with weapons supplied by Europe? "First, we will, of course, improve our air defence systems. We will be destroying their missiles," President Putin replied. "Second, we believe that if someone is thinking it is possible to supply such weapons to a war zone to strike our territory and create problems for us, why can't we supply our weapons of the same class to those regions around the world where they will target sensitive facilities of the countries that are doing this to Russia?" In other words, arming Western adversaries to strike Western targets abroad is something Moscow has been considering.

In my recent interview with Alexander Lukashenko, the leader of Belarus, Putin's close ally seemed to confirm the Kremlin has been thinking along these lines. Mr Lukashenko told me he had discussed the subject at a recent meeting with Western officials. "I warned them. 'Guys, be careful with those long-range missiles,'"

Mr Lukashenko told me. "The Houthi [rebels] might come to Putin and ask for coastal weapons systems that can carry out terrifying strikes on ships. 'And if he gets his revenge on you for supplying long-range weapons to [President] Zelensky by supplying the Houthis with the Bastion missile system? What happens if an aircraft carrier is hit? A British or American one. What then?'" But some of the media reaction in Russia appeared designed to play things down.

The Russian armed forces had already [previously] intercepted ATACMS missiles during attacks on the Crimean shore," a military expert told the Izvestia newspaper, which went on to suggest that President-elect Trump might "revise" the decision. This is, to put it mildly, an unusual situation. In two months' time, President Biden will be out of office and Donald Trump will be in the White House. The Kremlin knows that President-elect Trump has been far more sceptical than President Biden about military assistance for Ukraine. Will that be a factor in Vladimir Putin's calculations as he formulates Russia's response?

Will Ukraine now strike inside Russia with UK-made weapons?

LONDON (BBC): Now that the US has given Ukraine the green light to use American-supplied long range missiles in Russia, what will the UK decide? Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has been pushing for permission from Washington to use the powerful US-made Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, to hit targets inside Russia.

UK defence officials for their part have been seeking US approval for Kyiv to use Storm Shadow missiles provided by Britain to hit military targets inside Russia. But London has not been willing to go it alone and had been waiting for the White House to change its mind, which it did. The change of US policy paves the way for Ukraine to use Storm Shadow with fewer restrictions - something Ukraine has been requesting for months. Storm Shadow missiles, and their French equivalent called SCALP, have been sent in limited quantities - low hundreds not thousands - to Ukraine and so far have only been used against targets inside its borders. Ukraine has already used them against Russian-occupied Crimea - for example hitting Russia's Black Sea naval headquarters at Sevastopol.

These missiles, which are launched from an aircraft, fly close to the speed of sound and carry highly explosive warheads making them an ideal weapon for penetrating Russian bunkers and ammunition stores.

Protracted discussions about firing Storm Shadow missiles deep into Russia were raised during July's Nato summit in Washington. Starmer insisted the missiles were to be used for defensive purposes but said "it's up to Ukraine to decide how to deploy it".

In a message on X at the time Zelensky wrote he had "learned about the permission to use Storm Shadow missiles against military targets in Russian territory", adding that he and Starmer had the "opportunity to discuss the practical implementation of this decision". But nothing actually happened after the summit. Zelensky made it clear the use of long-range missiles are a key part of his "Victory Plan".

He raised the issue again when he went to Downing Street to brief Starmer last month, in a meeting attended by the new Nato secretary general Mark Rutte. There was no change in policy, but Rutte said there was no legal reason to prevent Ukraine from striking Russia if the countries who supplied the missiles consented. UK Defence Secretary John Healey has worked hard to avoid to show any public disagreement with Washington. When recently asked about the matter in a joint press conference with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, Healey said such discussions in public would only help Russia.

The fear is that although Russian President Vladimir Putin's threats have turned out to be largely bluffs,

allowing Ukraine to hit targets deep inside Russia with Western-supplied missiles could provoke a major escalation. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov warned Putin had expressed such a move would put Nato "at war" with Russia - as such strikes would ultimately be carried out not by Ukraine but by the countries that give permission for such use of missiles. Professor Justin Bronk from defence think tank the Royal United Services Institute told BBC News it is "very likely" that US President Joe Biden's belated decision to allow long-range strikes with ATACMS ballistic missiles will also enable Storm Shadow to be used in at least the same way. "US objections will presumably have been dropped for them," he said.

"Russian threats are unlikely to be considered a significant deterrent at this stage, since Russia has threatened dire consequences - including allusions to nuclear attacks - repeatedly throughout the war at each stage when Western equipment has been supplied." But he said there is little reason to think that expanding the usable area for UK Storm Shadow "will make any difference" to Ukraine's ability to hit back at Russia. He added "most of the more critical targets such as fighter bombers on Russian air bases are likely beyond the range of these missiles in practical terms - and there will be a limited number of the missiles available after lengthy combat use of the system in the war to date."

Living in Delhi smog is like watching a dystopian film again and again

NEW DELHI (BBC): Winter has come to Delhi and with it, a familiar sense of gloom. The sky here is grey and there is a thick, visible blanket of smog. If you stay outdoors for more than a few minutes, you can almost taste ash. You will feel breathless within minutes if you try to run or even walk at a brisk pace in the smog.

Newspapers are back to using words like toxic, deadly and poisonous in their main headlines. Most schools have been shut and people have been advised to stay indoors - though those whose livelihoods depend on working outdoors can't afford to do so. Delhi's air quality score was somewhere between 1,200 and 1,500, according to different monitoring agencies. The acceptable limit is less than 100.

These scores measure the levels of particulate matter - called PM 2.5 and PM10 - in the air. These tiny particles can enter the lungs and cause a host of diseases. On social media, people have been expressing shock, disappointment and anguish that it's all happening again. Along with the gloom, there is a strong sense of déjà vu - like we have seen this all many times before in the past 15 years. My drive to the office seemed even worse.

And we have covered every twist and turn of this story in the past two decades. We have reported how pollution is making people sick and reducing their life expectancy here, here and here. We have reported on India's Supreme Court ordering the government to take urgent steps to

curb pollution every year. The court has done the same this year. We have reported on how pollution affects children the most and how their freedom is taken away here, here and here.

We have written about how politicians blame each other for the problem every year here, here and here. We have discussed the root cause of the problem here, here and here. We have also talked about solutions - both the ones that marginally worked and the ones that failed miserably - here, here and here. We have reported on how pollution affects the poorest the most and how many don't have a choice but to go out and work in the smog here, here and here.

Covering this story feels like watching (and being in) the same dystopian film every year - following the same characters, plot and script. The outcome is always the same - nothing changes. The parks are empty again - people, particularly children and the elderly, have been told to stay indoors. Those who must work - daily-wage labourers, rickshaw pullers, delivery riders - are coughing but still going out. Hospitals are seeing an increasing number of people coming in with respiratory problems. And amid all this, we are back to the same question again - why does nothing change? The simple answer is that solving Delhi's air problem requires monumental efforts and coordination. The sources of the problem are many.

One of them is the practice of farmers burning crop remains to clear their fields quickly to sow seeds for

the next yield.

This mostly happens in the neighbouring states of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The smoke from the farm fires engulfs Delhi every winter and hangs low in the atmosphere as wind speeds reduce during winter months. But farmers can't be entirely blamed for this because this is the cheapest way of clearing fields. Different governments have talked about providing machines and financial incentives to stop crop burning, but very little has happened on the ground. Delhi itself produces a huge chunk of the pollution - emission from vehicles, construction and factories.

Every year, in the winter months, people get angry, journalists write and produce reports, politicians blame each other and courts fume - until we do it all over again the next year. A public health emergency like this would spark mass protests in most democracies. But the anger in Delhi is mostly limited to social media.

Activists say the reason is that pollution doesn't cause immediate problems for most people. Ingesting high levels of PM2.5 deteriorates health slowly. A Lancet study found that pollution led to more than 2.3 million premature deaths in India in 2019. And then there is the class divide. People who can afford to temporarily leave the city do that, those who can buy air purifiers do that, and those who can vent on social media do that. The rest, who don't have these options, just go about their lives.

US recognises Venezuelan opp leader as president-elect

WASHINGTON: The United States has recognised Venezuelan opposition leader Edmundo Gonzalez as the country's rightful president-elect, following a July election in which President Nicolas Maduro was accused by his domestic opponents of falsely claiming victory.

The US has also cast doubt on Maduro's claims of success in the election, which pre-election polls had shown him on track to lose by a large margin. Maduro's government has refused calls to release data that could confirm his victory. "The Venezuelan people spoke resoundingly on July 28 and made Edmundo Gonzalez-Urrutia the president-elect," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a social media post.

"Democracy demands respect for the will of the voters." The US and numerous governments across Latin America

have refused to recognise Maduro's victory, widely viewed with scepticism and followed by a harsh post-election crackdown by the Venezuelan government. The country's opposition, which faced prosecution of several top candidates in the months preceding the July 28 election, has also collected tally sheets purporting to show that they beat Maduro by a two-to-one margin.

It remains to be seen what impact, if any, the recognition of Gonzales by the administration of US President Joe Biden will have.

The opposition leader has fled to Spain but has said he would return to the country on January 10, when the new presidential term begins. While the Biden administration had previously stated that the opposition won the most votes, it had stopped short of recognising Gonzalez as the country's leader, possibly out

of a desire to find a diplomatic resolution to the impasse with the Maduro government.

Venezuela has faced growing diplomatic isolation following the contested election. While Washington has long had icy relations with Caracas, and even taken steps to overthrow previous governments, regional leaders on previously amicable terms with Maduro have grown more impatient with the government. "I think the elections were a mistake," left-wing Colombian President Gustavo Petro said, adding that they had not been "free".

In August, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who had previously emphasised the need for an easing of sanctions against Venezuela which have contributed to the country's economic turmoil, said the Maduro government was a "very unpleasant regime". — Aljazeera

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Jordan, Egypt at forefront

WITH no signs that Israel's onslaughts against Gaza and Lebanon will relent any time soon and members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's extremist coalition calling for the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, countries in the Middle East should band together. Two of the most important countries in this fight are Egypt and Jordan. The question is, what are Arabs and the countries in the region going to do? When Netanyahu and his crowd of zealots mention annexation, they probably have eviction in mind. The eviction of Palestinians is a plan that Israel has regularly touted during its Gaza campaign. However, Egypt was firm and did not allow Palestinians to cross into Sinai. Egypt knows full well that, if the Gazans left for Egypt as refugees, they would never go back. Therefore, Israel's plan to vacate the Palestinians from Gaza did not work, despite the massive bombardment, the genocide and the decapitation of the Hamas leadership.

Netanyahu is emboldened. He feels he is closer to achieving the dream of kicking the Palestinians out of Palestine and creating a "Greater Israel" from the river to the sea. In order to achieve that, he needs to evict the Palestinians of Gaza into Egypt and the Palestinians of the West Bank into Jordan. Hence, it is key that both these countries hold their ground. This is why the entire Arab and Muslim worlds should support them. They are the first line of defense against the extremist Zionist project that Netanyahu is leading.

There are glimpses of hope that the region will take a unified stand against this hideous expansionist project. Under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh last week hosted an Arab and Muslim summit to discuss Gaza. The Kingdom condemned Israel for conducting a genocide against the Palestinian people. The summit reiterated the Palestinian people's right to statehood and a dignified life. This unified front should materialize in supporting both Jordan and Egypt. It is important to make sure they do not succumb to any pressure to open their borders and allow evictions from Gaza or the West Bank. Recent history shows us that Palestinians who leave are never allowed to go back. Any eviction will mean more generations of refugees. Palestinians and the Arab states have learned the lessons of 1948 and 1967. The coming year should not be one of another mass eviction.

The countries that will bear the brunt of the pressure will be Jordan and Egypt. However, Arab and Islamic states should put their foot down. They should explain that another wave of Palestinian refugees will not be tolerated. They will not accept another wave of refugees in return for some perks from the US. The silver lining is that President-elect Donald Trump is not afraid to take firm positions on issues. If he sees that Netanyahu's approach will not work and might lead to a regional conflict, he will look for another way. Trump is more likely to pressure and be firm with Netanyahu than Joe Biden or Kamala Harris. This is the time to give Egypt and Jordan maximum support to hold their ground, so that they can resist any pressure from Israel to accept refugees. Arab and Islamic states should realize that the decisions they make today will affect many generations to come. The region is at a junction. We either allow Israel unbridled expansionism or stand together and establish a framework for a sustainable peace.

Head-of-state diplomacy

THE multiple bilateral meetings between Chinese President Xi Jinping and leaders from different countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Germany and France, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro on Monday and Tuesday highlight once again the key role head-of-state diplomacy plays in China's international relations.

The positive and warm responses of the foreign leaders to President Xi's call to maintain healthy bilateral ties between China and their respective countries on the basis of mutual respect, win-win cooperation and equality demonstrate the importance they attach to relations with China as the world's second-largest economy and a responsible major country dedicated to world peace and development.

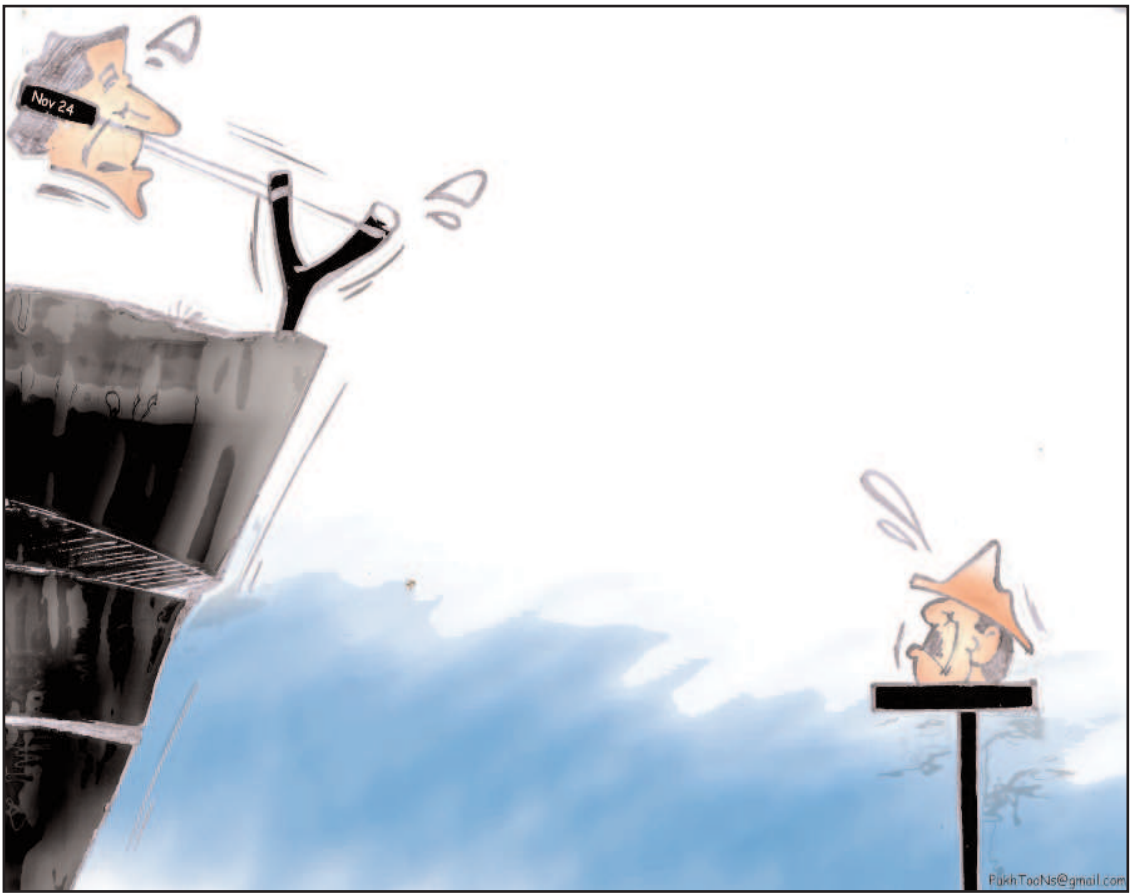
Their responses also underscore the broad common interests between their countries and China in both the economy and trade spheres and in addressing common challenges. The amicable atmosphere of the meetings and the broad common understandings and consensus that have been reached on not only deepening win-win cooperation but also the necessity of addressing differences through negotiations and dialogues should drive home the message that, in these leaders' eyes, China is by no means a threat to their countries, as some Western China-bashing politicians peddle, but a cooperative and friendly partner, and that China's development by no means brings risks and uncertainties, but rather opportunities and a source of stability.

The proposal China has made on building a community with a shared future for humankind, which it has been acting on accordingly, the global initiatives for development, security and civilization it has put forward, the neutral and responsible stance it adopts in its approach to burning issues and its hallmark Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which are the cornerstones of China's diplomacy, make the country a reliable and responsible partner to both developed and developing countries.

The face-to-face talks with Xi have provided the foreign leaders with a firsthand understanding that what China is striving for is common development, world peace and stability, a just and fair global governance system and an equal and orderly multipolar world. In the process, China will address both the domestic and international imperatives, while firmly safeguarding its national sovereignty, security and development interests. It is to be hoped the foreign leaders have been convinced that the smearing of China by some is unfounded and the country will always commit to openness and inclusiveness, and consolidate and expand its global network of partnerships. China will put forward more Chinese proposals, contribute more Chinese wisdom, and provide more public goods that serve to promote world peace and development.

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It is time to support Pacific Ocean stewards

Susana Waqainabete-Tuisee

LAST month, Mexico and the United States experienced yet another devastating hurricane. In 12 hours, Hurricane Milton went from a Category 1 to a Category 5 storm – the most extreme level there is. How? Sustained ocean warming, due to human-caused climate change, is creating so much ocean energy that storms are happening faster, and at much higher intensities, causing billion-dollar hurricane events as frequently as every few weeks.

The oceans, which cover more than 70 percent of the Earth's surface, are rapidly changing – with devastating consequences for global economies, coastal communities, and the lives of millions of people. In the Pacific Islands – my home – this reality is felt especially hard on an annual basis. Despite this region contributing the least to global emissions driving climate and ocean change, we are among the most impacted by human-altered climate.

Sea-surface temperatures in the southwest Pacific have risen three times faster than the global average, with marine heatwaves doubling in frequency, intensity, and duration since 1980. Rising sea levels are eroding our land and pushing the ocean into our homes. Climate change is also affecting fisheries, which are a major source of income for our nations. The sustainable industrial fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean, which provide over half of the world's tuna catch, are starting to collapse as tuna populations are moving east.

This could lead to losses of fishing access fees of up to \$140m annually by 2050, robbing Pacific economies of up to 17 percent of their annual government revenue, pushing already vulnerable economies to the brink. But the impact of climate change on the Pacific Ocean is not just concerning to its inhabitants. The world's oceans absorb a third of the planet's atmospheric carbon, so like the Amazon, the largest forest and lungs of the planet, the Pacific – the largest and deepest ocean – should also be understood to be the

lungs of our blue planet.

The urgency is undeniable: without immediate intervention, the Pacific will face an ecological and economic catastrophe in the next 30 to 40 years. In the face of these growing challenges and threats, Pacific Islanders are not waiting for the world to act. Instead, we are leading. Often referred to as "small island developing states (SIDS)", we know our

30 countries have shown that marine protections can boost both fishing and tourism revenues.

In some cases, profits have reached billions of dollars, proof that conservation and economic growth can go together. It is undeniable that it is in society's enlightened self-interest to support the creation of protected areas to sustain marine life, local livelihoods and economic inter-

allowing for sustainable activities like fishing and tourism.

Ocean management in the Pacific embraces cultural principles of Indigenous communities based on values of respect for others, devotion to family and deep appreciation for traditional stewardship in preserving natural resources for future benefits. Sustainable financing of such integrated systems is critical to ensure lasting impact. Across the Pacific, countries like Niue, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands are also championing traditional ocean management practices, proving that Indigenous knowledge is vital to sustaining the health of our oceans.

The plan will establish nine new fully protected MPAs while incorporating a network of community-led marine-managed areas and traditional fisheries reserves. This initiative will safeguard Samoa's ocean for future generations while allowing for sustainable activities like fishing and tourism. Ocean management in the Pacific embraces cultural principles of Indigenous communities based on values of respect for others, devotion to family and deep appreciation for traditional stewardship in preserving natural resources for future benefits. Sustainable financing of such integrated systems is critical to ensure lasting impact.

To scale and continue these efforts, the Pacific Islands need global support. Despite their leadership, the Pacific Islands receive only one percent of global climate funding, with even less reaching Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), who are essential to the sustainability of these efforts. Samoa's marine plan requires significant investment to succeed. It will impact local ocean users who rely on these waters for their livelihoods, so to ensure sustainable stewardship, we are developing a financing framework to support alternative livelihoods, capacity building, and traditional marine management practices. This is where the international community must step in.

Larger nations, those responsible for most of the emissions driving climate change, must partner with Pacific Island nations to fix the crisis they created. The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) which is currently under way, presents a critical opportunity for countries to pledge their support for Pacific Island nations' progressive efforts to deliver on their commitment to protect the ocean. The time for action is now. By investing in Pacific-led solutions, the world can ensure the sustainability of our shared ocean and protect the Pacific for the benefit of us all. The Pacific is doing its part to safeguard our ocean, but we cannot go it alone. Now is the moment to act – let us seize it.

Aljazeera

ests. The people of Samoa reaffirmed this belief by launching a Marine Spatial Plan on October 24. The plan aims to protect 30 percent of their ocean space by 2030 while ensuring sustainable management of the entire 120,000-square-kilometre (46,300-square-mile) area.

This ambitious strategy, built through extensive consultation with the Samoan people, reflects their commitment to balancing conservation, livelihoods, and economic development and is a key part of their national ocean strategy policy framework. The plan will establish nine new fully protected MPAs while incorporating a network of community-led marine-managed areas and traditional fisheries reserves. This initiative will safeguard Samoa's ocean for future generations while

Settler monster stealing Jerusalem's authentic tale

Daoud Kuttab

AS diplomatic envoys and politicians are trying to bring a ceasefire to Lebanon and possibly then to Gaza, the right-wing Israeli government is using this preoccupation with the north and the south to strengthen itself in the center. Jerusalem, the jewel in the crown for the Palestinians, is witnessing an unprecedented and largely unreported campaign to make the Old City and the nearby surroundings more Israeli. While Israeli religious fanatics are looking to set foot in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound (possibly by taking over the Bab Al-Rahma Mosque area), the bigger campaigns are happening in Silwan and Musrara.

Silwan, which is the closest highly populated Palestinian housing area to Al-Aqsa, has been a target of the settler movement for years. Palestinian homes and centers are being demolished and replaced by Jewish settlers and institutions. Naturally, with every house taken over by the settlers, an army of guards, cameras and fences are created, taking over even more property.

In Silwan, Israel has delineated the nearest built-up area to the Old City of Jerusalem, Al-Bustan, and marked it for takeover using a variety of legal and administrative means. Among the homes and centers that the Israelis have demolished using a different legal justification was a cultural center that the French government had been supporting for years. Last week's destruction of the center brought a quick and strong French response. French Foreign Ministry spokesperson Christophe Lemoine expressed concerns over the action, calling it "part of the Israeli colonization policy which is illegal under international law and threatens the two-state solution and the status of Jerusalem."

Another location that has been the target of Israeli settler activity is the Musrara shopping area just outside the Damascus Gate. This area received a jolt when the Israeli authorities evicted a small coffee shop that had been operating in the same location for decades. Castro Cafe in the Musrara neighborhood might not have been known to many Jerusalemites, although they must have passed by it on their way to or from the Old City. This modest cafe catered to customers who were either passing workers or people waiting for someone to call them to do a quick job. However, for many, it has now become symbolic of the Palestinians' struggle for the city's identity and its tolerant, pluralistic character, as opposed to the monolithic, intolerant character that dominates.

Mohammed Awda Castro had owned the small business in the Musrara neighborhood since 1954, when he rented it from the Jordanian government, which ruled East Jerusalem at the time.

Castro says that, in 2010, an eviction order was issued by the Israeli authorities. After he appealed the eviction, the Israeli Central Court issued an order allowing him to remain, while denying him the tenant protection rights that apply to Jerusalem. But settlers, along with the Israeli authorities, continued to go to court to evict him from the cafe and they finally got what they wanted when the Supreme Court issued a decision to evict him.

This decision came after the General Custodian saw an opportunity to evict Castro because he was carrying out renovation work. With time and general weather conditions, the cafe's walls had become dilapidated. Without realizing he needed to get a permit to fix the wall, Castro fell afoul of a legal loophole. Him carrying out renovation work without permission was considered sufficient justification to request his eviction.

After several legal battles, the Israeli High Court approved the eviction decision and, on Sunday, Israeli police came to the small cafe and took away all its contents in trucks. It is unclear who will take over the location, but the likely new tenant will be a settler, causing yet another point of provocation for all the other shops in the area.

It is known that Musrara, which is considered the first entrance to the Old City, is a historical neighborhood. It is considered to be one of the first neighborhoods built outside the walls of the Old City after the Ottoman Empire allowed it in 1830. So, its buildings are characterized by the Ottoman architectural style, like in other neighborhoods that were built outside the Old City, such as Katamon and Sheikh Jarrah.

In the Roman era, the area was used as a slave market. It was also called the Aqbat Al-Manzel Road in the Ottoman period, as it connected Jerusalem and Hebron. The Castro Cafe will not be the last of the shops, homes and centers to disappear from the areas outside the city walls. Israel is replacing an entire Jerusalemite Palestinian neighborhood with Jewish settlers.

Along with the campaign against Silwan, the Israelis are rushing through their actions while the world is busy with the ceasefire talks in Lebanon and the war on Gaza. With these actions, it is not only physical buildings that will disappear, but also the story of a city struggling over its narrative. Jerusalem will lose its authentic tale in the face of this monster coming toward it with the clear aim of changing it, literally under Palestinian feet and in front of their own eyes. The overarching Israeli goals are completely divorced from the natural development that most cities witness. The lesson is primarily aimed at the Palestinian people of Jerusalem – namely that the city they would like to see as their capital will never be theirs.

Arab News

Global threat of Russia's international partnerships

Nigel Gould-Davies

THOUSANDS of North Korean troops have begun to engage Ukrainian forces in Russia's Kursk region, and may soon enter Ukraine. This astonishing development amplifies an alarming trend: Russia's war needs are driving it to depend on revisionist states around the world. This has far-reaching implications for Western security and international stability.

When President Putin invaded Ukraine in February 2022, he expected a short victorious war and did not prepare Russia's economy or society for the long uncertain one that it unleashed. Belated mobilization, though significant, is inadequate. To fill the gap, Russia has procured dozens of ballistic missiles, thousands of military drones and millions of artillery shells from North

Korea and Iran. China is providing military intelligence and dual-use military goods and hosts a joint production facility for long-range attack drones.

There are three ways in which these developments are destabilizing. First, by providing Russia with materiel – and, in the case of North Korea, men – these countries prolong Europe's biggest war since 1945 and make a Russian victory more likely. This would not only be disastrous for Western security but would embolden its adversaries to seek and exploit other areas of weakness.

Second, Russia is providing quid pro quos that enhance the capabilities of its partners. It has vetoed UN monitoring of sanctions on North Korea and supports its long-range missile development. Western intelligence officials fear Russia is providing nuclear technology to

Iran. Russia is conducting increasingly aggressive joint air and naval patrols with China – and has begun to violate Japanese air space. Russia's support will shift regional balances of power in favor of Western adversaries.

Third, such cooperation is not only destabilizing three volatile theatres – Europe, the Middle East and East Asia – but is binding them together. Ties that were once pragmatic, transactional and limited are hardening into alignments of deep common interest that are being formalized in treaties. In June Russia signed a mutual defence agreement with North Korea. It is preparing to sign a major new partnership treaty with Iran. Two Sino-Russian state visits in two years appear to have quelled much of China's unease about the war. NATO has

declared it a "decisive enabler" of the conflict.

A new form of global confrontation is taking shape between two very different alliance systems, one shaped by American power and the other by Russian weakness. American power protects smaller states through long-established commitments to Europe, Israel, South Korea and Taiwan. Russian weakness is forging close ties with states – two of them, North Korea and Iran, much smaller than Russia – that are hostile to America's allies and share a broader revisionist agenda.

The West urgently needs a strategy to meet this challenge. It must shed its illusions of a compromise peace in Ukraine, and its reluctance to mobilise its huge latent power and do three things. First, the West must reframe its under-

standing of this new geopolitics. In the past four years several European states, and the EU itself, have enshrined an "Indo-Pacific tilt" in strategies that sometimes amount to little more than greater trade opportunities and a few port visits. This is now being dwarfed by Asia's lethal "Europe tilt", at Russia's behest, that threatens continental security.

Second, the West must confront, this threat, not ignore it. Countries that arm Russia for war have faced no real consequences. That must change. This means mounting a far more assertive campaign of sanctions and other instruments to stem the flow of support to Russia. The key will be China which is both Russia's most important partner and – given its interdependence with the West – still the least committed. This cries out for a

firm and creative diplomacy to press China to rethink its support for Russia.

Third, the West must scale up its support for Ukraine. This is not only because Russia, with foreign support, is gaining the upper hand on the battlefield, but because the longer the war continues the closer these ties will become. In the worst case, a single serious incident – a Franz Ferdinand moment – could trigger mutual commitments in rival alliance systems that unite three theatres of conflict into one. The clearest way to avert this is to defeat Russia.

The risks grow as Russia and its partners strengthen each other without fear of consequences. There are no clear limits to how much further this will go. But nor is there any sign that the West has the leadership to respond.

The Moscow Times

What the Arakan Army’s rise means for Rohingya

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

THE Arakan Army is emerging as the dominant force in Myanmar’s Rakhine State, a dramatic shift that could redefine the region’s political landscape. Over the past year, this group has not only entrenched itself militarily, but it has also sought to carve out a role as a governing authority. This transformation, while significant, brings both opportunities and challenges for Rakhine’s people, including the long-persecuted Rohingya minority.

The Arakan Army’s military achievements are striking. By mid-October, it had established control over an estimated two-thirds of Rakhine State, including critical areas such as the state capital Sittwe, the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone and the Myanmar military’s strategically important Western Command base. This consolidation is underpinned by the creation of nine military zones across the state and the deployment of thousands of troops in allied territories. This rise from obscurity is remarkable. Founded in 2009 with just 26 members, the Arakan Army now fields a force of about 40,000 troops. Its rapid growth reflects both its military prowess and its ability to position itself as a credible alternative to Myanmar’s junta.

Yet, despite its successes on the battlefield, it faces significant governance challenges. The International Crisis Group notes that, while the Arakan Army has established de facto control over much of Rakhine, it lacks the capacity to address the state’s fundamental socioeconomic needs. The coming years will test whether it can translate its military dominance into effective governance.

The Arakan Army has already taken steps toward governance. Even before the 2021 coup, it managed administrative and judiciary services in parts of Rakhine. Since gaining more territory, it has sought to establish legitimacy by engaging with diverse communities. For instance, it invited Rohingya representatives into its governance mechanisms and played a leading role in post-

Cyclone Mocha recovery efforts in May 2023.

These moves are critical for a state as fragmented as Rakhine, where ethnic and communal divisions run deep. By fostering inclusion, the Arakan Army has an opportunity to unify Rakhine’s communities and build a foundation for sustainable governance. However, its track record is mixed.

For instance, it invited Rohingya representatives into its governance mechanisms and played a leading role in post-Cyclone Mocha recovery efforts in May 2023. These moves are critical for a state as fragmented as Rakhine, where ethnic and communal divisions run deep. By fostering inclusion, the Arakan Army has an opportunity to unify Rakhine’s communities and build a foundation for sustainable governance. However, its track record is mixed. In April and May, during the final stages of its offensive against junta forces, the group committed atrocities against civilians, including the shelling, looting and burning of Rohingya neighborhoods in Buthidaung Township.

In April and May, during the final stages of its offensive against junta forces, the group committed atrocities against civilians, including the shelling, looting and burning of Rohingya neighborhoods in Buthidaung Township. These actions, which forced thousands to flee, underscore the tension between its aspirations and its actions on the ground.

The rise of the Arakan Army also changes the calculus for the Rohingya, who have historically borne the brunt of Myanmar’s ethnic strife. Its inclusive overtures, such as engaging Rohingya repre-

sentatives, are promising. However, these gestures must be accompanied by genuine efforts to protect Rohingya communities and ensure their rights. The group’s actions during the Buthidaung offensive highlight the precarious position of the Rohingya. While the Arakan Army may view the Rohingya as a potential constituency, its willingness to commit vio-

lence against them suggests that ethnic hierarchies and power struggles still dominate Rakhine’s politics. For the Rohingya, the group’s rise presents both risks and opportunities. On the one hand, its dominance could offer a respite from the systematic persecution they have faced under the junta. On the other hand, its ability to govern inclusively and protect minority rights remains unproven. As the Arakan Army transitions from a rebel force to a governing authority, it will face immense challenges. Rakhine is one of Myanmar’s

poorest states, with high levels of poverty, displacement and ethnic tension. Addressing these issues requires more than military strength; it demands a commitment to inclusive governance, economic development and reconciliation.

The group’s relationship with the Rohingya will be a litmus test for its governance. If it can protect Rohingya communities, integrate them into its governance structures and address their grievances, it could pave the way for a more stable and inclusive Rakhine. However, continued violence and exclusion will only deepen the state’s divisions. The international community has a role to play in shaping Rakhine’s future. Diplomatic engagement with the Arakan Army should prioritize the protection of minority rights and the establishment of inclusive governance. Humanitarian assistance should be directed toward addressing the state’s urgent socioeconomic needs, particularly in Rohingya communities.

At the same time, accountability for human rights abuses must remain a priority. Its actions in Buthidaung demonstrate the risks of unchecked power. Holding all actors accountable, including the Arakan Army, is essential for building a foundation of trust and justice in Rakhine. The group’s rise marks a new chapter in Rakhine’s troubled history. Its military dominance offers an opportunity to break free from decades of junta rule, but its ability to govern inclusively and address the state’s deep-seated challenges remains uncertain. For the Rohingya, its ascent is a double-edged sword, offering hope for change but also exposing them to new risks.

The road ahead for the Arakan Army and Rakhine is fraught with challenges. Success will depend on the group’s willingness to transcend its origins as a rebel force and embrace its responsibilities as a governing authority. For the sake of Rakhine’s diverse communities, including the Rohingya, this transition cannot come soon enough.

The rational solution

Fabio Massimo Parenti

THE outbreak of the crisis in Ukraine, followed by the crisis in the Middle East, has amplified the Cold War mentality and the fallacious logic of confrontation between opposing blocs. Suffering most from the consequences of such an approach are the peoples of Europe, who are forced to make major sacrifices in their daily lives to endure the results of many sanctions, tariffs and trade restrictions targeting Russia. Rightly, many observers have defined the European Union’s sanctions and tariffs as having a "boomerang" effect, affecting firstly peoples of EU member states. These measures are all unnecessary, enacted by certain European leaders and at the mercy of the United States, with the sole aim of hitting and harming Russia.

The EU must abandon such logic as soon as possible and take another path — dialogue. When trade ties between major powers present critical issues, they can only be resolved by talking and dialogue in order to reach compromises. Any other solution, all the more so at a historical stage when the global order is shifting from a unipolar world to a multipolar architecture, is only conducive to tensions and misunderstandings. In all this, EU-China relations play a significant role in promoting stability, peace and security not only in Europe but also in broader Eurasia.

It is incumbent on us to consider the fears of European citizens, who in recent years have been suffering the negative consequences of at least four unprecedented challenges: a large-scale war in Eastern Europe; internal polarization within the EU between individual governments; the breakdown of economic ties with Russia; and a worrying start to a trade war with China. The result of these contingencies coincided with a combination of economic deterioration and political instability.

European competitiveness, downsized and torn apart by nefarious political dynamics, much more in line with the needs of the US than those of the European people, has also suffered. For example, the recent closure policies implemented by Brussels have undermined European imports of gas from Russia (thus altering the energy plans of most European economic powers such as Germany), damaged the automotive sector, with tariffs that prevent the continent’s auto giants from working with their Chinese counterparts. Moreover, most importantly, they are dumping all the costs on the shoulders of the people.

European competitiveness will not regain vigor by implementing serious and urgent measures such as tariffs and duties. On the contrary, it is crucial for the continent’s industries to break out of the so-called middle technology trap

into a dangerous and counterproductive trade war with China.

It only takes a look at the numbers to see that China and the EU cannot and should not decouple, much less fight a trade war. In 2023, despite the global trade crisis, China-EU trade reached \$783 billion, with trade averaging nearly \$1.5 million per minute. The stock of bilateral investment between China and the EU exceeds \$250 billion, and companies on both sides continue to view each other’s markets favorably. According to the Business Confidence Survey 2024 published by

The EU could only watch helplessly the capital flight to the US and, more recently, was forced again by its US partner to plunge into a dangerous and counterproductive trade war with China. It only takes a look at the numbers to see that China and the EU cannot and should not decouple, much less fight a trade war. In 2023, despite the global trade crisis, China-EU trade reached \$783 billion, with trade averaging nearly \$1.5 million per minute. The stock of bilateral investment between China and the EU exceeds \$250 billion, and companies on both sides continue to view each other’s markets favorably.

but little or nothing will have a major effect without first shaping a clear vision for foreign economic relations. A vision that should not be exclusively on the demand of the US, but, on the contrary, should abandon any Cold War mentality and engage in dialogue with everyone: including and above all with China.

Not least because the US, in the economic sphere, plays its own game. A game within which all others — including Europe — are considered strategic rivals. Put another way, in the economic sphere the US considers the EU a competitor, and this will most likely be even better understood when US President-elect, Donald Trump, takes office. He may also impose sanctions on US imports from Europe (as he has repeatedly threatened to do in the election campaign). Not only that. Recently, under the Joe Biden-led administration, the US has adopted legislation, such as the US CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, both of 2022, which respectively authorized \$280 billion in new funding to promote domestic research and semiconductor manufacturing, as well as tax incentives to develop the clean energy and manufacturing sectors. The EU could only watch helplessly the capital flight to the US and, more recently, was forced again by its US partner to plunge

the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, 40 percent of European companies surveyed plan to make China one of their top three destinations, unchanged from 2023. At the same time, the 2023 Annual Report of the China Chamber of Commerce to the EU shows that more than 80 percent of surveyed Chinese companies expect to improve their business in Europe.

Given the delicate international situation, the EU should not listen to US sirens urging it to isolate itself economically from China. Europe’s major export-oriented economies — and Italy is one of them — need export markets, and China, from this perspective, is the largest export market for many large European companies (which also need access to China’s vast manufacturing base).

China and the EU should address the real needs of their companies, resolve crises through dialogue and negotiation, and firmly promote international cooperation to address challenges, jointly promoting multilateralism and global governance. The EU’s competitiveness will shine again the moment Brussels stops flattening itself to Washington’s positions and, on the contrary, becomes the bearer of the interests of the peoples of Europe.

The China Daily

With Trump heading for White House, Democrats must learn these lessons

Owen Jones

DID the Democrats really lose because they were too “woke”, too obsessed with minorities, too radical? After defeat, there always comes the battle for the narrative about why the party lost. As the US left is rediscovering, the most influential voices tend to be those platformed by corporate media outlets whose siren cry is always to march rightwards. And yet even the New York Times concluded that one of the main problems was in fact Kamala Harris’s “Wall Street-approved economic pitch”, which her brother-in-law — chief legal officer at Uber — reportedly helped craft, and which “fell flat”.

The liberal order, always riddled with hypocrisies and illusions, is collapsing, partly because mainstream liberals cannot be trusted to defend liberalism: they are set to conclude that Trumpism must be defeated through imitation. But here’s a polling fact that cannot be ignored. In the past 50 years, the number of Americans who believe the Democrats “represent the working class” has plummeted, while the numbers who believe they “stand up for marginalised groups” has dramatically risen, now exceeding the former.

This is what happens if you lack a convincing economic vision to uplift the working class — in all its diversity — as a whole. Even if your commitment to minority rights is superficial and rhetorical, your rightwing opponents will tell Americans that your interest is reserved for “marginalised groups”

rather than “the average Joe”. Or as one Republican attack ad put it: “Kamala is for they/them; President Trump is for you.”

This is a feature, not a bug, with the Democrats. Since the civil rights era, they have been a coalition including a chunk of corporate America, a shrinking labour movement and minorities. This cross-class alliance stopped them offering European-style social democracy, which would mean hiking taxes on their wealthy backers. In fact, under the Democratic administrations of John F Kennedy and Lyndon B Johnson in the 60s, hefty tax cuts benefited big businesses and affluent Americans the most. While the tax burden of the average US family nearly doubled between the 1950s and the election of Ronald Reagan, corporate taxes as a share of gross federal receipts fell by a third.

This means that the big government spending projects of those eras, like the anti-poverty measures of the Great Society, were largely paid for by middle-income Americans. This encouraged a backlash against the beneficiaries of the programmes, demonised as the undeserving Black poor. In this context, white American workers became increasingly associated with conservatism, as converts to Richard Nixon’s Republicans and the segregationist George Wallace. “The typical worker — from construction craftsman to shoe clerk,” wrote New York Times labour correspondent AH Raskin in 1968,

“has become probably the most reactionary political force in the country.” But as the working-class writer Andrew Levison wrote a few years later: “There is nothing strange in the fact that workers began deserting liberalism once liberalism so decisively deserted them.”

There are obvious differences today. The previous backlash against liberal failures paved the way to Reaganism, which did at least offer a coherent vision for society. Trumpism, on the other hand, is more emblematic of what the American literary critic Lionel Trilling said of US conservatism in 1950, that it was a series of “irritable mental gestures”, defined by fiery opposition to perceived progressive sensibilities rather than a cogent plan for what the US could look like. Policies that favour wealthier Americans — rather than many of the struggling Americans who voted for Trump — piggyback on this emotive backlash.

But Kamala Harris made her dividing lines abortion rights and the defence of democracy: crucial questions, no doubt, but not answers to the struggles of workers on stagnating wages. Trumpism, on the other hand, attempted to vocalise the rage many Americans felt about their difficult circumstances, and sought to portray the Democrats as driven by championing demonised minorities instead, such as migrants and transgender people. That Harris did no such thing in her campaign is irrel-

evant: the lack of a compelling cut-through message on bread-and-butter issues allowed the Republicans to “flood the zone with shit”, as Republican strategist Steve Bannon puts it.

The answer, then, is not to throw minorities under the presidential Cadillac. That will alienate progressive Americans, and given Trump won a similar number of votes as 2020 — while Democrats haemorrhaged natural supporters who stayed home — this would be a political as well as a moral failure. It is also true that the majority of citizens in any country will never be driven by a desire to improve the lot of minorities, and nor should the left wish to focus only on the most marginalised.

Instead, an economic populism that champions the interests of the American majority — irrespective of gender, race, religion, sexual or gender identity — will drown out claims that the Democrats care only for the marginalised “other”. Instead of the Democrats being drawn into toxic rows about the existence of transgender people, the Republicans would be forced on the defensive instead: as Reagan once wisely put it, in politics, “If you’re explaining, you’re losing”. The Democrats need a plan that unites the shared interests of low- and middle-income Americans in an age of crisis and turmoil. As for the siren voices demanding a corporate-friendly Democratic party which refuses to champion minorities: the voters were just offered that, and it lost.

The Guardian

Our politics could not be more different

Diane Abbott & Edward Leigh

FREE votes on conscience matters are comparatively rare in the UK parliament. But they are almost always about issues of once-in-a-generation social change. Laws such as this need the utmost care because of the risk of unintended consequences. This is especially the case with the current assisted dying bill.

Writing from opposite benches as the father and mother of the house, our concerns are twofold, relating both to the process regarding the bill and its likely practice once implemented. Regarding the process, we have seen our fair share of bills over the years: some good, some bad. Whatever the merits of a bill, laws are always better if there is proper scrutiny and plenty of expert advice has been sought. This is particularly the case with private members’ bills, which often do not enjoy the independent scrutiny that government lawyers can offer. When MPs last voted on this issue less than a decade ago, in 2015, Rob Marris published his private member’s bill a full seven weeks before MPs voted on the proposal at second reading, providing time for scrutiny and debate. In contrast, Kim Leadbeater’s bill was published just 18 days ahead of second reading.

The inadequacy of this timescale is heightened by the unprecedented number of new MPs. Parliament will have sat for just 12 weeks by the time MPs vote on what is, quite literally, a matter of life and death; many MPs are still relatively unfamiliar with normal parliamentary procedure, let alone for private members’ bills, of which this will be the first in this parliament. There is more than a suspicion that the pressure groups behind this proposed change have sought to take advantage of an inexperienced new parliament. Either way, the flawed process has been lamentable and wholly unacceptable for a matter of such importance.

It is not only parliamentary scrutiny that is being limited. There are significant legal and practical issues relating to assisted suicide. Last week, the former president of the high court family division, Sir James Munby, published detailed analysis of the bill’s judicial safeguards and concluded they fall “lamentably short”. He said: “Only those who believe implicitly in judicial omniscience and infallibility ... can possibly have any confidence in the efficacy of what is proposed.” Equally importantly, more than 3,000 med-

ical professionals have expressed concerns about the effect on their profession, were assisted dying to be made legal.

But our worry about this bill is not just about the rushed process. We are also concerned about how the new legislation would be implemented in practice, particularly as regards to vulnerable groups. The organisations campaigning for a change in the law have successfully used high-profile celebrities to promote the cause. We do not doubt their sincerity, and sympathise greatly with anyone experiencing the fear and pain that can sadly accompany terminal illness, but MPs must make laws based on their effect on every member of society, not just those whose profile gives them a prominent voice.

Evidence from elsewhere suggests those most at risk when assisted suicide is legalised are vulnerable minorities. Such people, unlike privileged elites who are used to exercising autonomy over every part of their lives and who can afford good-quality social and palliative care, are most likely to resign themselves to an assisted death against their will because they are unable to access the support they require.

Imagine the pensioner whose children cannot afford houses of their own watching her limited savings, earmarked for those children, disappearing on social care and so feeling a “duty to die”. And, sadly, it is not impossible to imagine a malevolent family member tacitly pressuring a disabled terminally ill relative to consider an assisted death, either because of the time-consuming and emotional burden their care has become, or even to be able to access the assets they will inherit more quickly. Or consider the elderly widow who has been hospitalised and worries she is taking up a valuable bed in an NHS under significant strain and would be better off dead.

Incidents such as these would be relatively rare, but the very act of legalising assisted suicide makes them possible. It is because, as demonstrated elsewhere, it is simply not possible to avoid such scenarios if assisted suicide were to be made legal that the only adequate safeguard is to keep the current law unchanged. Meanwhile, we should be investing instead in improving our health and social care system generally. And if there is one thing this debate has shone a light on, it is the urgent need to increase investment in palliative care.

REMEMBER, remember the 19th of November, when farmers exercised their right to roam across London in protest at Labour’s inheritance tax hike. I’ve never seen so many wellington boots. Just as well, the weather was foul. Pouring rain and tractors topped with snow.

I met folks from Ulster and Scotland; a kid had flown down alone to save the family farm (permission from the headmaster). I spoke at length with a man from Wiltshire about crop circles — who makes them and how, he doesn’t know, but he charges good money to look. “Some visitors,” he said with a twinkle, “claim they’re a ‘fur-till-itee’ symbol and try to use ‘em for immoral purposes.” He’s knocked that right on the head.

Atop a stage erected on Whitehall, farmer Olly Harrison asked the question on all of our lips: has the PM ever got up “at 4am to feed cows and get pooped on”? Actually, yes. Sir Keir Starmer told GB News that he understands the countryside because “my first job was on the farm”. That said farm was Fisher Price and the job was playing with

Tim Stanley

plastic “moo-moo cows” is by-the-by: we are used to make-believe from a party whose Chancellor thinks she ran a bank when she actually manned the tills. What’s insulting is to be told by such fantasists that it’s the farmers who are imagining things, that the tax rises aren’t that high and are easily offset. At a timely meeting of the agricultural committee, minister Steve Reed — who hails from bucolic Croydon — urged anyone affected to “take professional tax advice” to reduce their liability. Having raised a tax, the Government now seems to be encouraging citizens to avoid it.

“I don’t think you should look at change as inherently negative,” he added. His civil servants didn’t look at him at all. They stared into the distance like grazing cows. Back at the rally, opposition politicians made a pitch for the angry rural voter. Ed Davey fumbled his speech and assured us the Lib Dems would always defend “the family farm” (I’ll believe it when I see it). Tories clumped through puddles in suspiciously clean wellies and obviously new Barbour jackets: Marie

Antoinette visiting the serfs, dressed as a milkmaid. Farage was cheered. Tweed speaks to tweed.

But the real star of the show was Jeremy Clarkson. For years, I loathed this man, a legacy of being forced to watch Top Gear as a child, when, squeezed into skinny jeans, he’d squeeze himself into a Ford Fiesta and insist it purred like a lion. Shudder.

But the boy who refused to grow up has aged disgracefully well, dragging himself on stage after a heart operation and warning us that he was “off my tits on codeine and paracetamol”.

Clarkson joked about stupid politicians, whingeing consumers and dodgy foreign chicken — so packed with chlorine it “tastes like a swimming pool with a beak” — and left the crowd feeling understood and, most importantly, believed. I also saw Barry Gardiner, the Labour MP for Brent North, tell a farmer he found his claims of impoverishment unbelievable. After hearing his assets vs income, Gardiner observed: “You have a very inefficient use of capital”. “That’s farming,” replied the farmer, with obvious exasperation.



Stock Exchange loses 310 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 310.21 points, a negative change of 0.32 percent, closing at 95,546.46 points

PFC to participate in 3-day expo

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) is set to participate in a three-day international expo in Lagos, Nigeria, commencing on November 26. Chairing board of directors meeting here on Wednesday, CEO PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq informed that event will bring together industry leaders, manufacturers, and stakeholders from around the globe, providing a platform for showcasing innovative designs and craftsmanship.

PFC will exhibit an array of premium-quality furniture, reflecting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and modern design expertise. He said participation aimed to strengthen trade ties, explore new markets, and promote Pakistan's furniture industry on an international stage.

PFC Chief Executive emphasized that the expo was an excellent opportunity to highlight the country's potential in producing world-class furniture, attract foreign buyers, and enhance export volumes.

Mian Kashif said it will facilitate networking and business collaborations, opening avenues for joint ventures and knowledge exchange.

PFC's presence at the expo underscores its commitment to expanding global outreach and positioning Pakistan as a key player in the international furniture market, he concluded.

Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where two ships, MSC Branka and MSC Positano carrying Container berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile five more ships, Atlantic Ibis, Manti Core, Ds Sofie Bulker, Acuity and Milaha Ras Laffan scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Palm Kernel and LNG are also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containership 'MSC Branka' left the port on today morning, while six more ships, MSC Positano, Atlantic Ibis, Solar Catie, Xin Xiang He, Navig8 Montiel and Kouras Queen are expected to sail on today.

Cargo volume of 136,882 tonnes, comprising 80,579 tonnes imports cargo and 56,303 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,570 Containers (1,570 TEUs Imports & 2,000 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 13 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them four ships, ST. Michaelis, Khairpur, Milaha Ras Laffan and Atlantic Ibis & two more ships, Maersk Cape Town and Hyde Park are carrying Palm oil, Mogas, LNG, Container and Chemicals are expected to take berths at LCT, FOTOC, PGPC, QICT and EVTL respectively on today 20th November, while two more ships, Navios Tempo and Kuala Lumpur Express are due to arrive at port on Thursday.

as compared to 95,856.67 points on the last trading day.

A total of 1,138,411,946 shares were traded during the day as compared to 830,931,008 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 37.481 billion against Rs. 30.019 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 456 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 156 of them recorded gains and

251 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 49 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 174,389,145 shares at Rs 5.22 per share, Hascol Petrol with 63,973,243 shares at Rs 11.26 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 62,996,737 shares at Rs.9.98 per share.

Colgate Palmolive (Pakistan) Limited witnessed a maximum increase

of Rs.101.90 per share price, closing at Rs 1,480.88, whereas the runner-up was Nestle Pakistan Limited with Rs 91.17 rise in its per share price to Rs 6,691.17.

Pakistan Services Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 44.72 per share closing at Rs 802.67 followed by Services Industries Limited with Rs 39.48 decline to close at Rs 1,179.99.

Women entrepreneurs vital for economic landscape

ISLAMABAD (INP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in collaboration with the Shirakat-Partnership for Development organized an event to commemorate International Women's Entrepreneurship Day (November 19) to highlight the critical role of women entrepreneurs in Pakistan's economic landscape.

Managing Director, the National Education Foundation, Ms Tahira S. Sheikh was the Chief guest.

In her address, the chief guest Ms. Tahira Sheikh highlighted the importance of education and skill development of girls and women for a prosperous Pakistan, according to a press release received here.

She said that women are an integral part of society and their participation must be encouraged.

Deputy Chief Manager

of SBP, Intiaz Ali, highlighted the State Bank's commitment to promoting financial inclusion and gender equality.

He also highlighted the banking services on equality policy, which focused on creating gender diversity in financial institutions and developing banking products for women.

He also said that State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), through its banking services corporation offices, has organized more than 50 sessions and reached out to more than 1,500 businesswomen to inform them about the available financing opportunities.

Executive Director Shirakat, Bilquis Tahira, said that Shirakat has already trained 2500 women and youth to earn their livelihood opportunities with the financial sup-

port of international organizations.

Simona Lanzoni, Vice President of Pangea Onlus Foundation, discussed global and local efforts to empower women in business.

The event brought together key partners, including CARE International, Karandaaz, and several commercial banks of Pakistan. Their participation underscored the importance of multi-sector collaboration in supporting women's economic empowerment through access to financial resources, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

The representatives of different organisations also focused on the motivation of women which enabled them to use their talents to support their families and overcome financial crises.

POL imports up by 1.68% to \$5.11 billion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The petroleum group imports increased by 1.68 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year as compared to the imports of the same months of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported.

The imports of overall petroleum group during July-October (2024-25) stood at \$5,113.616 million as against the imports of \$5,029.009 million during July-October (2023-24), according to PBS data.

Among petroleum commodities, the import of petroleum products declined by 18.89 percent, from \$ 2,161.831 million last year to \$1,753.458 million during the time period under review.

However, the imports of petroleum crude increased by 16.80 percent, from \$1,486.957 million to \$1,736.712 million; natural gas liquefied by 10.97 percent, from \$1,176.718 million to \$1,305.831 whereas

the imports of petroleum gas liquefied went up by 56.03 percent and reached to \$203.463 million as compared to \$317.472 million last year.

The imports of all other petroleum group products also increased by 257.50 percent and went up to \$0.004 million from \$0.0143 million.

Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the petroleum group imports witnessed decrease of 30.55 percent during the month of October 2024 as compared to the same month of last year.

The petroleum imports during October 2024 were recorded at \$1,060.601 million against the imports of \$1,527.147 million during October 2023.

On a month-on-month basis, the petroleum imports into the country, decreased by 23.61 percent during October 2024, as compared to the imports of \$1,388,420 million in

September 2024, according to the data.

It is pertinent to mention here that the merchandise exports from the country increased by 13.45 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year.

Exports during July-October (2024-25) were recorded at \$10.880 billion against \$9.590 billion during July-October (2023-24), according to PBS data.

On the other hand, imports into the country also went up by 5.17 percent, growing from \$16.977 billion last year to \$17.854 billion during the first four months of the current year.

Based on the figures, the trade deficit during the months under review was recorded at \$6.974 billion against the deficit of \$7.387 billion last year, showing a decrease of 5.59 percent.



KARACHI: Chairman National Assembly Standing Committee on Industries & Production Syed Hafeezuddin chairing meeting at Pakistan Steel Mills.

SBP issues license to EPSPL F.P. Report

KARACHI: The SBP has given License to M/s. E-Processing Systems Private Limited (EPSPL) to commence commercial operations as an Electronic Money Institution (EMI). Under the license, the EMI shall offer e-money wallets to consumers, merchants and agents.

With this license, the number of EMIs undertaking commercial operations will increase to five, (05), namely M/s. NayaPay Private Limited, M/s. Finja Private Limited, M/s. SadaPay Private Limited, M/s. Akhtar Fuiou Technologies Private Limited and M/s. E-Processing Systems Private Limited.

In addition, two EMIs, namely M/s. Wemsol Private Limited and M/s. HubPay Private Limited, are in pilot operations. Meanwhile, three more EMIs-M/s. YAP Pakistan Private Limited, M/s. Cerisma Private Limited, and M/s. Toko Lab Private Limited-have been given in-principle approval and are currently in the process of developing organizational and technological infrastructure to commence pilot operations.

AI to generate 680b USD for telecom sector

HANGZHOU (APP): Over the next 15 to 20 years, artificial intelligence (AI) is estimated to generate up to 680 billion US dollars for the telecommunications industry, said John Hoffman, CEO of the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) Ltd. on Wednesday.

Hoffman was citing a McKinsey report when making the remarks in a speech that he delivered at the opening ceremony of the 2024 World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit, which is being held in Zhejiang Province, east China.

He said AI is emerging as a powerful force with the potential to transform business and society on an unprecedented scale.

About 81 percent of telecom operators around the world are testing generative AI solutions, and "Chinese operators are one of the leaders in the space, with big investments, strong government support and a booming tech landscape," Hoffman said.

"China Mobile, China Telecom and China Unicom have already made huge strides in AI research and applications, with solutions that are transforming public services, supply chains and healthcare," he said.

For instance, an intelligent computing service platform has been launched in northwest China to assist local flood control efforts, while an AI database in the country's southwest is committed to the protection and development of cultural diversity.

Across the world, Hoffman said, over 150 million people could have their lives improved by mobile big data and AI solutions in the next five years.

Noting that AI brings responsibilities alongside opportunities, Hoffman called for greater attention to the ethical and sustainable development of AI technology.

Prudent policies key to boosting foreign investment: Iftikhar

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik has said that viable results oriented prudent policies laced with good governance are crucial for building investor confidence and attracting foreign investments in diversified sectors of Pakistan.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, he said in Pakistan, such policies can play a transformative role in achieving and maintaining economic stability. Good governance, characterized by transparency, accountability, and efficiency, creates an environment where investors feel secure and confident in the stability and predictability of their investments.

He said transparency in government operations is essential that must reflect clear and open communication about economic poli-

cies, regulatory changes, and financial health. By making information readily available and easily accessible, investors can make prompt decisions. Transparency reduces the risk of corruption and builds trust between the government and the business community, he added.

Iftikhar Malik said accountability mechanisms must be strengthened which includes establishing independent regulatory bodies to oversee financial markets, ensuring that laws and regulations are enforced fairly and consistently. By holding public officials and institutions accountable for their actions, the government can deter malfeasance and promote a culture of integrity. Investors are more likely to commit their resources when they believe that there are reliable safeguards against misuse and corruption, he

added. He said the efficiency of bureaucratic processes needs significant improvement. Simplifying tax codes, reducing red tape, and enhancing the ease of doing business can make Pakistan a more attractive destination for both domestic and foreign investors.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said moreover, political stability and consistency in economic policies are fundamental. Frequent changes in policy direction can create uncertainty, deterring long-term investment. A stable political environment, with a clear and consistent economic strategy, reassures investors of the government's commitment to economic growth and stability. Collaborative efforts can lead to the development and implementation of policies that foster a conducive investment climate, he concluded.

European stocks fall on Ukraine-Russia fears

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Stock markets fell in Europe but finished mostly higher in New York Tuesday as markets weighed worries about escalating conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Moscow vowed to react "accordingly" after saying Ukraine had fired its first US-made long-range missile onto Russian territory, after being cleared to do so by US President Joe Biden.

"The news rattled markets this morning, driving European stocks lower and reinforcing bearish momentum" against the euro, said Fawad Razaqada, market analyst at Forex.com.

US shares also fell at the opening but then clawed back, lifted by strong guidance from retailer Walmart and expectations of positive earnings from chipmaker Nvidia.

While the Dow finished in the red, both the S&P 500 and Nasdaq ended in positive territory.

"We're kind of on our own continent over here,"

Kim Forrest of Bokeh Capital Partners said of the US investor mindset.

"In time, we would be impacted by an escalation of tensions. But today we're going to shrug that off, because tomorrow we get Nvidia."

All the main indexes in Europe closed in the red, though off their lows for the day.

Still, it was a marked reversal of the optimism seen on Wall Street on Monday, when stocks shrugged off uncertainty over Donald Trump's tariff plans to push higher, with the momentum carrying over into the Asian trading day.

"Caution returned early Tuesday, this time as events thousands of miles from Wall Street raised geopolitical risk concerns," said Joe Mazzola, a strategist at Charles Schwab.

On the corporate front, retail giant Walmart jumped three percent as it boosted guidance ahead of what it sees as a positive Christmas season.

Nvidia was up almost five percent. The AI chip giant, often seen as a bellwether stock for the technology sector, reports its quarterly earnings after the market closes Wednesday.

In Europe, shares in German industrial giant Thyssenkrupp rose almost 12 percent after the group said it expected a return to profit in its next financial year -- despite posting a hefty full-year loss for the second year in a row.

Nestle slid two percent after new chief executive Laurent Freixe announced a plan to slash costs and have a standalone water and beverages business.

Equities have seen big swings since Trump was elected US president this month, as investors balance the impact of corporate tax cuts against a potential trade war with China and others.

Any resulting surge in inflation would give a headache to policymakers at the US Federal Reserve, who are still fighting to bring prices under control.

UK annual inflation jumps on higher energy bills

LONDON (AFP/APP): Britain's annual inflation rate jumped more than expected in October to back above the Bank of England's target as households and businesses faced higher energy bills, official data showed Wednesday.

The Consumer Prices Index reached 2.3 percent from a three-year low of 1.7 percent in the 12 months to September, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

CPI was last at 2.3 percent in April, the ONS added in a statement, while analysts' consensus had been for the rate to climb back to 2.2 percent.

The Bank of England (BoE) target stands at 2.0 percent.

"Inflation rose... as the increase in the energy price cap meant higher costs for gas and electricity com-

pared with a fall at the same time last year," ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner said of October's data.

Britain's energy regulator Ofgem sets a price cap quarterly that suppliers can charge customers. The latest increase in October was 10 percent but this is expected to drop markedly in January according to forecasts.

The regulator had cited rising prices on international energy markets owing to increasing geopolitical tensions, and extreme weather events driving competition for gas, as the reasons behind the sharp rise.

"We know that families across Britain are still struggling with the cost of living," senior Treasury official Darren Jones said in reaction to Wednesday's inflation reading and saying the Labour government needed to do more to help.

Court Notice

In the court of sidra jalal civil judge-III judicial Magistrate- II Matta swat. Case #./17/1. institution.10/02/2024. Next Hearing date 30/11/2024. Alam khan etc.VS. Doorany etc. Notice to defendant #.(1/5/2) Adam khan (1/5/3) Ayub khan (1/5/4) Aman ullah (1/5/5) Ibrahim (1/5/6) Sadeeq (1/5/7) Momin khan sons (1/5/8) Mst. Yasmeen (2/5/9) Mst.Tasleem (daughter) Gul zareen r/o Shoorat raqba Baha tehsil Matta district Swat. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 30/11/2024. at 8.00 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you.

How to bolster crippling economy

Ejaz Ahmed

In the current situation, every country is struggling with the aim of ascending their position in the world. While at the same time, we have been trapped in unceasing turmoil, political instability, and a backsliding economy. One of the most important reasons behind this is bad governance. Without shared goals, no country can progress and maintain

itself in the technological world. Increasing disparities among the nations have led the country to political instability.

It is a time to learn and assume from the history of how countries become destroyed without shared goals. Despite having many resources, we are still surviving under the patronage of the IMF. It is all about misleading the situation that was rendered by our leaders. Everyone

joins politicians with the goal of exploiting the resources of the country instead of providing relief to the nation. With the passage of time, this will compel the nations towards brain drain.

Because there is nothing else but perpetuating grievances and anguish. Increasing exports and remittances are required for a stable exchange rate. Unfortunately, our exports are lower than imports. We

have nothing to import into the world. Devoid of planning, we have pushed the country to the wall.

At present, we can only sustain the economy by diminishing expenditure and augmenting the Tex collection. It is the duty of the government to privilege the FBR in order to collect tax from those who have not been paying the tax for a decade.

(The writer is a student of Karachi University)



In brief

Hughes to fight Nurmagomedov

DUBAI (Agencies): Paul Hughes will challenge Usman Nurmagomedov for the Russian's Bellator lightweight title on 25 January at the Coca-Cola Arena in Dubai. Hughes secured the highest win of his career as he outstruck AJ McKee to win their lightweight bout by split decision in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in October. The Derry fighter, 27, was an underdog going into the fight against McKee, who is a former Bellator featherweight champion. The Hughes - Nurmagomedov bout, which is called the Champions Series World Title, marks the beginning of a multi-year partnership between the Professional Fighters League (PFL), Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), and Dubai Sports Council (DSC). "It's great to have a quick turnaround [from the McKee fight] - it's what I wanted," Hughes told BBC Sport NI. "I went to the venue yesterday. It's a huge arena - it's unbelievable. "This [PFL] is the first global MMA organisation to come here, so it's the first one in the history of Dubai. There's been small local shows but this is history. "It's huge for PFL Bellator and it's huge for Dubai and certainly a huge thing for me, so the magnitude of this fight is huge." Hughes, a former featherweight champion in UK-based promotion Cage Warriors, was competing in only his second PFL bout after defeating Bobby King in June. He boasts a career record of 13 wins and one defeat. Russian's Nurmagomedov - the cousin of former UFC lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedov - defended his lightweight Bellator title by unanimous decision against Alexander Shabily in California in September. The 26-year-old was making his return to the cage after being banned for six months by the California State Athletic Commission (CSAC) for failing a drug test in October 2023. The win extended Nurmagomedov's unbeaten record to 18 fights, with no defeats and one no contest.

Celtics end Cavaliers' 15-match winning run

NEW YORK (Agencies): The Cleveland Cavaliers' 15-match winning run came to an end in a thrilling 120-117 defeat by the Boston Celtics in the NBA Cup at TD Garden. The Cavaliers became just the fourth franchise in NBA history to go 15-0 at the start of a campaign by beating the Charlotte Hornets on Sunday. But six Celtics players, led by Jayson Tatum's 33 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists, reached double figures to inflict a first defeat on the Cavs. Trailing by 17 points at half-time, the Cavaliers mounted a spirited comeback through Evan Mobley, who finished with 22 points, 11 rebounds and six assists. It helped them to make it a two-point game midway through the final quarter but the Celtics held out. "Everybody knew that they were undefeated and coming to our building," said Celtics' guard Derrick White. "And it's an NBA Cup game, and we already lost one. So, it was a really big game in that aspect. We were all aware." The Los Angeles Lakers extended their own winning streak to six games with a 124-118 victory over the Utah Jazz. Dalton Knecht, 17th pick in the 2024 draft, scored a career-high 37 points.

Pakistani trio moves in Int'l Squash C'ship semis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Nasir Iqbal, Noor Zaman and M Ashab Irfan have moved in the semifinals of the Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship here at Mushaf Squash Complex on Wednesday.

Nasir will face Ibrahim Elkabbani of Egypt while Noor will play Ashab in the semifinals of the International Squash Championship on Thursday.

Meanwhile in the quarterfinals, Ibrahim Elkabbani (Egy) beat Darren Pragasm (Mas) 17-15, 11-6, 11-5 (29 min), Nasir Iqbal (Pak) beat Seif El Shenawy (Egy) 10-12, 11-4, 11-4, 11-5 (35 min), M Ashab Irfan (Pak) beat Rowan Damming (Ned) 10-12, 11-2, 11-9, 11-5 (48 min) and Noor Zaman (Pak) beat Perry Malik (Eng) 14-12, 5-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-7 (54 min). The Chief of the Air

Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship is being organized by the Pakistan Squash Federation in collaboration with Serena Hotels. The tournament carries a prize money of US\$15,000. Apart from nine Pakistani players, a group of 15 world ranking players from Egypt, England, Hong Kong-China, Ireland, Kuwait, Malaysia and Netherland are participating in the championship.

Four Pakistani players move in quarterfinals of Tennis C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four Pakistani players Ahmad Nael, Bilal Asim, Muhammad Talha Khan and Abubakar Talha have qualified for the boys' singles quarterfinals of the ITF Pakistan PPL-Syed Dilawar Abbas World Junior Tennis Championship Leg-2 here at the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Tennis Complex on Wednesday.

This event has brought together 80 junior players from around the globe, including 50 boys and 30 girls representing countries such as Pakistan, Japan, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Canada, Korea, Germany, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Singapore, USA, Belarus, and Russia.

In Boys Singles quarterfinals, Ahmad Nael Qureshi (PAK) beat Asad Zaman (PAK) 6-1, 6-2; Sion J (KOR) beat Aahil Kaleel (SRI) 6-2, 6-2; Xiuyuan Guo (CHN) beat Muhammad Salar Khan (PAK) 6-1, 4-6, 6-2; Muhammad Talha Khan (PAK) beat Patham Laosakulporn (THA) 7-5, 6-2; Bilal Asim (PAK) beat Yeonmu Jung (KOR) 6-4, 6-2; Minwoo KIM (KOR) beat Muhammad Haider Ali Rizwan (PAK) 6-1, 7-5; Abubakar Talha (PAK) beat Ho Jun Park (KOR) 6-4, 3-6, 7-5.

In Girls Singles quarterfinals, Hinata Wada (JPN) beat hayoon Kim (KOR) 6-4, 6-7(4) 6-3; Karolina Ligai (KAZ) beat

Haruhi Katsube (JPN) 6-2, 6-2; Youngchae Oh (KOR) beat Pudith Phapatsirikul (THA) 6-4, 6-4; Elizaveta Privalova beat Gehansa Methnadi Lamappulage Don (SRI) 6-6, 2-6; Yeon Joo Cha (KOR) beat Paweenon Nualsri (THA) 7-5 6-3.

In Boys Doubles quarterfinals, Muhammad Haider Rizwan (PAK), Abubakar Talha (PAK), Aahil Kaleel (SRD), Louis Dish Knese (GER) 6-1, 6-1. In Girls Doubles quarterfinals, A Hyun (KOR), Chaeria Lee (KOR) beat Tanisha Kantam (SGP), Leyla-Esther Knese (GER) 6-1, 6-4; Dinara De Silva (THA), Phitchayapak Srimuk (THA) beat Jin A Hong (KOR), Chaewon Moon (KOR) 6-2, 6-4.

Tears flow as Nadal bids farewell to tennis

MÁLAGA (Agencies): Rafael Nadal got emotional while receiving an impassioned farewell from his fans in a packed arena in Malaga on Tuesday, following Spain's 2-1 defeat to the Netherlands in the Davis Cup.

The match marked the 38-year-old's final professional appearance, bringing an end to his illustrious career. Nadal, overwhelmed with emotions, delivered a moving 15-minute speech at a sold-out Malaga venue.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion struggled to hold back tears as he recalled his journey.

"What I have tried to do is to be a good person, and I hope you've seen that," Nadal told the crowd.

"I leave the tennis world having met so many friends along the way. I have so many people to thank. I leave with the peace of mind of having left a sporting and personal legacy I can be proud about.

"Thanks to all of you, the public. It's over 20 years (career), good years, bad years. I have been able to live with all of you. I have felt very fortunate to feel so much affection from all over the world, especially here



in Spain."

Earlier, Nadal's singles match ended in a 6-4, 6-4 loss to Botić van de Zandschulp, breaking his 29-match Davis Cup singles winning streak. Despite Carlos Alcaraz's victory over Tallon Griekspoor, Spain's hopes ended when Marcel Granollers and Alcaraz were defeated in the deciding doubles match.

Nadal, who announced his retirement last month, admitted his farewell did not unfold as he had hoped.

"It's obvious that it didn't turn out the way we wanted it to. I have given what I had. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to spend these last days as a professional

team player," Nadal said.

"My body has told me it doesn't want to play tennis anymore and I have to accept that. I am privileged. I have been able to make my hobbies my profession. I am fortunate.

"My family, my team, my friends. I am a person who believes in continuity, I believe in keeping the people you love and who make your life better. I have kept my family close. Without you this would not have been possible."

As Spain's Davis Cup captain David Ferrer faced criticism for including Nadal, the Netherlands advanced to face the winner of the Canada-Germany tie in the semi-finals.

Spurs appeal against length of Bentancur ban for Son slur

LONDON (AFP): Tottenham have appealed against the length of Rodrigo Bentancur's seven-game suspension for his controversial comments about team-mate Son Heung-min.

Bentancur was banned by the Football Association on Monday, ruling him out of six Premier League fixtures and a League Cup quarter-final against Manchester United.

The 27-year-old Uruguay midfielder was suspended from domestic competitions while the appeal is heard and the club will make no further comment during this time.

Bentancur was asked during an interview to show the shirt of a Tottenham player, and replied: "Sonny's? It could be Sonny's cousin too as they all look the same."

He apologised on Instagram to Son for his remarks, and Son accepted that apology in a statement on the same platform.

"I've spoken with Lolo (Bentancur). He made a



statement read.

"Rodrigo will remain suspended from domestic competitions while the appeal is heard and the club will make no further comment during this time."

Bentancur was asked during an interview to show the shirt of a Tottenham player, and replied: "Sonny's? It could be Sonny's cousin too as they all look the same."

He apologised on Instagram to Son for his remarks, and Son accepted that apology in a statement on the same platform.

"I've spoken with Lolo (Bentancur). He made a

mistake, he knows this and has apologised," the South Korea captain said.

"Lolo would not mean to ever intentionally say something offensive. We are brothers and nothing has changed at all."

Bentancur was also fined £100,000 (\$126,000), with the disciplinary panel insisting it should have been "reasonably foreseeable" to him that his remarks about Son would be widely distributed.

The panel said they took into account as mitigation his sincere apology and previous clean disciplinary record.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Nasir Iqbal and Japanese player Seif El-Shenawy in action during International Squash Championship 2024 at Pakistan Sports Complex.

Sports legends extend support to Pakistan Blind Cricket Team

KARACHI (APP): Renowned sports figures Jahangir Khan and Islahuddin Siddiqui have expressed their best wishes for the Pakistan Blind Cricket Team as the country hosts the 4th T20 Blind Cricket World Cup. Both legends highlighted the importance of supporting the visually impaired athletes who continue to bring pride to the nation.

Squash icon Jahangir Khan lauded the efforts of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council and its chairman, Syed Sultan Shah, for organizing the event. "I hope this successful initiative will boost blind cricket in Pakistan at both national and international levels," he said, urging the nation to support the team wholeheartedly.

Similarly, former hockey captain and Olympian Islahuddin praised the resilience and achievements of blind cricketers. "They have elevated Pakistan's dignity with their high morale and exceptional performances. I am confident they will once again make us proud and gift the nation another World Cup victory," he remarked. Both sports legends emphasized that blind cricket serves as a testament to the extraordinary potential of visually impaired individuals, calling for collective support to encourage these national heroes.

All-round performance leads Pakistan to thrilling win

ISLAMABAD (APP): Half-centuries by Shahzaib Khan and Usman Khan and four-fer from Ali Raza led Pakistan U19 to a thrilling 13-run win over Afghanistan in the U19 tri-series match at the ICC Academy in Dubai on Wednesday. This was Pakistan's first win over Afghanistan in the ongoing tournament after the latter defeated the former by 100 runs at the same venue on Friday.

Chasing 245 to win, Afghanistan after losing their opening batter Mahboob Khan (1, 4b) in the first over got their act together as Uzairullah Niazi (70, 72b, 8x4s, 1x6) and Faisal Shinozda (47, 48b, 5x4s, 1x6) knitted a 104-run partnership for the second wicket. After the departure of Faisal, Uzairullah soon followed him back to the pavilion as Afghanistan were 142 for three in 26.5 overs. That the Pakistan were able to stage a comeback in the match was due to right-arm fast Ali's two wickets in the 38th over.

Afghanistan were bundled out for 231 in 46.4 overs. Ali was backed up by Faham-ul-Haq (3-18) and Abdul Subhan (2-46). Earlier, after opting to bat first, the in-form opening pair Shahzaib and Usman provided a solid 129-run stand to Pakistan.

Left-handed Usman, who scored century against Afghanistan in the previous match, scored an 88-ball 77, which included eight fours. Centurion from the UAE game, Shahzaib top-scored for the side with 78 off 101 balls, hitting seven boundaries.

Aaqib opens up on Fakhar's potential comeback

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Aaqib Javed, the interim white-ball head coach of Pakistan, has discussed the potential return of top-order batter Fakhar Zaman to the national team on Wednesday.

Fakhar was excluded from the central contracts for the 2024-25 international season, as well as the squads for the tours to Australia and Zimbabwe last month.

However, Aaqib, who recently took charge as the interim head coach, heaped praise on Fakhar, calling him a match-winner.

The former pacer shared that Fakhar is dealing with some fitness issues and he will be back in the team once he achieves full recovery.

"Fakhar Zaman is a match-winner. He has been facing some fitness issues,

but the selection committee will reconsider him once he regains fitness." Aaqib stated while addressing the media in Lahore.

Remember, Fakhar expressed his disappointment through a social media post over the selection committee's decision to drop star batter Babar Azam after the first Test against England last month. Consequently, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) issued a show-cause notice to the left-hander over breaching the Code of Conduct. Aaqib Javed further shared that as interim head coach his goal is to take Pakistan cricket forward using his extensive coaching experience.

"PCB has entrusted me with additional responsibilities, and I will fulfil them to the best of my abilities," he added. "I have been

coaching for over 22 years and will use my experience with the team."

"As a coach, I am not focusing on individual players but on improving Pakistan cricket as a whole."

He emphasized that significant changes are needed for Pakistan's T20I team, and for this reason, new players will be provided ample opportunities ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup 2026.

"There's still over a year left for the next T20 World Cup, so a lot of changes will be seen," Aaqib Javed stated. "The team selected for Zimbabwe gives a message to new players that they will be given opportunities."

"However, as of now, we are focusing more on ODI matches and the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025."

Haris makes significant leap, Afridi moves down in ICC Rankings

DUBAI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf made a significant leap, while his fellow pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi experienced a downfall in the latest ICC T20I Bowling Rankings released on Wednesday.

The Green Shirts suffered a humiliating white-wash in the three-match series against Australia, which resulted in Pakistani players' steep fall in the rankings.

Shaheen Afridi had a disappointing outing during the series, struggling to find his rhythm on the

field. He managed to claim just one wicket, resulting in a frustrating bowling average of 107.00 and a high economy rate of 11.88 runs per over.

This below-par performance caused him to drop 10 spots to settle in the 24th position in the ICC T20I Bowling Rankings.

Similarly, Naseem Shah also claimed only one wicket in two games, conceding runs at an economy rate of 13.50, which caused him to drop 14 places to 65th.

However, Haris Rauf and Abbas Afridi made

significant gains in the ICC T20I Bowling Rankings courtesy of their brilliant performances despite Pakistan's loss.

Haris gained four spots to reach 20th with 601 rating points after taking five wickets in three games at an average of 15.40.

Meanwhile, Abbas Afridi claimed six wickets in as many games at a brilliant average of 6.66, which resulted in him entering the top 100 T20I bowlers in the rankings. He is currently sitting in the 83rd spot after making a 39-place jump.

Youth shine as University Sports Olympiad kicks off

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad turned into a vibrant hub of activity on Wednesday as the University Sports Olympiad kicked off, providing opportunity to over 3,000 student athletes from across the country to showcase their potential and skills in different sport disciplines.

The four-day extravaganza has been organized by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

The men and women athletes from both public and private sector universities are competing for top honours in different disciplines including badminton, table tennis, hockey, volleyball, athletics, judo, swimming, handball, weightlifting and wrestling. "This event is more than just a showcase of athleticism. It is a powerful statement of Pakistan's commitment to nurture its youth and foster a culture of sportsmanship, inclusivity and excellence. "The Olympiad is aimed at engaging students in healthy activities while scouting for raw talent that can be molded to represent Pakistan at national and international platforms."

Chairman PMYP Rana Mashhood Ahmad said talking to media here.

For many, this is not just a sporting event but the first step towards a future in professional sports. "Our youth are the backbone of this country. Through this initiative, we aim to instill discipline, teamwork, and a winning spirit in them. We are also identifying talent that can shine at the global level," former hockey great Olympian Khawaja Junaid, who is also the focal person for sports for PMYP told APP.

An official accompanying the University of Sargodha athletes said: "This Olympiad is exactly what we need to revive our sporting legacy. Events like these are breeding grounds for future champions."

Participants from universities of every province, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan have brought a sense of unity and diversity to the event. The different venues at Pakistan Sports Complex have been adorned with banners and flags, buzzing with excitement as students from across the country have gathered to compete and connect.

Zainab, a participant in the badminton competition, shared her excitement: "This is a dream come true for us. We get to compete, learn and build friendships with stu-

dents from other universities. The facilities here are outstanding!"

Along with sport competitions, the cultural programmes have also been arranged, creating a festive atmosphere and drawing attention to Pakistan's rich heritage. Visitors to the event expressed their admiration for these cultural segments.

"It's incredible to see the young athletes performing on the field and then witnessing their peers sharing their cultural roots on stage. This blend of sports and culture is what makes Pakistan unique," remarked Shahbaz Ahmad, a university student in attendance.

As the cheers and chants echo across the Pakistan Sports Complex over the next few days, the Olympiad is expected to leave a lasting legacy. It fosters a culture of sports while celebrating the vibrant cultural tapestry of Pakistan. The event aligns perfectly with the government's broader goals of youth empowerment, unity and international representation.

The University Sports Olympiad will conclude on Saturday while leaving all participants with unforgettable memories—and perhaps setting the stage for their future endeavours in sports and culture.



In brief

IG presided over a high-level meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Raza chaired a high-level meeting at the Central Police Office to review the overall law and order situation in the federal capital. He issued orders to ensure full security of public lives and property, government assets and important buildings. A public relations officer told APP that Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, DIG of Police Headquarters Mohammad Javad Tariq, DG Safe City Shakir Hussain Dawar, all AIGs, SSPs, and Zonal SPs participated in the meeting. The IG Rizvi directed officers to enhance the checking process at checkpoints and make patrol duties more active. Surveillance from the Safe City Command and Control Center should be made more effective for the security of important locations and to address crime. Search operations should be conducted across all areas to arrest suspicious elements, and countermeasures should be taken by carrying out final crackdowns on criminal hideouts. IG further directed officers to promote a friendly atmosphere at the police stations and ensure that public complaints are resolved promptly. "Our first priority is to ensure the safety of lives and property of the people and solve their problems on a priority basis."

IRSA releases 99,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 99,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 53,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1506.51 feet and was 108.51 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 24,900 cusecs and 49,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1166.50 feet, which was 116.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,700 cusecs and 28,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 51,700, 49,100, 37,700 and 5,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 14,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Suspect arrested for jewellery theft

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Morgah Police have arrested a housemaid and her nephew for stealing jewellery from the house of her owner and recovered its sale proceeds of Rs 3.4 million from them. Accused Mansab Mai had stolen jewellery from the house, which was sold by her nephew Abdul Waheed, a police spokesman said on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Naseerabad Police nabbed an accused Abbas for killing Shahi Gul over a business dispute and also recovered the weapon used in the murder. One of his accomplices was already in custody while the police were conducting raids to arrest the rest, the spokesman said. The Naseerabad Police had registered a case against the accused on the complaint of the deceased's brother, he added.

Naqvi discusses bilateral ties with Saudi minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with Saudi Arabia's Deputy Interior Minister Dr. Nasser bin Abdulaziz Al-Daoud on Wednesday and discussed enhancing bilateral ties, mutual interests and security cooperation.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki was also in attendance.

The Saudi Deputy Minister emphasized their close ties with Pakistan and expressed eagerness to enhance collaboration in various domains.

The ministers deliberat-

ed on measures to dismantle networks involved in sending beggars from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia.

Naqvi revealed that 4,300 individuals have been placed on the Exit Control List (ECL) as part of a zero-tolerance policy.

Both sides agreed to expedite the repatriation of 419 Pakistani prisoners currently held in Saudi Arabia, with legal procedures expected to conclude soon. Discussions included strengthening ties through joint training programs and exchanges between paramilitary forces and police forces of

both nations.

Naqvi commended Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030, expressing confidence that Saudi Arabia will emerge as a global leader in economic and social sectors under the current leadership.

"Saudi Arabia is a brotherly Islamic country. Pakistan will extend every possible cooperation to deepen our ties," said Mohsin Naqvi. Senior Pakistani officials, including the Additional Secretary of Interior, Chief Commissioner Islamabad, and IG Islamabad Police, were present during the meeting.

PTI's "Final Call" for protest deemed failure: Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SADRAN and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Amir Muqam, Wednesday dismissed PTI's November 24 protest call as a 'flop show,' claiming it would yield no significant results.

Engr Amir Muqam, the PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President, has described Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) "Final Call" for protests at D-Chowk on November 24 as nothing more than a 'miscall.'

He accused the party of attempting to provoke unrest and violence.

Muqam stated that Pakistan remains committed to combating terrorism in politics, warning that those who bring terrorism into politics will face the same consequences as terrorists.

He emphasized this stance as a reflection of Pakistan's dedication to eradicating extremism and promoting peace.

Engr Amir Muqam claims PTI leaders are using the protest call as leverage for a deal, while simultaneously seeking

behind-the-scenes apologies and concessions.

Muqam stated that the PTI founder's refusal to engage with other political parties raises concerns about his political judgment and commitment to democracy.

He added that by avoiding discussions, Khan appears to lack trust in the democratic process, sparking worries about his unwillingness to consider opposing viewpoints or find common ground.

Federal Minister stated that Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin, should not act as the PTI founder's suicide bomber. He warned that if the law is taken into one's hands, it will intervene.

Muqam also pointed out that Imran Khan has instigated a revolution by handing over the party to his wife and sister.

He urged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin to focus on addressing the rising terrorism in his province rather than expending energy on federal conflicts. Imran Khan's actions have drawn criticism, with many accusing him of hypocrisy.

His involvement in violent riots after his arrest on May 9, 2023, has raised doubts about his commitment to peaceful protest and democracy.

Muqam remarked that Ali Amin made bold statements before the Apex Committee but has remained silent since then.

He questioned whether Ali Amin is with the constitution or aligned with political terrorists. Muqam also urged Imran Khan not to use innocent people as scapegoats, stating that it is not a leader's role to harm innocent workers and party leaders.

He further stated that PTI does not want the public to be relieved from inflation, noting that inflation has decreased and the economy has stabilized, which seems to cause discomfort for PTI.

"Those asking 'are we slaves' have proven to be actual slaves." "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government employees are being used to target the federal government and Punjab," he said. "PTI founder, be cautious—Ali Amin Gandapur might embark on another tour of 12 districts on November 24."

RDA issues notices to 149 illegal housing schemes

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has issued notices to 149 illegal housing schemes and the Authority was making all-out efforts to protect the general public from exploitation and financial losses, said Director General, RDA, Kinza Murtaza.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, she informed that RDA has launched a campaign against illegal housing schemes.

She informed that RDA has intensified its action against illegal housing schemes which are misleading the general public by offering non-existent properties. These schemes, which have been operating under false pretenses, have caused substantial financial losses by promising ownership of homes that only existed on paper, often limited to mere maps and advertisements, she added.

"RDA was committed to ensuring that the general public was protected from the harmful effects of these illegal schemes," said DG

Kinza Murtaza.

She said: "We have issued notices to 149 illegal housing schemes and have made their fraudulent nature public through advertisements." These schemes have stolen people's hard-earned money by offering only dreams of home ownership," she added.

The DG emphasized that the increasing number of such fraudulent schemes have become a serious problem for the general public and urged the citizens to always verify the legality of any housing scheme before making investments.

She said: "We advise everyone to consult with RDA to ensure that the scheme they are interested in is legally approved, and their investment is secure."

The DG said that the RDA has also stopped the approval of new housing schemes.

A comprehensive survey was conducted, categorizing these schemes into three groups based on their

legal status.

The general public is advised to refrain from investing in the following schemes, which have been classified as illegal or completely fake, she informed.

She said that illegal Housing Schemes are Bin Alam City, CBR Residency, Media Enclosure, Al-Haram Phase-2, Gujar Khan, Town 21 and others.

Completely fake housing schemes are Khyber Model Town Chakri Road, Pak PWD Chakri Road, City Model Town, Al-Baddar Motorway, Shadabad Housing Scheme, and others.

Non-Existent Schemes which have no land, staff, or offices are Regent Farm House, AM Town, City Homes, Greenstone, and many others.

The DG assured that only legally approved housing schemes would be allowed to operate in future and all such schemes would be monitored to ensure the safety and security of public investments.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Saudi Deputy Interior Minister Nasser bin Abdulaziz Al-Daoud. —INP Photo

ANF seizes over 83 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations managed to recover over 83 kg drugs worth Rs 10 million and arrested 7 suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Wednesday.

He informed that 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested on KKH Road in Haripur. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In another operation, 2 kg heroin and 1 kg ice were recovered from the trolley bag of a passenger going to Doha at Peshawar International Airport.

43.2 kg hashish and 16.8 kg opium hidden in secret cavities of a vehicle was recovered near Ravi Toll Plaza Lahore and an accused was arrested during the operation.

13.2 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of a drug dealer netted near Kot Momin, Sargodha. A total of 4.6 kg hashish was recovered from two accused held on M-1 Motorway, Islamabad.

1.3 kg ice was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up on Sakhi Sarwar Road in Dera Ghazi Khan. Cases have been registered against the arrested accused under the Narcotics Control Act and further investigations are under process.

Exhibition of calligraphy held

RAWALPINDI (APP): An exhibition of calligraphy and handicrafts of Iranian artists was held at Punjab Arts Council, Rawalpindi, where the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Dr. Reza Amir Moghadam, was the chief guest. In the exhibition, art work of Iranian calligrapher Saeed Raza Kamrani and craftsman Hussain Qurbanyan were displayed.

According to the details, centuries old and modern styles of writing have been used in the calligraphy samples to be exhibited. Among the handicraft samples were cloths, vessels and objects made of beads. A copy of the Holy Quran on leather and hand-made dishes studded with precious beads were the center of attention of the people.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amir Moghadam said that Iran and Pakistan are historical brother countries and the people of this region have spoken the same language for 800 years.

Azam pledges unyielding dedication to safeguard children's rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): During his address at the World Children's Day event hosted by the Ministry of Human Rights and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child at the Pakistan National Council of Arts, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to protecting and promoting the rights of children.

He highlighted the importance of listening to children's voices, reflecting this year's theme, "Listen to the Future." He emphasized that children are not only the future of the nation but also an integral part of shaping its present.

The Minister underscored Pakistan's progress in advancing child rights through initiatives like the National Commission on the Rights of the Child and the Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA), which provides swift interventions for missing children. He also men-

tioned the Awaz App and the Take It Down Portal, which reflect the government's dedication to ensuring safer digital spaces for children and addressing online risks effectively.

Highlighting education as a top priority, he spoke about efforts to bridge gaps in access to education, particularly for girls, and reiterated the government's commitment to creating an inclusive and empowering environment for all children.

The Minister concluded by calling for a unified approach involving families, communities, civil society, and private sector stakeholders to build a society where children's voices are heard, their rights are protected, and their dreams are nurtured. He expressed hope that through collective efforts, Pakistan can create a future where every child thrives without fear or discrimination.

"Children are the strength and hope of our

nation," he remarked, "and investing in their well-being is an investment in the prosperity and progress of Pakistan."

In her address Chairperson NCRC Ayesha Raza Farooq highlighted that the Commission has been working tirelessly to safeguard the rights of children. From combating child marriage and child labour to ensuring access to education and online safety, the Commission has undertaken various initiatives ranging from legal and policy reforms to research, advocacy and awareness raising.

She said "World Children's Day reminds us of our collective responsibility to ensure every child in Pakistan thrives in a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment. Let us commit to shaping a society where children are respected, protected, and empowered because they are not just the architects of tomorrow but active contributors to shaping the present."

1.5 mln employment opportunities to be provided: Rana Mashhood

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Wednesday said that Youth is the future of Pakistan and as many as 1.5 million employment opportunities would be provided to them in Pakistan and abroad this year under PMYP.

Addressing a news conference here at Pakistan Sports Board Complex along with Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, he said that around 3,000 athletes were participating in the Prime Minister's University Sports (PMUS) Olympiad across the country starting on November 21.

Mashhood said that the young generation can play a major role in the prosperity and stability of the country and Pakistan has a

talented youth and has a pivotal role in advancing the country towards fast-paced development.

"We are dedicated to preparing our youth to excel in diverse fields, from sports to technical education, Information technology-driven industries to traditional crafts. This holistic approach will enable them to contribute meaningfully to Pakistan's socio-economic development," he added.

Chairman PMYP said that the PMUS Olympiad will not only foster a spirit of healthy competition but will also serve as a platform for the youth to engage, excel, and represent their universities with pride.

He said that the country's economy was moving towards the right direction under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and was taking various initiatives to highlight the potential and

provide more employment opportunities to the youth.

Mashhood said that the successful holding of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit reflected the best policies of the govt, adding Pakistan's position had been strengthened at the global level and the trust of international financial institutions and big powers showed the best economic policies of the government.

The Chairman PMYP added that youth were misled in the recent past from the right path but "We are now preparing our youth to face the challenges of the modern world as dreamed by the founders of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

On the occasion, he distributed motorbikes to two polio survivors turned national athletes, Muhammad Mustafa Ali and Nasir Butt, for their best performance in sports.

Cambridge University Press, Education ministry join forces for student success

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment on Wednesday agreed to offer Cambridge qualifications in four selected federal government schools in Islamabad.

In that regard, a delegation led by Mr. Rod Smith, Group Managing Director, International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment visited the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and met with Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui to sign an MoU.

Talking to the delegates, Dr. Khalid said that Cambridge is playing a positive role in imparting quality education to the youth of Pakistan. He stressed that Cambridge

needs to expand the horizon of their role in Pakistan.

He especially emphasised its role in creating enhance assessment capabilities of the local education boards. He said that transparency in assessment and enhanced engagement is the need of the hour.

Federal Minister was briefed by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani that the MOU sets forth the understanding and cooperative framework between Cambridge and The Ministry to offer Cambridge qualifications in four selected federal government schools in Islamabad. He said the initiative aims to enhance educational standards and provide international qualification pathways for students in these schools.

The selected schools included Islamabad Model College for Boys, G-6/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Boys, F-8/3, Islamabad, Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-8/1, Islamabad.

Wani said that this MoU will introduce Cambridge Lower Secondary, IGCSE and A-Level qualifications in four designated federal government schools in Islamabad in order to improve the quality of education by providing students with access to internationally recognized qualifications and fostering a learner-centred approach.

Furthermore, he said that it will build capacity among teaching staff to effectively deliver the Cambridge curriculum while support students in accessing diverse global opportunities for higher education and career development.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Rod Smith of Cambridge University Press and Assessment signs a MoU with the Ministry of Federal Education, accompanied by Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui.

Turkey commends IE efforts

KABUL (BNA): The spokesman for Ministry of Interior, Mufti Abdul Matin Qani, stated that the Deputy Minister for Counter-Narcotics, Mullah Abdul Haq Hamkar, met with the Counselor of the Turkish Embassy in Afghanistan, Zafer Kishi, and his accompanying delegation. In the meeting, both sides discussed joint efforts to combat narcotics, provide alternative livelihoods for farmers, collect and treat drug addicts, and improve the qualifications of medical professionals in the field.

Afghanistan finalizes team

KABUL (Amu TV): The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) announced the final 16-member squad for the National Blind Cricket Team, which will compete in the 2024 Blind Cricket T20 World Cup in Pakistan from November 23 to December 3. The team selection process, overseen by the Afghanistan Blind Association in collaboration with the ACB's Domestic Cricket Department, began two months ago with open trials conducted across Afghanistan.

Afghanistan-Turkey trade reaches \$94m

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce says that Afghanistan has conducted worth \$94 million trade with Türkiye in the first ten months of 2024.

According to the ministry, \$21 million of the total amount was exports while \$73 million was imports between the two countries.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesperson for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said: "Trade with Turkey during the first ten months of 2024 amounted to \$94 million, of which \$21 million was exports and \$73 million was imports. Most of the exported items include sesame seeds, raisins,

almond kernels, cumin, and cowhide, while the imported items consist of medicinal plants, carpets, and heaters."

On the other hand, the Chamber of Commerce and Investment says that the Istanbul Halal Expo is scheduled to take place in Turkey within a week, where a delegation from the Islamic Emirate and businesspeople will also participate.

Mir Zaman Popal, Acting Head of Administration and Finance of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment, stated: "This is one of the largest exhibitions in the world and very significant. Halal products from Afghanistan have a very good market, and we

participate in this annual exhibition."

According to the chamber officials, Afghan products will also be showcased at this exhibition for marketing purposes.

Sakhi Ahmad Paiman, First Deputy of the Chamber of Industries and Mines, said: "This is a good opportunity for Afghanistan's domestic products to be displayed, and it can also serve as an excellent bridge for developing various sectors."

According to officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, trade conferences, business networking meetings, and other economic programs will also be organized on the sidelines of this exhibition.

Fix flood damaged infrastructure, govt urged

TIRINKOT (Pajhwok): Some residents of central Uruzgan province have demanded the reconstruction of roads, bridges and culverts that were destroyed by floods in their areas.

They say last year, heavy rains and floods caused significant damage to local infrastructure, including main roads, bridges and culverts. Many of them have yet to be rebuilt.

The residents urge the government to begin the reconstruction of these projects before the winter season sets in.

Mohammad Nasim, a resident of Popalzai village, said a large bridge connecting Chora and Gizab districts and linking Daikundi province to Tirinkot, was severely damaged by flash floods last year. The bridge has not been rebuilt yet.

He added at the time, officials had promised to rebuild the bridge, but no one had followed up on it. "The winter is approaching again, but the bridge hasn't been rebuilt," he complained.

Similarly, Baryalai, hailing from Dehrawood district, recalled the road leading to Tirinkot had been damaged at two places by last year's floods.

Nearly ten months later, the road has still not been repaired. "Obstacles on the road remain are still there," he claimed.

Residents of the provincial capital, Tirinkot, are also facing similar problems and want the authorities to take urgent action to address the issues.

Ghulam Ismail, a resident of Khanqaa area, said in addition to bridges, roads, and culverts, thousands of acres of agricultural land, harmed by floods, had not been protected so far.

Local officials acknowledge the concerns of the people and say they have shared the issues with the central government.

Maulvi Adam Jan No-mani, the director of public works, confirmed several bridges and major roads needed reconstruction.

"Our department has repeatedly requested the ministry concerned to allocate funds for the reconstruction of infrastructure projects,"

Nomani added they were still working to secure funding and initiate repairs of the damaged projects.

Efforts to obtain a response from the Rural Development and Agriculture Departments to the reconstruction of harmed culverts, bridges embankments and the protection of agricultural lands had been unsuccessful.

According to officials, last year's rains and floods caused extensive damage in the province, affecting four major bridges, 32 culverts, 51 embankments and 13,000 acres of land, mostly agricultural.

Exports see \$61m rise in one month

KABUL (Amu TV): Afghanistan's exports increased by \$61 million in October compared to the previous month, according to the Taliban-controlled National Statistics and Information Authority.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the authority said the total value of Afghanistan's exports reached \$234.9 million in October, up from \$173.9 million in September.

The report noted a significant rise in imports as well. Afghanistan's total imports for October surged by \$186.8 million, reaching \$1.14 billion compared to \$954.1 million in September.

Afghanistan's imports from Pakistan grew by 2% over the past four months.

The most notable increase was in sugar imports, which rose 15-fold during the same period.

Afghanistan imported \$91.69 million worth of sugar from Pakistan in the first four months of this fiscal year, compared to \$5.93 million during the same period last year.

Stable Afghanistan benefits region and world: Baradar



KABUL (BNA): In a meeting with several scholars from India and Bangladesh, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, expressed that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan views a self-reliant Afghanistan as advantageous for both the region and the world.

According to a press release from the Deputy Prime Minister's office, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund recently met with the scholars at his office. During the meeting,

he emphasized that the Islamic Emirate is committed to promoting a pure and correct understanding of Islam, free from superstitions. To achieve this, the government is strengthening new educational institutions, and implementing significant reforms in the curriculum.

Furthermore, Mullah Baradar Akhund highlighted that the Islamic Emirate is actively working to improve the country's economic situation. Large-scale economic projects

have been launched, trade with neighboring countries, the region, and the world has expanded, and progress in the industrial sector has been made.

These efforts aim to create a self-sufficient economy, free from external dependencies.

He also mentioned that the freezing of Afghanistan's national assets and economic sanctions have been major obstacles, slowing the country's economic growth.

The Deputy Prime Minister further stated that

the Islamic Emirate seeks to establish political and economic relations based on mutual interests and in accordance with Islamic principles.

He reiterated that a self-sustained Afghanistan is beneficial for both the region and the world.

During the meeting, the scholars from India and Bangladesh expressed their satisfaction with the governance of the Islamic system in Afghanistan and shared their views on strengthening the Islamic system further.

Kabul Municipality hosts coordination meeting with UNOPS

KABUL (BNA): Kabul Municipality convened a coordination meeting with representatives of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to enhance cooperation and ensure the efficient implementation of new development projects across various districts of Kabul.

The meeting was attended by Mawlawi Abdul Rashid, the Mayor of Kabul; Mr. Nicholas, Head

of UNOPS; Ms. Josie, Director of Kabul City Programs; Mohammad Qasim Afghan, Head of Planning, Policy, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and several other officials from Kabul Municipality. Discussions centered on improving coordination and ensuring the successful execution of new urban development initiatives.

During the session, the Mayor of Kabul urged

UNOPS to expand its cooperation in implementing similar projects that address citizens' pressing issues while creating employment opportunities for residents.

Nicholas reaffirmed UNOPS's commitment to prioritizing projects aimed at addressing environmental concerns and providing livelihoods for vulnerable citizens. He stated that of the 100 planned projects, 36 are currently in

progress, with the remaining projects set to commence shortly.

These initiatives include constructing secondary roads, alleys, parks, and other public infrastructure. The projects are designed to adhere to high-quality standards, with technical and engineering teams from Kabul Municipality conducting regular monitoring to ensure timely and effective implementation.

Prisons Head meets with OIC Secretary General



KABUL (TOLOnews): Mohammad Yousuf Mestari, the acting head of the Prisons Administration of the Islamic Emirate, said during a meeting with Hissein Ibrahim Taha, the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), that all prisoners' rights are respected in the country.

In the meeting, Mestari stressed that all officials and staff of this institution honor the human rights of all male and female prisoners.

Mohammad Yousuf Mestari said: "We provided

all necessary information regarding the prisoners to them. In addition, we raised some requests concerning the provision of food supplies, education, and healthcare services for prisoners, and they promised to cooperate extensively with us in this regard."

"They should also be educated about their own rights and the rights of others, meaning the rights of society, so that in the future, when they are released, they can interact better with people," said Hadi Quraishi, a military

affairs expert.

"The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which is composed of Islamic countries and is an influential body made up of wealthy member states, can assist Afghanistan in various fields. It is a good initiative for them to support prisoners," Aziz Maarij, a former diplomat, told TOLOnews.

According to statistics provided by the Prisons Administration, approximately 12,000 individuals are currently incarcerated in the country's prisons.

Mining agreement signing ceremony: Commitment to transparency highlighted

KABUL (BNA): General Director of Administrative Affairs, Mawlawi Noor-ul-Haq Anwar, emphasized the commitment of the Islamic Emirate during a signing ceremony for an implementation agreement focused on the Islamic Emirate working hour procedures.

The event, held between the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum and the Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Authority, marked a pivotal moment in the ongoing efforts to improve administrative efficiency.

The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum announced

that the primary goal of the meeting was to smooth and expedite the bidding procedures for both large and small-scale mining projects.

The agreement also aims to establish clear implementation guidelines, ensuring that the process is more accessible and efficient for all stakeholders involved.

Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, Mullah Hedayatullah Badri, highlighted the progress made in simplifying contract procedures, stating that the ministry is dedicated to introducing further improvements to create standard-

ized and efficient mining operations.

Mufti Shahzad Noor Rashid, Head of Administrative Reforms and Civil Services, provided insights into the broader administrative reforms currently underway.

Mufti Shahzad Noor Rashid, Head of Administrative Reforms and Civil Services noted that several initiatives aimed at process simplification are being implemented under the General Directorate of Administrative Affairs, all designed to enhance ease and efficiency for citizens.

Minister calls for shared role to address religious, worldly needs

KHOST (TOLOnews): The Acting Interior Minister Khalifa Sirajudin Haqqani has asked people to work with the government in both religious and worldly needs.

During the inauguration of a mosque construction project in Khost, the Acting Minister of Interior, stated that mosques and madrasas (religious schools) should not be left solely in the hands of clerics.

He stressed the importance of collective efforts to address both religious and worldly needs and challenges.

"We will not leave religion solely to clerics. Everyone will have a role in religion, but for fulfilling worldly necessities and resolving issues, we will work together with proper rules, principles, and efforts to solve those challenges sincerely," said Haqqani.

The Acting Interior

Minister also highlighted the insufficiency of domestic revenues to fund developmental projects.

He added that domestic revenues are not sufficient for implementing major development initiatives and noted that long-term projects are being undertaken using revenue from the country's mineral resources.

"Our revenues are very limited, and our developmental income hasn't yet reached a level where we can carry out major projects. However, work on some long-term projects is ongoing using the proceeds from minerals. For projects within our capacity, we won't wait for others; we will make our own efforts," he added.

Residents of Khost, meanwhile, called for greater cooperation in implementing essential infrastructure projects in the province.



Mohammad Ilyas, a resident of Khost, said: "There are water dams in many areas where surveys have been conducted, but their construction has yet to start."

Another resident, Sakhi Mohammad, stated: "In Khost, we need projects that people urgently require, such as roads, bridges, and water dams."

Saeedullah Jan, another resident of Khost, told TOLOnews: "In the previ-

ous government, promises were made to us regarding reconstruction projects, but they were not implemented. Now we ask the Islamic Emirate to take action in this regard."

The mosque in Khost's capital is being constructed with a budget of 30 million Afghanis, funded by a local businessman.

The mosque will have the capacity to accommodate 2,500 worshippers at one time.

IEA ambassador advocates for E-ID distribution centers in Iran

KABUL (BNA): Mawlawi Fazl Mohammad Haqqani, the Islamic Emirate's Ambassador to Iran, during a meeting with the Deputy Head of the National Statistics and Information Authority, called for the establishment of electronic identity card distribution centers for Afghan migrants in Iran and the facilitation of their identity registration process.

According to a statement from NSIA, the Afghan Ambassador emphasized the need to improve the identity registration process for migrants, address identity-related issues, and facilitate the distribution of citizenship cards, especially for Afghan students in Iran.

In the meeting, the Deputy Head of Civil Registration at the National Statistics and Information Authority assured that efforts would be made to



establish distribution centers in Iran and resolve the challenges faced by Afghan migrants.

The National Statistics and Information Authority,

as the official body for civil registration and identity verification for Afghans, reaffirmed its commitment to providing services to citizens both inside Afghanistan

and abroad. The authority had previously opened an Easy Service Center in the United Arab Emirates to facilitate migrants' access to identity services.

Matthew addresses kyiv embassy security alert amid rising tensions

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: In US State Department press briefing today, spokesperson Matthew Miller addressed concerns surrounding a security alert issued to staff at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, Ukraine. Miller confirmed that embassy staff did not report to work due to the alert but emphasized that the situation was temporary. "I cannot share details of the specific threat that prompted this action," Miller said, "but I can assure you that all embassy staff will return to work tomorrow as usual." He clarified that no staff members have left Kyiv, dispelling speculation about a potential evacuation. Miller also discussed the United States' military support to Ukraine amid the ongoing conflict with Russia. He revealed that the U.S. has provided specialized mines to Ukraine designed to deter Russian infantry movements. "These mines have a two-week operational lifespan, after which their batteries expire, making them both temporary and detectable," Miller explained. He contrasted this with Russia's deployment of over two million mines, highlighting the



stark difference in approach. Amidst the briefing, some observers have raised concerns that such developments fuel speculation about the potential escalation of the conflict. Rumors are circulating that Presidents Biden and Putin might push the war to new extremes, especially as Biden's time in office approaches its end. The uncertainty in Kyiv and the increased spotlight on military strategies have amplified chatter about possible shifts in international strategies during these critical weeks. Turning to diplomatic engagements, Miller noted that Ukraine's Foreign Minister was in Washington, D.C., holding talks with John Bass and other officials. "Military strategies are being discussed at multiple levels with our Ukrainian counterparts," he said, underscoring the depth of collaboration between the two nations. As the briefing concluded, Miller reiterated the United States' commitment to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and security, while the global community continues to watch the evolving situation closely.

PTI leaders, workers united for release of Imran: Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has stated that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, officials, workers, and the public are united for the release of PTI's founder and all political prisoners. Barrister Dr. Saif dismissed the reports of differences within PTI, calling them exaggerated and a possible desire of the fake government adding that since the final call for protest was announced, the fake government's ministers have been holding press conferences and exaggerating news regarding differences among PTI. Barrister Dr. Saif said that the rulers have lost their senses and are worried and frightened by PTI's growing popularity. He

emphasized that the time has come to topple the fake government. Barrister Dr. Saif expressed confidence in PTI's youth, saying their morale is high for the November 24 protest. Meanwhile, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif while addressing the Iqbal Literary Festival organized by the Youth Empowerment Club at the University of Peshawar, has emphasized that such intellectual and academic events are vital for the character building and intellectual guidance of the youth. In his address, Barrister Dr. Saif stated that Allama Iqbal's poetry and philosophy are not only a source of inspiration for Muslims but for all humanity. He remarked that Iqbal, through his works, encapsulated history, philosophy, and the challenges of

human existence in a way that serves as a guiding light for people of every era. Dr. Saif highlighted that Iqbal's core message to the youth revolves around character building. He asserted that in today's materialistic world, Iqbal's teachings inspire us to recognize our inner self and strive for higher goals in life. The Advisor further urged the youth to expand their thinking, awareness, and intellectual horizons. He encouraged them to understand and implement Iqbal's ideas to aim for greater objectives in life. He stressed that true success does not lie in achieving materialistic goals but in working for the welfare of humanity. At the end of the event, Dr. Saif visited the various stalls and appreciated the efforts of the students. On this occasion, a commemorative shield was also presented to him.

Naval Chief inaugurates Technology Park

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The groundbreaking ceremony of Pakistan's first Maritime Science and Technology Park (PMSTP) was held at EXPO Centre during IDEAS-2024. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the event as the Chief Guest. While addressing the ceremony, the Naval Chief highlighted historic significance of the project, stating that PMSTP will pave the way for much-needed growth in maritime sciences, technologies, businesses, and industries. He emphasized that this initiative will open new avenues for enhancing Pakistan's GDP and advancing the maritime sector. The Naval Chief further underscored that the success of PMSTP reflects strong partnerships cultivated



ed with visionary individuals and organizations. PMSTP is the country's first dedicated maritime science park, integrating academia, industry, and government in a unique collaboration to foster growth across Pakistan's maritime sectors. The park's initiatives will target diverse fields, including Naval Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Ocean Renewable Energy, Seafood Processing, Shipbuilding, and Coastal Tourism. PMSTP is envisioned as a transformative hub for innovation and advancement, focusing on maritime science and technology to bolster Pakistan's blue economy. The project represents a significant step toward addressing Pakistan's economic challenges, with plans for expansion beyond Karachi to Islamabad, Lahore, and Gwadar.

KP govt decides to increase climate change fund

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to increase climate change fund to Rs. 100 billion by 2028, with next year's allocation being doubled from Rs. 20 billion to Rs. 40 billion. In this regard Advisor to Chief Minister, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Finance and Inter-Provincial Coordination, Muzammil Aslam, participated in the Convention on Climate Change (COP 29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, where he, along with other team members from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, took part in a panel discussion on the session titled "Clean Water

and Climate Resilience: Transforming Pakistan's Water and Agricultural Landscape." Speaking on watershed management, Muzammil Aslam highlighted the need for 5,000 watersheds in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, requiring an investment of Rs. 115 billion. He mentioned that only 250 watersheds have been constructed in the province so far, and more are urgently needed. He emphasized the government's seriousness in this matter. Underlining the need for investment in the province, Muzammil Aslam remarked, "We cannot wait any longer. If investors spend one dollar, we will

also ensure proportional investment." He shared that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has allocated Rs. 20 billion for climate change initiatives this year and will double the allocation annually. For the next fiscal year, Rs. 40 billion will be earmarked, and by the provincial government's fifth year, Rs. 100 billion will be dedicated to climate change funding. Discussing governmental efforts to combat the impacts of climate change, he said that measures are being taken to the best of their capacity. A "Billion Tree Plus" project is being launched to counter the effects of climate change.

'Positive' use of VPNs not against Shariah: CII

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) issued a statement clarifying that the 'positive' use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) is not against Shariah. In a clarification, the Council of Islamic Ideology emphasized the importance of using technology in line with Islamic principles and promoting responsible digital citizenship. According to the Council of Islamic Ideology, VPNs are not inherently unlawful, but their usage should be positive and responsible. "Social media is a powerful tool for expressing thoughts and ideas that can be used for noble purposes. Muslims must follow Islamic teachings, using social media for promoting Islamic knowledge, education, and training," the statement read. It added that social media should not be used for defamation, sectarianism, unrest, or unlawful purposes. The Council of Islamic Ideology added that the government has started registering VPNs, asking the citizens to use registered VPNs and avoid the unregistered ones.

Ukraine fires cruise missiles into Russia

KYIV (Reuters): Ukraine fired a volley of British Storm Shadow cruise missiles into Russia on Wednesday, the latest new Western weapon it has been permitted to use on Russian targets a day after it fired US ATACMS missiles.

The strikes were widely reported by Russian war correspondents on Telegram and confirmed by an official on condition of anonymity. Moscow has said the use of Western weapons to strike into Russian territory far from the border would be a major escalation in the conflict. Kyiv says it needs the capability to defend itself by hitting Russian rear bases used to support Moscow's invasion, which entered its thousandth day this week.

Russian war correspondent accounts on Telegram posted footage they said included the sound of the missiles striking in Kursk region. At least 14 huge explosions can be heard, most of them preceded by the sharp whistle of what sounds like an incoming missile. The footage, shot in a residential area, showed black smoke rising in the distance. The pro-Russian Two Majors Telegram channel said Ukraine had fired up to 12 Storm Shadows into the Kursk region, and carried pictures of pieces of missile with the name Storm Shadow clearly visible.

A spokesperson for British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said his office would not be commenting on reports or operational matters. Britain had previously allowed Ukraine to use Storm Shadows within Ukrainian territory. The Kyiv government has been pressing Western partners for permission to use such weapons to strike targets deep inside Russia, and obtained the all-clear from US President Joe Biden to use the ATACMS this week, two months before Biden leaves office.

Biden's successor, President-elect Donald Trump, has said he will end the war, without saying how. The warring sides have interpreted this as likely to involve a push for peace talks — not known to have been held since the war's earliest months — and are trying to seize a strong position before negotiations. The Storm Shadows have a range in excess of 250 km (155 miles) and would give Ukraine the ability to hit targets far deeper into Russia than before. Kyiv says Moscow, which invaded Ukraine in February 2022, has previously taken advantage of limits on its use of weapons, particularly to strike Ukrainian cities from the air with heavy guided bombs. Western countries say the arrival of more than 10,000 North Korean troops to fight for Russia in recent weeks was an escalation that merited a response. The first use of the US ATACMS on Tuesday, fired at a Russian arsenal in the Bryansk region, prompted firm words from Moscow, which announced a change to its nuclear doctrine to lower the threshold for the use of atomic weapons.



QUETTA: Students and local people participating in a protest for recovery of missing persons at Balochistan Assembly Chowk.

PHC dismisses writ against 26th amendment

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar has dismissed a petition filed by Najeeb Ahmed challenging the 26th Constitutional Amendment, Wednesday.

The petitioner's lawyer argued that the amendment raises fundamental constitutional concerns and was passed without proper authorization, affecting the basic structure of the Constitution.

The National Assembly did not meet the required quorum during passing of the 26th amendment, the lawyer argued. He added that the amendment, passed by Parliament, raises fundamental constitutional issues and was introduced improperly, affecting the basic structure of the Constitution.

However, Additional Attorney General, Sana Ullah raised objections to the petition's maintainability, stating that Peshawar High Court can only issue directions within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's jurisdiction. He added that the Supreme Court of Pakistan has already decided to hear

similar cases, making this petition non-maintainable.

The petitioner requested the inclusion of all four provincial governments, the federal government, and other necessary parties through supplementary petitions. Additional Attorney General stated. PHC ultimately dismissed the petition after the petitioner chose to withdraw it, considering the Additional Attorney General's objections and the six supplementary petitions filed.

PHC grants conditional permission for Civil Judge exams: A divisional of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Syed Arshad Ali has granted conditional permission to candidates for participation in judicial exam for civil judge/ judicial magistrate/ Alaqa Qazi positions, despite a two-year court practice requirement.

The petitioners including Abid Hussain Shah, lawyers from 13 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa challenged the two-year experience requirement introduced in the Judicial Service Rules 2015. The counsel Numan Mohib Kakakhel advocate argued that this is discrimi-

nation against lawyers from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as other provinces, including Sindh, do not have this requirement, the lawyer argued.

PHC directs ANF personnel to face relevant court after dismissal of writ: A divisional bench comprising Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad has dismissed petitions filed by Ashna Gul and six Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) officials, seeking cancellation of a First Information Reports (FIRs) lodged against them, on Wednesday.

The ANF had raided Ashna Gul's residences, recovering a large quantity of narcotics and registered FIR. However, the counsel Amin-ur-Rehman Yousafzai advocate argued that the petitioner was forcibly abducted and falsely implicated, while the ANF argued he was wanted in multiple cases.

The ANF had frozen petitioner's properties, worth millions, without justification, the lawyer stated. PHC directed both parties to pursue their cases in relevant courts. The court ruled that the FIR cancellation requests cannot be entertained at this stage.

Putin eyes contours of a Trump peace deal

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian President Vladimir Putin is open to discussing a Ukraine ceasefire deal with US President-elect Donald Trump but rules out making any major territorial concessions and insists Kyiv abandon ambitions to join Nato, five sources with knowledge of Kremlin thinking told Reuters.

Trump, who has vowed to swiftly end the conflict, is returning to the White House at a time of Russian ascendancy. Moscow controls a chunk of Ukraine about the size of the American state of Virginia and is advancing at the fastest pace since the early days of the 2022 incursion. In the first detailed report of what President Putin would accept in any deal brokered by Trump, the five current and former Russian officials said the Kremlin could broadly agree to freeze the conflict along the front lines.

There may be room for negotiation over the precise carve-up of the four eastern regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, according to three of the people who all requested anonymity to discuss sensitive matters. While

Moscow claims the four regions as wholly part of Russia, defended by the country's nuclear umbrella, its forces on the ground control 70-80 per cent of the territory with about 26,000 square kilometres still held by Ukrainian troops, open-source data on the front line shows.

Russia may also be open to withdrawing from the relatively small patches of territory it holds in the Kharkiv and Mykolaiv regions, in the north and south of Ukraine, two of the officials said. Putin said this month that any ceasefire deal should reflect the "realities" on the ground but that he feared a short-lived truce which would only allow the West to rearm Ukraine.

"If there is no neutrality, it is difficult to imagine the existence of any good-neighbourly relations between Russia and Ukraine," Putin told the Valdai discussion group on November 7. "Why? Because this would mean that Ukraine will be constantly used as a tool in the wrong hands and to the detriment of the interests of the Russian Federation."

Two of the sources said

BD ex-police chief faces crimes against humanity charges

DHAKA (AFP): Bangladesh's former police chief appeared in court on Wednesday, accused of overseeing a deadly crackdown in a failed bid to suppress the August revolution that toppled the regime of Sheikh Hasina.

Former police inspector general Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was flanked by serving officers as he was led into court, where prosecutors alleged he was responsible for overseeing massacres, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Eight defendants appeared in court in Dhaka, including Ziaul Ahsan, a former commander of the feared Rapid Action Battalion paramilitary force.

Chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam, from Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal, said the eight men had committed crimes "that even devils dare not do". Islam said the former police chief was the "commander of all atrocities carried out against the student protesters", he told reporters outside court after the hearing. Dozens of Hasina's allies have been taken into custody since her regime collapsed, accused of involvement in a police crackdown that killed more than 700 people during the unrest that led to her ouster.

Islam presented a detailed list of crimes allegedly committed by Ahsan that included extrajudicial killings, the dismembering of bodies, and the surveillance of government critics. The prosecution said he was also responsible for shutting down the internet during the uprising. Ahsan denied all charges. "I was not in charge of the secret detention centre and never surveilled people," he told the court. Former lower-ranking officers in court were accused of killing protesters and burning their corpses to destroy the evidence.

One was accused of shooting Shaikh Ashabul Yamin — a student protester whose death was captured on a video shared widely on social media, showing his body being hurled from the top of a police armoured vehicle.

Israeli strikes kill 33 people in Gaza

CAIRO (Reuters): Israeli forces killed at least 33 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, including a rescue worker, health officials said, as troops deepened an incursion along the territory's northern edge, bombarding a hospital and blowing up homes.

Medics said at least 12 people were killed in an Israeli strike on a house in the area of Jabalia in northern Gaza earlier on Wednesday, and at least 10 people remained missing as rescue operations continued. Another man was killed in tank shelling nearby, they said. Later on Wednesday, an Israeli airstrike killed seven Palestinians, including a girl, in Al-Mawasi, a humanitarian-designated area in western Khan Younis in the southern

Gaza Strip, Gaza medics said. Palestinian and UN officials say no place in the enclave is safe.

Another air strike on a house in Remal neighbourhood in Gaza City killed four people, while a strike killed three Palestinians and wounded at least 20 others at a school sheltering displaced families in central Gaza Strip, medics said. Hussam Abu Safiya, director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya, one of three medical facilities barely operational in the besieged northern area, said the hospital "was bombed across all its departments without warning, as we were trying to save an injured person in the intensive care unit" on Tuesday.

"Following the arrest of 45 members of the medical and surgical staff and the

denial of entry to a replacement team, we are now losing wounded patients daily who could have survived if resources were available," he told Reuters in a text message. "Unfortunately, food and water are not allowed to enter, and not even a single ambulance is permitted access to the north."

There were 85 injured people, including children and women, at the hospital, six in the ICU. Seventeen children had arrived with signs of malnutrition as a result of food shortages. One man died of dehydration a day ago, Abu Safiya added. Israeli operations in Gaza have focused for weeks on the northern edge of the territory, where the military has laid siege to three major towns and ordered residents to flee.