

Azam Swati sent on remand
F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Azam Swati has been sent on a two-day physical remand by a Rawalpindi Anti-Terrorism Rawalpindi Court (ATC) in a case pertaining to 'violent' protest by the party. According to details, ATC Judge Amjad Ali Shah heard the police plea, seeking a two-week physical remand of Azam Swati.

Khan's lawyer given chance
F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) has granted the final opportunity to Imran Khan's lawyer to present arguments in the cases related to the May 9 riots. The ATC in Lahore heard the bail petitions of PTI founder Imran Khan in the cases related to the violent incidents of May 9. ATC Judge Manzoor Ali Gill presided over the hearing of the bail applications.



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Millions of US voters choosing new president

WASHINGTON: Millions of US voters visited polling stations Tuesday to pick a new president, deciding whether to elevate Vice President Kamala Harris to become the country's first female leader or return former President Donald Trump to the White House that he lost in the 2020 election.

Polls show that Harris, the Democratic candidate, and Trump, her Republican challenger, are locked in one of the closest contests in decades, with the winner to begin a four-year presidential term in January. Political analysts say the national outcome is likely to be determined by the vote in seven political battleground states spanning the country, where surveys show the two candidates are within 2 percentage points of each other, what pollsters describe as a toss-up.

Depending on how close the vote is, and how fast the vote counting is in key states, a likely winner could emerge by late Tuesday or early Wednesday, but maybe not for several days, as occurred four years ago. Both Harris and Trump have assembled a vast roster of experienced election lawyers to contest any irregularities they believe might affect the outcome to their candidate's disadvantage.

Polls started opening early Tuesday across the country's eastern states, with people streaming in to vote at government centers, fire stations, schools, churches and elsewhere. Other polling stations were to open later across the country's six time zones. Trump, 78, spent the early hours of Election Day in the political battleground state of Michigan. He wrapped up his campaign with a late-



night rally in Grand Rapids, a Republican stronghold where he also ended his 2016 and 2020 runs for the presidency.

"We're in very good shape. I have to tell you, we're way up in terms of the vote," Trump declared in a post-midnight speech. He claimed that Harris and the Democrats could only win if they cheat. "They have to cheat, and they do, and they do it very well," Trump contended. He blamed Harris, as he has throughout the campaign, for high consumer prices and the influx of undocumented migrants across the Mexican border into the United States.

Trump, who cast his ballot in person Tuesday, is spending the day at his

Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. He is scheduled to hold an election result watch party in West Palm Beach on Tuesday night. Harris, 60, ended her campaign at a star-studded rally in the eastern city of Philadelphia on Monday night, with pop star Lady Gaga, musical groups and former talk show host Oprah Winfrey lending their support. Harris did not mention Trump in her remarks, telling the crowd, estimated at 30,000, that "tonight, we finish as we started, with optimism, with energy, with joy, knowing that we the people have the power to shape our future."

Harris plans to attend an election night party at Howard University in Washington, a historically Black uni-

versity where she graduated with a degree in economics and political science in 1986. Harris said Sunday that she had "just filled out" her mail-in ballot and it was "on its way to California," her home state. Both candidates made stops Monday in Pennsylvania, with 19 electoral votes, the biggest prize among the seven battleground states. They held a series of rallies, with both showing up in Pittsburgh, in the heart of the US steel-making region. Both Harris and Trump expressed optimism.

"The momentum is on our side," Harris told her supporters gathered at a historic steel facility. "Our campaign has tapped into the ambitions, the aspirations and the dreams of the American people. And we know it is time for a new generation of leadership in America." "We must finish strong," Harris added. "Make no mistake, we will win."

Trump, addressing his supporters at a sports arena, said another presidential term with him at the helm would "launch the most extraordinary economic boom the world has ever seen." "If you vote for Kamala, you will have four more years of misery, failure and disaster," Trump claimed. "Our country may never recover. Vote for me and I will deliver rising wages, soaring income, and a colossal surge of jobs, wealth and opportunity for Americans of every race, religion, color and creed. Every one of them." Ahead of Tuesday's Election Day, more than 83 million Americans cast early votes, either in person at polling stations or by mail.

The total is more than half the 158 million who voted in the 2020 election, when President Joe Biden

defeated Trump. It was a Democratic victory that to this day Trump says he was cheated out of by fraudulent voting rules and vote counts. Dozens of court decisions, often rendered by Trump-appointed judges, went against him as he attempted to challenge the 2020 results. On Sunday, he told a Pennsylvania rally he "shouldn't have left" the White House in 2021 when Biden assumed office. Trump has said he will only accept Tuesday's outcome if he concludes that the election is conducted fairly, which Democratic critics have said they assume means only if he wins.

A Trump victory would make him only the second president to serve two non-consecutive terms, after Grover Cleveland in the 1880s. He would also be the first felon to serve as president as he awaits sentencing later in November after being convicted of 34 charges linked to his hush money payment to a porn film star ahead of his successful 2016 run for the presidency. Trump has often punctuated his campaign with angry broadsides at his Democratic opponents, calling them the "enemy within" the country and a threat to the country's future. He has belittled Harris as a person of limited intellect and said she would be the pawn of other world leaders in dealing with international relationships.

Harris for weeks has claimed she is the underdog in the campaign but lately expressed more optimism and now says she expects to become the country's 47th president. If elected, she would be the first woman to be the American leader, its first of South Asian descent and its second Black president after Barack Obama. She has described Trump as an "unserious

man," saying he would be a threat to American democracy and unhinged by any normal presidential constraints after the US Supreme Court ruled earlier this year that presidents cannot be prosecuted for any wrongdoing linked to their official actions.

Pollsters say the country's voters are deeply divided between the two candidates. It is an assessment reflected in how major media outlets look at the possible outcome. Last-minute polling shows the Harris-Trump race all but tied in the battleground states. The importance of the battleground states cannot be overstated.

US presidential elections are not decided by the national popular vote but through the Electoral College, which turns the election into 50 state-by-state contests, with 48 states awarding all their electoral votes to the winner in those states. Nebraska and Maine allocate theirs by both statewide and congressional district vote counts. The number of electoral votes in each state is based on population, so the biggest states hold the most sway in determining the overall national outcome, with the winner needing 270 of the 538 electoral votes to claim the presidency.

Aside from the 19 electoral votes at stake in Pennsylvania, and two other battleground states, Georgia and North Carolina, have 16 apiece, and Michigan has 15. Polls show either Harris or Trump with substantial or somewhat comfortable leads in 43 of the states, enough for each to get to 200 electoral votes or more. Barring an upset in one of those states, the winner will be decided in the seven remaining battleground states. — VOA

Pakistan desires to strengthen Iran ties

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reaffirmed that Pakistan desired to further strengthen its brotherly relationship with Iran through maintaining regular high-level exchanges and enhancing mutually advantageous cooperation across all spheres of shared interest.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Foreign Minister of Iran Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, who called on him here, reiterated Pakistan's unequivocal support to the Palestinian people in their just struggle for self-determination and statehood. He strongly condemned and expressed grave concern over Israel's ongoing genocidal campaign against the Palestinian people, according to a PM Office press release.

Welcoming Foreign Minister Araghchi on his first official visit to Pakistan as Foreign Minister of Iran, Prime Minister Shehbaz conveyed his sincere regards and good wishes to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei and President Massoud Pezeshkian. The prime minister also emphasized the need for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, provision of unhindered humanitarian assistance and, above all, grant of the inalienable right to self-determination to the Palestinian people, as guaranteed to them by the relevant resolutions of the UN, as well as OIC.

The prime minister also reiterated strong condemnation of Israel's attack against Iran on October 26, 2024, while reaffirming support for Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Iranian foreign minister thanked the prime minister for Pakistan's principled position and briefed him on Iran's perspective regarding the situation in

the region.

PM breaks ground for two Rs 8b interchanges; vows to make Islamabad tourism model: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif laid the foundation stones for two road-interchanges projects at Jinnah Avenue-Ninth



Avenue and Serena Convention Center intersections to ease traffic congestion on the main arteries of the federal capital.

The prime minister, who unveiled the plaques for both mega road projects valued over Rs 8 billion, emphasized the swift completion of the work and believed that the projects would usher in an era of progress and prosperity for the residents of Islamabad and its suburbs.

Addressing the ceremony, the prime minister said what was initially planned to be completed in six months will now be completed in just 100 days. The Serena Chowk project will be finalized in 60 days. He also extended his felicitations to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for his leadership in executing key projects.

A detailed briefing on the plans was given to the prime minister by Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa, who outlined the designs and expected benefits of the projects for local residents and commuters. "Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi has maintained his exemplary record of Punjab and has shown great commitment to beautifying and modernizing Islamabad," the prime

minister remarked and also appreciated Information Minister Attaulah Tarar's efforts in repairing and beautifying the SCO CHG conference hall.

He praised the security arrangements made by law enforcement agencies, particularly the beautification

of Islamabad for the recently successful conduct of the SCO CHG conference, which had been widely appreciated by foreign dignitaries including the Chinese and Russian premiers. In addition to the new infrastructure developments, Prime Minister Shehbaz asked the authorities concerned to maintain the aesthetic appeal of Islamabad as a permanent feature to amuse the guests coming from across the world and the country, and instructed to develop Islamabad as a global tourist hub, taking advantage of its natural beauty.

Earlier, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who also spoke at the ceremony, reiterated the government's dedication to completing these projects swiftly and maintaining the beauty and flow of Islamabad's infrastructure. He announced plans for additional development, including the construction of five-star hotels and efforts to improve the traffic flow at Faizabad Chowk. Naqvi said, "We are also working on connecting Margalla Road with the Motorway to further ease congestion and reduce the motorway to PM Office distance to just 15-20 minutes."

2 FC soldiers martyred in D I Khan

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: A Frontier Constabulary (FC) vehicle came under terrorist attack within the jurisdiction of Dera Ismail Khan's Daraban police station on Tuesday.

According to the statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, two brave FC soldiers embraced martyrdom, while four others sustained injuries during the terrorist attack. The martyrs were identified as Sepoy Sher Rehman and Sepoy Syed Ameen. The statement further added that the FC soldiers valiantly fought against the Khwarij terrorist attack.

Sepoy Sher Rehman hailed from South Waziristan, while Sepoy Syed Ameen was from Gadoon, Swabi. The injured soldiers Havaladar Imtiaz, Sepoy Muhib Shah, Sepoy Sahib Din, and Sepoy Fazal Kareem have been shifted to the hospital for medical treatment.

"The Frontier Constabulary remains resolute in its mission to thwart the malicious intentions of terrorists. The sacrifices of FC soldiers exemplify the unwavering commitment in the fight against terrorism," said the Ministry of Interior spokesperson.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the terrorist attack that took place in Dera Ismail Khan targeting a convoy of Frontier Constabulary (FC). The prime minister paid tribute to the FC official martyred in the attack and prayed for the elevation of his rank in paradise and patience for the bereaved family, according to a PM Office press release. He also instructed the authorities concerned to extend the best possible medical care to the injured FC officers and personnel and paid tribute to the sacrifices of the FC force for maintaining peace in the country.

Cabinet okays Hajj Policy

Policy rate reduction a debt relief, pleasing move for economy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday lauding the policy rate reduction by the State Bank of Pakistan to 15%, said that the government's economic stability measures were coming to fruition.

The prime minister, in his opening remarks, while chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet, said a further two percent reduction of the policy rate was a pleasing development for business, agriculture, exports, and commerce sectors. He said SBP had gradually reduced the policy rate from 22% to 15%, encouraging people to invest their money in the economy to create jobs, enhance production, and exports.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that

the policy rate reduction would decrease the debt burden by Rs1.3 trillion providing huge relief and creating a great fiscal space for the country. He expressed the hope that the country's economy would strengthen if the indicators continued to move positively.

The prime minister told the cabinet members that in a follow-up of his recent visit to Saudi Arabia, a Pakistani delegation had left for the Kingdom to discuss cooperation in mining and minerals, solar energy and skilled IT workforce which was required by both Saudia Arabia and Qatar. He asked the IT ministry to give a presentation to explain their strategy to produce IT workforce of international standard to make them cope with the requirements of both

the countries.

Calling for swift action on B2B MoUs with Saudi Arabia, the prime minister said the Azerbaijan government had also given a green signal for the signing of \$2 billion MoUs to strengthen bilateral cooperation. "These are good signals. How we take advantage of these is up to us," he remarked.

The prime minister hinted at announcing a power relief package for the winter season and emphasised facilitating the businessmen to boost their morale "We are taking measures bit by bit for relief of the common man to create jobs and run the economy. This is a tough journey but only the nations which face the challenges are destined to succeed," he remarked.

JCP approves Constitutional Bench

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Tuesday approved a seven-member Constitutional Bench with representation from all four provinces for a term of two months.

The JCP, reconstituted under the 26th Constitutional Amendment, convened its first meeting chaired by Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, Chief Justice of Pakistan / Chairman of the Judicial Commission here at the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Mr. Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Mr. Mansoor Usman Awan, Attorney-General for Pakistan, Senator Farooq Hamid Naek, Senator Syed Shibli Faraz, Sheikh Aftab Ahmad, Member of the National Assembly, Mr. Umar Ayub Khan, Member of the National Assembly and Ms. Roshan Khurshid Bharucha.

The Commission considered the formation of a Constitutional Bench within the Supreme Court to consider constitutional matters/cases. The Chief Justice expressed the views of the judges regarding the Constitutional Bench under Article 175(A) of the Constitution and suggested certain duration of the Bench. Other participants also expressed their views on the matter which was considered and thoroughly debated.

Following a vote, the majority (7 out of 12) approved a seven-member

Two SC judges write to CJP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Two senior judges of the apex court on Tuesday wrote a letter to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Yahya Afridi to call a full court bench for hearing plea against the 26th Constitutional Amendment. Senior puisne judge Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Muneeb Akhtar demanded a full court bench to be called during this week in connection with plea against the 26 Constitutional Amendment. Both judges pointed out that the committee meeting which was held on Oct 31 had decided to call a full court bench on Nov 4 but no cause list was issued in that regard.

It was mentioned in the letter that the judges had called a committee meeting on Nov 4 under Section 2, in which both of the judges had decided to make a full court bench on that plea. The judges had also sent directives to the SC registrar to upload minutes of meeting on the SC website. It must be remembered that President Asif Ali Zardari had signed the Practice and Procedure Amendment Ordinance 2024. The most senior judge of the Supreme Court, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah had earlier excused himself from a special bench to hear tax case. Justice Shah wrote a letter to then chief justice Qazi Faez Isa as head of the Practice and Procedure Committee on Oct 23. He said he had written earlier that he would not be a part of special benches until the full court sits on the amendment ordinance. He wrote that "people are watching our actions and history will never forgive [us]." It may be recalled that the tax review case was heard on October 4 by a three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Isa. Justice Shah and Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan were the members of the bench. Justice Shah had written a dissenting note in the case and it was decided to include him in the bench to hear the review petition.

Constitutional Bench with representation from all the four provinces for a term of two months, comprising of the judges including Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, (Chairman), Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan.

Earlier, the Chairman JCP wel-

comed the participants and congratulated them on their nomination. At the outset, Mr. Umar Ayub objected to the quorum of the Commission highlighting the absence of one member. This objection was later put to a vote and by majority, the meeting affirmed that the proceedings are in consonance with the Constitution and can continue in the absence of one member.

The Frontier Post confronts Matthew Miller with critique of press treatment by him and Karine on election eve

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON D.C: A heated exchange unfolded at a State Department press briefing when The Frontier Post correspondent confronted spokesperson Matthew Miller on issues ranging from US involvement in Pakistan's politics to perceived bias in how journalists are treated at briefings. The exchange highlighted the correspondent's frustration over alleged US silence on Pakistan's human rights issues and what he described as unequal treatment in press access.

The briefing opened with light-

hearted banter between the correspondent and senior journalist Matt Lee, as they reflected on their 25-year careers covering the State Department. Recalling his friendship with former spokesperson Richard Boucher, the correspondent contrasted Boucher's respect for journalism with his current frustrations. While he regularly covers top officials like Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Pentagon leaders, the correspondent expressed that gaining access to White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre's briefings has become challenging, noting that even the

Secret Service admitted they "have no idea what's going on."

Tensions escalated as the correspondent questioned Miller's previous remarks regarding former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's ouster and using the word "clossish", a word described by journalist Matt Lee as unique in diplomacy. Accusing Miller of downplaying US involvement while signaling disapproval over Khan's relationship with Russia, he pressed for clarification. Miller rejected the portrayal, stating, "That is not an accurate representation of what I said."

The correspondent then turned to Pakistan's human rights situation, citing the recent abduction and recovery of a Supreme Court attorney, Mr Panghota and questioning why the US had not publicly condemned the treatment of Pakistani lawyers, parliamentarians, Senators and activists. Miller replied, "I'm not aware of that report, so I can't comment on it," drawing visible frustration from the correspondent, who accused the State Department of ignoring his questions about Pakistan's human rights abuses for the past two years.

Adding to his grievances, the cor-

respondent shared a recent experience last week in which he brought his six-year-old son to a briefing, intending for him to ask Miller a cute and genuine question. Unlike other journalists' children, who have been permitted to stay and pose politically charged questions, he claimed he was told to take his son out of the briefing room in front of his son, suggesting a double standard in treatment.

At one point, the correspondent held up a photo depicting Miller and Jean-Pierre with bull horns, symbolizing what he described as an aggressive and disrespectful approach

toward journalists and their journalism which is the beacon of democracy in America. "This is how I feel journalism is treated under you and Karine," he stated.

Miller, seeking to keep the briefing on track, reminded, "This is question time, not argument time." As he moved to the next question, the incident left a pointed reminder of the often complex and contentious relationship between international journalists and US officials, spotlighting the challenges journalists face in their pursuit of transparency and accountability.



LAHORE: A teacher wearing facemask due to smog gives a lesson to students at a local school.

Murad launches state-of-the-art Counter-Terrorism Fusion Centre

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah today inaugurated a cutting-edge facility, the Fusion Centre of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), within the provincial police, aimed at enhancing the provincial government's counterterrorism efforts.

According to the CM House information, the inauguration ceremony was attended by Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Inspector General of Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Additional IG CTD Imran Yakoob Minhas, and DIG CTD Asif Aijaz Shaikh, along with other senior officials.

The Fusion Centre, established by the National Radio and Telecommunications Corporation (NRTC), is equipped with advanced technology and infrastructure to strengthen the CTD's capacity to combat terrorism. "The provincial government has allocated Rs722 million for the Fusion Centre in the fiscal year 2023-24 to support the centre's operational and developmental needs," the CM said.

The centre is designed as a central hub that integrates online and offline data from all relevant stakeholders, enabling efficient analysis, collaboration, and decision-making. Through the project, the CTD aims to streamline intelligence-sharing and bolster the scientific investigation of terrorism cases and other government-assigned matters.

Sindh Chief Minister Shah Syed Murad Ali Shah, speaking on the occasion, said that his government was committed to equipping the provincial police with modern resources. "the provincial government has focused on strengthening the Sindh police with improved training, transportation, budgetary support, and essential equipment," he said. He added that It was the responsibility of the police to protect the lives, property, and liberties of the people of the province.

Shah also discussed the persistent threat of terrorism and expressed his appreciation for the sacrifices made by the police, Rangers, and other law enforcement agencies. "Our law enforcement agencies have played an invaluable role in maintaining law and order, even at personal cost," he said.

The Fusion Centre represents a significant step forward in Sindh's counterterrorism capabilities, as it seeks to improve intelligence-driven policing and enhance public safety across the province. Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar also spoke on the occasion and appreciated the support the chief minister has extended to strengthen the provincial police.

One day seminar, walk on 'Breast Cancer Awareness' held

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab University Institute of Social & Cultural Studies, Department of Public Health in collaboration with the Pink Ribbon Organization, Shaukat Khanum Cancer Hospital, Atomic energy Cancer Hospital Immol Lahore, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and Al-Habib Pharmaceuticals, organized a one-day seminar and awareness walk on 'Breast Cancer Awareness'.

On this occasion, ISCS Directors Prof Dr Rubeeza Zakar, Clinical Oncologist of Immol Cancer Hospital Dr Wajeeha Anjum, Director Immol Cancer Hospital Dr Amna Shami, faculty members and students were present. The event was started with a Pink Ribbon Breast Cancer awareness walk in which students and faculty members participated. In her address, Dr Rubeeza Zakar shared insights on the importance of proactive health measures and community support in the fight against breast cancer and highlighted the common myths surrounding breast cancer that must be addressed to empower communities.

Dr Wajeeha Anjum delivered an informative presentation on 'Early Detection and Preventive lifestyle choices'. She shed light on the global, national and local statistics of Breast Cancer and encouraged the students for self-examination to promote early detection. Dr Amna Shami highlighted the role of community participation and different organizations like Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, who are working to fight the evil of Breast Cancer. The student of BS Nutrition and Dietetics set up stalls at ISCS for promoting cancer-preventative food which was highly appreciated by the participants.

Need to develop definitive accounts of novel economic technologies

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: 'We must develop definitive accounts of novel economic technologies.' This was the core message of a book launch for the edited volume titled 'Decentralized Autonomous Organizations: Innovation and Vulnerability in the Digital Economy,' held at the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad.

Dr Usman W. Chohan, Advisor for Economic Affairs and National Development at CASS presented key findings of the co-edited volume and urged all stakeholders in Pakistani society to be aware of emerging economic technologies for Pakistan's development. Focused on the blockchain-based technology known as 'Decentralised Autonomous Organizations' (DAOs), the edited volume brought together 11 renowned authors from eight countries spanning seven academic disciplines, including economics, technology, mathematics, law, and sociology, among others. Dr Chohan's presentation covered the preparation, vision, and structure of the book, which aims to serve as a definitive account of DAO technologies from a multidisciplinary perspective.

President of CASS, Islamabad, Air Marshal Javid Ahmed (Retd) delivered concluding remarks and congratulated Dr Chohan on this eighth book in his six years at CASS and emphasised the role of innovation and technology in economic development. He urged young Pakistanis to remain abreast of economic technologies and to make contributions to their advancement. Given the scope and detail covered in the collective research endeavor, he lauded the comprehensiveness of the book and expressed hope that the co-edited volume would serve as a valuable resource on DAOs internationally for many years to come. The launch was for inauguration of the 'Dr Usman W Chohan Book Corner' in the Centre's library showcasing his books written and edited over the past few years at CASS, Islamabad.

Third edition of Social Sciences Winter School Begins at IBA

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Third Edition of the Social Sciences Winter School, jointly organized by the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi and the Centre for South Asian and Himalayan Studies in Paris (CESAH, CNRS-EHESS) commenced at IBA City Campus.

According to an IBA statement issued today, the theme of the Third Edition of Winter School is 'Questioning Society Through Image, Film & Sound'. Running from November 04-08, the school will emphasize diverse methodologies, from photography and digital archives to ethnographic film and sound, fostering innovative perspectives and reflective observation in social research and heritage projects.

Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi and member of the Winter School Steering Committee, opened the session by thanking all those who made Winter School possible for the third consecutive year. He highlighted the value of collaborating with scholars from diverse fields in the study of image, film, and sound, emphasizing how these partnerships foster cultural exchange and collaborative learning. He thanked participants for their continued engagement with IBA Karachi and expressed his desire to expand the program's reach next year, inviting even more participants to join in this collective experience of learning, working, and thinking together.

Dr. Rémy Delage, Research Scholar of CESAH (CNRS-EHESS) and member of the Steering Committee of the Winter School discussed how the Winter School was "A unique training setup that brings together scholars and participants from various backgrounds and cultures to address multiple societal challenges in a collaborative manner and through the lens of Social Sciences".

Dr. Michel Boivin, another prominent Research Scholar of CESAH (CNRS-EHESS), highlighted the ongoing academic collaboration between France and Pakistan, noting its role in facilitating Pakistani students' pursuit of PhDs in France. He emphasized the collaborative framework that underpins this initiative and shared that the Third Edition of Social Sciences Winter School will place greater emphasis on methodological approaches using image, film, and sound as tools in social science research. Additional plenary sessions were also organized to explore different themes. The sessions included international trainers and participants from France, Belgium, Sri Lanka, and Turkey. The first plenary session was delivered by Professor Christopher Pinney, Anthropologist, University College London, who delivered a speech titled, 'On Medium Specificity, Or, What's Photography Got to Do with It?'. Meanwhile, a man killed and two others were injured in a collision between a donkey cart with a motorcycle at Nutal road Gandawa area of district Jhal Magsi on Tuesday.

According to a levies force report, the motorcycle collided with the donkey cart at Nutal road Gandawa area of district Jhal Magsi, resultantly, man Sikandar, resident of Sajawal Sindh died while two others Asadullah and Muhammad Akbar sustained injuries. The body and injured were rushed to District Headquarters Hospital Gandawa, where the deceased was handed over to the heirs after fulfilling necessary medico-legal formalities while the injured was being treated.

Haji Tibat Shah's wife passes away

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Haji Tibat Shah's wife, sister-in-law of Haji Mir Badshah, mother of Haji Abd Razzaq, Shaukat, Arif Ashfaq and aunt of Haji Niaz Badshah and Islam Badshah passed away.

Her funeral prayer was offered on Tuesday. Dua will be held at House No. 5, Street No. 1, Sector H-2 Phase 2, Hayatabad.

Meeting seeks formation of committee

F.P. Report

KARACHI: A high-level meeting, held at the Sindh Assembly building under the chairmanship of Sindh Home Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar, focused on key issues and reforms related to airport security.

According to the Sindh home ministry's information, Mr Lanjar emphasized conducting a security audit and ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in the process. He directed the immediate implementation of orders to form a committee for airport security matters.

The committee will include the Secretary of the Sindh Home Department Iqbal Memon, Additional IG Karachi, DIGs East and CTD, representatives from Special Branch, SPU, Joint Director of Intelligence Bureau, ASF, and members of the Civil Aviation Authority. The committee's responsibilities will involve creating SOPs for foreign nationals and assigning security-related duties. For enhanced security around and within the airport, the home minister instructed the installation of additional CCTV cameras. He also directed the committee to prepare a comprehensive SOP detailing the responsibilities of each institution and official for review.

He said that the security for foreign nationals will be strengthened further, ensuring exceptional safety measures. The home minister expressed the commitment to work diligently and emphasized the need to maintain this level of dedication. The meeting was attended by IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon, the Secretary, Additional IG Karachi, the Joint Director of IB, DIGs, CTD, Special Branch, and representatives from other law enforcement agencies.

2 brothers gunned down

F.P. Report

QILLA ABDULLAH: Two brothers were gunned down in a firing incident at Gulistan cross area of district Qilla Abdullah in Balochistan province on Tuesday while another man sustained injuries in the incident.

According to levies, scuffle between cousins turned into an armed clash in at Gulistan cross area of district Killa Abdullah. In the ensuing fire, two brothers namely Shamsullah and Ikramullah died. One person namely Exatullah sustained injuries in the incident.

The bodies and injured were shifted Sandeman Provincial Hospital Quetta for completion of codal formalities and treatment, respectively. The body was handed over to the heirs after fulfilling necessary medico-legal formalities. The incident has created a mourning atmosphere in the victims' home. Further investigation is being conducted by the authorities of levies station, Killa Abdullah.

Meanwhile, a man killed and two others were injured in a collision between a donkey cart with a motorcycle at Nutal road Gandawa area of district Jhal Magsi on Tuesday.

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AJK Minister discuss national issues with Sharjeel

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Information Minister Mazhar Saeed Shah met with Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon at his office in Karachi. During the meeting, the two ministers discussed national issues, as well as matters related to Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Sindh, among other topics. Minister Mazhar Saeed Shah was accompanied by Maulana Ejaz Mehmood, Malik Asif Raza, Hassan Asim, Muhammad Arqam Shah, and Waliullah in his meeting with Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon.

During the meeting, Sindh's Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, informed the delegation about the initiatives taken by the Pakistan People's Party and the Sindh Government for the welfare of journalists.

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that freedom of media and expression is not merely a principle but a fundamental component of democracy. He emphasized the Sindh Government's commitment to creating an environment where media houses and journalists can work freely, without fear or threat. "A vibrant, independent media is essential for a transparent and accountable government," he added.

He stated that the Sindh Government has been working tirelessly to promote long-term growth in the media industry. "It has been the vision of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistan People's Party, and the Sindh Government to ensure the welfare and protection of journalists and uphold freedom of expression," he said. Under the leadership of the PPP, the Sindh Government is committed to safeguarding press freedom and protecting the rights of journalists.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated, "A free press is a pillar of a democratic society, and freedom of expression is essential for holding power accountable." He highlighted that the Sindh Government has taken numerous steps to support journalists, media workers, and media houses.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Information Minister Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah praised the Sindh Government's efforts for the journalist community, stating that "the Sindh Government's initiatives serve as a model for provinces across Pakistan. These initiatives not only benefit journalists but also enhance the credibility and resilience of media institutions."

He stated that the stance of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on the Kashmir issue has been clear and historically significant. "The way Bilawal Bhutto Zardari raised the Kashmir issue on Indian soil as Foreign Minister was a historic act," he added.

During the meeting, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Information Minister Mazhar Saeed Shah presented a gift of traditional Kashmiri tea to Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. In return, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon gifted the visiting Information Minister and other members of the delegation with traditional Sindhi Lungi and Sindhi Topi. Additionally, Minister Memon presented a special souvenir to Information Minister Mazhar Saeed Shah as a token of goodwill.

KMC receives Rs228m from municipal utility charges

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that bold and strict decisions were made to make the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) financially self-sufficient, and the benefits are beginning to show.

According to KMC information today, KMC received a cheque of 228 million rupees from municipal utility charges collected through K-Electric bills in just one month. KMC aims to collect 3 billion rupees annually from municipal taxes, which will be used for development projects across the city as well as for paying pensions and dues to municipal employees. Details of these receipts and expenditures will be available online.

Speaking at a press conference at KMC's head office on Tuesday, alongside Deputy Mayor Salman Abdullah Murad, Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said it was time to question those who opposed the collection of municipal taxes through K Electric. "Who will answer for the 10 billion rupees in losses incurred by KMC over the past three years due to their negative propaganda? Why were they trying to strangle this city?" he asked. He noted that although the past mayor previously had the authority, it failed to generate legitimate revenue from municipal taxes. Today's check counters the narrative that funds could not be received through K-Electric. Sometimes, tough and brave decisions are necessary in the larger interest of the city.

The mayor also announced that the new District ADP (Annual Development Program) has started, and all development work in the city will begin within a month. With monthly funds increased from 500,000 to 1.2 million rupees, union council (UC) chairmen are now empowered to address issues such as road repairs, sewage, and streetlights in their areas.

During the press conference, Wahab highlighted that he and Deputy Mayor Salman Murad have been in office for a year and four months.

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Kundi urges unity to eliminate extremism, sectarian violence

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday stressed that we all must unite to eliminate extremism and sectarian violence.

He said this during a meeting with a delegation of Tehreek-e-Nifaz Fiqa Jafariya (TNFJ) at Governor House, led by Provincial President Syed Ghazanfar Ali Shah, included senior vice president Maulana Malik Ijlal al-Hyderi, provincial vice president Zulfiqar Haider Jameel, Advocate Zulnoorain Haider, and other members.

The TNFJ delegation raised several important issues concerning the security and welfare of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the nation as a whole.

They demanded the full implementation of all clauses of the National Action Plan to ensure lasting peace and the complete eradication of terrorism in the province and across Pakistan.

The delegation also called for the practical banning of proscribed organizations, enhancing the security of the Peshawar-Parachinar road, constructing alternative routes for the residents of Parachinar, and halting cross-border infiltration.

They further brought up the deteriorating condition of the Mir Ahmed Shah Shrine in Orakzai, and to restore the road leading to the shrine and carry out

necessary repairs.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi assured the delegation that maintaining peace and order in the province was a shared responsibility.

He expressed optimism about the collective efforts to bring peace to the region soon. "We all must unite to eliminate extremism and sectarian violence. The people of our province are peaceful and peace-loving," he said.

The Governor also emphasized the natural beauty and resources of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which attract people from across the country.

"Our province has been blessed by Allah with immense beauty and resources, and its rich culture and natural wonders draw visitors from far and wide," he added.

Faisal Karim Kundi expressed deep concern over the security situation in Parachinar and assured that he was in constant contact with local authorities and the people there. "We must move forward as Muslims and Pakistanis, united in the fight against extremism and sectarian violence," the Governor concluded.

Meanwhile, delegation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa National Jirga, led by the Jirga Chairman Khalid Ayub and delegation of Buner University also called on Governor Faisal Karim Kundi here at Governor House.

During the meeting, the

delegation briefed the Governor on the deteriorating conditions of universities in the province and other pressing issues.

While addressing the delegations, Governor Kundi acknowledged the challenges faced by the province, saying that resolving these issues, along with empowering women and engaging the youth, was a top priority for the provincial government.

He emphasized that after the 18th Amendment, powers had shifted to the Prime Minister and Chief Minister, leaving the provincial government with limited authority on several matters.

On the issue of university appointments, the Governor mentioned that the appointment of Vice Chancellors was a serious matter, and he had openly expressed his concerns regarding the process.

He clarified that university appointments were made based on summaries sent by the Chief Minister's office, in accordance with established procedures.

"The appointment of Vice Chancellors is a serious issue, and I have expressed my reservations openly.

These appointments are made based on the summary sent by the Chief Minister," he said.

Governor Kundi also condemned incidents of harassment at universities, emphasizing that such

cases would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

He assured that no form of injustice would be accepted in the universities, and efforts would be made to address the concerns of staff, faculty, and students.

"Any form of harassment or mistreatment at universities will not be tolerated. We will leave no stone unturned in resolving the issues faced by staff, teachers, and students," he affirmed.

Discussing the overall security situation in the province, the Governor said that the situation could not be improved by isolated events, such as the release of leaders or rallies.

He stressed the need for collective action to ensure peace, promote education, health, and communication infrastructure.

"Peace in the province cannot be restored by isolated events like protests or the release of individuals. We need to focus on ensuring peace, improving education, health, and communication facilities across the province," he said.

Governor Kundi also expressed confidence in the talent present in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, urging everyone to support and nurture this potential.

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has talent in every sector, and it is our responsibility to support and foster it," he added.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur chairing a meeting of committee constituted for solarization of government buildings.

Ghulam Ali congratulates newly elected KhuJ cabinet

Hails role of journalists in supporting business community

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, recognizing the enduring resilience and commitment of Peshawar's journalists, congratulated Kashifuddin Syed, the newly elected President of the Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ), and his cabinet on their recent clean sweep in the elections.

He highlighted the journalists' unwavering dedication to truth, even in the most challenging circumstances, and expressed his decades-long association with the journalistic community of Peshawar.

Addressing the press at the Peshawar Press Club, former Governor Ghulam Ali expressed his high hopes for the new KHUJ leadership to actively address the issues faced by journalists.

Accompanied by a delegation from the Sarhad Business Alliance (SBA), he presented flower garlands to the newly elected cabinet members as a gesture of congratulations. Among those present were SBA Co-Chairmen Muhammad Ishaq and Syed Sirajuddin, former provincial minister and trade leader Malik Mehr Elahi, President Peshawar Traders Chamber Ghulam Bilal Javid, FPCCI former coordinator Sartaj Ahmed



Khan, Shehzad Siddiqui, and other prominent figures.

The President of the Peshawar Press Club, Arshad Aziz Malik, and the KHUJ President Kashifuddin Syed, along with cabinet members, expressed their gratitude to the former governor and the delegation, discussing various matters of mutual interest.

Former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali remarked on the sacrifices and contributions of Peshawar's journalists, especially during the challenging years of the fight against terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He praised the press corps for

their steadfast commitment to truth in the face of adversity.

"The contributions journalists have made with their pens and cameras in supporting every sector, including the business community, are unforgettable," he said.

He expressed confidence that under the leadership of Kashifuddin Syed, the new KHUJ cabinet would play an active role in solving the challenges faced by the journalist community.

Later, the former governor and his delegation visited shops affected by a recent fire in Namak Mandi's Medicine Market. He extended his sympathies

to the affected shopkeepers and assured them of full support to recover from the financial losses caused by the incident.

In response, the shopkeepers expressed their gratitude but also raised concerns that the firefighting team arrived over an hour late, which exacerbated the damage. SBA representatives Muhammad Ishaq and Syed Sirajuddin accompanied the former governor on this visit.

This press release maintains a formal and appreciative tone while addressing the support offered to the journalist community and the concerns raised by the local business owners.

PHC seeks progress report on judges' security

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed directed both federal and provincial governments to submit progress report till 14th November in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council's petition regarding judges' security, on Tuesday.

Additional Attorney General Sana Ullah, Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Faisal Uthmanzai, Chairman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council Sadiq Ali

Mohmand and Additional Chief Secretary Home Abid Majid appeared before the court.

Additional Chief Secretary Home informed the court that the federal government had been approached to discuss new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for judges' and bar rooms' security.

Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim emphasized the importance of cooperation between federal and provincial governments to ensure judges' security, citing the province's deteriorating law and order situation. "We can't let our judges live in fear". Over

20,000 police officers have made the ultimate sacrifice. We owe it to them, and to every family affected to act, he observed.

Additional Chief Secretary Home Abid Majid assured the court that joint meetings with federal authorities had yielded new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for judges' security.

PHC's divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice PHC Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad ordered both federal and provincial governments for submission of progress report regarding security of judges and bar's rooms till 14th November.

PHC issues notice to Pesco in bill dispute case

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah has issued notice to Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO), seeking response regarding an electricity bill dispute, on Tuesday.

The petition Imran Ullah claimed that PESCO incorrectly added Rs. 80,000 to his electricity bill. His lawyer, Daniel Asad Chamkani, argued that despite assurances from PESCO officials to resolve the issue, the amount was still included in the bill.

The petitioner had initially appealed to the Federal Ombudsman, who directed both parties to resolve the matter mutually.

However, PESCO failed to honor the agreement, prompting the petitioner to approach the High Court.

PHC accepted the petition and issued a notice to PESCO, seeking their response.

Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Tuesday informed that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Rehman Baba Grid Station on 7th and 9th November from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Resultantly consumers of Kachori, Sharif Abad, Khan Mast Colony, New Hazar Khwani, Shalozai Bala, Phandu baba, Umar 2, Yakatoot, New Chamkani, Phandoo Road 2, Ring Road, Chairman Daftar, Beri Bagh, Rashid Ghari, Akhoona Abad, Ring Road 2 and SIDB feeders will face inconvenience.

Likewise, it said that power supply will remain suspended from Kohat Road Grid Station on 7th and 9th November from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. resultantly, consumers of PAF Express, Kohat Road, Wazir Bagh, Old Deh Bahadar, Old Kohat Road, Dora Road, New Deh Bahadar, Scheme Chowk feeders will face inconvenience.

Islamic Relief holds event on violence against women

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR (APP): Islamic Relief with support of Bolo helpline of Social Welfare Department here Tuesday arranged a meeting of stakeholder to tackle gender-based violence in the province.

The event was attended

by dignitaries from United Nations, FIA Cybercrime Wing, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, academia, ombudsperson representatives and lawyers.

Participants praised the efforts of Islamic Relief in bringing expertise and stakeholders on the issue and expressed hope that

forum would help fostering a collaborative approach among various departments and agencies about gender based violence.

Speakers also stressed for a collective commitment in creating a safer and more equitable society for women, girls and transgender persons in KP.

Capacity building project for KP nurses inaugurated

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Secretary Health, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Syed Adeel Shah has stated that the Department of Health, in collaboration with Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar and British universities consortium, has initiated a phased program of advanced professional training for nurses serving in public hospitals.

This program will not only open new avenues for training nurses on modern lines but will also foster a new culture of nursing care in public sector hospitals.

He expressed these views while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the second batch of KP Nurses Capacity Building Project organized in collaboration with British universities consortium at KMU.

Distinguished guests at the event included representatives from SAME RPS UK, Dr. Ijaz Hussain;

Pro Vice Chancellor KMU, Prof. Dr. Rubina Nazli; KMU Registrar, Inamullah Wazir; Head of HSRU at the Department of Health, Dr. Khalil Ur Rehman; Director of Nursing, Dr. Fareed Ullah Shah from DG Health Services; and KMU INS Director, Dr. Najma Naz.

The Health Secretary emphasized that, in alignment with the vision of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, selected nurses will receive advanced training to provide high-quality medical services in government hospitals, leading to significant improvements in the delivery of healthcare services.

He expressed satisfaction that the healthcare system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is more effective compared to other provinces, and despite challenging conditions, the medical staff is performing exemplary services. He further highlighted that this advanced

training program for nurses was initiated upon the special interest and directives of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and that its outcomes will be encouraging.

Recognizing the vital role of nurses in the healthcare system, the Health Secretary stressed the importance of enhancing their professional skills.

He appreciated the special interest taken by the representative of SAME RPS UK, Dr. Ijaz Hussain, and KMU Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq, and expressed confidence that after the successful training of the first group, the training of subsequent groups will be conducted with the same enthusiasm and dedication. He expressed optimism that this training program will not only enhance the professional skills and capabilities of nurses but also benefit the welfare of patients in public hospitals.

Swati directs for considering historical worth of KP Assembly

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, has issued directives considering the historical significance of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Despite its extensive parliamentary history, it has not been properly preserved and highlighted.

Therefore, the Assembly Secretariat requires the services of the University of Peshawar Arts & Design Department and other relevant provincial departments to preserve this important historical heritage and present it for public exhibition and to students.

These thoughts were expressed by the Acting Secretary of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, Syed Waqar Shah, during a meeting with Dr. Imrana Ismail, Chairperson of the University of Peshawar Arts & Design Department and her accompanying delegation at the Assembly Chamber in Peshawar. Representatives from the Public Relations and Research Sections of the Assembly Secretariat were also present on this occasion.

In this meeting between the Acting Secretary and the representative delegation of the University of Peshawar Arts & Design Department, detailed discussions were held on framing the historical aspects of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly in the form of exhibition Portraits and highlighting the historical significance of the Old Hall of the

Assembly, which holds its own history, and the steps to be taken to preserve this important building.

The Acting Secretary also took the Peshawar University delegation on a tour of the important parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Secretariat, including the Provincial Assembly Hall, Old Jirga Hall, offices of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Leader of the House, Speaker and Deputy Speaker Gallery, and Flag Point, so that the experts from the Arts Department could physically examine these parts and present their suggestions in this light.

Acting Secretary Syed Waqar Shah further stated that Speaker of the Assembly Babar Saleem Swati has always emphasized the importance of

the parliament and generating public interest in it, so that the public better understands that the parliament is the place where their representatives protect their rights and carry out the legislative process.

The Acting Secretary said that Speaker of the Assembly Babar Saleem Swati believes that staying informed about the legislative process and other parliamentary affairs is a fundamental right of the public, which is why the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Secretariat has kept all its parliamentary activities, assembly sessions, and other important events open to the public. Today's meeting is also a part of this series, in which we will welcome all your positive efforts and suggestions.



In brief

Five killed over dispute on passage F.P. Report

BATKHELA: At least five people were killed and another seriously injured when neighbors resorted to indiscriminate firing at each other over a dispute related to construction of a pathway in Batkhela city of Malakand district on Tuesday. Batkhela Levies said the incident occurred between two neighboring families over some construction of a pathway leading to their houses in Akbar Abad area. Levies said the dispute spanning over one year led to harsh arguments on Tuesday morning and both the groups started direct fire at each other. As a result of intense firing five people were killed on the scene and another seriously injured. Those who died in the incident included Rashid Khan, son of Akbar Khan, Ifikhar Hussain, son of Noor Hussain, Abdul Kabir Khan, son of Taza Khan, Matan, son of Fazal Subhan and Bilal Khan, son of Muhammad Rashid. Another man, Muhammad Rahim, son of Abdul Kabir was injured. On receiving information, a large contingent of Levies Force reached the area to contain the situation, however other people involved in firing managed to flee the area. The entire area was cordoned off to avert further bloodshed. Levies have also started a search operation to arrest those involved in firing.

Supdt jail inspects Bannu prison F.P. Report

BAANU: Senior Officer Department of prisons Junaid Khan appointed as Superintendent Central Jail Bannu while inspected Mandah Khana, kitchen and various barracks, on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Deputy Superintendent Jail Mutasim Balaulah, Incharge Asim Khan, Jail Chief Hanif Khan and other officers were also present. Superintendent Jail Junaid Khan said that the provincial government and IG Jail. In the light of the orders of the Central Bannu, reforms have been started in the prison, proper education and Witr Bait are also provided to the prisoners in this regard, the prisoners will be taught different skills so that they can become useful citizens of the society. No one will be abused inside no pressure will be accepted other than the government rules. We are trying to provide better facilities to the prisoners coming here. Moreover, special ceremony in honor of TMO Bannu Yusuf Khan, TMO was dressed in traditional langi and gifts were presented at Tehsil Municipal Administration Bannu Town Hall. Hafiz Kareem Dad Khan was held in which TOR Maswar Khan, Tehsil Finance Officer Abdul Farid Khan Wazir, President of Pensioners Association Mir Hatim Gul Khan and other leaders and officers participated in large numbers.

Unknown culprits kill couple F.P. Report

LARKANA: Unknown armed persons has killed couple in Larkana as few days ago the Nazir Ahmed Kodarani, a resident of Mahota village, and escaped after killing the woman. On the information of the local residents, the police of Darri police station arrived and took the bodies of the victims to Chandka Medical College Hospital and handed over the bodies to their relatives after post-mortem. On the other hand, after killing the lovers, the involved accused managed to escape.

Multi-faceted exhibition arranged



Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: District administration under Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Program "Awami Agenda" held a magnificent multi-faceted exhibition at the Kohat Sports Complex to create awareness among the primary school students of Kohat district on environment, environmental protection, science and sports.

Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafiullah Jan MPA and Commissioner

Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah attended the said exhibition as chief guests. In the said exhibition, students of government primary schools of Kohat district set up magnificent display stalls and presented practical activities.

Parents, teachers and people from different walks of life witnessed the activities in large numbers and highly appreciated the various activities.

The audience highly appreciated the children's

scientific experiments and environmental awareness.

Chairman DDAC Kohat and Commissioner Kohat highly appreciated the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram and his team for organizing these useful activities for the primary school students. Commissioner Kohat announced that under the Chief Minister's program "Awami Agenda", such useful activities will also be organized continuously in all the districts of Kohat division.

Tehsil sports gala kicks off at GDC Ghazi

F.P. Report

GHAZI: Tehsil Sports Gala has launched with high energy and fanfare at the Government Degree College Ghazi. A sports activity with the name of Sport Gala has been started in tehsil Ghazi, the sports Gala will continue from November 4th to November 10th. This week-long event will showcase thrilling competitions and events designed to foster teamwork, resilience, and fitness among students from ten participating schools across the tehsil. The event highlights not only the athletic abilities of young students but also emphasizes the importance of character-building, discipline, and unity.

For formal inauguration of the Sports Gala, an impressive opening ceremony was held which began with a solemn recitation from the Quran by Hafiz Irfan, followed by a heartfelt Naat that set a reverent tone. Chief Guest and Principal GDC Professor Hafiz Sadiq ur Rehman delivered the inaugural address, expressing his hopes for a successful event. ASDEO Male Circle Ghazi, Mr. Talal Khan Tahir Khaili, welcomed the attendees and passionately spoke on the role of sports in shaping confident, well-rounded individuals.

Professor Muhammad Farooq applauded the organizers for their efforts and discussed the positive impact of sports on physical fitness, mental alertness, and character development. Other distinguished speakers including Professor Abdul Razaq, Sadaqat Ali Tanoli from the English Department and Malik Naseer Awan highlighted how sports cultivate confidence, teamwork, and mental strength qualities that contribute to success both on and off the field. First-year students Zeeshan Gandapur and Muneed warmly welcomed the guests and helped to manage the arrangements with enthusiasm and dedication.

The sports gala launched with spirited competitions as students from ten schools competed in the opening matches, showing their talents with passion and teamwork.

The participating teams impressed the crowd with their skills, agility, and determination, making it a thrilling start to the event. The excitement was amplified by Mr. Khawar Zareen and Umar Naseer, who delivered lively and engaging commentary that kept the audience enthralled. Sajjad Anwar Tanoli masterfully handled the stage as secretary, and Headmaster

Gibran Shahid (GPS Aldo Jabbi) provided seamless support.

An organizing committee, led by Convener Khawar Zareen and including team members Umar Naseer, Ehtisham, Waseem, and Waleed Ali Khawaja worked tirelessly to bring the event successful. The monitoring team, comprising Qamar Ali Shah, Babar Nadeem, and Akmal ensured that all competitions ran smoothly, with fair play and organization at the forefront.

Khawar Zareen received special appreciation for organizing top-notch refreshments and offering exceptional hospitality to honored guests and participating teachers, adding warmth and generosity to the event atmosphere. The Sports Gala will continue until November 10, featuring a diverse range of competitions to promote healthy competition, sportsmanship, and camaraderie among students.

By championing physical fitness, discipline, and teamwork, the event seeks to equip young people with skills and values that will serve them throughout life. This gala is more than just a celebration of sports but it is a celebration of character, unity, and the boundless potential within every young participant.

Local govt to play key role against climate change Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: An awareness session, "The Role of Local Governments and Youth in Climate Action," took place at the University of Swat, organized by Youth in Local Governance (YoLoGo), a joint initiative of GIZ and the Forum of Federations.

The panel featured youth climate activist Asif Javid, green entrepreneur Zahra Kamal Khan, and Dr. Jan Muhammad, Deputy Director of Plant Protection. Moderator Shahab Ud Din guided the discussion on climate change's far-reaching impacts.

Dr. Jan Muhammad highlighted Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's climate and agriculture initiatives, emphasizing community engagement and youth collaboration. Zahra Kamal Khan advocated for simple daily actions like reducing plastic use and recycling. Asif Javid stressed the need for practical steps over rhetoric. Dr. Umar, Chairman of Economics and Development Studies, praised youth's valuable role in combating climate change. Abur Haider, representing the Forum of Federations, underscored local governments' significance.

Delay in issuance of passport irk masses F.P. Report

BUNER: Thousands waiting for their passport since August in spite they were deposited demanded fee for normal urgent and fast track passport. Those waiting their passport told media outside passport office Swari, they were time and again visited passport office to receive their passport.

Some of them complained they were paid fee for urgent and fast track passport just to avoid it urgent and fast but to no avail. Those waiting for their passport were eager immediate leaving country and to embark in Malaysia UAE Saudi Arabia and Western countries but delayed passport was main hurdle.

They while best utilizing the opportunity of media persons, have demanded the elected public representatives for raising voice and making sure passport available and help them go out of country for earning livelihood as their families were fast moving towards starvation due to sky rocketing hike in prices. The passport office management staff were reluctant to talk media but uttering themselves were shifting the burden on the shoulders of passport supply unite at top level.

It's pertinent to mention here that most of Buner district population depend on foreign reserves, earned by elders or youths from a family and delayed passport sent a wave of uncertainty and most of them were sent to mental illness.

Three-day book fair launched at UoM

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Students, faculty members and administrative staff took keen interest in a book fair held at the University of Malakand (UoM) here on Tuesday. A three-day book fair was jointly arranged by the UoM in collaboration with the National Book Foundation.

The Commissioner Malakand Division Amjad Ali Khan along with Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan, UoM Vice Chancellor Prof Dr. Rashid Ahmed and Vice Chancellor University of Karak Fida Khattak formally inaugurated the three-day book fair at the main campus of the varsity. A large number of students, UoM faculty and administrative staff, local educationists, schools' heads and teachers visited the book fair and showed keen interest in books on different titles and topics ranging from medical, engineering, history, science, information technology, philosophy, politics and literature.

Speaking on the occasion the commissioner said that students should develop book reading as their habit during studies and in their free time. He said the aim of the book fair was to draw the attention of the youth towards book reading because the trend was gradually vanishing among the youth and students. The commissioner said that students should promote the cause of readership for reviving the culture of book reading on the campuses to boost up creativity in them. He said that only educated nations progressed and developed.

Commissioner Malakand Division appreciated the efforts of the organizers for arranging a successful book fair. Later, the commissioner along with DC Lower Dir and VC UoM visited various stalls of multi-disciplinary books in the book fair. According to the organizers, more than five thousand books had been put on display for sale at discounted rates for students and other readers.

Teachers' organization announces to keep government primary schools closed in KP: The All-Primary Teachers' Association (APTA) has announced to close all male and female government primary schools across the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province for an indefinite period from Tuesday (today) in protest against the government for its failure to

accept teachers' demand.

Talking to local journalists at Timergara the APTA district president Qazi Habibullah, chairman Akhunzada Ubaidullah and general secretary Siraj ud Din said that all government male and female primary schools would remain closed from Tuesday till indefinite period. The APTA leaders said the KP government had failed to notify teachers' up-gradation, end illegitimate tax deduction from salaries, to appoint class wise teachers in primary schools, to decrease bag burden on students, regularize contract teachers and declare the contract teachers for general provident fund (GP Fund) benefits.

They said the APTA had held a meeting in Peshawar on Sept 14 and then protested in front of press clubs across the province on Oct 7 for acceptance of its demands but the government did not take it seriously. The teachers' leaders said that their suspension, imprisonment, beating charge and gas shells could not force them to end their protest. They demanded the KP government to immediately notify the demands presented to it by the teachers' organization. Otherwise, they threatened to keep government primary schools closed for a long time in the province.

Lady Health Workers: Representatives of lady health workers in Lower Dir complained that hundreds of their colleagues were working without salaries for the last six months. Talking to local journalists at Timergara, they threatened to boycott their official duties if their salaries were not released within a week. The LHWs said that they were faced with severe financial difficulty due to stoppage of their salaries and it was not possible for them to run their families in the wake of current inflation.

Road opening: A jirga of local elders on Tuesday succeeded in opening a road for traffic at Dushkhel area of Talash which was kept closed for the last one year. The road was closed due to a dispute among residents of Tauda China and Toor Baba that caused misery to local residents. A jirga led by the PTI welfare wing district president Muhammad Israr started efforts to convince the parties and resolve the issue. After several rounds of talks the jirga succeeded to open the road for vehicular traffic.

Admn silent on land mafias in Mardan

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The district administration and incompetent thesil municipal administration become silent spectators before land mafias as lack of parking in commercial plazas which created menace of traffic jam in Mardan.

This was claimed by local residents while talking to *The Frontier Post* and argued Chief Secretary to take stern actions against incompetent public servants. The plazas and commercial sites constructed by influential builders have been completed without the proposed construction regulations due to the negligence of the TMA and the district administration in the main commercial centers and urban areas of Mardan.

There is no space for underground car parking in these plazas, due to which after the business activities started in these plazas, the cars and motorcycles of the customers who come here are parked in front of these plazas on the footpaths and roads made for the public

which will cause more problems due to traffic jams in the city of Mardan, which is already suffering from severe traffic problems.

It should be noted that despite the mandatory parking orders in the commercial plazas of the provincial government, due to the negligence of TMA Mardan, the maps of the parking plazas have been released. Public social circles have strongly demanded from the Chief Secretary KP to issue orders to make car parking in the commercial plazas under construction in Mardan.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner, Additional Deputy Commissioner visited Central Jail Mardan. On reaching the Central Jail, a well-armed squad of Jail Police, Superintendent Jail while giving a briefing said that the cost of construction of 342 Kanai Jail at a cost of Rs 1730 million was completed in 2015. The jail has a 180-bed hospital with necessary medical staff for the treatment of inmates, while the jail also provides religious and secular education as well as various skills to

make the inmates useful members of the society, including tailoring, electrician, fashion design, surfing, computer plumbing and drug rehabilitation centers.

Deputy Commissioner reviewed security arrangements and other facilities in the jail. He took deep interest in the establishment of drug rehabilitation center and marble product industry in the jail and assured full cooperation from the administration in this regard. He said that provision of portable x-ray machine for patients in the jail hospital will be ensured while effective steps will be taken to solve other problems. He appreciated the performance of the Superintendent of Jail for better management of cleanliness and other matters in the Jail.

Moreover, Assistant Commissioner Sahar Anwar has emphasized the importance of following precautionary measures to protect the public from dengue virus. He said that especially in the morning and evening hours, when dengue mosquitoes are most active, citizens must adopt protective measures.

Effects of marble wastes on Biodiversity-II

Murad Khan

FORTY years old, Hashim Khan said that due to the presence of marble waste particles one side the photosynthesis of the plants effects and on the other side lying dust particles slow down transpiration and photosynthesis of the plants, which ultimately affect the growth of biological species. "Similarly during rain these wastes mix with flood water and go to the Green fields which directly affect the plant's organisms and enzymes, so when these flood water goes into wells these wastes are used by plants, animals and even human beings as well, which can cause serious diseases to plants and animals". He added.

Hashim Khan who is working as teacher in Government Higher Secondary School Ghalani, said that we have practically seen the bad effects of these marble wastes in some areas of lower sub division of Mohmand District, where the sugarcane production was badly affected due to the use of water mixed with marble waste, gradually the yield of sugarcane was decreased, then local farmers changes the upper surface mud and used alternate water source, so these were the bad effects of marble waste over plant species and for the safety of biodiversity in Mohmand District, this serious issue should be addressed on emergency basis by government and NGOs.

Effect of Marble Wastes on Wildlife species: Kiram Shah, DFO (Divisional Forest Officer) of Mohmand wildlife division said Marble factories waste contaminates water resources, impacting wildlife by polluting their habitats, disturbing water quality, and potentially causing respiratory and digestive issues in animals. Similarly, Fishes, amphibians and invertebrates may suffer from reduced oxygen levels and they are unable to survive in contaminated waters, which ultimately leading to a loss of biodiversity and when marble dust becomes airborne, it can pose respiratory threats to both wildlife and humans.

The DFO said that Waste exposure can lead to respiratory issues, skin diseases, and poisoning in wildlife. Polluted water sources may also spread pathogens affecting animal populations. Besides this, Birds and small animals that inhale the dust are at risk of respiratory illnesses and lung damage.

Kiram Shah added that regularly clean and treats polluted water sources, set up filtration systems, and restrict wildlife access to contaminated areas. Restoring polluted areas through soil remediation, planting native vegetation, and cleaning contaminated water sources can help restore the local ecosystem, providing wildlife with healthier habitats.

Mr. Shah said that proper waste management systems in factories, awareness and community involvement, use of sedimentation

ponds to filter runoff, and enforcement of environmental regulations can be adapted as precautionary methods.

Government's view about marble wastes in Mohmand: Faheem Ullah Tarakzai, Industrial development officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Industries Department said that there more than 150 marble industries are in Mohmand and under the Marble Waste Management Rules 2012 and stone crushers rules 2020 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the marble industry. He added that the marble industry produces about 30% of slurry waste from quarry production, 15-20% from processing activities, and 5-7% from polishing waste and in waste management, the govt. imposed them the rules of proper waste disposal, recycling, and reuse of marble waste to minimize environmental harm.

About the regulation he added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Industries Department is responsible for enforcing these rules and ensuring compliance from marble industries. Some specific Regulatory Measure includes Licensing and permits for marble industries, Regular inspections and monitoring, Penalties for non-compliance, Waste Disposal and Recycling, in which Industries must dispose of waste in designated areas and follow proper waste management protocols.

Answering a question about

Govt. activities for the proper marble waste management, he said "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has initiated various activities to promote proper marble waste management in the marble industry, some of them are:

1. Establishment of Marble City in Ekkaghund, namely Marble estate industrial zone at Michniarea: A dedicated zone for marble processing and waste management.
2. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines: Regular monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations.
3. National Environmental Policy (2010): Emphasizes sustainable resource utilization and waste minimization.
4. Marble Waste Management Rules (2012): Specific regulations for marble industry waste disposal.
5. Hazardous Substances Rules (1999): Guidelines for handling hazardous waste.
6. Marble Waste Recycling Project (MWRRP): Aims to recycle 50% of marble waste initiative taken by PCSIR at industrial estate Tribal District Mohmand at Ekkaghund Tehsil.

He said that ministry of Environment, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Industries Department KP, Labor Department & district administration of the concerned areas are involved in waste management and minimizing the effects of marble waste.

He added that limited resources, lack of infrastructure and Insufficient public awareness are our main challenges and we in future we are not only trying to overcome these challenges but are also trying to expand Marble City and Establish proper waste management.

Marble industry Owner's point of view about marble wastes: Gulab Hussain, the CEO of Mohmand Lining & Minerals Pvt Ltd said that we have started this company in 20216, which makes boric acid (H3Bo6) from 32 lack from special marble stone, which are found easily in Mohmand.

About the waste from his Industry. The 38 years old industry owner said that we have tried to safe 80 per cent health of our labors safe from dust, as we have installed new machinery, which has been minimized the direct involvement of labors, that's why we take majority work from machines, from grinding to final packing, we use machines.

About the labor safety he said that we have provided PPE's (Personnel Protective Equipment's) to our labors in huge quantity, but still there are some labors, who are not abiding the full safety mechanism and if someone from labors is not obeying these rules, we finally quit his job.

Mr. Gulab Hussain was of the view that the dust from our industry neither goes into the water nor it is lying in open air, which can creates problems for humans and

other organisms and said that there are still marble powder industries in hilly areas of Mohmand District, who are still using the old and conventional methods of grinding, which are not only creates problems for human beings but it also affects our agriculture and wildlife species as well.

For safety of human beings and biodiversity he demanded govt. to take strict actions against those factory workers who are not applying waste management policy.

Conclusion: The marble waste founds in two major forms, either it is lying on earth in open air or flows with water, when these waste mix with open air, it can create lungs and chest disease for human beings and animals, apart from this it can also harm to the biodiversity of the overall district, because on one hand this wastes stops photosynthesis of plants, if directly lay down on its leaves and change PH of the water, when it mix with water and when these wastes flows with flood water it goes into the drinking water creating a lot of human, animal and plant diseases, therefore, the Govt. should take serious steps to make sure the waste management policy. For the safety of residents of Mohmand District, the Government should take strict action against violators.

The writer is a Radio Producer and Freelance Journalist, who tweets on @muradonline123.
(Concluded)



TBILISI: Protesters taking part in a rally against alleged violations in a recent parliamentary election in Georgia.

Thousands rally again in Georgia to protest election

TBILISI (AP): Thousands of opposition supporters rallied outside Georgia's parliament for the second straight to denounce the Oct. 26 election as illegitimate after the ruling party was declared the winner amid allegations of vote-rigging helped by Russia.

The protesters, who waved Georgian and European Union flags, demanded a new parliamentary election under international supervision and an investigation of the alleged ballot irregularities. Opposition leaders vowed to boycott sessions of parliament and hold regular protests until their demands are met.

"We will not accept illegitimate elections; we will not recognize an illegitimate parliament," said Badri Japaridze, leader of the Lelo Strong Georgia Coalition. "We will not go to that parliament, and we will not let (the ruling party) Georgian Dream announce itself as the legitimate representative of the Georgian people, because they have stolen the elections. This is a special operation backed by Russia, where the future of the Georgian people has been stolen, and we will not accept that." The protest

took place under the watch of riot police, reflecting the simmering political tensions in the South Caucasus country of 3.7 million people that lies between Russia and Turkey. The Central Election Commission said Georgian Dream won about 54% of the vote. Its leaders have rejected the opposition claims of vote fraud.

Salome Zourabichvili, who has rejected the official results, says Georgia has fallen victim to pressure from Moscow against joining the EU. Zourabichvili, who holds a mostly ceremonial position, has urged the United States and EU to support the demonstrations.

Officials in Washington and Brussels have urged a full investigation of the election, while the Kremlin has rejected the accusations of interference. Giorgi Vashadze, leader of the United National Movement Coalition, said that the opposition is urging the West not to recognize the vote and will gather more evidence of violations to push for a new election. He vowed to organize protests not only in the capital but across the country.

Georgian Dream, which has been in power since 2012, was established by

Bidzina Ivanishvili, a shadowy billionaire who made his fortune in Russia. The opposition has accused it of becoming increasingly authoritarian and tilted toward Moscow. It has recently adopted laws similar to those used by the Kremlin to crack down on freedom of speech and LGBTQ+ rights. European election observers said the election took place in a "divisive" atmosphere marked by instances of bribery, double voting and physical violence.

Observers said instances of intimidation and other violations were particularly prevalent in rural areas. The EU suspended Georgia's membership application indefinitely because of its passage in June of a Russian-style "foreign influence law." Many Georgians viewed the parliamentary election as a pivotal referendum on the country's effort to join the EU.

"I am angry that we are not on a European Union path at all right now," said Tbilisi resident Tornike Tsiramua, voicing hope that the protests will grow. "This election was fraudulent; we have all the evidence, and we need to push our government to ensure

the elections are conducted fairly and freely." Georgian Dream promised to continue pushing toward EU accession but it also wants to "reset" ties with Russia, the country's former imperial master. In 2008, Georgia fought and lost a brief war with Moscow, which then recognized the independence of two breakaway Georgian regions and bolstered its military presence there. Georgia's prosecutors last week launched an investigation of the alleged vote-rigging. The opposition immediately objected that the Prosecutor's Office would not conduct an independent investigation because its head was appointed by the Georgian Dream-controlled parliament. The investigation was requested by the Central Election Commission and Zourabichvili was summoned for questioning about the allegations.

Others "who may possess information related to the alleged criminal act" also would be questioned, the Prosecutor's Office said. Zourabichvili said she would not obey the summons, arguing that the prosecutors should have found the evidence itself.

men sometimes escort or kidnap migrants as they travel to the US border. One possible scenario was that armed migrant smugglers may have been in one or both of the trucks, but that the migrants were basically unarmed bystanders. The defense department said the three National Guard officers who opened fire have been taken off duty. Former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who left office Sept. 30, gave the military an unprecedentedly wide role in public life and law enforcement; he created the militarized Guard and used the combined military forces as the country's main law enforcement agencies, supplanting police. The Guard has since been placed under the control of the army.

But critics say the military is not trained to do civilian law enforcement work. Moreover, lopsided death tolls in such confrontations - in which all the deaths and injuries occur on one side - raise suspicions among activists whether there really was a confrontation. For example, the soldiers who opened fire in Chiapas - who have been detained pending charges - claimed they heard "detonations" prior to opening fire. There was no indication any weapons were found at the scene.

2 Colombians killed on migrant smuggling route near US

MEXICO CITY (AP): Mexico's National Guard fatally shot two Colombians and wounded four others in what the Defense Department claimed was a confrontation near the US border. Colombia's foreign ministry said in a statement that all of the victims were migrants who had been "caught in the crossfire." It identified the dead as a 20-year-old man and a 37-year-old woman, and gave the number of Colombians wounded as five, not four. There was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy.

Mexico's Defense Department, which controls the National Guard, did not respond to requests for comment on whether the victims were migrants, but it said one Colombian who was not injured in the shootings was turned over to immigration officials, suggesting they were. If they were migrants, it would mark the second time in just over a month that military forces in Mexico have opened fire on and killed migrants. On Oct. 1, the day President Claudia Sheinbaum took office, soldiers opened fire on a truck, killing six migrants in the southern state of Chiapas. An 11-year-old girl from Egypt, her 18-year-old sister and a 17-year-old boy from El Salvador died in that shooting, along with people from Peru and Honduras.

The most recent shootings happened on a dirt road near Tecate, east of Otay Mesa on the California border, that is frequently used by Mexican migrant smugglers, the department said in a statement. The Defense Department said a militarized National Guard patrol came under fire after spotting two trucks in the area, which is near an informal border crossing and wind power generation plant known as La Rumorosa. One truck sped off and escaped. The National Guard opened fire on the other truck, killing two Colombians and wounding four others. There was no immediate information on their conditions, and there were no reported casualties among the guardsmen involved. One Colombian and one Mexican man were found and detained unharmed at the scene, and the departments said officers found a pistol and several magazines commonly used for assault rifles at the scene.

Colombians have sometimes been recruited as gunmen for Mexican drug cartels, which are also heavily involved in migrant smuggling. But the fact the survivor was turned over to immigration officials and that the Foreign Relations Department contacted the Colombian consulate suggests they were migrants. Cartel gun-

US says Russia, China 'shamelessly protects, emboldens NK

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters): The United States called out Russia and China at the United Nations Security Council for "shamelessly protecting" and emboldening North Korea to further violate UN sanctions as Pyongyang pledged to accelerate building up its "nuclear force."

"Russia and China have shamelessly protected Pyongyang from any reprisal, or even condemnation of its actions," said deputy US Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood. "Shielded from closer scrutiny of its sanctions-violating activities by Moscow and Beijing, Pyongyang, unsurprisingly, has been emboldened to continue advancing its

unlawful ballistic missile, nuclear, and WMD programs," he said, using the acronym for weapons of mass destruction.

The 15-member council was meeting over Pyongyang's test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile, Wood said. Russia and China had prevented the council from issuing a statement of condemnation, a move that needs a consensus. North Korea's UN Ambassador Kim Song told the Security Council that Pyongyang would accelerate the buildup of its nuclear force to "counter any threat presented by hostile nuclear weapons states." "The nuclear threat of United States against DPRK has already reached critical point in terms of its

scale and danger," Kim said. "Due to reckless moves of the United States, the potential situation is approaching the brink of war."

DPRK is the acronym for the country's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea has been under UN Security Council sanctions since 2006, and the measures have been steadily strengthened over the years with the aim of halting Pyongyang's development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Russia and China rejected the U.S. remarks. Deputy Russian UN Ambassador Anna Evstigneeva accused the countries which called meeting - the US, France,

Japan, Malta, South Korea, Slovenia and Britain - of "demonizing" North Korea to keep "afloat ineffective sanctions measures" and justify "aggressive steps" by the US and allies in the region. "We would once again like to note that the Security Council must fundamentally revise its approaches in order to get the situation out of this dangerous deadlock and not make it worse," she said, accusing Western states of being "stuck somewhere in the Cold War era."

China's UN Ambassador Fu Cong said the Security Council needs unity, not division, should be promoting dialogue, and should not "profess itself just for the sake of doing so."

EU, SK urge withdrawal of NK troops from Russia's war

SEOUL (Reuters): South Korea and the European Union jointly condemned North Korea's supply of weaponry to Moscow and demanded that it withdraw troops it has sent as Russia wages war against Ukraine. The EU and South Korea were holding their first "Strategic Dialogue" meeting in Seoul, shortly after Washington and Seoul sounded the alarm about North Korea sending soldiers to help Russia.

In a joint statement, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell and South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul condemned the North's "unlawful arms transfers to the Russian Federation for its use in attacking Ukraine". They demanded an end to the "unlawful military cooperation" and a withdrawal of the North Korean forces. Borrell also met South Korean Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun. "Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an existential threat," Borrell said in a post on X that included a photo of him shaking hands with Kim. "The Republic of Korea is best positioned to understand it. We are united in our support to Ukraine. I encouraged them to step it up."

The two countries also signed a security and defence partnership covering 15 areas including cyber security and disarmament. Cho said last week, when asked whether Seoul could send weapons to Ukraine in response to North Korea aiding Russia, that all possible scenarios were under consideration. South Korea has provided non-lethal aid to Ukraine, including mine clearance equipment, but rebuffed requests for weapons. Seoul expects the North to be compensated by Moscow with military and civilian technology, as it races to launch a spy satellite and upgrade its missile capabilities. North Korea last week flexed its military muscle with the test of a huge new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile dubbed Hwasong-19. Washington expects the North Korean troops in Russia's Kursk region, part of which has been seized by neighbouring Ukraine, to enter the fight against Ukrainian forces soon. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last week. At talks in Moscow, North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said her country would back Russia until it achieved victory in Ukraine.

Germany's top diplomat in Kyiv

KYIV (AP): Germany's top diplomat arrived in the Ukrainian capital on an unannounced visit, in what appeared to be a show of European support for Ukraine on the eve of a US presidential election that could bring far-reaching changes in Washington's policy toward Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbor.

Germany is Ukraine's second biggest weapons supplier after the US. Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock vowed that Berlin's backing would remain steadfast. "Together with many partners around the world, Germany stands firmly by Ukraine's side," she said. German news agency dpa reported. "We will support the Ukrainians for as long as they need us so that they can continue on their path to a just peace."

The war is at a critical moment for Ukraine, with the Russian army making creeping gains on the battlefield and another hard winter ahead after Russia relentlessly battered the Ukrainian power grid. With his army under severe Russian pressure in the eastern Donetsk region, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Western military aid deliveries have accelerated, including for artillery. The grinding attritional warfare being fought in Ukraine requires large amounts of ammunition, and Ukrainian officials have long grumbled that Western pledges of support take too long to arrive. Zelenskyy said Ukraine is also trying to strengthen its air defense systems. Russia is currently deploying about 10 times more Iranian-made Shahed drones than it was this time last year, he said.

Japan launches defense satellite

TOKYO (AP): Japan launched a defense satellite aimed at speedier military operations and communication on a new flagship H3 rocket and successfully placed it into orbit, as the country seeks to build up its military capability amid growing tension in the region.

The East Asian country is accelerating its military buildup under a 2022 security strategy that calls for Japanese troops to play a greater role in regional defense amid rising tension from China, North Korea and Russia. The H3 No. 4 rocket lifted off from the Tanegashima Space Center on a southwestern Japanese island. Everything went as planned and the satellite was successfully put into a targeted orbit, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, or JAXA, announced.

The rocket was carrying Kirameki No. 3, a Defense Ministry satellite that uses X-band communication for information and data sharing, as well as military operations and command. X-band satellites are less affected by weather conditions and can support stable communication. Kirameki No. 3 follows two earlier X-band satellites already in operation to meet Japan's growing military communication demands and

enhance its satellite operations. Maj. Gen. Yasuhiro Kato, the Joint Staff Systems Department chief, told an online joint news conference from Tanegashima that the triple X-band communication satellite system would enable high-speed, large-capacity data transmission across Japan's Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces, as well as with units deployed overseas on peacekeeping missions or exercises.

"It will further contribute to Japan's national security and the operational capacity of the Self-Defense Forces," Kato said. Ippei Kikuta, a defense ministry acquisition agency official, said Kirameki No. 3 will start operations by the end of March after being shifted to a designated geostationary orbit above Japan and tested, joining forces with the two other X-band satellites, Kirameki No. 1 and No. 2, which are in undisclosed locations. Launch was initially planned for Oct. 20 and came after four postponements due to a technical glitch and bad weather. Kato said the delay had no impact on Japan's security and defense activity. JAXA President Hiroshi Yamakawa said he felt "relieved" that the H3

rocket succeeded in delivering the satellite to its planned location after the two-week delay.

The launch was the third consecutive successful flight of the H3 system after a shocking failed debut attempt last year when the rocket had to be destroyed with its payload. Japan sees a stable, commercially competitive space transport capability as key to its space program and national security. JAXA and its main contractor, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, have been developing the H3 launch system as a successor to its current mainstay, H-2A, which is set to retire after one more flight. MHI will eventually take over H3 production and launches from JAXA and hopes to make it commercially viable by cutting the launch cost to about half of the H-2A. JAXA and MHI have set a goal of six launches per year.

MHI's space segment chief, Iwao Igarashi, told reporters that the strength of the Japanese rocket launch is its reliability and on-time record and that success was "another big progress." The company has so far signed multiple H3 launch deals with U.K. and French satellite operators and the U.A.E space agency.

Putin hosts North Korean FM on Russia's 'unity day'

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian President Vladimir Putin met North Korea's foreign minister in the Kremlin at a time of mounting concern in the West that North Korean soldiers are about to enter the Ukraine war on Moscow's side.

Video of the meeting showed the pair shaking hands for a full minute as Putin greeted Choe Son Hui. Putin noted that they were meeting on Russia's National Unity Day, a public holiday, and Choe conveyed "sincere, warm, comradely greetings" from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The United States says North Korea has sent some 10,000 troops to Russia, including 8,000 to the western Kursk region where Russia is still battling to expel Ukrainian troops who broke across the border in August.

Putin, who signed a treaty with Kim in June that includes a mutual defence clause, has neither confirmed nor denied the North Korean troop presence. He has said that Russia is free to implement the pact as it sees fit. The Russian leader briefly alluded to the military situation in Kursk when he met youth volunteers, telling

them: "When the enemy is cleaned out from the region, there will be lots of work for you to do."

In Kyiv, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said he had discussed with his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock the "need for decisive action" in response to North Korean involvement in the war in Ukraine. He said North Korean troops were waging "an aggressive war in Europe against a sovereign European state". Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy last week urged Kyiv's allies to stop just "watching" and start taking action to tackle the presence of the North Koreans.

The United States accused Russia and China at the UN Security Council of "shamelessly protecting" and emboldening North Korea to further violate United Nations sanctions. In Seoul, South Korea and the European Union jointly condemned North Korea's "unlawful arms transfers to the Russian Federation for its use in attacking Ukraine" and demanded that it withdraw its troops. North Korea's Choe has been in Russia for almost a week, having arrived in the far

eastern port of Vladivostok last Tuesday on her second trip to the country in six weeks.

Choe told Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov that their countries enjoyed relations of "invaluable military comradeship" and that North Korea would stand alongside Russia "until the day of victory" in Ukraine. The Kremlin had said last week there were no plans for Putin to meet Choe. The US and South Korea say North Korea has shipped ballistic missiles, anti-tank rockets and millions of rounds of ammunition for Russia to use against Ukraine. Moscow and Pyongyang have denied weapons transfers. Putin earlier marked Russia's national holiday by placing red roses at a monument on Red Square to Kuzma Minin and Dmitry Pozharsky, revered as national heroes for raising an army to liberate Moscow from a brief period of Polish and Lithuanian occupation in the early 17th century. He met the children of Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine and embraced one girl who had lost her father, telling her: "Russia relies on people like your dad."

Polish community provide ambulances for Ukraine

WARSAW (BBC): The Polish community in a Warwickshire town is at the forefront of delivering humanitarian aid from the county to people living in Ukraine. The latest decommissioned ambulance, full of aid to support victims of the Russia-Ukraine war, set off from Royal Leamington Spa.

Since the conflict began, more than 40 vehicles have made the three-day trip to Le'ajsk on the Poland/Ukraine border, along with 250 tonnes of aid so far. Each ambulance costs between £7,000-£8,000 to purchase, plus the cost of sorting the vehicles for the trip across Europe. Dawid Kozlowski, from Royal Leamington Spa's Polish Centre, said: "We are very proud of what we have achieved for such a small organisation and it says a lot about our community."

Mr Kozlowski works for LKQ Euro Car Parts, which has provided major financial backing for the aid missions, and Warwick and Leamington MP Matt Western has taken part in two of the recent trips.

Over the duration of the war, the Leamington group has even delivered

six washing machines to a group of nuns supporting displaced people. "It's not the kind of thing you think about, but these are the problems they have," said Mr Kozlowski. "We see more and more people from the community wanting to get involved. As we said from day one, it's not just a Polish project. "We're now at a stage where most of our volunteers are not Polish people and that's great to see."

The latest trip will also deliver mobility aids to Ukraine for soldiers who have lost limbs. The Leamington organisation also helped to fund a 14-year-old boy's eye surgery. "When we were arranging to take ambulance number one into Ukraine, we arranged for Ignit and his mum to come through the border and meet us," said Mr Kozlowski. "He came to me and said 'thank you for giving me a second life' and you realise a single person can make a difference to another person's life." Royal Leamington Spa's mayor, Judith Clarke, attended an event at the Polish Centre earlier this year and said she "was so impressed with what they were doing". "I

was very, very humbled actually to meet these people," she said. She talked to her husband Steve after the event and he decided to sign up as a driver for the trip this week with his lifelong friend Kaz Librowski, whose parents are Polish, and another friend Paul Elsdon.

"I'm very proud that Steve has taken up this challenge to help the people in Ukraine," she said. "Lots of people in Leamington took in Ukrainian refugees and that was a sign of what a wonderful community we are and, all over Warwickshire, people are helping." The mayor's consort added: "I've known about this operation for quite a while now, then Judith went to the event at the Polish Centre, told me about it and I thought 'I'd like to do that sometime'." "I'm strongly motivated by anything that stops Putin. I don't think we can allow an armed invasion to succeed. "All it takes for evil to succeed is for good people to do nothing, so at least we are doing something. "It helps and I'm sure the Ukrainians appreciate it."

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America needs a smooth transfer of power

THE world is watching today as American voters decide who will lead their country – the strongest economic and military power on Earth – for the next four years. These elections will determine the political future of the US and the result will have consequences for America's allies and opponents alike. However, the electoral process itself is arguably just as important.

The last race for the White House is often remembered for all the wrong reasons. An angry mob, incensed by what they regarded as an attempt to steal the election from then president Donald Trump, stormed the US Capitol building. In scenes that were beamed around the world, hundreds of rioters fought with police and ransacked offices inside this bastion of American democracy. One of Mr Trump's supporters was shot dead in the chaos.

January 6, 2021 was a manifestation of deeper issues that had been plaguing American society for several years. Conspiratorial thinking and political polarisation were joined by a refusal to accept the outcome of the vote. The result was an explosion of deadly and transgressive violence. Although some of the issues that fuelled the unrest are still present – there have been several ugly and divisive moments in this year's campaigning – many in America and beyond will be hoping for a smooth and rapid transfer of power this time.

This must mean more than US law enforcement acting to prevent or counter street disorder. Already there are signs that there will be tooth-and-nail legal challenges to the results in states that, owing to America's political system, could decide who will sit in the Oval Office next year. Although calling for recounts or querying instances of suspected fraud are legitimate measures, they must be accompanied by a willingness to accept defeat once it is clearly established who has won. Dragging the election result through the courts unnecessarily is in no one's interest. Winning the White House while further damaging America's image as a stable democracy is equally troubling.

Indeed, the many challenges facing the US in the coming years require a return to bipartisanship not further polarisation. Internal stability and economic prosperity should be prioritised. The wars raging in Gaza and Lebanon, as well as the alarming military exchanges between Israel and Iran require America's contribution to stop. The political distraction posed by the presidential race must be soon dispensed with if peace is to return to the Middle East.

For committed supporters of Mr Trump and US Vice President Kamala Harris, a victory by their opponent is a worst-case scenario. However, despite the dire predictions that accompanied Mr Trump's 2016 victory and Republican fears of a US led by President Joe Biden, it is wiser to remember the achievements of both administrations.

Under Mr Trump, the US economy performed well until the Covid-19 pandemic. The Trump administration faced no major foreign-policy crises and even achieved some gains, such as helping to broker the Abraham Accords and begin a talks process with North Korea. For his part, Mr Biden helped steer the country out of the Covid crisis and oversaw a period of US economic growth. Although legitimate criticisms of both presidents could be made, those going to the polls today should reflect on the fact that one electoral outcome or another does not spell the end of American democracy, influence or relevance, but violence and undermining electoral systems could.

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Trump or Harris - Islamabad is getting prepared

Farhan Ahmad

AS the United States votes today in what is shaping up to be one of the most closely contested elections in recent history, the world, including Pakistan, is watching with keen interest. Today's election between Democratic candidate Kamala Harris and Republican challenger Donald Trump is pivotal, not only for American citizens but for the broader international landscape, including South Asia. With polls showing both candidates in a near tie, this election is poised to impact diplomatic relations and policy orientations around the globe and Pakistan's strategic position in South Asia places it firmly within the scope of American foreign policy changes.

For Pakistan, the results will shape not only bilateral relations but also influence how Pakistan maneuvers within the complex regional dynamics, particularly in its relationship with China. Kamala Harris, currently the sitting Vice President, represents a continuity of the Biden administration's policies. Should she secure victory, her approach to foreign policy is expected to reflect Biden's focus on multilateralism, climate change, democracy and human rights. Harris's administration could align closely with U.S. allies in South Asia, a region growing in strategic importance due to its proximity to the Indo-Pacific. This would mean stronger cooperation with democratic allies, including India, as the U.S. strengthens its presence in the region to counterbalance China's influence.

Pakistan, which maintains a strategic partnership with China, may find itself under increased pressure from a Harris administration. Her stance on human rights is likely to be more stringent than Trump's, meaning that Harris may push for reforms within Pakistan in areas such as press freedom, religious tol-

erance and minority rights. For instance, under Biden, there was significant concern over Pakistan's treatment of minorities and the media, issues Harris is likely to continue emphasizing. This could create challenges for Pakistan, which has to balance the expectations of an ally like the U.S. with its internal policies and socio-political dynamics. However, Harris's likely support for multilateral aid and development funding could be advantageous to Pakistan, particularly if her administration chooses to address Pakistan's vulnerabilities related to climate change and economic instability.

In terms of regional stability, Harris's victory could lead to more collaboration on maintaining peace in Afghanistan, an area of mutual interest for both the U.S. and Pakistan. The Biden administration had a vested interest in stabilizing Afghanistan through diplomatic and humanitarian channels and Harris has signaled her intent to prioritize stability in South Asia. Pakistan's strategic influence with the Afghan Taliban and other regional actors positions it as a critical partner in achieving this goal. However, Harris's administration might also expect more stringent oversight of cross-border movements and pressure Pakistan to take a stronger stance against any elements that could destabilize Afghanistan.

In contrast, a Trump victory would bring an entirely different set of dynamics to U.S.-Pakistan relations. Known for his direct, often transactional approach to diplomacy, Trump's strategy has traditionally been more pragmatic and less constrained by considerations of human rights or democratic values. His policies focus largely on national security and counterterrorism, both areas where Pakistan plays a critical role. During his last term, Trump

fostered a functional relationship with Pakistan that emphasized security cooperation over other issues. A Trump-led White House might prioritize Pakistan's role in counter-terrorism and security in South Asia, particularly in preventing extremist elements from destabilizing the region.

A Trump victory would also likely align more with Pakistan's internal policies, as he has shown less inclination to press countries on human rights or media freedom issues. His strong stance against China could, however, place Pakistan in a challenging position given its economic and strategic partnership with Beijing. CPEC, a cornerstone of Pakistan's infrastructure development and economic strategy, remains an essential part of China's Belt and Road Initiative. Under a Trump administration, Pakistan may feel pressure to distance itself from China, although the feasibility of such a move remains complex given Pakistan's economic dependency on Chinese investments and projects.

The ongoing instability in Afghanistan is another factor that both candidates are likely to approach differently. Trump's policy towards Afghanistan during his previous term was often criticized for its abruptness, as evidenced by the sudden withdrawal of U.S. forces. If he is re-elected, Trump may continue prioritizing security over development, which could result in limited U.S. involvement in Afghanistan's rebuilding. For Pakistan, this could mean a significant security role, with more reliance on Pakistan to manage stability across its western border. However, if instability spills over, Pakistan may bear the brunt of its consequences, including border security challenges, refugee influx, and economic strains.

Moreover, the economic policies of both candidates could have a direct impact

on Pakistan's economy. Harris is likely to continue Biden's emphasis on climate-friendly policies and international development, areas that could benefit Pakistan, given its economic vulnerabilities and climate-related challenges. Her administration may seek to re-establish international economic support for Pakistan and other developing nations. Trump, on the other hand, would likely focus on "America First" policies, with an emphasis on domestic growth over foreign aid. This could mean reduced foreign assistance and more stringent conditions on any aid provided, making it difficult for Pakistan to secure economic support from the U.S.

In terms of Pakistan's strategic and diplomatic approach, this election underscores the need for Islamabad to balance its relations between the U.S. and China. The growing U.S.-China rivalry means that Pakistan will need to skillfully navigate its alliances without alienating either partner. Harris's administration might press Pakistan to reduce its reliance on China by offering alternatives or expecting increased collaboration in areas of mutual interest like counterterrorism and regional stability. Trump's approach, however, would likely entail a stronger anti-China stance and a push for Pakistan to align more closely with U.S. interests, especially in the Indo-Pacific. Today's election is not only a pivotal moment for the U.S. but a signal for Pakistan to reassess its foreign policy strategy, preparing for both the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Whether it's Harris's values-based diplomacy or Trump's straightforward pragmatism, Pakistan's response will need to be measured, ensuring that it retains its position as a relevant partner to the U.S. while also protecting its own national interests in an increasingly polarized global environment.

Israel must realize that Palestinian dignity is nonnegotiable

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib

AS everyone was stuck either to a TV screen or their computer watching news about the US election, I chose to watch the "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver" comedy show. This episode was not about the election, it was about the plight of Palestinians in the West Bank. What really affected me was a short video of the mayor of Hebron who refused to engage with an Israeli counterpart. He said he will only engage when the Israelis treat Palestinians as equals, not as slaves. He added that dignity is nonnegotiable.

He is right. Dignity is nonnegotiable and, as long as Israel tries to subjugate the Palestinians as well as the Lebanese, it will face resistance. Israel is refusing to give Palestinians statehood and, instead, several leading figures have suggested giving them economic incentives like the ill-advised "deal of the century." What Israel's supporters do not grasp is that dignity is a primal need. There is no way that the Palestinians will exchange it for anything else. There is no way that they can live with dignity while under Israeli occupation. No one lives in dignity under occupation. This is why the more they feel humiliated by occupation, the more they strike, regardless of the medium; whether

that is Hamas, the Palestine Liberation Organization or any other group. The need for dignity creates these organizations.

When people look at Hamas or Hezbollah as the main problem, it is a shallow analysis. They might be a problem, but more importantly they are a problem created by a bigger problem: the grievances caused by the feeling of being humiliated.

A lady from the south of Lebanon I met last week told me that her house had been reduced to ashes by Israeli bombardments. Her family barely escaped the Israeli raid, otherwise they would have shared the fate of the house. She told me that, for her people, Hezbollah is a phase. Before Hezbollah, there was the Lebanese National Movement (Al-Harakat Al-Wataniyya), the Lebanese National Resistance Front (Jammoul), the communists, etc.

The resistance has manifested itself in many different shapes, Islamic as well as secular, national and pan-Arab. However, she told me that the common denominator is the fact that the people of the south hold on to their dignity. Again, because dignity is nonnegotiable. Israel thought that, by humiliating people by inflicting casualties and pain on them, it can pacify them. Israel is wrong. The lady also told me that

the reason Israel never built settlements in south Lebanon was because they were never secure. They never felt confident enough to bring their families to live there. The soldiers lived in insecurity in south Lebanon. Ultimately, the Israelis had to leave. She told me that many members of her family had been killed by Israel over the decades. For her, they died so that she can live with dignity. She added it is not true that Israel has no ambitions in south Lebanon. It is Galilee, which is part of what they call "Greater Israel." She went on: "You think they don't want the south? They do, but we did not let them because our land is more than the soil in which we plant olive trees, it is our dignity."

Israel does not understand that the crueler it is, the more it nurtures the resistance. Even if Hezbollah and Hamas disappear, other movements will take their place. Other movements that will probably be more violent and more organized. Other movements that will learn from their predecessors' mistakes and avoid repeating them.

Analysts see the future as bleak for Gaza and south Lebanon, but it is bleaker for Israel. This is because Israel refuses to understand that dignity is nonnegotiable. Israel might think it has

defeated the Palestinians. However, it cannot be victorious unless the Palestinians admit defeat – and this is something that will never happen.

Israel does not realize that the West is starting to notice Palestinians and their need for dignity. Hence the John Oliver program I watched, which is a mainstream show. Israel has not noticed that the world has changed. The Palestinian narrative is now being heard. Israel can no longer carry out atrocities against the Palestinians and get away with it. On the one hand, Palestinians are tenacious people who will not give up on their dignity. And on the other, they have the West slowly freeing itself from feelings of guilt and starting to see what Israel truly is.

This is a bad combination for Israel. The problem is that Israel is living in the moment and not seeing the future or learning from the past. If Israel were to look to the past, it would realize that subjugating Palestinians and humiliating them does not make them weaker. On the contrary, it makes them more determined to fight back. If it was to think of the future, it should imagine what future resistance will look like. If it understood the past and properly projected the future, Israel would come to know that dignity is nonnegotiable.

A legacy beyond tenure: The lasting impact of reputation and honor

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE tenure of a leader or an official is marked not only by the responsibilities they shoulder but also by the legacy they leave behind. Reputation and the honors earned during these years hold an enduring value, often transcending the boundaries of time and geographical borders. In any field – be it politics, bureaucracy, academia, or business – individuals who exhibit integrity, dedication, and remarkable achievements earn a place in history. Their contributions become points of reference, inspiring generations long after they have stepped down from their roles. This phenomenon is particularly evident in public service, where a leader's vision and decisions can influence the lives of millions, shaping the destiny of nations and communities.

Reputation, a fragile yet invaluable asset, is built over time and can be dis-

their nation's soft power, creating goodwill that benefits future generations. A country known for its dignified and accomplished leaders is more likely to be respected and trusted on global platforms, and this trust can translate into diplomatic, economic, and social advantages.

However, the reputation and honors of a tenure must be nurtured through a constant commitment to ethical standards and principles. One mistake, if severe enough, can overshadow years of dedicated service, leading to a tarnished legacy. This is why public figures are often under intense scrutiny, with their actions and words dissected by the media and the public. In this age of digital information, where news spreads rapidly, maintaining a good reputation has become even more challenging. Yet, those who successfully navigate these challenges, staying true to their principles and goals, emerge with a legacy that

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In countries like Pakistan, where political and bureaucrat figures have played crucial roles in shaping the nation's identity, the legacies of certain leaders remain vivid. Figures like Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah are celebrated for their foresight and unwavering commitment to Pakistan's creation. His tenure as the leader of the freedom movement, his speeches, and his decisions have become iconic, remembered not just for what they achieved in the moment, but for the foundation they laid for an independent, sovereign state. Similarly, figures in the bureaucracy Mr. Shahab ud Din, often revered as one of Pakistan's most esteemed bureaucrats, stands out for his reputation and honor in the country's civil service. His legacy is beautifully captured in his autobiographical work, Shahabnama, which offers readers a unique glimpse into both his personal life and professional experiences. Honors earned during a person's tenure do not merely serve as personal achievements; they are symbols of collective pride.

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mantled in a moment. It is the cumulative result of consistent actions, ethical conduct, and commitment to a cause. A person who diligently serves with sincerity and responsibility gains respect, not only from colleagues and peers but from society as a whole. This respect and admiration endure, becoming a form of unofficial honor. While many may view honors as medals, awards, or ceremonial recognitions, the true honor often lies in how people remember a person's contributions. These memories, passed down through narratives, shape an individual's legacy, influencing perceptions and establishing benchmarks for future generations.

In countries like Pakistan, where political and bureaucrat figures have played crucial roles in shaping the nation's identity, the legacies of certain leaders remain vivid. Figures like Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah are celebrated for their foresight and unwavering commitment to Pakistan's creation. His tenure as the leader of the freedom movement, his speeches, and his decisions have become iconic, remembered not just for what they achieved in the moment, but for the foundation they laid for an independent, sovereign state. Similarly, figures in the bureaucracy Mr. Shahab ud Din, often revered as one of Pakistan's most esteemed bureaucrats, stands out for his reputation and honor in the country's civil service. His legacy is beautifully captured in his autobiographical work, Shahabnama, which offers readers a unique glimpse into both his personal life and professional experiences.

Honors earned during a person's tenure do not merely serve as personal achievements; they are symbols of collective pride.

When a leader or official accomplishes something of great value, it becomes a shared honor for the entire community or nation they represent. Their achievements resonate with the values, strengths, and aspirations of the people, becoming a source of inspiration. In the international arena, these honors contribute to a country's image and credibility. Leaders who leave office with an untainted reputation add to

few can dispute. The memories of a reputable tenure can also serve as a form of guidance for those who follow. When a respected figure leaves office, their successors often look back at their accomplishments, failures, and decisions to draw lessons. These historical insights provide a blueprint for the future, offering examples of what can be achieved through determination and vision. For instance, young politicians may study the tenure of celebrated leaders to understand how they managed crises, made tough decisions, and maintained the trust of the people. Similarly, in the bureaucracy, officers may look to the examples set by renowned quality of administrator to guide their conduct and strategy. The continuity of these values ensures that the honorable legacy of a tenure is not only remembered but also emulated.

In essence, the reputation and honors earned during a tenure serve as a testament to an individual's impact on their community or nation. They embody the ideals of responsibility, dedication, and integrity, qualities that are cherished and valued across cultures and generations. The memories of such tenures are often immortalized in the stories told, in the admiration expressed by others, and in the standards set for future leaders. People are drawn to these stories, not just because they celebrate an individual but because they reflect the human potential for greatness.

For a leader or official, knowing that their actions will be remembered can serve as a powerful motivator, encouraging them to pursue excellence with sincerity and accountability. Eventually, while positions of authority may be temporary, the influence of a commendable tenure is long-lasting. It reminds us of the importance of integrity and the impact one individual can have on society.

In a world where trust in leadership is increasingly questioned, these enduring reputations provide hope, offering proof that honorable service is not only possible but profoundly impactful. Thus, the honors and reputation earned during a tenure become more than memories; they become a part of the collective consciousness, shaping the path forward for generations to come.

In Middle East, EU is an economic giant but a political dwarf

THE EU has seen its geopolitical influence decline throughout the world in recent years, but no more so than in the Middle East, a region historically, economically and culturally closer to it than the US. The Europeans have been losing political influence for decades, especially after endorsing the US-sponsored peace accords between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel.

Exclusive US oversight of the Oslo process sidelined the EU as a block, as well as the UN and Russia, although these three entities remain members of the Quartet — in addition to the US. But Washington has made it clear that it will neutralize any meaningful role of the Quartet to avoid laying any serious pressure on its ally and proxy, Israel.

But the EU's political influence on parties to the Israel-Palestine conflict has also declined in recent years. In this case, it suffered a fatal blow following the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing brutal Israeli war on Gaza, which is ongoing and has now stretched to Lebanon.

The Europeans, including the British after leaving the union, are divided when it comes to exerting meaningful pressure on Israel to cease its assault on Gaza. Following the Oct. 7 attacks, European leaders flocked to embrace Benjamin Netanyahu and to declare that Israel had the absolute right to defend itself against the aggressor, meaning Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

But they soon realized that Netanyahu had

unleashed an indiscriminate blitz whose aim was not to decapitate Hamas, as he has claimed, but to kill civilians, destroy infrastructure and eventually drive more than 2.2 million Palestinians toward death, either by direct bombing or by starvation and disease. It became clear that Netanyahu had other plans as he waged what nongovernmental organizations, UN rapporteurs and even the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court have described as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Still the EU has vacillated, as members like Hungary and Austria have rejected calls to bring collective punitive measures against Israel. The leading critical voice of Israeli atrocities in Gaza is foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell, who has been banned from entering Israel, Gaza and the West Bank by the far-right Israeli government because of his bold statements.

Europe exhibited such divisiveness and lack of a coherent foreign policy when three European states — Spain, Ireland and Slovenia — decided to recognize a Palestinian state in May. The UK, which is widely recognized as triggering the decades-long conflict and causing the Palestinians' historic injustice, has made no such move. France sat on the fence on this issue as it battled the rise of the pro-Israel far right at home and the decline of its economic influence within the EU.

Germany, the EU's economic and political powerhouse, remained loyal to its blind support of Israel and denial of its war crimes in Gaza and

Osama Al-Sharif

the West Bank. Italy and France took the step of stopping all military shipments to Israel.

But at no point was the EU able to initiate a dialogue with the Biden administration about reining in Netanyahu and preventing his doubling down on what is now clearly a crime of ethnic cleansing in northern Gaza. The EU has become dependent on Washington's support of its policy on Ukraine, the most crucial geopolitical challenge to the bloc since its inception.

Yes, the EU and its members remain the biggest donor to UNRWA and other UN agencies working for the welfare of the Palestinians. Brussels is also the biggest financial supporter of the Palestinian Authority. However, such financial support is undercut by its inability to produce a decisive political stand that would influence the trajectory of events in the Occupied Territories.

The EU and individual member states have imposed sanctions on Jewish settler groups in the West Bank, as has the US. But that has not prevented Netanyahu's far-right government from unleashing a settler-led wave of terror and mayhem against West Bank Palestinians.

And when South Africa brought what has become a seminal charge of genocide against Israel at the International Court of Justice, Germany and, at one point, the UK moved in to defend Israel and attempt to throw out the case, despite the tens of thousands of Palestinians who have so far been killed.

Historically, the EU has been a progressive entity when it comes to addressing the plight of the Palestinians and how the conflict should be resolved. In 1980, it issued the famous Venice Declaration, which recognized the Palestinian right to self-determination and the concept of the two-state solution based on UN Security Council resolutions.

Aside from the US' dominant role in managing peace talks between Israel and the PA, which have been nonexistent for almost 15 years now, the EU has gone through significant internal transformations that have eroded its role in the international arena, especially the Middle East. While the EU remains the third-largest economy in the world in terms of gross domestic product, its economies have been suffering from slow or negative growth, rising inflation, immigration, both legal and illegal, too many regulations, Donald Trump's first-term tariffs policy and pressure to increase defense spending, NATO challenges and, finally, Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The last of these has depleted the EU's resources and, together with the immigration issue, allowed the far right to make historic gains in local, national and EU-wide elections.

Euroskeptics like Hungary's Viktor Orban and Italy's Giorgia Meloni now want to "change" the EU from within, extracting benefits while hollowing out its real spirit of unification. The UK's influence in the Middle East is also waning. The Gaza war has singled out the US as the only player that is capable of stopping the

massacre of Palestinians and preventing a regional spillover.

But it is Israel's pivot to becoming a rogue state — its parliament last week voted to abolish all agreements with UNRWA — that is putting the EU and its fundamental value system under pressure. The group does not influence Israel, while several state members continue to defend Netanyahu's genocidal war. Its economic support of the Palestinians does little to change the needle as far as a political settlement is concerned.

Moreover, the rise of other global and regional powers, such as China, Russia and the Gulf states, has created new diplomatic channels and alliances, reducing Europe's relative importance.

One should add that Europe's responses to various other Middle Eastern crises, including the Syrian civil war and the so-called Arab Spring, have been criticized as slow and ineffective, damaging its credibility.

And unlike the US, the Europeans have a modest military presence in the Middle East, thus limiting their diplomatic options when it comes to intervening in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

While the EU as a group is still an influential economic power, it has proven to be a political dwarf when it comes to addressing geopolitical challenges, not only in the Middle East but in the Southern Mediterranean as a whole.

This has been most evident in France's failure to intervene in the Israel-Lebanon showdown, despite Paris seeing itself as a guarantor of its former colony's stability.

Why is BRICS so popular among Global South countries?

FROM 22 to 24 October, leaders and senior officials from 33 Global South countries and 6 international organizations attended the XVI BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, welcoming new members to the BRICS family and inviting many countries to become partner countries. So far, over ten countries have applied to join the group as partner countries and more than 30 have expressed interest in joining BRICS cooperation. With increasing influence and appeal on the international stage in recent years, BRICS has become a much sought-after mechanism among Global South countries. This is by no means accidental, but rather the result of various causes.

The most compelling reason for the growing influence of BRICS is its composite strength. With the admission of countries like Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iran, and Ethiopia, BRICS now covers nearly half of the global population. BRIC's GDP, measured by purchasing power parity, has reached US\$63.2 trillion, far exceeding the G7's US\$52.3 trillion.

According to the latest forecasts of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the world economy is set to rely more on the BRICS to drive growth over the next five years, and China alone will contribute 22% of global growth, bigger than all the G7 countries combined.

In the manufacturing sector, BRICS countries account for over 40% of the world's total output, playing an indispensable role in the global supply chain. In terms of food production, BRICS countries produce 42% of the world's wheat, 52% of rice, and 46% of soybeans, serving as a pillar of global food security. Just as is often said, "He who gets close to a good tree will have a good shade." These facts amply explain why the Global South countries naturally

Vox South

gravitate towards BRICS.

BRICS cooperation, as it generates immense benefits, has unparalleled appeal for the Global South countries. The New Development Bank (NDB), as a shining brand of the BRICS cooperation, has by now approved over 100 projects with loans aggregating more than US\$34 billion, providing strong support for the Global South countries by expanding their financing channels and helping them shore up weak links in infrastructure. For example, the NDB financed sustainable agriculture projects in Brazil, which has helped the country improve agricultural productivity and boosted its rural economy. Trade among BRICS countries has also become more dynamic. In recent years, the growth rate of total trade volume within BRICS countries is much higher than the global trade during the same period. This has injected strong impetus into the economic recovery and development of fellow member countries.

BRICS is a platform for countries with similar historical experiences and development challenges to seek strength through unity. It offers a unique channel for these countries to break free from unfair treatment, speak for themselves and defend their rights. For a long time, the Global South countries lacked power and a cooperation mechanism that they could truly call their own. BRICS cooperation mechanism has changed the situation. By bringing together the power of the Global South, championing peace, development, innovation, green development, and equality, BRICS has made global governance fairer, more equitable and inclusive.

For instance, a few countries have exploited the U.S. dollar tide to repeatedly drain wealth from the world to the detriment of the Global South. By establishing financial institutions such as the Contingent

Reserve Arrangement (CRA), BRICS has made the international financial system diversified, thus effectively preventing the Global South countries from being exploited.

BRICS cooperation rejects small circles, providing vital opportunities for solidarity and collaboration among Global South countries. BRICS upholds the principles of openness, equality, and solidarity, and draws no lines based on ideology or geopolitical interests. Any country can apply to join as long as it meets the criteria. That's why numerous Global South countries are queuing to apply. This open nature is unprecedented. For Global South countries, it is next to impossible for them to enter the Western-dominated multilateral platforms. Though occasionally invited, they are often insignificant participants without a true "seat at the table" and may even end up being listed "on the menu". The establishment and development of the BRICS cooperation mechanism has shattered the "center-periphery" model in international relations. It enables countries to participate in the mechanism on an equal footing and according to their own will, giving them a strong sense of identity and belonging.

BRICS countries build partnerships based on equality, openness, cooperation, and mutual benefit. This is in line with the underlying trend towards greater democracy in international relations and meets the core interests of the Global South. In contrast, some countries are building exclusive circles behind closed doors, attempting to block Global South countries' way to development. What they are doing is in fact isolating themselves. The Global South therefore needs to make the right choice, and engage in greater BRICS cooperation more actively. Only in this way can we have brighter development prospects.

Trump's re-election could be worse for Mideast

US presidential and legislative elections could be a turning point for the worse for this region if Republican Donald Trump is victorious. A Trump administration would embolden Israel to act even more aggressively than over the past year without even the half-hearted restraints outgoing President Joe Biden attempted to impose on Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and his far-right cabinet.

During his initial term in the White House (2017-2021) Trump upended decades of US policy on this region and contributed heavily to destabilisation and warfare. On Palestine, Trump recognised Israel's capital in Jerusalem and moved the US embassy to the city although the fate of the holy city is meant to be decided by negotiations between Palestine and Israel. Trump declared that the US no longer viewed as illegal Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Syrian Golan. This amounted to a denial of international law and the Fourth Geneva convention which bans an occupying power from transferring its population into occupied territory. The fate of Israeli settlements and settlers was also meant to be determined by negotiations between Palestine and Israel. Trump also recognised Israeli annexation of Syria's Golan heights where Israel has also planted settlers. These actions were taken despite widespread international criticism and condemnation.

Trump undermined US endorsement of the two-state solution involving the emergence of a viable, sovereign Palestinian state within the West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem as its capital. Trump entrusted his son-in-law Jared Kushner and other pro-Israeli figures to craft a two-part peace plan which would initially promote Palestinian economic development and eventually permit Palestinians to establish a rump state without viability or sovereignty on portions of Palestinian territory not illegally colonised by Israel.

As Trump's neophyte team did not have a clue about what they were doing they consulted closely with Binyamin Netanyahu who flatly rejected (and rejects) a Palestinian state. Little wonder the Trump plan was rejected by the Palestinians and Arabs. A real estate magnate like his father-in-law,

Michael Jansen

Kushner expressed interest in developing the Gaza coast for tourism. This would, of course, only take place if Palestinians were driven from Gaza. Little wonder that Hamas responded with its ill-conceived, fatal October 7th attack on Israel to which Netanyahu has responded by devastating Gaza, assaulting the West Bank, and attacking Lebanon and Iran.

In 2018 Trump also withdrew US from the 2015 agreement limiting Iran's nuclear programme in exchange of lifting sanctions which have crippled Iran's economy. Tehran abided by the terms of the deal for a year while waiting for the other signatories — Germany, Britain, France, China, and Russia — to ease sanctions. They failed as the US retains an iron grip on banking and global finance. Consequently, Tehran breached the deal by enriching uranium above the 3.67 per cent purity to 20 and then 60 per cent (which is near 90 per cent needed for weapons), amassing a large stockpile of enriched uranium, and introducing banned advanced centrifuges for rapid enrichment. Iran also limited monitoring and inspections conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Trump's abandonment of the deal has deepened US-Iranian tensions and encouraged Israel to seek confrontation with Iran with the aim of drawing the US into a war with Iran. This has been Netanyahu's objective for at least two decades.

While Democratic party candidate and incumbent Vice President Kamala Harris has been more critical than Biden of Israel's conduct in Gaza and has displayed empathy for Palestinians, it is unclear how much she would change his policy of extending unconditional military and diplomatic support to Israel. While Biden has voiced support for the two-state solution, he has done nothing to implement this policy which is mandated by the international community and accepted by the Palestinians and their Arab allies.

However, the global political environment has altered over the past 13 months due to Israel's deadly and destructive war on Gaza which has undermined Israel's international standing and strengthened demands for implementation of the two-state solution. It is recognised as the only means to end the 76-

year war between Palestinians and Israelis and ease tensions in this highly volatile region. Since she has not declared herself a Zionist as Biden has done, Harris could be in an advantageous position to rein in Israel and push for realisation of a Palestinian state.

When asked why voters should support Harris, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, an independent, said Trump and his right-wing Republican legislators have "worked overtime to block humanitarian aid to the starving children in Gaza." While Biden and Harris support humanitarian aid for Gaza, Israel blocked access to Gaza. Sanders stated, "And let me be clear. We will have, in my view, a much better chance of changing US policy with Harris than with Trump, who is extremely close to Netanyahu."

To achieve change, Sanders and like-minded legislators could cite the 2024 ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It declared Israel's occupation of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem is unlawful, its presence there should be withdrawn as soon as possible, colonisation should cease, colonists should be evacuated, and Palestinians should be compensated for their losses. The ICJ dismissed the Israeli/US insistence that Palestinian self-determination must be negotiated between the two sides. Experts commenting on the court's rulings said the judges laid down the precedent that, "Freedom from foreign military occupation, racial segregation and apartheid is absolutely non-negotiable."

The ICJ has yet to rule on the South African petition on whether Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people while the panel of judges on the International Criminal Court (ICC) has still to authorise requested warrants for the arrest of Netanyahu and Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. While both bodies are under strong US pressure to drop these cases, their compliance would finish off the Western pretence that the internationally recognised rule of law must apply to all violators. Why should the ICC bestow an arrest warrant curbing travel by Russia's President Vladimir Putin for his Ukraine war while Netanyahu and Gallant remain free to go wherever they choose?

No state has an inherent ‘right to exist’, not even Israel

THE quote “Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth,” attributed to Adolf Hitler’s propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, encapsulates what modern psychology has proven: that repetitive statements can overpower our critical thinking to the point of accepting falsehoods as self-evident truths. In other words, brainwashing works.

The notion that “Israel has the right to exist” is a case in point. It is a statement so often asserted by mainly Western leaders and media that it appears to be correct. And if it is a “right”, it must be rooted in law.

Thus, when French President Emmanuel Macron reportedly stated during an October 15 cabinet meeting that “Mr Netanyahu must not forget that his country was created by a UN decision” in reference to the 1947 United Nations General Assembly’s Resolution 181(II), he suggested that Israel’s existence stems from an international legal act, which, therefore, confers on it legitimacy — the so-called “right to exist”. This often-shared misconception is a distortion of historical and legal realities.

To begin, the idea of a state’s inherent “right to exist” is fallacious. Conceptually or legally, no such natural or legal right exists — for Israel or any other state — as the establishment of nation-states is not rooted in international law. Nation-states are the outcome of, ultimately, a proclamation by those purporting to represent the newly formed state.

Once declared, the new state and its government may (or may not) be formally recognised by other states and governments. The new state thus exists because of a political fact and not a legal act — that is, not because it has a “right” to exist.

Whereas the “constitutive” legal theory deems a state to exist only if it is recognised by other states, the “declaratory” theory deems a state to exist even in the absence of diplomatic recognition. In practice, however, wide diplomatic recognition remains necessary for a proclaimed state to

be able to function as a full-fledged legal and political entity although the exceptional case of Taiwan appears to contradict this postulate.

In this sense, UN Resolution 181(II) “Future Government of Palestine”

Moncef Khane

duced, was never endorsed by the Security Council and thus never became binding under international law. But even if it had, the Security Council — just like the General Assembly — could

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Ahead of the vote, the United States exerted intense pressure on some developing countries as well as France to vote in favour of the resolution. But remarkably, the US itself was also threatened as President Harry Truman recalled in his memoirs: “I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance. The persistence of a few of the extreme Zionist leaders – actuated by political motives and engaging in political threats – disturbed and annoyed me.” After delaying the vote by a few days to secure the necessary support, the General Assembly adopted the resolution by a narrow margin of two votes on November 29, 1947. The UN Partition Plan for Palestine, which it introduced, was never endorsed by the Security Council and thus never became binding under international law. But even if it had, the Security Council – just like the General Assembly – could not have created Israel because neither has the juridical competence under the UN Charter to “create” a state. Six months after the vote on the Partition Plan, the State of Israel was proclaimed by David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. This political act was the culmination of pre- and post-World War II Jewish migration to Palestine and the ethnic cleansing and a violent land grab campaign by Zionist militias, including the Haganah, the Stern Gang (Lehi) and the Irgun, which Albert Einstein called in a 1948 letter a “terrorist, right wing, chauvinist organization”.
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did not create the State of Israel. Instead, it proposed a plan to partition British-occupied Palestine into three entities: a “Jewish State”, an “Arab State” and Jerusalem under a special international regime.

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The Partition Plan was rejected by the five Arab states that were members of the UN at the time and other

governments primarily because it was deemed to violate the inalienable rights of Palestinians (of all faiths) to self-determination under Article 55 of the UN Charter.

Legally, this view holds true today because the right

of Palestine will settle the problem of Palestine is mistaken. Partition will create a dozen new problems dangerous to peace and international relations. It is much better to let Palestine alone than to attempt to enforce a solution which will bear bitter fruit.”

Al-Jamali's words were prescient. Although Israel wasn't established by the UN as Macron believes, the international community is still reeling from a historical injustice done to Palestinians of all faiths, including Jewish Palestinians. Before and after the Holocaust, Zionists had promised European and North American Jewish settlers a safe haven in Palestine, but that promise proved empty.

Since its establishment, the State of Israel has been hypermilitarised and in a constant state of warfare. It will have no prospects for peace unless and until its occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territory ends, its borders are delineated and its quest for a biblical “Greater Israel” be formally abandoned.

Repeating propaganda does not nullify international law, according to which no state has an inherent “right” to exist, but peoples have an inalienable right to self-determination. An occupying power has no inherent right of self-defence against the people it subjugates, but the people under occupation have an inherent right of self-defence against their occupiers, as the International Court of Justice has ruled.

The powers that could make a difference, chief among them the US, seem incapable or unwilling to right a historical wrong and look at these tenets of international law clear-eyed. Even in the face of an ongoing genocide that they enable, both militarily and diplomatically, they are incapable or unwilling to remove their political blinders and even listen to their own public opinions. Worse, they now prefer to risk a regional conflagration and even a nuclear strike by a genocidal Israeli regime. Hoping it will never come to that is not a cogent strategy. — *Aljazeera*



PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 366 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 366.32 points, a positive change of 0.40 percent, closing at 92,304.32 points as compared to 91,938.01 points on the last trading day.

A total of 752,664,527 shares were traded during the day as compared to 589,546,678 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs32.827 billion against Rs29.959 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 452 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 223 of them recorded gains and 169 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 60 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Power Cement with 66,262,505 shares at Rs7.79 per share, Sui South Gas with 51,962,511 shares at Rs16.68 per share and Fauji Foods Limited with 32,398,093 shares at Rs10.57 per share.

Indus Motor Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs73.60

per share price, closing at Rs2,062.88, whereas the runner-up was Sagzar Engineering Works Limited with Rs 49.05 rise in its per share price to Rs1,081.39.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs554.53 per share closing at Rs18,667.33 followed by Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs63.26 decline to close at Rs7,442.09.

Rupee sheds 05 paisa against dollar: Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 05 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.83 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.78.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.35 and Rs278.90 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 11 paisa to close at Rs302.52 against the last day's closing of Rs302.63, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and

closed at Rs1.82, whereas an increase of 20 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs360.50 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs360.30.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham increased by 02 paisa to close at Rs75.64 and the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant and closed at 73.96.

Gold prices decrease by Rs.500 per tola: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs500 and was sold at Rs283,200 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs283,700 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs429 to Rs242,798 from Rs243,227 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs222,565 from Rs222,958, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs3,430 and Rs2,940.67, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$5 to \$2,736, the Association reported.

Most Asian markets rise as US heads to polls in toss-up vote

HONG KONG (APP): Asian markets mostly rose Tuesday, a day before results from the US presidential election rolled in, with opinion polls showing a knife-edge vote, while Chinese equities were boosted by hopes over the country's economy.

Uncertainty about the outcome and worries that the winner might not be known for days has led to warnings that investors could be in for a period of volatility.

Eyes will also be on the Federal Reserve's policy decision on Thursday, with expectations for another cut, while the post-meeting statement from bank boss Jerome Powell will be pored over for an idea about its plans for 2025.

A win for Republican Donald Trump is expected to boost the dollar, restoke inflation, and send Treasury yields higher owing to his pledges to slash taxes and impose tariffs on imports.

Analysts see less upheaval from a win by Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris.

"Some view a second Trump term as a potential ticket to higher deficits and a dash of inflation, courtesy of his tax-and-tariff play-book," said Stephen Innes at STI Asset Management.

"A Trump victory with a Republican Congress would likely mean a green light for these pro-growth, deficit-stirring policies.

"With Harris and a divided Congress, radical Democratic policies would face a wall, keeping fiscal volatility in check compared to Trump's economic flamethrower."

He added that a Trump win and Republican sweep of both houses of Congress could cause headaches for Powell as he continues his battle to bring inflation to heel.

National Australia Bank's head of market economics, Tapas Strickland, said that after Thursday's decision: "Harder discussions come in December and beyond, especially on the pace of potential cuts, where rates are likely to go, and any policy impacts by the next president and Congress."

Wall Street's three main indexes ended in the red, and Asian traders mostly managed to build on Monday's performance with markets swinging in and out of positive territory.

Hong Kong and Shanghai each climbed more than two percent after data showed China's services sector expanded last month at its fastest pace since July.

The news came as traders await the end of a government meeting this week to hammer out an economic stimulus.

Officials are expected to give the go-ahead to about \$140 billion in extra budget spending, mostly for indebted local governments, and a similar one-off payment for banks.

Adding to the risk-on mood were comments by Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who said he was "fully confident" the economy would hit its growth targets this year and indicated that there was room to do more.

Meezan Bank inks agreement to join ITFC

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank has signed a new strategic partnership with the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), a member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group, under the ITFC Letter of Credit (LC) Confirmation product.

This product facilitates trade flow by allowing exporters and issuing banks to gain assurance from ITFC to secure payment and thus eliminate credit risks. It will support private sector clients, including SMEs, by working with local banks in Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member countries to facilitate various import transactions.

The agreement was signed by Nazeem Noordali, Chief Operating Officer of ITFC, and Syed Amir Ali, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Meezan Bank, in the presence of executives



from both sides. Meezan Bank is the first bank in Pakistan to partner with ITFC for the LC Confirmation facility.

This Islamic trade facility will enable Meezan Bank to extend geographical coverage by leveraging the ITFC network, both in member and non-member countries. It will also enable the Bank to handle longer term LC Confirmation transactions (6 to 12 months).

Syed Amir Ali, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Meezan Bank, highlighted the impact of this cooperation saying: "Today marks a significant milestone in our business relationship with ITFC as we solidify our partnership. This arrangement reinforces our Bank's commitment to reliability, stability, and financial excellence. The Letter of Credit Confirmation Agreement strengthens our position in the market,

enabling us to capitalize on new opportunities and facilitate international Islamic trade."

M. Nazeem Noordali, Chief Operating Officer of ITFC, expressed his views on the partnership: "We are proud to strengthen our partnership with Meezan Bank through this Letter of Credit Confirmation Agreement, which reflects our commitment and support to private sector clients in our member countries".

Pakistan Stock Exchange appointment new CEO

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Tuesday announced the appointment of Farrukh H. Sabzwari as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

According to a notice issued by PSX, Sabzwari will assume his office as CEO of Pakistan Stock Exchange on November 18, 2024.

Farrukh Sabzwari has spent more than 25 years in senior management roles in the investment banking

industry, both locally and abroad, the press release said adding he had previously served as CEO and MD of KASB Securities (local partner of BoA Merrill Lynch), BMA Capital and Country Head for CLSA Emerging Markets in Pakistan.

His time abroad includes stints at CLSA Emerging Markets in NY, USA, where he was VP sub-continent sales and at Credit Suisse in Indonesia and Singapore – where he spent seven years looking at both

APAC and Frontier Markets as Director Equities sales, said PSX press release. He also served as Chairman Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP from December 2018 to August 2019) and Commissioner of SECP from 2018 to 2021, a position he took up on his return to Pakistan.

He is a proposed Director on the board of Hugobank – a Getz Group entity that he has been associated with since March 2022 – one of the five

Digital Banking consortiums that were awarded banking licences by the SBP in January 2023.

He is also a co-opted member of the Capital Markets Advisory Council (CMAC), set up in November 2023.

Sabzwari has capital market certifications from various jurisdictions, including Singapore, Indonesia, and NY, and he is an alumnus of the IBA in Karachi, where he graduated with an MBA in December 1992, the press release added.

Tax awareness session held at Bahria University



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue organized an awareness session on "Tax Culture in Pakistan" at Bahria University Islamabad. This seminar, held in collaboration with the Business School, was attended by both students and faculty members of the university.

Speaking in the occasion, Secretary (Tax

Education) FBR, gave a comprehensive briefing on the current tax system in Pakistan.

He emphasized the various initiatives FBR is undertaking to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the revenue collection system.

He also encouraged the students to file their income tax returns and become Tax Ambassadors by spreading awareness

about tax obligations within their communities.

The session concluded with a detailed question and answer segment, allowing attendees to engage directly with the speaker and gain further insights.

This initiative is part of FBR's ongoing efforts to foster a better understanding of the tax system among the youth and to promote a culture of tax compliance in Pakistan.

Wearable devices in healthcare for infection control

Um-e-Habiba and Tarque Usman

Wearable devices are increasingly becoming vital tools in healthcare, particularly for infection control. These technologies, including smartwatches, fitness trackers, and specialized medical wearables, offer real-time monitoring and data collection that can significantly enhance patient care and safety.

One primary benefit of wearable devices is their ability to monitor vital signs such as heart rate, tem-

perature, and respiratory rate continuously. This data can help detect early signs of infection, allowing for prompt intervention. For instance, a sudden increase in body temperature could indicate an infection, prompting healthcare providers to take necessary actions before the situation escalates.

Additionally, wearables can promote hygiene practices. Devices equipped with sensors can remind users to wash their hands or maintain physical distance in crowded environments, effectively reduc-

ing the risk of infection transmission. They can also track medication adherence, ensuring that patients follow their prescribed regimens, which is crucial for preventing secondary infections.

Furthermore, the integration of wearables with telehealth platforms enables healthcare professionals to monitor patients remotely, minimizing hospital visits and the risk of exposure to infectious diseases. This is particularly relevant in the context of pandemics, where minimizing contact is essential.

‘Questioning Society Through Image, Film & Sound’:

Third Edition of Social Sciences Winter School launched at IBA Karachi



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Third Edition of the Social Sciences Winter School, jointly organized by the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi and the Centre for South Asian and Himalayan Studies in Paris (CESAH, CNRS-EHESS) commenced at IBA City

Campus. The theme of the Third Edition of Winter School is "Questioning Society Through Image, Film & Sound". Running from November 04-08, the school will emphasize diverse methodologies, from photography and digital archives to ethnographic film and sound, fostering innovative perspectives and reflective observation in

social research and heritage projects.

Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi and member of the Winter School Steering Committee, opened the session by thanking all those who made Winter School possible for the third consecutive year. He highlighted the value of collaborating with scholars from

diverse fields in the study of image, film, and sound, emphasizing how these partnerships foster cultural exchange and collaborative learning. He thanked participants for their continued engagement with IBA Karachi and expressed his desire to expand the program's reach next year, inviting even more participants to join in this collective experience of learning, working, and thinking together.

Dr. Rémy Delage, Research Scholar of CESAH (CNRS-EHESS) and member of the Steering Committee of the Winter School discussed how the Winter School was "A unique training setup that brings together scholars and participants from various backgrounds and cultures to address multiple societal challenges in a collaborative manner and through the lens of Social Sciences".

Dr. Michel Boivin, another prominent Research Scholar of CESAH (CNRS-EHESS), highlighted the ongoing academic collaboration between France and Pakistan, noting its role in facilitating Pakistani students' pursuit of PhDs in France. He emphasized the collaborative framework that underpins this initiative and shared that the Third Edition of Social Sciences Winter School will place greater emphasis on methodological approaches using image, film, and sound as tools in social science research.

Additional plenary sessions were also organized to explore different themes. The sessions included international trainers and participants from France, Belgium, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

The first plenary session was delivered by Professor Christopher Pinney, Anthropologist, University College London, who delivered

a speech titled, "On Medium Specificity, Or, What's Photography Got to Do with It?". He examined photography's unique qualities, focusing on its technical and semiotic aspects. Drawing from theorists like Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, and Ariella Aisha Azoulay, Professor Pinney explored concepts including 'photographability' and the 'civility of photography,' highlighting indexicality, contingency, and the distinctive 'screen' of photography. His talk provided new insights into photography's role in modern society.

The second plenary speaker, Ms. Saima Zaidi, Communication Designer and Founder & Director, Numaish-Karachi, spoke about 'Collective Memory: Community Engagement Through Visual Interventions'. She highlighted Pakistan's visual culture as a lens into its heritage and showcased proj-

ects like Jhuley Lal: Crafting the Contemporary, which unites designers and artisans in Sindh to reimagine traditional crafts and Sheherezade: The Walled City Anthology, a Lahore project blending digital art with historical heritage. She also introduced The Reading Project, aimed at revitalizing Karachi's Khalikdina Hall as an inclusive cultural space for community dialogue.

Dr. Nicolas Puig, Anthropologist, URMIS, IRD, Université Paris Cité, spoke on 'Anthropology of Sound: Approaches and Knowledge through Sonic Relationships'. He emphasized how listening to the world's harmony provides insights into human experiences, cultural dynamics, and environmental interactions, highlighting sound as a valuable tool for understanding social contexts.

The multidisciplinary workshops at the Third

Edition of Winter School will combine theoretical sessions, field practice, and survey methods, including Workshop 1 - From Studio to Screen: Methodologies of Writing Social Sciences with Light, Workshop 2 - Crafting the Moving Image: Documentary, Anthropological, Ethnographic Perspectives in Pakistan, and Workshop 3 - Sound in Urban Environments from a Social Sciences Perspective: Field Recording, Sonic Archives, and Sound Documentary.

Aimed at students, emerging scholars, and young professionals, the Winter School offers intensive training in using image, film, and sound to examine social narratives, cultural patterns, and representation. This approach encourages critical engagement with social issues, cultural narratives, and ideologies shaping identity and societal change.



Pakistan may have to change tactics in Adelaide

A D E L A I D E (ESPNCricinfo): Pakistan's insistence on bowling short on a fast and bouncy MCG pitch almost produced a famous heist, but the tactic may not be as successful in the second ODI at the Adelaide Oval.

In a low-scoring thriller that evoked the heyday of the 50-over format, Pakistan's pace attack led by speedster Haris Rauf troubled Australia with vicious short-pitch bowling on a surface that stayed true throughout.

A sizzling spell from Rauf had the pro-Pakistan crowd in raptures and turned Australia's chase of a modest 204 on its head before captain Pat Cummins once again calmly lifted his team over the line as the home side claimed a two-wicket victory.

While the approach clearly shook up the Australian batters, with

Rauf accounting for Marnus Labuschagne and Glenn Maxwell in consecutive deliveries as he ramped up his speed, those fireworks are unlikely to be replicated at the traditionally batting-friendly Adelaide Oval on Friday.

Bouncers can prove risky on a ground renowned for its short boundaries square of the wicket in a major contrast to the vast expanses of the MCG.

"We saw Pakistan's tactics [in Melbourne] bowling pretty short," Australia opener Matt Short told reporters on Tuesday. "But I think they may have to change that a little bit at this ground with the shorter square boundaries which are the complete opposite to the 'G. It's always a nice ground to bat on."

After making just one run before top-edging Shaheen Shah Afridi, Short will relish returning to his BBL home

ground where he has dominated in recent seasons for Adelaide Strikers.

"It's going to feel quite comfortable down there opening the batting, that's for sure," Short said. "It's my favourite ground in the world to play at, and I've played there quite a number of times, so I should be pretty familiar with it."

It was not the start to the series envisioned for Short, who is vying to be the permanent replacement for David Warner in the 50-over format. He had entered the series with the inside running after opening in three of the last four ODIs in England and making a match-winning 30-ball 58 in the series-decider in Bristol in a performance that showcased his big-hitting capabilities.

"I came into this series with high aspirations to try to cement my spot in the team," Short said. "I'm going to go out there

and keep trying to be positive and play aggressive cricket. It should pay off at some stage."

With regular opener Travis Head on paternity leave, Short and Jake Fraser-McGurk have formed a new opening duo although both fell inside the first four overs in the first game.

Fraser-McGurk, who also has his eyes set on the vacant opener's spot, made 16 off 14 balls in a whirlwind befitting his ultra-aggressive style. While there may be some belief that Short should rein in his approach to complement his brash opening partner, Australia's hierarchy are backing all-out attack at the top of the order.

"The coaching staff give us both the licence to be free and play our shots," Short said. "Batting with Travis Head as well, if he goes [off] then I let him go and I do my thing."

"It's similar with Jake.



It probably didn't come off last night for him, like myself, but if he is seeing and hitting them well

then I probably won't say much to him and just let him go. And just focus more on myself.

"The more important thing in a partnership is that if he is struggling a bit then working through

whatever the issues are. It's really exciting to bat with him...nice to watch from the other end."

Pak boxer Waseem announces final eliminator fight

ISLAMABAD (APP): Renowned Pakistani boxer Muhammad Waseem on Tuesday revealed his highly anticipated final eliminator fight to take place in the Dominican Republic on December 13.

The former three-time World Boxing Council (WBC) World Silver flyweight champion expressed excitement about his upcoming bout during a press briefing here.

"I'm thrilled to announce my new promotion and training camp in Liverpool, followed by a trip to the USA and then Dominican Republic for the fight," Waseem said.

Waseem also announced plans to bring the World title to Pakistan in April 2025. "Hosting the World title in Pakistan is monumental, and I'll be honoured to be a part of it. However, my opponent



for the December 13 fight will be revealed within a week and is expected to be an American fighter," he said.

With 13 wins and two World title losses in 15 fights, Waseem who

boasts an impressive record said, "I have also won two World titles in the history of Pakistan. I'm also the first boxer former WBA, WBC, IBF to be No. 1 in the Ranking for Pakistan," he said.

After a two-and-a-half-year hiatus, Waseem is confident following his October victory in Malta. "I'm optimistic about my success against my opponent in the upcoming bout," he said.

Noman's stellar performance earns ICC nomination

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Noman Ali has been named in the outstanding performers that have been shortlisted for the ICC Player of the Month awards for October.

Noman is shortlisted for the first time after his wicket-taking exploits on home soil helped Pakistan secure a memorable comeback victory over England.

Noman made a triumphant return to Test action for Pakistan in October, and earned his first nomination for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award thanks to 20 wickets at an average of 13.85 across his two Tests against England in Multan and Rawalpindi. Alongside the equally impressive Sajid Khan, Noman was a constant threat on spinning surfaces, and was at his most lethal in the second innings of both encounters, taking eight for 46 and six for 42 respectively to inspire the hosts to a memorable comeback victory, said a press release.

Meanwhile, joining him among the October nominees is Mitchell Santner, the left-arm spinner bowled New Zealand to victory in the second Test against India at Pune.

Kagiso Rabada reclaimed top spot in the ICC Men's Test Bowling Rankings during the month and his outstanding efforts during South Africa's series triumph in Bangladesh earns him his latest nomination. The shortlist for the ICC Women's Player of the Month award features three individuals honoured in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024. New Zealand's Amelia Kerr is nominated thanks to a memorable string of performances in which she set a new wicket-taking record as the White Ferns secured their maiden T20 World Cup triumph in the UAE.

Deandra Dottin made her return to the West Indies' lineup in October, and made an immediate impact, inspiring her side to reach the semi-final of the competition with valuable runs and wickets. Laura Wolvaardt completes the shortlist after topping the run-scoring charts and captaining South Africa to their second successive Women's T20 World Cup final.

Asif moves in World Snooker semis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani cueist Muhammad Asif has moved in the semifinal of IBSF World Snooker Championship 2024, at Doha, Qatar. According to details, Asif will face the winner of other quarterfinal between China and Cyprus. Earlier in the pre quarters, Asif beat Ahmed Saif of Qatar by 4-3 (112(53)-0, 100(69)-24, 4-97(64), 44-77(77), 68-22, 01-68, 54-0). Meanwhile, Michel Georgiou of Cyprus outplayed Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal by 4-2 (70-20, 71-0, 46-76(52), 35-73, 89(73)-31, 61(52)-19).

Huraira to lead Pakistan Shaheens against Sri Lanka 'A'

LAHORE (APP): Mohammad Huraira has been appointed Pakistan Shaheens captain for the two four-day and three 50-over matches against Sri Lanka 'A' at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium from 11 to 29 November.

22-year-old Mohammad Huraira has scored 3,310 runs in 40 first-class matches with eight centuries and 14 half-centuries. In 25 List-A matches, the right-handed batter has accumulated 632 runs, striking a century and a half-century.

The Men's National Selection Committee has also named the two squads, which include Test fast bowlers Mohammad Wasim Jnr and Khurram Shahzad. The duo returned to competitive cricket last week by featuring in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy after completing their rehabilitations at the National Cricket Academy.

Hussain Talat is the other international player in the white-ball squad, whereas Muhammad Ghazi Ghori and Ahmed Safi Abdullah have earned their maiden Shaheens call-ups.

In the white-ball squad, Abdul Samad, Haider Ali, Maaz Sadaqat, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Imran Jnr and Rohail Nazir have retained their places in the side that participated in the ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup last month, while Muhammad Imran,

Sirajuddin and Ubaid Shah have broken into the Shaheens side for the first time.

The red-ball squad will commence training sessions from 6 November, while Sri Lanka 'A' will arrive on 8 November before starting their preparations on 9 November. White-ball players will assemble in Islamabad on 22 November.

Meanwhile, the PCB has also confirmed umpire and match officials for the series. Iqbal Sheikh and Bilal Khilji will lead the Playing Control Team (PCT) for the red and white-ball matches, respectively, while umpiring responsibilities in the series will be shared between Asif Yaqoob, Imran Jawed, Rashid Riaz and Zulfiqar Jan.

Pakistan Shaheens squad

Four-dayers: Mohammad Huraira (captain) (Sialkot), Abdul Faseeh (Rawalpindi), Ahmed Safi Abdullah (Faisalabad), Ali Zaryab (Lahore), Haider Ali (Rawalpindi), Hussain Talat (Lahore), Kashif Ali (Rawalpindi), Khurram Shahzad (Faisalabad), Muhammad Ghazi Ghori (Karachi), Mohammad Rameez Jnr (Lahore), Mohammad Wasim Jnr (FATA), Rohail Nazir (Islamabad), Saad Khan (Hyderabad) and Sameen Gul (FATA)

50-over matches: Mohammad Huraira (captain) (Sialkot), Abdul

Faseeh (Rawalpindi), Abdul Samad (Faisalabad), Haider Ali (Rawalpindi), Hussain Talat (Lahore), Maaz Sadaqat (Peshawar), Mehman Muntaz (Rawalpindi), Mohammad Haris (Peshawar), Mohammad Imran Jnr (Swat), Muhammad Imran (Bahawalpur), Mohammad Wasim Jnr (FATA), Rohail Nazir (Islamabad), Sharoon Siraj (FATA), Sirajuddin (FATA) and Ubaid Shah (Lahore)

Umpire and match referee appointments (All matches will be day games and played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium)

11-14 Nov – 1st four-day. Asif Yaqoob and Zulfiqar Jan (on-field umpires), Imran Jawed (third umpire), Iqbal Sheikh (match referee)

18-21 Nov – 2nd four-day. Rashid Riaz and Imran Jawed (on-field umpires), Zulfiqar Jan (third umpire), Iqbal Sheikh (match referee)

25 Nov – 1st 50-over match. Rashid Riaz and Zulfiqar Jan (on-field umpires), Imran Jawed (third umpire), Bilal Khilji (match referee)

27 Nov – 2nd 50-over match. Rashid Riaz and Imran Jawed (on-field umpires), Zulfiqar Jan (third umpire), Bilal Khilji (match referee)

29 Nov – 3rd 50-over match. Rashid Riaz and Zulfiqar Jan (on-field umpires), Imran Jawed (third umpire), Bilal Khilji (match referee).

Mbappe must adapt to solve Real problem: Benzema

MADRID (BBC): Kylian Mbappe must learn to play as a central striker at Real Madrid because he will not be able to displace Vinicius Junior on the left, the club's former forward Karim Benzema says.

France star Mbappe, who joined Real after his Paris St-Germain contract ended in July, has eight goals in 14 appearances for his new club but has scored just once in his past five games.

The 25-year-old's favoured position is on the left wing but manager Carlo Ancelotti has kept Brazil international Vinicius in that position, forcing Mbappe to play centrally.

"The problem, in my opinion, is that [Mbappe] is not a central striker, even with the national team, every time he plays as a number nine he doesn't feel right, because that's not his position," former France striker Benzema said on Spanish television show El Chiringuito., external

"On the left, he's got a guy who's at the same level as him, Vinicius, so there is a problem, you can't play Vinicius as a number nine or on the right, because when he plays on the left he makes the difference in every game."

"Mbappe isn't a real number nine. People ask a lot of him and he's under a

lot of pressure, this isn't Paris St-Germain."

Benzema is Real's second-highest scorer of all time, behind Cristiano Ronaldo, and the Frenchman won the Ballon d'Or when at the club in 2022 before signing for Saudi Arabian side Al-Itihad last year.

The 36-year-old, winner of five Champions Leagues and four La Liga titles during 14 seasons at the Bernabeu, warned Mbappe that "if you go two or three games without a goal, you're going to have a lot of problems".

In addition to scoring just once in the past five games, Mbappe failed to make an impact as Real's

42-game unbeaten run in La Liga was ended by a painful 4-0 home defeat by rivals Barcelona.

Team-mate Vinicius came second to Manchester City midfielder Rodri in the voting for the men's Ballon d'Or last month - awarded to the best footballer of the year.

On his advice to Real's present number nine, Benzema said: "Don't give up, because I don't think he's going to push Vinicius to move. He's the best player in the world at the moment."

"Mbappe needs to get it into his head that today he's a number nine, and forget about the left flank for a while."

Below-par Pegula out of WTA Finals

LONDON (BBC): Jessica Pegula was knocked out of the WTA Finals with one group match still to play as she fell to a lacklustre straight-set defeat by Barbora Krejickova.

Wimbledon champion Krejickova won 6-3 6-3 against a below-par Pegula for her first victory at the season-ending tournament in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

In a performance devoid of any positive energy, Pegula struggled to cope with Krejickova's huge serves and hit just four winners in a match lasting little more than an hour.

"I'm really pleased with the way I played today," said eighth seed Krejickova. "I felt I had to play my best tennis."

"I had some very high parts of the season, especially winning the Wimbledon title. It was something that is really indescribable, and to be here right now is a huge privilege to be playing in

the final eight."

Victory keeps 28-year-old Krejickova's hopes of reaching the semi-finals alive, following her opening three-set defeat by Iga Swiatek on Sunday, but Pegula can go no further.

Later on Tuesday, defending champion Swiatek faces Coco Gauff in the second Orange Group match of the day. A win for the Pole would see her join Aryna Sabalenka in advancing to the semi-finals, while Gauff requires victory in straight sets to progress with a match to spare.

On Monday, Sabalenka beat Jasmine Paolini in the Purple Group for her second win of the tournament, and success over the already-eliminated Elena Rybakina on Wednesday would secure her the end-of-year world number one ranking.

US Open finalist Pegula, 30, had got off to the perfect start with a love hold in her first serv-

ice game on Tuesday, amid a catalogue of Krejickova unforced errors.

But it was Czech Krejickova, who is ranked 13th in the world but qualified for the WTA Finals on account of being a 2024 Grand Slam champion, who got the initial break midway through the first set, at which point sixth seed Pegula's body language began to sour.

Krejickova missed a chance to wrap up the opener on her first set point as she slammed a backhand return into the net, but she was gifted it on her second as Pegula tapped a return into the net from close range.

Form did not improve for Pegula at the start of the second set as Krejickova broke her serve at the first opportunity, though there was a brief reprieve for the American as she cancelled that out in the next game.

But any glimmer of

hope for a Pegula comeback was extinguished as she double-faulted to give her opponent the break back, after which Krejickova coasted to a straightforward victory with a solitary break point her only hurdle.

Though Krejickova's performance was far from polished, finishing with more unforced errors than her opponent, her serving did much of the damage as she recorded 11 aces - her highest total of the season - compared to one from Pegula.

Pegula will face Swiatek in her final group-stage match on Thursday, after Gauff plays Krejickova.

The WTA Finals are being held in Saudi Arabia for the first time - a move which has been criticised by some because of the country's human rights record.

This year's tournament has record prize money, with the singles champion set to collect about £4m.

Lewis wants Fury to be 'heavier' in Usyk rematch

LONDON (BBC): Lennox Lewis thinks Tyson Fury will have to "to do a lot more" to beat Oleksandr Usyk in their heavyweight rematch on 21 December.

Fury, 36, will be seeking revenge against unified champion Usyk having lost their first encounter in May by split decision.

Lewis, a former undisputed heavyweight champion, is backing Fury to beat his rival if he learns from his mistakes in the first fight.

"I think Fury learnt what he needs to do next time because he didn't do enough. He needs to do a lot more. I like him a bit heavier for his fights and not moving around as much," Lewis told the 5 Live Boxing with Steve

Bunce podcast.

"He has to conquer his own self first. He's been through these things before so I think he can do it because he knows what to do."

"He's been at lows before and at highs before. He's down here right now, he knows how to get back up here. He just needs to put in the work."

Before 37-year-old Usyk defeated Fury, British fighter Lewis was the last man to become reigning undisputed heavyweight champion in 1999.

The Briton defeated Evander Holyfield for the title, winning in a rematch after their draw earlier that year.

Lewis competed in three

key rematches in his career. He twice came back to win after losing a first bout, once to Hasim Rahman in 2001 and once to Oliver McCall, who beat him in 1994 before folding to defeat in 1997.

Now 59, Lewis says he was driven by "revenge" in those contests and says Fury will be going through the same thing after the first loss of his career.

"Every day I woke up training for this person, ready for this person, thinking about them the whole day. I took it real serious," Lewis said.

"Wake up every day to their picture. Stick it on the wall. And be thinking about them all the time. It's a mental war you're going in against."

Arsenal captain Odegaard back in full training

LONDON (BBC): Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard has returned to full training after two months out with an ankle injury.

The Norway midfielder, 25, has been out since September, missing 12 games, after damaging his ankle ligaments on international duty.

He trained with the Arsenal squad before Wednesday's Champions League game at Inter Milan.

Arsenal have picked up just one point out of a possible nine in their last three Premier League games after losses to Newcastle and Bournemouth and a hard-fought draw against Liverpool.

Arsenal struggled to create clear-cut chances against Newcastle and having their leader and one of their main creative outlets back will be a big boost.

However, England midfielder Declan Rice, 25, has not travelled with the Arsenal squad to Milan and will miss Wednesday's match.



In brief

Facility restored

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Housing and Works has started allotment of government accommodation to the employees of the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat (WMS), which has brought great joy and sense of relief to them. It may be pointed out that the employees of the Wafaqi Mohtasib had been getting official accommodation in the past. However, it was discontinued some years ago which has caused serious problems to the low income employees of the Secretariat with regard to arranging affordable accommodation. Following a series of meetings between the officials of the Ministry of Housing & Works and the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat, this facility has been restored and now the employees belonging to this Secretariat shall also be entitled to the allotment of government accommodation.

DC visits

Rawat Center

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, Hassan Waqar Cheema here on Tuesday visited Rawat, Vehicle Inspection and Certification System (VICS) Centre and inspected working of the center. The DC also inspected vehicle inspection process to prevent smog. Secretary, Regional Transport Authority, (RTA) Rashid Ali gave a detailed briefing to the DC. The DC directed the authorities concerned that inspection of the vehicles causing smog should be done on priority basis. The crackdown against smoke emitting vehicles should be launched, he ordered. Hassan Waqar urged the citizens not to burn garbage and crop residues to protect the city from air pollution. DC was informed that since July 1, over 18,000 vehicles have been inspected and since Nov 1, more than 125 smoke emitting vehicles were impounded. RTO said that 300 vehicles were inspected on Monday.

Police arrest two bike lifters

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two bike lifters and street criminals and recovered five stolen motorcycles, Rs 39,000 cash and other items from their possession, said a Police spokesman. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, Taxila Police Station managed to net two bike lifters, Hamza and Numan and recovered five stolen motorcycles, cash Rs 39,000 and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Nasir Nawaz said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars.

Dengue affects 117 patients

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi reported 117 new dengue patients during last 24 hours. According to the details released by the District Health Authority Rawalpindi on Friday, the fresh reported patients include 47 from Pothohar Town Peri Urban areas while 26 from Rawalpindi Cantt Board localities and 18 patients were reported from Municipal Corporation areas. Presently, dengue wards established in various allied hospitals contain 241 patients under treatment including 66 patients admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 55 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 48 in Rawalpindi Teaching Hospital, 34 in Fauji Foundation Hospital and 38 patients are under treatment in different private hospitals.

Apprehending suspects involved in robbery:

Ayaz commends Islamabad police

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Tuesday praised Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Islamabad Police Syed Ali Raza and his team for their swift action in apprehending suspects involved in a recent bank robbery in federal capital.

During meeting with DIG Islamabad Police, he commended the Islamabad Police for their successful operation, congratulating them on their effective performance and awarding a shield in recognition of their achievements.

The Speaker lauded the police force's prompt and effective response, noting that such actions have

strengthened public trust in law enforcement.

"Law enforcement agencies play a vital role in maintaining peace and security," he said, adding that the Islamabad Police's measures to ensure public safety and crime prevention are commendable.

He further emphasized that the police force's improved performance is a significant step toward making the capital a safer city.

"Such measures reflect the government's commitment to finding lasting solutions to security issues and fostering a peaceful society," he stated.

Speaker praised the

Islamabad Police's professional conduct, underscoring the importance of a secure and peaceful environment for the country's progress and the prosperity of its people.

He also expressed his good wishes for the police's future efforts to serve the public and eradicate crime.

Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Mir Ghulam Mustafa Shah and Members of the National Assembly Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah, Ejaz Hussain Jakhani, Asad Alam Niazi, Syed Abrar Shah, Abdul Qadir Patel, and Mian Khan Bugti were also present at the occasion.

Pak universities' pioneer in adopting HEC's Maktab

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Universities are pioneer in adopting Higher Education Commission (HEC)'s 'Maktab' technology to automate operations as per global best practices.

According to the details from official sources, HEC, via its Higher Education Development Program - HEDP will bring Maktab, the world's best technology solution, to Pakistani universities.

By automating the entire student lifecycle, Maktab

will not only reduce operational costs but also offer a state-of-the-art academic experience at significantly subsidised rates, the sources added.

Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture, Multan; AROR University, Sukkur; Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design, Lahore; Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar; UET, Peshawar; and Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University,

Quetta pioneered to digitise their operations from student admissions till graduation (ERP-SLC).

The solution design signing event held last week demonstrates a commitment to digitising university operations tailored to specific needs.

At the ceremony, Higher Education Commission (HEC) Member IT Dr. Jameel Ahmed encouraged other universities to take advantage of this unique automation opportunity.

DG RDA launches special awareness drive

RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General (DG), Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA), Kinza Murtaza on Tuesday launched special awareness campaign regarding approved housing schemes and dengue disease in the city.

The awareness campaign has been launched to educate the citizens about various housing schemes, emphasizing the importance of dengue prevention measures.

Under the campaign, information regarding approved housing schemes including details about the residential units, plots and associated facilities would be provided to the citizens. Awareness would also be raised about dengue cases, its symptoms, and preventive steps to curb the spread of the disease.

Kinza Murtaza, while launching the campaign said, RDA was committed to provide accurate information about the housing schemes in order to help the residents to avoid financial risks.

Under the campaign, efforts would also be made to prevent the spread of dengue, the DG RDA said and emphasized the need for collective efforts to combat the disease.

She said, "Prevention of dengue is not just an individual responsibility; it requires concerted efforts from the entire community. We are urging the citizens to take necessary actions, including cleanliness and removal of the stagnant water and elimination of mosquito larvae."

The public engagement would be facilitated

through the use of the SMD (Special Mobile Display) truck, which would travel across various areas of Rawalpindi, pamphlets, and providing expert advice on housing schemes and dengue prevention.

"Our top priority remains the health and safety of the citizens," she added.

This campaign would not only raise awareness about housing options, but, it would also equip the citizens with the knowledge and tools to protect themselves from potential health risks like dengue.

"We will encourage everyone to cooperate with RDA in this important initiative so that together, we could make Rawalpindi a safer, healthier, and more prosperous city," she added.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing Telecom Cybersecurity Awards-2024 Ceremony.

Senate penal summons CDA Chief and DC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Housing and Works on Tuesday summoned the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Deputy Commissioner to appear at the next session to investigate the issue of illegal construction in D-12, as well as other pending matters.

The meeting, chaired by Senator Nasir Mehmood at the Parliament House, also instructed the FIA to provide an update on ongoing investigations into various housing authorities, including PWD, FGEHA, PHA-F, and NESPAK.

The committee discussed a variety of critical issues concerning ongoing housing projects and departmental inefficiencies.

After thorough deliberation, they reached a consensus to further investigate allegations of mismanagement, prioritize accountability, and ensure transparency in future housing schemes.

A key agenda item was the discussion of the long-delayed 200-bed Center of Excellence in Gynecology and Obstetrics in Rawalpindi. Approved in 2007 with an estimated cost of Rs 166 million, the project has faced numerous setbacks, primarily due to funding challenges.

Although construction resumed in 2010, claims for the project escalated to Rs 218 million by 2023. However, discrepancies in these claims raised questions about their authenticity.

The committee voiced concerns over whether construction had continued despite an alleged ban, to which the construction company denied receiving any formal notification of such a ban.

PWD officials confirmed that the project remains incomplete, despite an initial announcement by the then-prime minister in 2004, and a subsequent change in scope in 2017, when the project was scaled down from 400 to 200 beds.

Committee members criticized the performance of the Ministry of Housing and Works and its subsidiaries, with Senator Bilal Khan pointing out that provincial departments had outperformed the federal



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin meeting with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament's House.

Ambreen given additional charge

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government on Tuesday gave the additional charge of Managing Director of Pakistan Television Corporation to Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting Ambreen Jan, said a notification issued by Cabinet Secretariat, Establishment Division.

Ambreen Jan has currently been serving as Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting.

The Government of Pakistan has given the additional charge of the post of Managing Director of Pakistan Television Corporation to Federal Secretary Information under clause 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973 for a period of three months or until regular appointment.

After assuming charge as MD PTV, Ambreen Jan issued orders for starting an investigation into illegal recruitments in the PTV.

After termination of the contracts of 12 retired employees, the PTV management has been directed to start the process of verification of degrees of other employees.

Power load shifting to be completed on time

RAWALPINDI (APP): Power load shifting to the recently completed underground cabling project in the Sadar area will be completed by November 13.

IESCO will render its power shifting assignment in a week at Bank Road, Sadar.

This was told in a meeting between the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board and IESCO, during which the underground cabling project's load shifting was discussed.

According to the details, Cantonment Executive Officer Syed Ali Irfan Rizvi, Additional CEO Haider Shuja, Chief Cantt Engineer, SE Operation (IESCO), and the Project Director attended the meeting participated.

CEO RCB appreciated that the underground cabling system of Rawalpindi Sadar has been energized and currently both underground cabling and overhead systems are running in Sadar. He urged the CEO IESCO to complete the meter load shifting work as soon as possible.

CEO IESCO assured that the work of load shifting and removal of poles would be completed soon.

Zero waste to be ensured: Minister

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Local Government and Community Development, Zeeshan Rafique here on Tuesday said that zero waste would be ensured in cities and villages through, 'Suthra' Punjab programme.

Chairing a meeting held here in Commissioner Office regarding 'Suthra' Punjab the Minister said that the programme was launched on the directives of Chief Minister Punjab and it is a gift for the people.

Members of National and Provincial Assemblies, divisional administration officers, contractors and others attended the meeting.

The officers concerned gave a briefing on the steps being taken by Rawalpindi Waste Management Company regarding 'Suthra' Punjab.

Zeeshan Rafiq said that environmental friendly sustainable measures are being taken under 'Suthra' Punjab programme.

All the required

resources are being provided by the Punjab Government, after which there should be no problem in ensuring 100 percent cleanliness.

He said that outsourcing of cleanliness and sanitation system in rural areas would ensure manual, mechanical sweeping, waste collection, drain cleaning and waste disposal. Local government department would monitor the outsourcing system digitally, he said.

The monitoring would include biometric attendance, vehicle tracking management system, vehicle weighing at dumping site, digital monitoring of the fleet and container clearance through geo-tagging and prompt resolution of the complaints, the minister informed.

At district level, a control room under the supervision of Assistant Commissioners is being built in the Deputy Commissioners Office and

in each Tehsil, Zeeshan Rafiq said adding, to ensure full participation of the public in the sanitation system, an App 'Saaf Rawalpindi' and a toll-free number 1139 have been launched.

The citizens could get registered their complaints for which the contractor would be given two to three hours time to resolve them, he added.

So far, 17 Union Councils (UCs) across the division have been outsourced for 'Suthra' Punjab programme. The outsourcing is in progress in four UCs and pre-qualification have been completed.

The UCs which have completed the outsourcing process would enter the first operational phase before December 1, the minister was informed.

The sanitation system would become operational in UCs where outsourcing is in process and a target of January 1, 2025 has been set in this regard.

'Lok Mela' to project soft image of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): The much anticipated 'Lok Mela', being arranged by National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) from November 08-17, will present soft image of the country through showcasing Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, traditional art and music.

This was stated by the Secretary National Heritage and Culture Division, Hassan Nasir Jamy, in a video message.

He said that the Lok Mela will represent the rich culture and heritage of all the provinces, promoting soft image of the country.

"It is heartening to share that Lok Virsa being custodian of Pakistan's rich cul-

tural heritage has been arranging 'Lok Mela' from the last more than 40 years", Jamy said.

The Lok Mela will bring great opportunities for the artisans and folk artists of Islamabad, all the provinces as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan to showcase their innovative talents and culture.

This year's Lok Mela festival has a special significance as Lok Virsa is celebrating its Golden Jubilee Celebrations (1974-2024).

Since establishment in 1974, Lok Virsa has been playing an instrumental role in preservation and promotion of rich cultural legacy of the country for the future generations.

Another special feature of this Lok Mela, Jamy mentioned, is that the whole activity is focused on "Youth of Pakistan" and it will feature the works of a large number of young artists and artisans. The Lok Mela will present musical nights of all the provinces showcasing the musical performances by the artists from each province while art and cultural shows and traditional cuisines will also add colour to the festival.

He said that a special night will be arranged to mark the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Lok Virsa, celebrating its immense contributions for safeguarding and projecting true image of Pakistan.

ANF arrests 7 drug dealers with over 396 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 10 operations across the country managed to arrest 7 accused and recovered over 396 kg drugs worth over Rs 120 million, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman.

He informed that 460 grams ice was recovered from an accused arrested on M-1, Islamabad.

5 kg hashish was recovered from a drug dealer netted in Tandojam,

Hyderabad. 8 kg hashish and 160 grams weed were recovered from two suspects nabbed near a university on Munir Ahmad Road, Quetta.

1.6 kg ice and 400 intoxicated tablets were recovered from an accused held near another university in Quetta. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions.

He informed that in another operation, 280 kg

hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Indus Chowk, Karachi.

During operations conducted in two different areas of Balochistan, 57 kg heroin and 39 kg hashish were recovered.

1.5 kg heroin and 2 kg ice were recovered from an accused held near Lakpas, Toll Plaza Mustang.

600 grams hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up near GT Road, Attock.

specifically questioned how such buildings were permitted despite regulatory oversight.

FGEHA's Director General confirmed that some illegal constructions had been demolished and that corrective actions were underway since his appointment. However, the committee expressed dissatisfaction with the response, and further investigations are anticipated.

The committee was also briefed on the Park Road project, which has been plagued by corruption and mismanagement. The matter has been referred to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for an ongoing inquiry. The Project Director was suspended and subsequently terminated.

ed, while the contractor has been blacklisted. Show-cause notices have been issued to several officials, and the case remains under active investigation.

The ongoing oversight by the Senate Standing Committee highlights the pressing need for reforms within the housing sector to tackle long-standing inefficiencies and safeguard the interests of federal employees and the public at large.

The meeting was attended by Senators Bilal Ahmed Abro, Muhammad Aslam Khan, Khilda Ateeab, Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Husna Bano, and Hidayatullah Khan, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Housing and Works.

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

Afghanistan signed mining deals worth \$1.2b

KABUL (TOLOnews): The spokesperson for the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum has said that since the beginning of the current solar year, this ministry has signed three major contracts valued at \$1.2 billion.

According to the ministry spokesperson, Homayoon Afghan, these contracts cover salt, gas, and cement extraction and were signed with both domestic and foreign companies.

Homayoon Afghan told TOLOnews, "This year, we have contracts with companies from Uzbekistan and Turkey in the gas and cement sectors, and previously with companies from Iran, Turkey, and China in oil, gas, copper, and gold. Other foreign companies are also interested, but we have not yet signed contracts with them."

Officials in the caretaker government have repeatedly stated that the necessary facilities for investment by domestic and foreign companies in Afghanistan have been established, and investor interest in working in the country has increased.

The Chamber of Industries and Mines said that investing in mines is crucial for the country's economic growth and development.

According to officials in this chamber, investments in cement and gas production could lead the country to self-sufficiency in these two sectors.

Sakhi Ahmad Paiman, First Deputy of the Afghanistan Chamber of Industries and Mines, told TOLOnews, "Afghanistan's mines and gas reserves, amounting to thousands of billions of cubic meters, are economically viable and beneficial for Afghanistan."

Moreover, we have several cement mines, of which one or two are active."

Economic analyst Ahmad Firdaws Behgozin said: "Proper extraction and processing of Afghanistan's mines can positively impact the correct and global sale of these resources."

In the past three years, the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum has frequently met with investors and representatives from countries including China, Iran, Turkey, Qatar, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Russia to discuss investment and opportunities in this sector.

Zia pledges improved access to information

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Deputy Minister of Information and Culture said that with the ratification of the Access to Information Law, journalists' issues will be addressed, and ambiguities in the law will also be resolved.

Zia-ul-Haq Haqmal, acting director of publications at the Ministry of Information and Culture, in a two-day seminar aimed at fostering coordination between spokespersons and journalists in the northeastern region, pledged that journalists' challenges would be addressed.

The Deputy Minister for Publications of the Ministry of Information and Culture said, "We follow the leadership's guidance, and God willing, we will provide information according to this guidance. Work has also been done on the media law, and it will be sent to the office of the leader of the Islamic Emirate once more, and after its ratification, all issues will be transparent, and problems will be resolved."

Some journalists in the northeastern region are calling on officials to put an end to their issues.

Sayed Mohebbullah Madras, a journalist, said, "Our request to the Islamic Emirate is to improve access to information for the media."

Another journalist, Abdul Sami Khawari, added, "We hope that the scope of such meetings will expand, allowing for discussions on media challenges and proposed solutions."

Another journalist, Nusratullah Ebrahimi, said, "We were concerned about image restrictions in certain provinces, especially in Takhar, and we were promised solutions. We hope that the media law will be made public so we can carry out our work in line with it."

Previously, some journalists in Kunduz had also requested facilitation in their professional activities.

Afghan girls voice desire to participate in 2025 Kankor exam

KABUL (TOLOnews): After the announcement of the registration process for the 1404 solar year (2025) entrance exam (Kankor) by the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan, some girls have expressed their desire to be allowed to participate in the exam as well.

These girls told TOLOnews that they want to participate in the upcoming year's Kankor exam, just like the boys, and continue their education.

Bahara, a 12th-grade student who dreams of studying in the Faculty of Economics, told a TOLOnews reporter: "Today my brother has been admitted to the Faculty of Engineering and is pursuing his dreams. I also wanted to reach my goal in the same way. When my brother can, and I cannot, it's very disappointing and discouraging."

Safa, another student, said: "We ask the Islamic Emirate to allow us to study. My wish for myself and for all Afghan girls is to be able to go to university one day and continue our studies."

Meanwhile, Mansoor Ahmad Hamza, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan, announced the start of boys' registration for this exam in schools and madrassas without mentioning the participation of girls in the 1404 Kankor exam.

Mansoor Ahmad Hamza added that the registration process for this exam will continue until the 30th of Jadi (January 19).

The spokesperson for the Ministry of Education said: "The Kankor exam will be held as usual in the month of Jawza (May/June), and in the warmer provinces, it will be conducted earlier. Registration continues until the 30th of Jadi (December / January), after which it will stop. God willing, the exam for madrassas and schools will be held at the same time, and there is no issue."

This comes as the Kankor exam has been held across the country for the past two years without the participation of female students.

Ministry graduates 112 in specialized artillery training



KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of National Defense held a ceremony today marking the graduation of 112 personnel from various units who completed a

Afghanistan continues to face crises

KABUL (Ariana News): The International Federation of Red Crescent (IFRC) has reported that Afghanistan continues to face prolonged and complex humanitarian crises.

IFRC said in a report published on Tuesday, that about 23.7 million people, more than half of Afghanistan's population, are in urgent need of humanitarian aid.

According to the IFRC, natural disasters, the growing impact of climate change, population displacement, economic challenges, and food insecurity are the main factors contributing to Afghanistan's ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Afghanistan ranks among the most vulnerable countries globally to climate change and disaster risks.

The country is also prone to earthquakes, with nearly 400 tremors recorded in the last three years, including significant quakes, such as the 6.3 magnitude in Herat Province in October last year.

The compounding effects of disasters in the country have exacerbated the already fragile situation in Afghanistan, the IFRC's report read.

These successive disasters have pushed more Afghans into poverty and heightened their vulnerability.

In addition, Afghanistan's economic crisis is widespread, with more than half of households experiencing an economic shock.

The country's economy is heavily dependent on foreign aid and remittances, which have declined significantly since the political change in 2021.

This has resulted in high levels of unemployment, challenging people's coping mechanisms and thwarting the already fragile economy's ability to adapt to shocks, the report read.

The IFRC said more than 85 percent of the country's population is now living below the poverty line.

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Suhail highlights bilateral talks with Chinese ambassador

KABUL (BNA): Mohammad Suhail Shaheen, Head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's Political Office in Doha, has announced a productive meeting with Cao Xiaolin, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Qatar.

In a post on his X account, Shaheen stated that the meeting took place yesterday, where the two officials engaged in discussions centered on strengthening bilateral relations, promoting good neighborly ties, and exploring trade and investment opportunities.

Additionally, in another post on his X account, Shaheen shared details of a meeting held with Ms. Katrina Ritz, Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegation in Afghanistan.

Their conversation covered topics of humanitarian assistance, health services, and climate change. According to Shaheen, both sides underscored the importance of expanding the ICRC's activities to meet the needs of the Afghan people.

Herat launches 78m afn customs projects

HERAT (BNA): The implementation of four strategic development projects, with a total investment of over 78 million Afghanis, has commenced at the Islam Qala border crossing in Herat.

These initiatives, aimed at enhancing customs infrastructure and trade facilitation, were inaugurated in a formal ceremony attended by key officials.

Mufti Abdul Mateen Saeed, Deputy Minister for Revenue and Customs at the Ministry of Finance, outlined the scope of the projects, which include the construction of four warehouses funded by national resources. He emphasized the government's commitment to completing these warehouses swiftly to provide improved facilities for traders and customs operators.

In his remarks, Mawlawi Hayatullah Mohajer Farahi, Acting Deputy Governor of Herat, stressed the importance of these projects in line with the Islamic Emirate's priorities for enhancing customs operations. He reiterated that advancing customs systems remains a central objective, noting that significant measures have already been undertaken toward this goal.

Furthermore, Mawlawi Mohammad Hamed Ahmad, Director of Herat Customs, expressed confidence that the completion of these warehouses would effectively resolve many of the logistical and operational challenges currently facing the Islam Qala customs facility.



Afghanistan received \$6.7 billion in humanitarian aid over 3 years

KABUL (TOLOnews): The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Afghanistan has reported that Afghanistan has received \$6.7 billion in humanitarian aid over the past three years.

The OCHA report also said that aid was provided to 12 million people in Afghanistan in the first six months of this year.

According to OCHA data, the peak of aid to Afghanistan was in 2022, amounting to approximately \$3.3 billion, while in 2023, the number of people in need reached 29.2 million.

The organization has warned that a reduction in aid to Afghanistan could endanger progress and lead to increased food insecurity and poverty.

The report said: "Afghanistan has received approximately US\$6.7 billion in humanitarian funding since the Taliban takeover on 15 August 2021, with resources peaking at nearly \$3.3 billion in 2022. This support coincided with record-high humanitarian needs following the transition – reaching an unprecedented 29.2 million in 2023."

Hamdullah Fitrat, Deputy Spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, told TOLOnews: "The aid provided by the United Nations and its related agencies is handed over directly to organizations, which then distribute it. The Afghan government does not intervene in this aid. Distribution is conducted independently through international organizations."

At the same time, some residents of Kabul say they are in greater need of humanitarian assistance as winter approaches.

Khan Zada, a Kabul resident, said: "There is no work. I come here sometimes earning 50 afghani, sometimes 40 afghani, and sometimes nothing at all, then go home."

Mohammad Shafi, another Kabul resident, said: "I live in a rental house. This cart is my livelihood. God is the provider, and this cart is my second source. I have seven family members to feed, and I make 150, 160, or 170 afghani a day."

The Ministry of Economy also considers the continuation of aid crucial to improving the economic situation of families in the current conditions, but it emphasizes that aid should focus more on creating employment opportunities for citizens.

Abdul Latif Nazari, Deputy Minister of Economy, told TOLOnews: "Humanitarian aid and support from the international community are essential for the people of Afghanistan. We thank all the donor organizations. Our request is that aid be directed toward developmental and infrastructure projects to structurally eliminate poverty."

Previously, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Program (WFP) expressed concern over the economic crisis in 22 countries, including Afghanistan, in a joint report.

UNAMA to make useful decisions about Afghanistan at summit

KABUL (Ariana News): Roza Otunbayeva, head of UNAMA, said in a meeting with officials of Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency that UNAMA will try to make useful decisions about Afghanistan at the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference.

The conference is scheduled to start on Monday and will be held in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan.

She also said the conference will provide the basis for the participation of an Afghan delegation at similar international conferences in the future.

According to Otunbayeva, UNAMA is trying to attract international aid for Afghanistan.

Mutiul Haq Khals, the Director General of the National Environmental Protection Agency, said at the meeting that people are suffering from the negative effects of climate change and the issue should be looked at from a human point of view and not politicized.

He said if joint steps are taken in this field, the grounds for practical measures will be provided.

Climate change is having a significant impact on Afghanistan, resulting in a range of serious challenges.

One of the most immediate and pressing consequences of the climate crisis in Afghanistan is its impact on food security across the country.

With the country's economy reliant on agricultural production, particularly rain-fed agriculture, changes in precipitation patterns and extreme weather events have an extremely detrimental effect to the health of soil, crops and livestock.

Climate change has made erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, unseasonal frosts and flash floods increasingly common in Afghanistan and Central Asia, wreaking havoc on food production.

These deficits mean rural producers are unable to feed their families from their land - deficits that are also driving up market prices.

Humanitarian concerns have been raised repeatedly over Afghanistan being left out of United Nations climate negotiations and meetings.

The country has been left out of such meetings since the Islamic Emirate regained power in 2021.



NEPA meeting addresses climate challenges, says Mati-ul-Haq

KABUL (BNA): The head of the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) Mawlawi Mati-ul-Haq Khalis highlighted the historical context of environmental pollution, tracing its origins to the Industrial Revolution and emphasizing that developed nations are the primary contributors to climate change, significantly impacting developing countries. He noted that the extensive environmental degradation in Afghanistan will require years of concerted effort to restore.

Khalis also pointed out the detrimental effects of prolonged conflicts in the region, stating that the use of explosives and heavy weaponry has severely compromised both environmental health and the well-being of society. He cited alarming reports of increased physical and mental disabilities among children, along with high early mortality rates, attributing these issues to environmental degradation exacerbated by warfare.

The head of the department raised concerns about rising air pollution during the winter months, referring to it as a "silent enemy" that poses a growing threat to public health. He urged the necessity of public awareness campaigns focused on environmental protection and commended the efforts of educated and volunteer groups contributing to this cause.

Expressing his apprehension over the general lack of awareness regarding environmental pollution, Khalis advocated for each family to appoint a volunteer responsible for educating their members about environmental issues. He assured attendees of his agency's full support for volunteer groups, emphasizing their readiness to assist in any necessary capacity.





ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkiye, Mr. Irfan Neziroglu, called on Acting President, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

KP govt decides to appoint additional judges

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has decided to appoint additional judges in district judiciary directing law department to complete necessary homework in consultation with the judiciary.

He was chairing a progress review meeting of Board of Revenue here on Tuesday. Provincial Minister for Revenue, Nazir Abbasi, Senior Member of Board of Revenue, Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah and other senior officers of Board of Revenue attended the meeting. The decision was taken to reduce backlog of cases related to land disputes and ensure their timely disposal. The meeting decided that additional judges would be appointed in those districts where pendency of estate related cases is high.

The CM also decided to introduce GIS technology for identification of land ownership. He also directed speedy completion of the ongoing computerization of land record emphasizing that computerization of land records and GIS mapping are the only solutions to land disputes. He also directed that Service Delivery Centers should be made operational immediately in all districts where land record computerization has been

completed and added that government would provide all necessary resources for the purpose on a priority basis. Chief Minister was also briefed on reform initiatives taken in Board of Revenue during last six months and was told the progress being made on implementation of decisions and directives issued in cabinet meetings.

Govt plans to polarize public offices: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has planned to solarize all public sector buildings including hospitals, schools, colleges, universities, prisons, police stations, and other government offices alongside the solarization of tube wells and street lights with the aim to ensure availability of un-interrupted electricity to the public offices at reduced cost.

A meeting of the committee constituted for solarization of government buildings was held here at Chief Minister's Secretariat with Chief Minister Ali Amin Kham Gandapur in the chair to review progress so far made to practically launch the initiative. The meeting was attended by Advisor to Chief Minister for Finance, Muzammil Aslam and other members of the committee. The forum was briefed in detail on power required for government buildings

and proposed action plan for the implementation of solarization project.

The forum was informed that data collection regarding public sector offices and energy required for them is underway. However, so far received data, some 13,000 units have made their entries, which would require a solar system with a capacity of about 73 MW for public buildings. The solarization of these units is expected to produce 92 million units of solar electricity annually. It was further told that solarization project for government buildings will be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 10 billion. Upon completion, the project would result in annual savings of around 2 billion in electricity bills for the provincial government.

The Chief Minister emphasized the need to finalize the project promptly and directed the committee to complete all necessary requirements for the project's launch within a week. He also directed that remaining task for implementation of the project be completed in the shortest possible time. Additionally, he directed for the early launch of project for solarization of Masajid and madaris across the province. Under this initiative, 7,000 Masajid and 3,000 madaris would be converted to solar energy across the province.

Youth to make Pakistan prosperous country

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Pakistan's youth with its hard work, resilience, and determination would make it a developed and prosperous country.

Addressing the National Youth Summit as chief guest here, he said that Pakistan was founded on the dream of Allama Iqbal, which turned into reality under the leadership of Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The minister said that the youth of the subcontinent gained freedom by supporting the Qaid-e-Azam in the struggle for freedom.

"Through the resolve and determination of the Muslim youth of the subcontinent we achieved the goal of freedom ", he maintained. The youth carried the message of the Qaid-e-Azam to every nook and cranny of the subcontinent and helped create awareness among the Muslims about the importance of Pakistan. He said was an honour to address the best and most talented youth of Pakistan present at the event. He said Pakistan had abundance of talented youth who were playing an important role in the development of the country.

Young people were representing Pakistan on every forum, he said adding that

they could shape the world scenario in a unique way. He said there was a need for a lot of work as far as climate change was concerned. "We have suffered many losses due to adverse effects of climate change in the shape of floods and cyclones", he remarked.

He expressed the hope that Pakistani youth would play their role in mitigating the effects of climate change. He said Pakistan's youth were striving for gender equality, better health facilities, and the overall well-being of the people of the country and region. He said local youth were working in the digital field and Pakistani start-ups were considered the best in the world.

He said empowering the youth was the need of the hour and the government was taking various steps to empower the youth. He said that all over the world Pakistani youth was known for resilience and innovation. He said it was the youth of this country that created a separate state for Muslims and they will save this country and take it to great heights. Pakistani youth, he opined not only have the potential but can reshape the future of the world as we are moving towards a common shared future of humanity.

Appreciating the young girls in the summit, he said it was not easy to make a mark as a female as there were many impediments in the way. He said still there was a need for more efforts

to ensure gender equality so that girls could also play a more effective role in the nation-building process. He said that the government was fully aware and willing to support the Pakistani youth working in the digital field. He said there was a need to make the National Youth Council more active and give youth a role in the decision-making and policy-making process.

The government was working day and night for the strengthening of the country's economy, Attaullah Tarar said. He said following the Israeli attack on Gaza, Pakistan gave admission to 200 Palestinian medical students in Pakistani institutions. He said Israel was committing genocide of armless Palestinians, and its forces were involved in war crimes.

The United Nations should take action to stop the genocide of Palestinians and the international community must force Israel to halt its invasion. He remarked that Pakistan wanted the restoration of the pre-1967 borders and a free Palestinian state. He said that youth can play a key role in ensuring a peaceful world. The minister said those who were silent over the Palestinian genocide were partners in the war crimes being committed by the Israeli forces. He said that youth in Gaza and the West Bank must have equal opportunities like the youth world over.

Chinese and Pakistan Airforces drills completed

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Indus Shield-Chinese, a bilateral module of Exercise Indus Shield 2024, being conducted separately between Chinese and Pakistan Airforces has concluded at an operational air base of Pakistan Air Force. The exercise witnessed participation from People's Liberation Army Air Force of China, with its personnel and high-tech equipment comprising AESA Radar and Long Range BVR Equipped J-16 & J-10C fighter aircraft, Lethal HQ-22 Surface to Air Defence system, Potent Airborne Electronic Warfare YTG-9 Platform, alongside KJ-500 Airborne Early Warning system pitched against PAF's J-10C and JF-17 Block-III fighter jets simulating contemporary aerial combat scenarios.

The successful execution of such a large-scale exercise demonstrates Pakistan Air Force's joint operational readiness among allied nations while addressing contemporary security challenges. Aimed at validating interoperability between China and Pakistan in the face of contemporary air combat challenges and by simulating various military tactics in near realistic multi domain operations training environment, Indus Shield-Chinese has maximized the warfighting potential of both the participating air forces.

2 foreigners injured in firing

F.P. Report

KARACHI: A security guard opened fire in a factory in SITE area of the city on Tuesday injuring two foreign nationals. "The security guard escaped from the scene after shooting," police said. "Both persons who sustained injuries in firing have been shifted to a private hospital for medical attendance," officials said. Sindh's home minister Zia Lanjar has summoned detailed report of the incident in industrial area from the DIG-South.

The minister has directed for a probe into the incident to unveil the facts of the case. He also directed to the official to keep him in the loop about the details of the inquiry report and police action over it. Meanwhile, Sindh Home Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar today ordered an immediate arrest of the security guard involved in a dispute with foreign delegates at Site A Police Station.

According to a statement issued from the Sindh Home Ministry, Mr Lanjar emphasized the need for an audit of security companies providing protection to Chinese experts and foreign nationals to assess their performance and security arrangements.

PHC extends status quo against schemes

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed has extended status quo against the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's block and umbrella schemes till 19th November, on Tuesday.

The counsel Sultan Muhammad Khan advocate for opposition leader Dr. Abdullah, appeared before the court, while Additional Advocate General represented the provincial government. The Additional Advocate General requested for more time, which the

court granted, adjourning the hearing until November 19 and extending the stay order.

The opposition members had approached the Peshawar High Court against the provincial government's umbrella schemes and block allocation, leading to the court's initial stay order against the government's use of funds.

PHC grants protective bails: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has granted protective bail to Special Assistant Musaddiq Abbasi till 14th November, while withdrawing a petition filed against Naem Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman lawyer Haider Panjutha, Tuesday.

PHC's divisional bench comprising of Justice S M Attique Shah and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah heard the petition filed by Musaddiq Abbasi. Abbasi's lawyer, Alam Khan Adezai, informed the court that the petitioner wanted to appear in relevant courts in Islamabad, as cases were registered against him after protesting ¹.

The court approved Abbasi's protective bail until November 14 and directed him to appear in the relevant courts. Similarly, the petition filed against Naem Haider Panjutha, Imran Khan's lawyer, was withdrawn as the petitioner failed to appear in court.

Israeli strikes in Gaza leave dozens dead

CAIRO/QABATIYAH (AFP): Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip and West Bank have resulted in significant casualties, as conflict in the region intensifies. Since Monday night, at least 30 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, with strikes leveling buildings and tightening sieges on northern areas of the enclave, according to Palestinian media and medical sources.

In Beit Lahya, northern Gaza, two houses were heavily damaged in an airstrike, killing at least 20 people late on Monday, as reported by WAFA and

Hamas-linked media. The Gaza health ministry has not immediately verified this toll. Additionally, four people were reported dead in the central town of Al-Zawayda around midnight.

Meanwhile, six more Palestinians died in separate airstrikes on Gaza City and Deir Al-Balah. The Israeli military claimed that its forces had "eliminated terrorists" in central Gaza and Jabalia and uncovered weapons and explosives in the southern area of Rafah, where it had also dismantled "terrorist infrastructure." Reports from the ground suggest that Israel's

tactics aim to clear northern Gaza towns and refugee camps to establish buffer zones, a strategy Israel says has successfully neutralized hundreds of Palestinian fighters in Jabalia over the past month.

More than 43,300 Palestinians have died in Gaza over a year of fighting, and much of the region has been devastated. The conflict initially erupted following Hamas-led attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, which killed around 1,200 Israelis and resulted in 251 hostages being taken to Gaza.



KARACHI: Policemen busy in investigation at a factory where two Chinese nationals were allegedly shot.

JI demands full court to hear 26th amend petition

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Hafiz Naemur Rehman, has sharply criticized the privatization policies and alleged corruption surrounding national institutions, including Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and K-Electric.

In a press conference held at Noor Haq Institute, he demanded that a full court bench hear Jamaat-e-Islami's petition against the 26th Constitutional Amendment in the Supreme Court, claiming the amendment undermines the 1973 Constitution and threatens Pakistan's democracy. Hafiz Naemur Rehman stated that Jamaat-e-Islami had filed a petition challenging the 26th Amendment, emphasizing that the Assembly formed under Form 47 does not have the authority to alter the foundational structure of the Constitution.

He argued that the amendment, particularly in relation to judicial reforms, has politicized the judiciary and eroded the independence of Pakistan's courts. He condemned the alleged corruption involved in the recent changes to the judicial system, which, according to him, have been manipulated to gain political leverage.

Addressing the issue of privatization, Rehman condemned the sale of national assets, particularly PIA and K-Electric, as "a national tragedy." He questioned the motives behind Nawaz Sharif's suggestion for his daughter to purchase and run PIA under the Punjab government and Ali Amin Gandapur's proposal to control the airline under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government. He accused the ruling elites of squandering public resources and exploiting national assets for personal gain.

"Who sank the PIA fleet in 40 years? Who destroyed the national institutions?" he asked, referring to the previous governments' inability to reform and revitalize state-owned enterprises. He pointed out that despite claims by PTI to restore national institutions, the party failed to address the problems of PIA and Pakistan Steel Mills during its time in power. Rehman emphasized that the responsibility of running national institutions lies with the government.

Pak Navy ship Zulfiqar visits Port Djibouti

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship ZULFIQAR visited port Djibouti during deployment on Regional Maritime Security Patrol. Upon arrival at port, PN Ship was received by officials of Djibouti Navy.

The Commanding Officer of PNS ZULFIQAR called on senior military leadership and explored avenues for further collaboration. Navy to Navy engagements between Pakistan and Djibouti have been the cornerstone of diplomatic relations between both brotherly countries. During Port Call, crew of PNS ZULFIQAR also had professionally rewarding interactions with Djibouti Navy and Coast Guards.

Pakistan and Djibouti enjoy close and cordial relations based on mutual respect and understanding. Both the countries also have numerous common interests in maritime arena. The Ambassadors, Defence Attaches, Senior Government and Military Leadership of Djibouti and



prominent members of local and Pakistani community also visited the ship. Upon departure, PNS ZULFIQAR conducted Passage Exercise with Djibouti Coast Guards to enhance inter-operability.

Meanwhile, the participants of the 26th National Security Workshop, led by Director General Institute of Strategic Studies and Research Analysis (ISSRA) Major General Muhammad Raza Aizad, visited Naval Headquarters.

The workshop participants received a briefing on contemporary maritime challenges and Pakistan Navy's response options, including PN's contributions to maritime awareness and socio-economic devel-

opment of coastal communities. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf also engaged with the participants.

In his address, the Naval Chief elaborated on issues related to maritime security and Pakistan's blue economy potential. He emphasized on the efforts to enhance maritime and coastal security through Regional Maritime Security Patrols and Coastal Security & Harbour Defence initiatives. The visiting delegation, comprising parliamentarians, politicians, bureaucrats, Armed Forces officers, and representatives from civil society, highly appreciated the Pakistan Navy's efforts and offered valuable suggestions.

Minister vows to maintain positive momentum of macroeconomic stability

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, highlighting the significant signs of macroeconomic recovery in national economy, on Tuesday vowed that we are seeing positive momentum and we have to take it forward for sustainable economic stability.

The finance minister expressed the views while addressing the launching ceremony of Electronic Mortgage Register by Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and later talking to media persons on the occasion. The new unified digital mortgage servicing platform of the SECP is an advancement in the automation of mortgage registration, modification, and termination processes and it is aimed at reducing transaction time, lowering cost and accelerating service delivery besides



ensuring access to accurate and up to date mortgage information to lending financial institutions.

The minister while addressing the ceremony said, "With signs of macroeconomic recovery, including interest

rates around KIBOR at 13% and the Pakistan Stock Exchange gaining over 1,000 points, we are seeing positive momentum. However, there is no room for complacency." He emphasized the importance of the development within the broader context of Pakistan's economic stability and said, "Our goal is to establish permanence in macroeconomic stability, and this platform's end-to-end digitalization will lead to shorter turnaround times, benefiting the overall economy."

He elaborated that successful digitalization was not just about technology induction but it required the commitment of people, capacity building and streamlined processes. The digitalization reduces the human intervention and leads to greater transparency and better facilitation to the people concerned, he said and added that government was working on digitalization of Federal Board of Revenue that would help curtailing

the corruption and extend better facilities to tax payers.

Sharing insights from recent international engagements in Washington, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, the Senator Aurangzeb said that our multilateral and bilateral partners were ready and willing to support the Pakistan in efforts of economic stabilization. "With billions in investments anticipated multilaterally and bilaterally, we must be careful about what we regulate and how we regulate. Our aim is to encourage investment without regulatory overreach," he noted.

The finance minister while responding to media queries regarding climate financing informed that positive meetings were ongoing with multilateral partners and concrete results were expected soon. He also discussed potential improvements in Pakistan's credit ratings to 'single B' by S&P and Moody's and described that rating agencies look for macro-

economic stability and it might take three to four months.

Earlier, SECP Chairman Akif Saeed, in his address, highlighted the platform's efficiency and potential impact on transparency and said that servicing of mortgages become easier for both lenders and borrowers. He said that SECP was planning to expand the digital capability across corporate registration and end-to-end solutions while an AI model was also under development which will further enhance processing speed and accuracy.

The new mortgage servicing platform is part of SECP's ongoing mission to support a business-friendly environment in Pakistan, enhancing ease of doing business (EODB) and reducing administrative delays to attract local and foreign investment, ultimately contributing to macroeconomic stability, he said. The EMR launch ceremony marking a signifi-

cant move of SECP towards a fully digitalized financial ecosystem aimed at fostering economic transformation was also attended by Chairman SECP Policy Board, Mehmoond Mandviwala, former governor SBP Shamshad Akhtar, finance sector members, and media representatives.

Earlier, the Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, also inaugurated Southern Regional Office of Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) in Karachi. The finance minister along with Chairman SECP Akif Saeed and other senior official cut the ribbon and unveiled the plaque to inaugurate the SECP regional office at Karachi. He visited different sections of the newly inaugurated office and directed to make the regional office fully functional at the earliest so that maximum facilities could be provided to the business community. He also assured his all-out support in the regard.