

COAS meets Saudi prince

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman received Pakistani Army Chief General Asim Munir in Riyadh on Wednesday. During the reception, Saudi-Pakistani relations and opportunities to develop them were reviewed. A number of issues of common interest were also discussed. The meeting was attended by Saudi Minister of Defense Prince Khalid bin Salman and other officials. — Agencies



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Trump retakes power

Donald wins election but ‘classless’ Harris fails to concede

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump was elected the 47th president of the United States on Wednesday, an extraordinary comeback for a former president who refused to accept defeat four years ago, sparked a violent insurrection at the US Capitol, was convicted of felony charges and survived two assassination attempts.

With a win in Wisconsin, Trump cleared the 270 electoral votes needed to clinch the presidency. The victory validates his bare-knuckle approach to politics. He attacked his Democratic rival, Kamala Harris, in deeply personal – often misogynistic and racist – terms as he pushed an apocalyptic picture of a country overrun by violent migrants. The coarse rhetoric, paired with an image of hypermasculinity, resonated with angry voters – particularly men – in a deeply polarized nation.

As president, he’s vowed to pursue an agenda centered on dramatically reshaping the federal government and pursuing retribution against his perceived enemies. Speaking to his supporters Wednesday morning, Trump claimed he had won “an unprecedented and powerful mandate.” The results cap a historically tumultuous and competitive election season that included two assassination attempts targeting Trump and a shift to a new Democratic nominee just a month before the party’s convention. Trump will inherit a range of challenges when he assumes office on Jan. 20, including heightened political polarization and global crises that are testing America’s influence abroad.

His win against Harris, the first woman of color to lead a major party ticket, marks the second time he has defeated a female rival in a general election. Harris, the current vice president, rose to the top of the ticket after President Joe Biden exited the race amid alarm about his advanced age. Despite an initial



surge of energy around her campaign, she struggled during a compressed timeline to convince disillusioned voters that she represented a break from an unpopular administration. Trump is the first former president to return to power since Grover Cleveland regained the White House in the 1892 election. He is the first person convicted of a felony to be elected president and, at 78, is the oldest person elected to the office. His vice president, 40-year-old Ohio Sen. JD Vance, will become the highest-ranking member of the millennial generation in the US government.

There will be far fewer checks on Trump when he returns to the White House. He has plans to swiftly enact a sweeping agenda that would transform nearly every aspect of American government. His GOP critics in Congress have largely been defeated or retired. Federal courts are now filled with judges he appointed. The US Supreme Court, which includes three Trump-appointed justices, issued a ruling earlier this year affording presidents

broad immunity from prosecution.

Trump’s language and behavior during the campaign sparked growing warnings from Democrats and some Republicans about shocks to democracy that his return to power would bring. He repeatedly praised strongman leaders, warned that he would deploy the military to target political opponents he labeled the “enemy from within,” threatened to take action against news organizations for unfavorable coverage and suggested suspending the Constitution. Some who served in his first White House, including Vice President Mike Pence and John Kelly, Trump’s longest-serving chief of staff, either declined to endorse him or issued dire public warnings about his return to the presidency.

While Harris focused much of her initial message around themes of joy, Trump channeled a powerful sense of anger and resentment among voters. He seized on frustrations over high prices and fears about crime and migrants who illegally entered the country on Biden’s watch. He also highlighted wars in the Middle

East and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine to cast Democrats as presiding over – and encouraging – a world in chaos.

It was a formula Trump perfected in 2016, when he cast himself as the only person who could fix the country’s problems, often borrowing language from dictators. “In 2016, I declared I am your voice. Today I add: I am your warrior. I am your justice. And for those who have been wronged and betrayed, I am your retribution,” he said in March 2023.

This campaign often veered into the absurd, with Trump amplifying bizarre and disproven rumors that migrants were stealing and eating pet cats and dogs in an Ohio town. At one point, he kicked off a rally with a detailed story about the legendary golfer Arnold Palmer in which he praised his genitalia. But perhaps the defining moment came in July when a gunman opened fire at a Trump rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. A bullet grazed Trump’s ear and killed one of his supporters. His face streaked with blood, Trump stood and raised his fist in the air, shouting “Fight! Fight! Fight!” Weeks later, a second assassination attempt was thwarted after a Secret Service agent spotted the barrel of a gun poking through the greenery while Trump was playing golf.

Trump’s return to the White House seemed unlikely when he left Washington in early 2021 as a diminished figure whose lies about his defeat sparked a violent insurrection at the US Capitol. He was so isolated at the time that few outside of his family bothered to attend the send-off he organized for himself at Andrews Air Force Base, complete with a 21-gun salute. Democrats who controlled the US House quickly impeached him for his role in the insurrection, making him the only president to be impeached twice. He was acquitted by the US Senate, where many Republicans argued that

he no longer posed a threat because he had left office.

But from his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, Trump – aided by some elected Republicans – worked to maintain his political relevance. Rep. Kevin McCarthy, the California Republican who at the time led his party in the US House, visited Trump soon after he left office, essentially validating his continued role in the party. As the 2022 midterm election approached, Trump used the power of his endorsement to assert himself as the unquestioned leader of the party. His preferred candidates almost always won their primaries, but some went on to defeat in elections that Republicans viewed as within their grasp. Those disappointing results were driven in part by a backlash to the US Supreme Court ruling that revoked a woman’s constitutional right to an abortion, a decision that was aided by Trump-appointed justices. The midterm election prompted questions within the GOP about whether Trump should remain the party’s leader.

But if Trump’s future was in doubt, that changed in 2023 when he faced a wave of state and federal indictments for his role in the insurrection, his handling of classified information and election interference. He used the charges to portray himself as the victim of an overreaching government, an argument that resonated with a GOP base that was increasingly skeptical – if not outright hostile – to institutions and established power structures. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who challenged Trump for the Republican nomination, lamented that the indictments “sucked out all the oxygen” from this year’s GOP primary. Trump easily captured his party’s nomination without ever participating in a debate against DeSantis or other GOP candidates.

With Trump dominating the Republican contest, a New York jury

found him guilty in May of 34 felony charges in a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 election through a hush money payment to a porn actor who said the two had sex. He faces sentencing later this month, though his victory poses serious questions about whether he will ever face punishment. He has also been found liable in two other New York civil cases: one for inflating his assets and another for sexually abusing advice columnist E. Jean Carroll in 1996.

Trump is subject to additional criminal charges in an election-interference case in Georgia that has become bogged down. On the federal level, he’s been indicted for his role in trying to overturn the results of the 2020 election and improperly handling classified material. When he becomes president on Jan. 20, Trump could appoint an attorney general who would erase the federal charges. As he prepares to return to the White House, Trump has vowed to swiftly enact a radical agenda that would transform nearly every aspect of American government. That includes plans to launch the largest deportation effort in the nation’s history, to use the Justice Department to punish his enemies, to dramatically expand the use of tariffs and to again pursue a zero-sum approach to foreign policy that threatens to upend longstanding foreign alliances, including the NATO pact.

When he arrived in Washington 2017, Trump knew little about the levers of federal power. His agenda was stymied by Congress and the courts, as well as senior staff members who took it upon themselves to serve as guardrails. This time, Trump has said he would surround himself with loyalists who will enact his agenda, no questions asked, and who will arrive with hundreds of draft executive orders, legislative proposals and in-depth policy papers in hand. — Arab News



GHIZER: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong during his visit to Chinese Embassy.

Completion of GB projects to usher in new era of development: Shehbaz

F.P. Report

GHIZER: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday emphasized the transformative potential of large-scale development projects in Gilgit-Baltistan, as their completion would bring a new era of development and prosperity in the region.

During his visit to Ghizer, PM Shehbaz Sharif laid the foundation stone for various development projects aimed at boosting the region’s infrastructure and energy capacity. He highlighted the importance of these initiatives to uplift Gilgit-Baltistan’s economy and shared his vision of leveraging the region’s tourism potential to bring prosperity to the area.

The prime minister, who was on a day-long visit to Gilgit-Baltistan, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to meet with the people of GB, recalling a visit to Ghizer in 2022 after a natural disaster. At that time, he had directed immediate reconstruction efforts, and today, he celebrated the fact that the affected families now have homes again. He noted that the government deposited Rs. 5 million as endowment fund for Qandeel, a young survivor of the tragedy, which has since grown to Rs. 6.7 million to meet her expenditure.

Addressing the region’s pressing challenges, PM Shehbaz acknowledged around 450MW shortage of electricity in Gilgit-Baltistan during winter season. To address this, he announced the initiation of two hydropower projects and pledged to establish a 100-megawatt solar project within a year under his supervision.

Additionally, the foundation stone for a Technical University, originally initiated by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, was laid, signaling further progress in local education. To support students, the prime minister promised a fund to assist students at Baltistan University and Karakorum University who are struggling with tuition costs.

He also directed federal ministers and officials to thoroughly assess and address local

PM visits Chinese embassy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday visited the Chinese Embassy to condemn the firing incident, in Karachi yesterday, in which Chinese nationals were injured and assured exemplary punishment to those involved in the incident. Talking to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, the prime minister said that he came to condemn the yesterday’s attack on Chinese nationals and to inquire after the health of those injured in the incident. The prime minister assured the Chinese ambassador that those responsible in the incident would be apprehended soon and would be awarded exemplary punishment, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He further informed the Chinese ambassador that he was personally supervising the process of arresting those involved in the incident and bringing them to justice. Moreover, he had directed to provide the best medical facilities to the Chinese citizens injured in the incident, he said, adding that it was a matter of satisfaction that the health of the injured Chinese nationals was improving. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Interior Mohsin Raza Naqvi and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi accompanied the prime minister. Prime Minister Sharif said that China was a long-standing friend of Pakistan and the attack on the Chinese nationals was a desperate attempt to damage Pakistan-China fraternal relations.

infrastructure and highway issues promptly. Emphasizing the potential for international employment, PM Shehbaz reiterated the federal government’s commitment to IT training, which would enable millions of young Pakistanis, including those from Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, to gain dignified employment abroad.

He also spoke of promoting Gilgit-Baltistan’s tourism sector during recent discussions in Qatar and Saudi Arabia, expressing optimism that global investment in tourism would boost the region’s prosperity. The prime minister paid homage to the sacrifices of Gilgit-Baltistan’s people, honoring their legacy of resilience and patriotism, and reaffirmed the government’s commitment to realizing their dreams for a prosperous future.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also announced the immediate power supply of 100 megawatts for Gilgit Baltistan and a Rs1 billion endowment fund for the universities students.

The prime minister, who chaired the special meeting of the GB cabinet during his daylong

visit here, expressed satisfaction and pleasure over the timely completion of Bubar Model Village, which he earlier inaugurated, to provide housing facility to the people affected by flood in 2022. He instructed the GB administration to establish educational institutions, playgrounds, power transmission and other facilities in Ghizer district.

Besides announcing an immediate power supply of 100 megawatts to GB, the prime minister announced Rs 1 billion merit-based endowment fund for the students of Baltistan University and Karakorum University. Prime Minister Shehbaz told the GB cabinet members that the federal government would establish Daanish Schools in GB, on the pattern of Punjab province. He said that his government was actively working for the uplift and welfare of the GB people. He recalled that while being Punjab chief minister, his government had given a Rs1 billion gift to uplift GB’s education sector. He said that the provincial governments’ cooperation with the federal government for the economic stability was significant.

Rescuers pull 30 bodies from a building in Lebanon

BARJA: Lebanese rescuers pulled 30 bodies out of the rubble after a late night Israeli strike on an apartment building in the town of Barja, Lebanon’s Civil Defense service said Wednesday as the Mideast was pressing on with no signs of abating.

It remained unclear if there were any survivors or bodies still trapped under the rubble following the Tuesday night airstrike, which came without warning. There was no statement from the Israeli military and the strike’s intended target also was unknown. Barja, a town just north of the port city of Sidon in central Lebanon, has not been regularly targeted so far in the conflict.

“Something pulled me hard, and then the explosion happened,” said Moussa Zahran, who was at home with his wife and son when the building was hit. He said he couldn’t see but started digging through the rubble until he found his wife and son – alive but injured – and pulled them out. Both are still in the hospital, he said. Another building resident, Muhyiddin Al-Qalaaji, said he was at work when the strike happened and heard the news from his wife who called him frantically.

“There are many dead and injured,” he said as he carried out what he could salvage of the family’s belongings on Wednesday

morning. Civil defense official Mostafa Danaj said some of the neighbors have reported there are still people missing. Israeli forces and the Hezbollah militant group have been clashing for more than a year, since Hezbollah started firing rockets across the border soon after the deadly Hamas-led attack on southern Israel sparked the ongoing war in Gaza in October last year.

The war on the Lebanese front has substantially escalated since mid-September, with Israel launching a massive aerial bombardment and ground invasion. On Wednesday, sirens blared across northern and central Israel, including in the populous metropolitan area of Tel Aviv, as Hezbollah launched 10 rockets toward Israel. Israel’s Magen David Adom rescue services said there were no reports of injuries.

A large portion of a rocket slammed into a parked car in the central Israeli city of Raanana. Rockets also struck an open area near Israel’s main airport, Israeli media reported, though the airport said flights were operating as normally. Israel’s Magen David Adom rescue services said there were no injuries. Israeli police said they arrested 40 people during protests on Tuesday night when the demonstrators blocked Israel’s main highway in Tel Aviv. — Arab News

NEPRA cuts power tariff

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday notified Rs 1.28 per unit reduction in power tariff in fuel cost adjustment (FCA) for month of September under monthly mechanism. The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) has sought 71 paisa reduction in power tariff for the said month, said a notification issue here.

The NEPRA conducted hearing on October 30 on the petition filed by the CPPA-G. Earlier, 86 paisa reduction in FCA was charged in August. The FCA of September would be 42 paisa less as compared with August. It would be applicable to all consumers except life line, prepaid and electric vehicle charging stations. It would also not be applicable to the consumers of K-Electric.

According to Neptra, this FCA reduction will apply to most consumer categories, except for lifeline consumers, domestic consumers using up to 300 units, electric vehicle charging stations, prepaid customers, and agricultural connections.

Neptra also confirmed that the adjustment will be effective for domestic users with Time of Use (ToU) meters, regardless of their consumption levels. The FCA is a mechanism that adjusts electricity tariffs based on the fuel costs incurred by power producers.

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, on Wednesday launched the third phase of the “Drug-Free Peshawar” program, under which 2,000 drug-addicts would be rehabilitated.

The provincial government has released substantial funds of Rs. 320 million for this purpose. Under this program, individuals suffering from drug addiction will be shifted to rehabilitation centers, where they would be provided with quality treatment and facilities.

Additionally, an extensive awareness campaign has also been launched in educational institutions aimed at educating the young generation about the devastating consequences of drugs addiction. As part of this awareness campaign, a seminar and awareness walk were held on Wednesday at the University of Peshawar, led by the Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur himself. Provincial cabinet members Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Muzammil Aslam, members of the National and Provincial Assemblies, government officials, heads of provincial universities, faculty members, religious scholars, and a large

number of students attended the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, the Chief Minister emphasized the provincial government’s zero-tolerance policy against drugs abuse, stating that ‘relevant departments and institutions have been directed to intensify actions against those involved in drug trafficking’. He urged the concerned departments to target the “big fish” and make them an example, regardless of their influence. He added that drug trafficking is a heinous crime deserving the strictest punishment.

“The aim of the whole this efforts is to make the provincial capital drug-free and to rehabilitate drug-addicted individuals, helping them to reintegrate into normal life”, he remarked and added that control rooms have also been established in both the Deputy Commissioner’s Office and the Chief Minister’s Secretariat to ensure that the program is implemented in an efficient and result oriented manner.

The Chief Minister outlined that in the first two phases of the program, 2,400 drug-addicted individuals were rehabilitated, including residents from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and even neighboring Afghanistan. He reiterated that the program will

continue similarly in the future, providing treatment to everyone without discrimination.

He also directed all other divisional commissioners to compile data on drug-addicts in their respective divisions; the provincial government will take steps for their rehabilitation as well. The Chief Minister pledged to make the province drug-free and to rehabilitate addicted individuals, aiming to transform them into valuable assets instead of burdens. He maintained that work on the Whistleblower Act is also in progress to combat corruption, which includes awarding a specific share to individuals providing information about undisclosed properties.

He termed the public as the government’s team and added that the government cannot progress without their support. A special portal has been created to register public complaints and ensure their resolution. Citizens are encouraged to submit their complaints on the Citizen Portal, proper action will be taken to address them, he said. The Chief Minister urged religious scholars, teachers, civil society, media, and public representatives to play their part in making this mission of the provincial government a success story.



Sindh cabinet orders reconduct of MDCAT test, approves Rs6.63bn for damaged roads, ordered

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a cabinet meeting, approved Rs6.63 billion for the construction of six damaged roads, approved Rs232.14 million for IBA Sukkur to reconduct MDCAT, approved the establishment of the Sindh Job Portal, directed the IT department to implement E-stamping within six months, and extended the contract period for teaching faculty members of Khairpur Medical College. The meeting was held at CM House and attended by provincial ministers, advisors, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, and concerned secretaries, according to a CM House statement issued today.

At the outset, the cabinet approved the decisions of the cabinet subcommittee headed by Minister of Energy Nasir Shah. Under the decisions, Rs 81.9 million were approved for the payment of salaries and other liabilities of the employees of the defunct Larkana Development Authority who have already been sent to the surplus pool. The cabinet approved Rs 68.043 million for the Jamshoro Electrification Programme, and Rs 4 million for the organisation of the Literary Conference at Frere Hall.

Repair of damaged roads: The CM approved Rs 6.63 billion to reconstruct eight roads damaged by the recent floods and

heavy rains. He allowed procurement for these projects on an emergency basis.

These roads include 9/1 to 3 km Johi to Chhini Road, five km Johi, Wahi Pandhi to Golo Faqir, nine km Baid to Mian Naseer Mohammad Kalhoro Road (district Dadu), 27 km Chamber to Mirwah via Snjhar Chang, 17.6 km Tando Allahyar, Tando Adam-Shahdadpur road, Distt Sanghar, 51 km Jhirk Mulakatiar Road to Nooriabad via Jhimpir Fly overbridge, over three km Sujawal city Carriage way.

MDCAT: The cabinet approved Rs232.14 million for the re-conduct of the MDCAT by IBA Sukkur, which will take place within the next six weeks. The Chief Minister directed the Health Department to establish Vigilance Committees in collaboration with the PMDC. Additionally, he instructed the Secretary of the Universities and Boards (U&Bs) to ensure that examination boards announce results at least one month before the MDCAT in the future, as mandated by the court.

The Chief Minister said that, in accordance with the court order, the test will be based on the syllabus that has already been taught in the province. The validation from the previous year will not be considered for this year. He directed the Health Department to guarantee the smooth conduct

of the revised MDCAT-24 with cooperation from Sukkur IBA University.

Job Portal: The cabinet approved the proposal from the Sindh Information Science and Technology Department, developed in collaboration with Sukkur IBA University, to establish the Sindh Job Portal (SJP). This centralised online platform is designed for provincial government job recruitment across Sindh, addressing inefficiencies in the current manual process. The SJP will provide a secure and user-friendly system for managing applications for positions ranging from grade 1 to 15.

The portal will feature automated application submissions, tracking capabilities, and real-time data analytics. It will also integrate seamlessly for applicants who have passed the Sindh Testing Service (STS) exams. Built on a scalable microservices architecture supported by AWS cloud technology, the SJP will include user-friendly interfaces, administrative tools, and robust security measures to protect user data.

Environmental Council: The provincial cabinet approved the establishment of the Sindh Environmental Protection Council under the Sindh Environmental Protection Act of 2014. The Council will consist of official and non-official members, totalling no more than 25, who will be appointed by the government for a

term of three years. The Chief Minister will serve as the chairperson or appoint another individual in that role, while the Minister in charge of the Environment Protection Department will act as vice-chairperson.

The Chief Minister noted that the Sindh government has implemented the Sindh Climate Change Policy, 2022 and has prepared an Implementation Framework and Action Plan. He added that the Climate Change Department is in the process of upgrading the Directorate General of Climate Change by recruiting additional staff.

E-Stamping: The cabinet was told that a Service Level Agreement between the Sindh Board of Revenue and the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) has been executed for the implementation, operation, and maintenance of the e-stamping system. This agreement is in effect for three years, from October 4, 2021, to October 3, 2024, at an annual service charge of Rs. 48 million.

The cabinet decided to extend the service period of the PITB for an additional six months, during which the provincial Information Technology Department will work on building its capacity to operate the e-stamping system. Integrated Health Services: The cabinet approved Rs425.713 million for salaries, non-salaries, and other liabilities

for Integrated Health Services (IHS) facilities, which the Health Department has taken over from private partners. The Chief Minister instructed the Health Department to form a committee to verify the claimed amounts.

Khairpur Medical College: The cabinet was told that 15 faculty members in Basic and Clinical Medical Sciences at Khairpur Medical College (KMC) are currently on contract, with their contracts set to expire in November 2024. The Chief Minister approved a six-month extension for these teaching faculty contracts and directed the Health Department to recruit additional faculty members through the Sindh Public Service Commission (SPSC) within the next six months.

It was noted that the positions for 64 teaching faculty members, including 28 in Basic Medical Sciences and 35 in Clinical Sciences, have been referred to the SPSC. Moreover, KMC has a working strength of 105 employees in grades BS-1 to BS-4, but only 48 are currently employed, leaving 57 positions vacant. The Chief Minister instructed the Health Department to proceed with recruiting the necessary employees after completing the required formalities. The cabinet was informed that filling these 57 vacant positions would incur a financial burden of Rs26.7 million.

Thatta Health Facilities: The cabinet was informed that the Health Department has outsourced 13 health facilities (five in district Sujawal and eight in district Thatta) to the Medical Emergency Resilience Foundation (MERF) through a competitive process. The contract, signed on March 19, 2015,

was for five years, during which the administrative and financial control of the five health facilities in district Sujawal was transferred back to the Health Department from the private partner.

The eight facilities in Thatta will be handed over to the Liaquat University of Health Sciences

(LUMHS) in Jamshoro, which has established its college in Thatta. To facilitate the reestablishment of the LUMHS teaching hospital, the cabinet has extended the contractual agreement with the current private partner for an additional six months, allowing time for the LUMHS to take over the facilities.

CONDOLENCE

THE ALL PAKISTAN NEWSPAPERS SOCIETY

expresses profound grief over the sad demise of

mother of

Mr. Shahab Zuberi

Chief Operating Officer, (Daily Business Recorder/Aaj Tv)

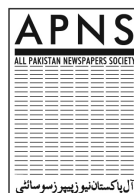
and

Finance Secretary APNS.

May Allah the Almighty rest her soul in eternal

peace and grant courage to the

family to bear the loss.



All Pakistan Newspapers Society

143 new dengue cases reported in Punjab

LAHORE (APP):The Punjab Health Department reported a sharp increase in dengue cases, with 143 new infections recorded across the province on Wednesday. Among the affected areas, Rawalpindi reported the highest number of cases at 117, followed by Lahore with eight, Chakwal with four, Faisalabad with three, and Attock, Multan and Sialkot with two each. Additionally, single cases were identified in Gujranwala, Sargodha, Sahiwal, Kasur and Vehari.

This surge brings the weekly total to 1175 new cases across Punjab, raising the province's total number of cases in 2024 to 6,420. In response, the Health Department assured the public that hospitals are fully stocked with necessary medicines and are prepared to handle the increased patient load.

Health officials have advised the public to maintain clean, dry environments to help curb the virus's spread. They emphasized the importance of taking preventive steps and requested public cooperation with health teams actively working in affected areas.

Minister distributes internship certificates

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari distributed certificates among 180 students, who completed the internship course here at the special ceremony, held at the Directorate General of Public Relations (DGPR).

Speaking at the event, Azma said that it was an honour for her that within a few months, 180 students had completed the internship course. These students had made significant contributions to the electronic media, social media and print media, which was highly commendable. My department's doors were open to students from all universities, she added.

رسم قلم

حاجی تبت شاہ کی بیوی، حاجی میر بادشاہ صاحب کی بھانجی، حاجی عبدالرزاق، شوکت، عارف اشفاق کی والدہ اور حاجی نیاز بادشاہ و اسلام بادشاہ کی چابی کا نماز جنازہ بروز منگل ادا کر دیا گیا۔
مرحومہ کی رسم قلم آج بروز جمعرات کو انکی رہائش گاہ، گھر نمبر 5، جی نمبر 1، سیکٹر H2، فیئر 2، حیات آباد میں ادا کی جائیگی۔

CM introduces special reward package for wheat farmers

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has introduced a special historic reward package for the wheat farmers, under which 1,000 tractors worth billions of rupees would be given for cultivating wheat on 25 acres and more area while on 12.5 to 25 acres of wheat cultivation 1,000 laser land leveler

would be provided to farmers through a transparent balloting.

Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani shared this information while presiding over the wheat cultivation meeting at the Commissioner's Office, Lahore. While giving a briefing, the minister was told that

this year, the target of wheat cultivation in Lahore division has been set at 133,000 acres and to achieving it all resources and means are being used. Facilitation is being provided to the farmers as per wheat action plan. Special teams are monitoring with the support of district administration for supply of quality fertilizers, seeds and

pesticides in the market. Mega farmer gathering and exhibition plots are being prepared to guide the farmers. Regular meetings of divisional and district committees are being held. Apart from this, linkages with Agriculture and Irrigation Department have been further improved to ensure water supply for wheat crop.

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Please be informed that our Islamic Banking branch, located at 1st Floor, Al-Haj Tower 2, Phase 3, Chowk Gulabad, Jamrud Road, Peshawar, will be shifting to the below-mentioned address from **December 13, 2024**:

Plot No. 6, Ground, First & Second Floor, Bilal Market, Sector D-1, Phase 1, Hayatabad, Peshawar.

For further information, please contact:
Branch Manager: 0313-5220313
Branch Operations Manager: 0333-9112585

تصحیح

مؤرخہ 02/11/2024 کے اخبارات میں حکم معدنیات کے شانے شدہ اشتہار برائے نیلام عام زیر نمبر **INF (P) 2904/24** میں درج ذیل تصحیح درج کی جائے۔

"ذکورہ اشتہار کے متن نمبر 6 میں ہیکڑنگس 20% کے بجائے 2% پڑھا جائے۔"

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INF(P)2948/24

PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

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OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A PART OF PAA'S PROFESSIONAL TEAM
SITUATION VACANT NOTICE NO. 06/2024

Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) requires services of qualified individuals to fill the following vacant posts **on Contract basis** where selection will be made purely on suitability and merit:-

Post	No. of Seats	Prescribed Qualification	Quota & Pay	Mode of Appointment	Age Limit
Sr. Deputy Director Medical Services (EG-04)	Five (05)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FCPS Internal Medicine / ER Medicine / Cardiology with minimum three (03) years post-qualification experience. OR MCPS in Internal Medicine / ER Medicine / Post-Graduation Certification in Emergency Medicine (ER) / MRCEM with minimum five (05) years of post-qualification experience. Candidates must be registered with PMDC / PMC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merit-01 KPK-01 Punjab-02 Sindh-(R)-01 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Three (03) Years (Extendable) Lump Sum Pay Package shall be offered equivalent to Gross Pay of Rs.276,378/- per month with 05% annual increment. (Negotiable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum 50 years of age (including all age relaxations)
Sr. Assistant Director Medical Services (EG-02)	Five (05)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MBBS from an HEC recognized University with Minimum five (05) years of post-qualification experience preferably in emergency medicine / cardiology / internal medicine Candidates must be registered with PMDC / PMC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merit-01 KPK-01 Punjab-01 Bal-02 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Three (03) Years (Extendable) Lump Sum Pay Package shall be offered equivalent to Gross Pay of Rs.218,545/- per month with 05% annual increment. (Negotiable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum 45 years of age (including all age relaxations)

Application Procedure:

- Interested candidates are required to fill & submit Online Job Application Form available at <https://paa.gov.pk> within fifteen days from the date of this advertisement.
- Candidates will be required to upload scanned copies of certificate / degree of the required qualification mentioned above and CNIC while applying for the job.
- In case a candidate does not upload the above documents with the online application form, his/her application will be rejected.
- All the interested candidates must read the Terms of Reference (TOR) mentioned in this advertisement before applying for the post.

SR. ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR HR (TM)
HEADQUARTERS PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY,
TERMINAL-I, JINNAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KARACHI. TEL: 021-99072067-8



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC HEALTH ENGG: DIVISION TRIBAL DISTRICT BAJAUR Email: phe.bjr@gmail.com, Ph: 0942-220012

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING SINGLE-STAGE SINGLE ENVELOP BIDDING PROCEDURE

PHE Division Tribal District Bajaur, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites Electronic Bids from the Eligible Firms/Contractors having specialization code CE-09 in light of rule 6(2)(a) "Single Stage, Single Envelop" procedures of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (KPPRA) rules 2014, registered as an active taxpayer with FBR and KPRA for the following works.

S. No.	Name of Scheme	Estimated Cost (in Millions)	Earnest Money with Stamp Duty (Rs.)	Bidding Entry Fee 0.03% (Rs.)
CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS IN VARIOUS VILLAGE COUNCILS (VCs) OF PK-21 UNDER 'DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE' ADP#: 978/240311 (2024-25) (PACKAGE-I, II & III)				
1	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC YOUSAF ABAD KHAR.	6.270	144,150	1890
2	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC BATAI ALIZAI KHAR.	6.270	144,150	1890
3	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC CHINAGAL.	6.270	144,150	1890
4	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC KOKA.	6.360	145,950	1910
5	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC MANDAL.	6.360	145,950	1910
6	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC KUALA TANGAL.	6.590	150,550	1980
7	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC MANO DEHRAL.	6.590	150,550	1980
8	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC GARDAL.	6.590	150,550	1980
9	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC SIKANDARO.	6.490	148,550	1950
10	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC HAYATAL.	6.490	148,550	1950
11	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS VC SERI MIR KHAN.	6.490	148,550	1950
12	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC GHAZI BABA.	6.440	147,550	1940
13	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC NARANJ.	6.440	147,550	1940
14	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT ARANG & SURROUNDING AREA.	6.440	147,550	1940
15	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC CHORAL.	6.510	148,950	1960
16	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC BADO BAGH ARANG.	6.510	148,950	1960
17	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC MATAKO & SURROUNDING AREA.	6.510	148,950	1960
18	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS VC GHAR SHAMOZAI.	6.510	148,950	1960
19	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC BAR TARGHO.	6.510	148,950	1960
20	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS VC NAZAR MENA.	6.510	148,950	1960
21	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC MAIMOOL.	6.750	153,750	2030
22	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC ASIL TARGHAO.	6.750	153,750	2030
23	CONSTRUCTION OF PCC STREET PAVEMENT, DRAINS, AND CULVERTS AT VC MORDARA & SURROUNDING AREAS.	6.750	153,750	2030

TERMS & CONDITIONS:-

- Bid Solicitation Documents including instructions to Bidder can be obtained from the office of the undersigned upto one day prior to the opening date.
- A pre-bid meeting will be held on **20-11-2024 at 02:00 PM** in the office of the undersigned.
- Last Date & Time of Submission of the bid is **26-11-2024 at 12:00 PM**, which will be opened on the same day at **12:30 PM** in the presence of the Contractors or their authorized representative who opt to be present.
- The Bid Security (in original), Additional Security (in original), and detail rate analysis shall be submitted as per KPPRA Notification No. S.R.O.(14)/Vol: 1-24/2021-22/6058-71 Dated Peshawar, the May 10th, 2022, along with the bidding documents in a sealed envelope before the designated closing time of the Bid submission to the office of the undersigned.
- Non-refundable bidding entry fee @ 0.03% of the estimated cost must also be submitted/furnished with bids in the shape of separate call deposit (in original) in the name of the Executive Engineer.
- Each bidder must attach photocopies of CNIC, PEC Registration Certificate (Valid), Enlistment Certificate, and Active Taxpayer Certificate of FBR and KPRA with each work bidding document.
- The Competent Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the bids as per the provision contained in rule 47 of KPPRA Rules 2014.
- In case of equal rates of two or more bidders, their bids shall be evaluated on the best prevailing practices/toss base.
- Bidders who fail to meet the specified conditions or submit incomplete documents in any aspect shall be liable to rejection.

INF (P) 2943/24

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

M. Riaz honoured for polio eradication efforts



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Renowned journalist and former President of the Peshawar Press Club, M. Riaz, has been recognized for his exceptional contributions to polio eradication efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At a special ceremony held in honor of World Polio Day, awards were presented to individuals and organizations for their dedication to eradicating polio.

The event was graced by Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, as Chief Guest, along with Provincial Health Minister Ehtesham Khan,

Special Secretary of Health, Abdul Basit, who is also the Coordinator for the Emergency Operation Center for Polio eradication, and Abdul Rauf Rohela from Rotary International. Representatives from the Health Department, World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF were also in attendance.

During the ceremony, heartfelt tributes were paid to individuals who have contributed tirelessly to the national fight against polio, especially in the challenging regions of Pakistan, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Awards were presented to polio workers, health experts, and others from

various fields who have played a frontline role in this critical public health mission.

M. Riaz, a senior journalist and former President of the Peshawar Press Club, was among the award recipients, recognized specifically for his efforts to raise public awareness about polio vaccination.

His work has been instrumental in encouraging parents to vaccinate their children against this crippling disease.

This marks the second award M. Riaz has received for his role in the anti-polio campaign in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where six cases of polio have been reported this year.

Prevention of crime must for successful societies: Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, addressed a three-day National Criminology Conference held at the University of Peshawar.

In his remarks, he highlighted that crime is a persistent element within societies, noting, "No society has fully eradicated crime."

He further explained that as societies progress, new factors emerge, giving rise to different forms of crime.

Barrister Dr. Saif emphasized that successful societies are those that take effective steps to manage and prevent crime.

He expressed concern over the absence of an effective accountability system in Pakistan, stating, "It is unfortunate that legislative processes in Pakistan often lack consultation with relevant experts. Laws are implemented abruptly, and the public remains unaware of who introduced them and why."

Addressing his reservations regarding the 26th Constitutional Amendment, he noted that constitutional changes are often made without adequate deliberation, which he identified as a serious issue.

During his conversation with journalists, Barrister Dr. Saif criticized the current federal and Punjab governments, asserting, "These governments do not represent the public. Their primary focus is on pleasing those who brought them to power, rather than serving the people."

Discussing the province's law and order situation, the Information Advisor remarked, "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is facing challenges to its peace and security; however, our police force and law enforcement agencies are valiantly combating terrorism." He reiterated that the struggle against terrorism would persist under all circumstances.

The conference was also attended by Professor Dr. Qazi Naeem, Vice Chancellor of the University of Peshawar, Professor Dr. Johar Ali, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Ombudsperson for Anti-Harassment Rakhshanda Naz, Secretary to Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Tourism Dr. Bakhtiar, and various departmental heads and criminology experts who also addressed the participants.

Kundi flays attack on Chinese nationals

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Wednesday expressed deep concern and sorrow over the attack on Chinese nationals in Karachi, calling it a highly distressing incident.

The Governor termed the attack on Chinese citizens as "extremely alarming" and emphasized that such acts of violence were part of a broader conspiracy by anti-Pakistan forces.

In his statement, Governor Kundi said that the attack was a deliberate attempt to destabilize the peaceful relationship between Pakistan and China.

Ex-Governor Ghulam Ali, Peshawar Mayor meet CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a key meeting, former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali and Peshawar Mayor Haji Zubair Ali met with Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur at Chief Minister House, where they discussed various administrative and other issues faced by local representatives across the province.

The Chief Minister assured them of immediate progress on these matters and confirmed plans for a meeting with the business community next week to address their challenges.

During this lengthy discussion on the province's local governance system, the former Governor and Mayor outlined challenges arising from legislative changes, halted funds, and administrative hurdles, which have hindered local representatives from address-



ing public issues for over three years.

Chief Minister Gandapur assured the representatives that legislative measures are in place to release funds and provide relief in other administrative areas, enabling them to better serve the people without

further obstacles.

Additionally, in response to the former Governor's request, the Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur promised to meet with a delegation from Peshawar's business community next week to take practical steps toward resolving their

issues.

He emphasized that the business community plays a vital role in the province's development and assured them that the government would strive to resolve challenges facing the industry and trade sectors through collaborative efforts.

Minister C&W assures solution to people problems

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for C&W Sohail Afridi listened to the problems of the people of his constituency who came to his office and assured to solve their problems.

Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa on C&W Sohail Afridi said that we are sitting here to serve the people and will provide them with every possible facility.

According to the vision of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, work is underway on the projects for the welfare of the people.

Special Assistant to the

Chief Minister of C&W Sohail Afridi said that the doors of my office are open to the people at all times, along with this he said that we are following a zero tolerance policy for corruption, all government employees should perform government work transparently, we are sitting here to provide the best facilities to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



PESHAWAR: A view of overloaded vehicle plying on city roads. — INP photo

KP initiates interest free Ehsas Loan Scheme

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has taken a public friendly step and completed all the action points to commence interest free Ehsas Loan Scheme.

A meeting regarding interest-free Ehsas loan scheme was held in the Civil Secretariat under the chairmanship of Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance Muzammil Aslam here on Wednesday.

Minister Housing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Amjad Ali, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Technical Education and Vocational Training Tufail Anjum and Secretary Zakat Nazir Hussain Shah and relevant

stakeholders participated in the meeting.

The meeting was informed that under the interest-free Ehsas loan scheme, loans will be provided for up to five years, while interest-free loans will be given for small business and house building purposes.

Speaking at the meeting, Advisor on Finance Muzammil Aslam said that Ehsas Loan Scheme will create new business opportunities while making the people employed and poverty eradication will be possible in the province.

He said the Akhuwat Organization was supporting the provision of the Ehsas loan scheme to the public.

He further said that the interest-free loan scheme would start from one billion rupees in the first phase.

He furthered that under the interest-free Ehsas loan scheme, a loan of up to Rs. 5 lacs will be given for the first year.

Issuing instructions to the concerned authorities, Finance Advisor Muzammil Aslam remarked that all the stakeholders should complete their memorandum of understanding for the Ehsas Loan Scheme by this month. He said that the interest-free Ehsas loan scheme is a continuation of the loan scheme launched in 2022 by the then KP government.

KP Food Departments seizes 2,500 kg of rotten meat

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the Chief Minister's "Awami Agenda program" and directives of KP Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Department conducted a significant crackdown on a gang supplying dead and substandard meat, seizing around 2,500 kilograms of spoiled meat during a check point on GT Road, Peshawar. The meat was immediately disposed of following established safety procedures.

According to Food Department officials, on Wednesday early-morning, inspection team established a checking point on GT road on a tip of about a vehicle transporting unsafe meat. During the inspection, officials intercepted the vehicle and found hundreds of kilograms of stale and substandard meat. Samples were tested by the Livestock Department's meat testing lab, which declared the meat unfit for human consumption, leading to its prompt disposal.

Officials revealed that

this rotten meat was being transported from Punjab to various cities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The vehicle's owners were taken into custody, with an FIR registered, and further legal action has been initiated.

Secretary for Food Department Saqib Raza Aslam stated that, under the minister's directive, a three-member committee has been constituted to thoroughly investigate the network involved in the distribution of substandard meat and to uncover the

complete extent of the operation.

KP Food minister Zahir Shah Toru praised the inspection team for their successful raid and stressed that stringent actions would be taken against those endangering public health. He affirmed that individuals involved in this harmful trade would face severe consequences, and directed the department to intensify actions against such businesses to ensure the health and safety of citizens across the province.

Syed Fakhar Jihan assumes office as provincial minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Syed Fakhar Jihan on Wednesday, assumed the office responsibilities after taking oath as provincial minister in the cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Earlier, the oath-taking ceremony in respect of Syed Fakhar Jihan was held at the Governor House in Peshawar on the same day, wherein, Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, administered the oath to Sayed Fakhr-e-Jahan.

The event was attended by Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, provincial ministers, members of the provincial assembly, the Inspector General of Police, senior civil bureaucrats, political workers, and various dignitaries.

The occasion marked a significant moment in the provincial political landscape as Syed Fakhar Jihan officially joined the provincial cabinet as a minister.

In the ceremony, Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi, Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, fellow cabinet members, and other esteemed guests congratulated him and wished him success in his new role.

This event symbolizes the addition of a new, committed leader to the provincial government, with



expectations for enhanced public service and improved governance in the province. After taking the oath, Syed Fakhar Jihan expressed his gratitude toward the leadership of his political party, including party founder Imran Khan, Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, and all other party officials, workers, and the people of his constituency.

He expressed his deep appreciation for the trust and support extended to him by the party leadership and the public.

He vowed to serve with renewed zeal, stating that he would continue his previous performance with greater dedication and energy.

He emphasized that as a provincial minister, he would use all his capabilities to serve the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa impartially and take every possible step to address

their needs and concerns. Mr.Jahan reiterated his commitment to work towards the development of the province and improve the lives of its citizens. He expressed a strong determination to address the issues of the public and to ensure that the provincial government's resources are utilized effectively for the betterment of the people.

His statement, "I will leave no stone unturned in serving the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," reflects his intent to focus on the welfare of all residents without discrimination. He also mentioned that his primary goal would be to tackle the province's challenges, such as those related to education, health, security, and infrastructure, and ensure that the needs of the people are addressed in a systematic manner.

In his views, Syed Fakhar Jihan acknowledged the trust placed in him by the political leadership and the people of the province. He stated that this success was due to the unwavering support of his party's leadership and the public's belief in his abilities.

He assured that he would live up to this trust and fulfill his duties with sincerity, hard work, and dedication. His commitment to his new role was clear as he declared, "I will ensure that I serve the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the best of my abilities."

The minister also reflected on various issues facing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and acknowledged the province's struggles adding that the government would take proactive measures to address them. "We will work together to resolve these challenges by utilizing all available resources to improve the lives of our people," he assured.

Mr.Jihan further mentioned several upcoming initiatives and developmental projects that would help boost the province's economy.

He outlined plans to create more employment opportunities for the people and introduce new infrastructure development projects. He emphasized, "We need to make better use of our resources, and we will take steps at every level to ensure the growth and prosperity of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

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Swati participates in Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

PESHAWAR (APP): Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, participated in the 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) held in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

The conference, which began on November 3 will continue till November 8, 2024, focuses on the theme "Engage, Empower, sustain: Charting the Course for Resilient Democracy," said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

During the conference, Speaker Swati engaged in various workshops and sessions, including discussions on parliamentary frameworks and promoting political participation among youngsters. His participation highlights the active role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in global parliamentary affairs and the commitment to fostering resilient democratic practices.

Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, visited the New South Wales Parliament along with members of the assembly and other officials at the invitation of the Speaker of New South Wales.

During this visit, discussions were held between the Pakistani delegation and the Speaker of the New South Wales Assembly on parliamentary systems and other matters of mutual interest. Speaker Babar Saleem Swati expressed his gratitude for the hospitality extended by the Speaker of New South Wales and presented traditional gifts from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

On the occasion of the ongoing conference in Australia, Speaker Babar Saleem Swati and other members of the delegation including Deputy Speaker Suraya Bibi, Assembly Secretary Kifayat Ullah Afridi, and other assembly members on the invitation of

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Australia, Zahid Hafeez Chaudhry also visited the Pakistani Consulate in Sydney.

The host High Commissioner, Deputy High Commissioner, and Consul General were also present during this visit. During the visit to the consulate, detailed discussions were held between the Speaker and the officials regarding the issues faced by the Pakistani community residing in Australia, as well as the relations and business activities between Pakistan and Australia.

Additionally, Pakistani High Commissioner Zahid Hafeez hosted a dinner in honor of Speaker Babar Saleem Swati and the Pakistani delegates, which was attended by assembly members, business community representatives, doctors, and other professionals.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif being presented shield at the end of three-day National Criminology Conference.



In brief

Acting President attends Qul F.P. Report

MULTAN: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani attended Rasm-e-Qul of late bureaucrat Khizar Hayat Haraj, the father of MNA Raza Hayat Haraj in Kabirwala on Wednesday. The Acting President expressed his heartfelt condolences to MNA Raza Hayat Haraj, MPA Akbar Hayat Haraj and Asghar Hayat Haraj and prayed for the elevation of stature of late former bureaucrat Khizar Hayat Haraj in the after-life. Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani also tied turban on the head of MNA Raza Hayat Haraj to perform 'Dastaar Bandi'. MPA Rana Iqbal Siraj, Mahar Ameer Abbas, Rana Babar, Amir Hayat Haraj, former MNA Sikandar Bosan, notables from the area and people from different walks of life attended the Rasm-e-Qul. Earlier, noted religious scholar Maulana Tariq Jameel led 'Dua' for the departed soul.

Two killed in Tank mishap F.P. Report

TANK: Two people riding a motorcycle were killed when a pickup van hit their two-wheeler in Tank district on Wednesday. Police said the incident occurred in Khargi area of FR Tank where two friends riding a motorbike were killed when hit by a pickup van. Police shifted bodies of both the youth to Jandala Hospital for identification and medico legal procedure.

DC alerts officials

KHANEWAL (INP): Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali Bukhari on Wednesday alerted departments concerned including health officials after 11 dengue patients with travel history were reported and ordered their proper treatment and prevention measures to check further spread. Presiding over a district emergency response committee (DERC) meeting here, the DC asked departments concerned to intensify dengue control activities during prevailing weather changing scenario. Dr. Hisham Khalid, the focal person for dengue control, gave a briefing to the DC on updated situation regarding dengue control activities. The DC said that official teams should check tyre shops, junkyards, and nurseries and emphasized on intensifying awareness campaign during field operations. Bukhari said that care was the only option against dengue threat and urged the citizens to cooperate with the administration. He said, dengue control activities were being monitored closely and officials would face action in case of submitting bogus statistics. DHO Dr. Mohsin Bukhari, and officials from health and other departments were present.

Death sentence in murder case

SARGODHA (INP): Additional District & Session Judge (AD&SC), Irfan Ahmed Sheikh on Wednesday awarded death sentence to an accused involved in killing of his wife. According to prosecution, Nasrullah r/o Bhulwal had killed his wife on 3rd June 2023. Saddar Bhulwal police arrested the accused and presented challans in the court for trial. After completing arguments, the learned judge awarded death penalty to the murderer and imposed Rs 500,000 fine as compensation. Meanwhile, police arrested 12 dacoit gangs, 362 proclaimed offenders, illegal weapon holders and drug peddlers during the last month.

Minister directs SNGPL authorities to resolve gas issues

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate has directed the SNGPL authorities to resolve the



gas load-shedding, low gas pressure and other gas related issues. The meeting beside others was attended by the Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafiullah Jan MPA, Daud Shah Afridi MPA, Tehsil Chairman Gumbat Sajid Iqbal, Deputy

Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram, authorities concerned of SNGPL Kohat and CNG pumps owners. A detailed briefing was given to the meeting regarding gas load-shedding, low pressure and other gas related issues in

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Kohat. In the meeting, certain important decisions were taken to resolve gas-related issues and necessary instructions were given to the authorities concerned. The provincial minister said that providing basic facilities to the public is his top priority in which any kind of legacy or negligence is unacceptable.

Meanwhile, an important meeting was also held at the Deputy Commissioner House Kohat under the chairmanship of the Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate regarding the early rehabilitation of Liaquat Memorial Hospital, Sangher Hospital and Police Hospital in which various important decisions were taken for the complete rehabilitation of these hospitals so that the public can be provided with the best medical facilities and all possible relief.

KP ex-minister changes his third political party

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Pakistan Tahreek Insaf Parliamentarian (PTI-P) central vice chairman and former provincial minister for finance Muzaffar Syed Advocate has announced to join the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), his fourth political party, along with hundreds of his colleagues. He made the announcement during the JUI-F workers' convention held in Timergara. The JUI-F Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief and senator Maulana Atta ur Rehman was chief guest on the occasion.

Muzaffar Syed, a Jamaat-i-Islami activist, had joined the PPP on Nov 16, 2020 when some of the JI activists did not support him during the 2018 general elections. He was first elected as the JI union council nazim in 2001 and then MPA on its ticket in 2002. The party again awarded him ticket in 2008 but the later the elections were boycotted by the JI. Muzaffar Syed was again elected as MPA on the JI ticket in the 2013 general election and was given the

portfolio of finance in the PTI led government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He was defeated by the PTI candidate Malik Shafiullah in 2018.

He joined the PTI-P led by former defense minister Pervaz Khattak in Nov, 2023. In the last general elections, he got more than 6 thousand votes from PK-16 Lower Dir, but did not succeed to get elected. The JUI-F local chapter started efforts to bring him to the party and during a jirga held here the other day he was convinced. Former district councilor Hakeem Khan, tehsil councilor Shahab Utmami and PPP former district president Barrister Aurang Zeb also accompanied him in joining the JUI-F.

Addressing the function the JUI-F provincial chief Maulana Atta ur Rehman welcomed the PTI-P leader and said that his party would further strengthen in the region after his joining. The convention was also addressed by the JUI-F provincial deputy general secretary Muhammad Rahim Haqqani, finance secretary Noor Islam, party

spokesman Maulana Abdul Jalil Jan, Qazi Ayaz ud Din, district emir Siraj ud Din and others.

Maulana Atta ur Rehman said the JUI-F acted as the real opposition party in the country. He said that thousands of party workers would participate in the 'Israel Mordabad' rally to be held at Peshawar on Dec 8. He said the passage of 26th constitutional amendment was the achievement of the JUI-F because the government was unable to get the bill passed from the parliament without the JUI-F support.

He said the JUI-F would strongly resist the anti-Sharia verdicts of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He said they would safeguard all the Islamic articles and clauses of the 1973 constitution. The JUI-F senator said that lawlessness was being created in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan under a planned conspiracy. The speakers criticized the Muslim world for being silent on the Gaza situation and said that Israeli forces killed innocent Palestinians.

SHC Larkana bench annoys over DC behavior

F.P. Report

LARKANA: A case has been filed by the President of Disabled Itehad at Sindh High Court Larkana bench under the disabled quota case D-651 2023. The hearing was held in the Sindh High Court, while the petitioner Saddam Hussain Chandio, Qalandar Bakhsh Sheikh, Zulfiqar Ali Jatoti, Irshad Sheikh, Ayaz Ali Irshad Ali Bugti, Siraj Ali Thebo and others appeared in the court along with their lawyer Wajid Ali.

Expressing anger at the non-appearance of the DC Larkana, SHC issued a notice for the next hearing. Petitioner Saddam Hussain Chandio said that the Deputy Commissioner Larkana and the Commissioner Larkana Division are deliberately

using delay tactics. The Sukkur High Court will pass an order in favor of disabled quota, while the next hearing of the case was postponed by the court till 25 November.

Residents hold protest: In Larkana, different parties who were oppressed by oppression held separate protests for the recognition of their demands. On the occasion, the widow of Muhammad Moosa Magsi, protested in front of the journalists and said that a few years ago, my daughter Afrooz Khatoun was married to Shaukat Magsi, a resident of Banahon Magsi, a village in Taluka Mirokhan, from whom she has 5 children. Alleging that on August 25, due to a property dispute, my husband's brother-in-law Ahmed Ali Magsi shot and

killed my daughter along with armed men.

Despite meeting with SSP Qamber Shahdaktot Kaleem Imam, no action has been taken by the CIA police to arrest the accused and the influential accused have been giving death threats to get rid of the case. He demanded from the IG Police Sindh and Deputy Inspector General Police Larkana Division to arrest the killers of my innocent daughter and bring them to justice, otherwise I will kill the children, which will be the responsibility of the administration. On the other hand, a protest was held in front of the press club by the residents of the Sharif area of Ratodero Taluka of Larkana city, against the alleged abuses of influential relatives.

Engr Faisal Waqar defends M. Phil thesis in Sciences

F.P. Report

GHAZI: Scholar Engineer Faisal Waqas, a distinguished footballer from the Tarbela Dam Project, a member of the WAPDA Tarbela team, and Secretary of the WAPDA Tarbela Sports Committee, who recently completed his MPhil in Sports Science, highlighted the significance of sports in developing young minds and bodies. He emphasized that sports activities not only enhance physical abilities in youth but also cultivate high values like teamwork, resilience, character-building, and unity.

While chatting to daily The Frontier Post he stated that sports is not merely

about competition but is a comprehensive training that demands discipline and balance. "Like other aspects of life, sports too require consistency and a balanced approach so athletes can avoid injuries during games and maintain peak performance through timely treatment and recovery" he maintained. Faisal Waqas further added that sports not only improve physical fitness but also foster a strong moral foundation and self-confidence in young individuals, which are essential for success in every area of life.

Scholar Engineer Faisal Waqas said that Sports injuries are an unfortunate reality in athletic activities, affecting athletes' performance and even leading to

long-term health issues if not managed properly. Common injuries often arise from overuse, improper technique, lack of preparation, or insufficient conditioning.

Scholar and Engineer Faisal Waqas, while providing an overview of common injuries, preventive measures, and safe practices for athletes at all levels, emphasized the importance of understanding and preventing frequent sports injuries. He explained that athletes often face a range of injuries, such as sprains, strains, knee injuries, fractures, dislocations, and shin splints. However, he noted that it is crucial for athletes to know how to avoid these injuries through proper technique, training, and self-care.



KOHAT: Regional Director Kohat Malik Tariq, addressing 'Khuli Katcheri' while District Public Prosecutor Ibad-u-Rehman also present.

DC vow to resolve issues of masses

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Resolving the issue being faced by the tribesmen of the district is of his priority and all resources will be utilized for the welfare of the locals. The views were expressed by the newly posted Deputy Commissioner (DC), Khyber Capt (Retd) Bilal Shahid Rao while addressing on the occasion of chairing of first district level administrative meetings at Khyber House, Peshawar last day.

Additional DC Ihasanullah, Additional DC (Relief) Nauman Ali Shah, Assistant Commissioner (AC), Jamrud Dr Amir Zaib, AC Landi Kotal Adnan Mumtaz, AC Bara Naveed Ahmad, Additional ACs Aimal Khan, Rameez Ali Shah and Naseer Abbas and tehsildars were among the participants of the meeting. He said that addressing collective problems faced by the residents of the district was the first and top most priority and all necessary initiatives and available resources would be used to solve it.

He directed the administrative officers at tehsil levels to execute their duties with honesty and make hectic efforts to provide relief to the people so that they can benefit from the facilities, supplied by the government. Earlier, the DC was briefed of the activities across the district and informed that under the Chief Minister public agenda of providing better services to the masses, crack-down against price hiking in various bazaars of the districts, visits of health centers and educational institutions in Khyber, monitoring of development projects etc. were in progress.

Orphan Mela held

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The District Administration, Youth Department, and Sports Department of Dir Lower on Wednesday collaborated with Al-Khidmat Foundation to organize the annual Orphan Mela and screening test for orphans and their families. The event, held at Abdul Wali Khan Campus Qaziabad Timergara was aimed at providing medical care, education, and recreational activities for the underprivileged children.

Commandant Dir Task Force Brigadier Sanaullah Khan, Deputy Commissioner Dir Payne Muhammad Arif Khan and District Police Officer Saleem Abbas Kalachi inaugurated the event. A medical camp was set up to provide healthcare services to orphans and their families. The foundation sponsors 500 orphans in Lower Dir and provides medical, rescue, and ambulance services during natural disasters.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan praised Al-Khidmat Foundation's selfless service, and honorary shields were presented to special guests. Trophies and shields were awarded to outstanding performers in sports events. 150 orphan children received school bags and gifts from the District Youth Department. Al-Khidmat Foundation has been working tirelessly to support orphans and vulnerable populations.

World must cooperate against climate change

F.P. Report

HUB: The world must decide on a joint and coordinated plan of action to deal with the ravages of climate change. In the last few years, climate change has had severe effects in Pakistan. These views were expressed by the senior central leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, spokesperson President Asif Ali Zardari and Provincial Advisor for Industry and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri in a statement.

He said that the major countries that cause climate change should help the countries affected by these catastrophic changes, especially Pakistan, in their difficult situation to be safe from the severe weather in the future. Due to climate changes, Pakistan especially in Balochistan has suffered severe damage to the infrastructure of Pakistan due to unexpected heavy rains and floods in the past years and Hub district was the most affected by these rains and floods. We have helped the people affected by these natural calamities according to our ability, but a strong plan must be set to deal with the severity of the climate.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri

further said that the responsibility of climate change is not Pakistan, but developed countries, while Pakistan being directly affected by environmental pollution. He said that severe climate change is a big challenge for the whole world, but Pakistan is having more negative effects of this change which Pakistan is dealing with on its own. He said more that unexpected rains occurred due to climate change and God willing, similar conditions will not be faced in the coming cold season.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that it is impossible to resist natural disasters but necessary steps can be taken to deal with the effects of climate change. Neither Pakistan nor any other country in the world can afford it.

He said that rapid industrial development in developed countries has polluted the environment. Climate changes are taking place all over the world, including Europe, while the cold and hot seasons are intensifying. Where there used to be more rains, rains are stopping, while where there were less rains, due to severe weather changes, heavy and destructive rains

have caused serious damage, an example of which is the series of unexpected rains in Pakistan in the past years.

He further said in his statement that pollution due to industries in developed countries has greatly increased the temperature of the planet; glaciers are melting rapidly causing floods is having a direct impact on Pakistan, which is a serious problem and Pakistan is also facing the situation resulting from the effects of this pollution, although Pakistan is not responsible for this environmental pollution, but the victim of pollution created by other countries.

The Provincial Advisor on Industries and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri emphasized that to avoid climatic extremes we have to be serious now and put aside all kinds of political differences and make serious efforts to build dams so that our future generations can be protected from the effects of these disasters and the effects of extreme cold and hot seasons in addition to expected heavy rains and floods can be avoided due to the expected severe climate changes in the future.

Installment under Apna Ghar scheme released

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Distribution of first instalment under "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" housing scheme of the Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has been started among selected deserving people who were selected through draw. Former Federal Minister Saira Afzal Tarar, members provincial assembly Mian Shahid Hussain Bhatti, Mian Aoun Jhangir Bhatti, Sheikh Gulzar Hussain, Mian Thawar Hussain Tarar, ADCG Hamdullah, AC Pindi Bhattian Ishfaq Ahmad gave letters regarding "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" housing scheme at doorsteps of the lucky people.

Local Leaders of PMLN Muhammad Zaman Ahmad Bhone, Khalid Mehmood Butt, Muhammad Hanif Toor, and Tariq Mehmood Dhothar were also present on his occasion. While distributing letters among people, Saira Afzal Tarar, Mian

Shahid Hussain Bhatti and Mian Aoun Jhangir Bhatti said that Chief Minister of the Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif was fulfilling all promises made for welfare of the people gradually.

They said that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was taking ideal and unmatched measures for development and provision of relief to people in the province including district Hafizabad. They said that instalment of Rs.750000/= each were released to all deserving people for construction their own homes.

They said that the Punjab government was talking revolutionary steps for improving performance of agriculture, livestock, health, education besides improving socio-economic condition of farmers and breeders in the province. They said that under "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" housing scheme, Rs. 15 lakh each was being given markup free loan to less resources people to enable them for

construction their own homes.

Advisor visits prison: Chief Minister's Task Force for Prisons, Punjab, Rana Abdul Manan visited District Jail Hafizabad and reviewed security and other arrangements made for welfare of prisoners. While talking to media, he said that change come through work and change impossible through hollow slogans.

He said that serving the people was slogan and top priority of present government instead of blame game and to use abusive language against others. He said that positive results of jail reforms of the Punjab government were witnessed while conditions of jails were improving in the great extent. He said that duty hours of officials were reduced from 16 hours to 8 hours and four hours duty was started on trial basis whereas corruption in the jails would be eliminated to redact duty hours.

Water scarcity puts Sujawal traditional economy at risk

F.P. Report

SUJAWAL: A severe water scarcity in Sujawal district has led to a decline in the growth of straw and weed, a vital raw material for local artisans. The weed and straw, which grow in ponds and small lakes, is used to craft essential items like mats, baskets, and shelters.

Several families in remote areas of Sujawal rely on the water hyacinth and straw craft industry for their livelihood. However, the water shortage has severely impacted their business, similar to the decline in fishing. A middle-aged woman from a Sujawal village, Amina Amro revealed that her

family has been making mats from water-weed and straw for generations. She lamented that the current water scarcity has resulted in significant financial losses for them."

She further said that they had to travel long distances in search of weed, however the process of transforming weed into mats and baskets was always cumbersome. Allah Bachayo Jat, a local craftsman, said that people in villages used straw-made shelters to protect their houses from harshness of weather, particularly scorching heat.

"The baskets made of weed and straw are used by local farmers for loading wheat and paddy in

trucks and bull carts"; he said and added that during the paddy harvesting season they make and sell buckets in local markets of district Sujawal.

Another laborer Noor Ahmed said that due to a decline in growth of raw material this year they were unable to earn a substantial amount from this business.

The craftsmen from Jati, Daro, Mirpur Bathoro and Chuhar Jamali earn their livelihood through this business. The craftsmen urged concerned authorities to promote this business at a mega level so that poor masses associated with this business can improve their quality of life.



Ukrainian troops have engaged with NK units in Russia

KYIV (AP): Ukrainian troops have for the first time engaged with North Korean units that were recently deployed to help Russia in the war with its neighbor, Ukraine's defense minister said. Another Kyiv official said Ukraine's army fired artillery at North Korean soldiers in Russia's Kursk border region.

The comments were the first official reports that Ukrainian and North Korean forces have engaged in combat, following a deployment that has given the war a new complexion as it approaches its 1,000-day milestone. Neither claim could be independently confirmed. The Ukrainian and North Korean troops engaged in "small-scale" fighting that amounted to the start of Pyongyang's direct involvement in Europe's biggest conflict since World War II, Ukraine's Defense Minister Rustem Umerov told South Korea's public broadcaster KBS in an interview.

North Korean soldiers are mixed with Russian troops and are misidentified on their uniforms, Umerov was quoted as saying by KBS. That makes it hard to say whether there were any North Korean casualties, he said. Umerov reportedly said he expects that five North Korean units, each consisting of about 3,000 soldiers, will be deployed to the Kursk area. Meanwhile, Andrii Kovalenko, the head of the counter-disinformation branch of Ukraine's Security Council, said "the first North Korean troops

have already been shelled, in the Kursk region."

He provided no further details. Western governments had expected that the North Korean soldiers would be sent to Russia's Kursk border region, where a 3-month-old incursion by the Ukrainian army is the first occupation of Russian territory since World War II and has embarrassed the Kremlin. US, South Korean and Ukrainian intelligence assessments say up to 12,000 North Korean combat troops are being sent by Pyongyang to the war under a pact with Moscow. The Pentagon said that at least 10,000 North Korean soldiers were in Russia near Ukraine's border. More troops from North Korea's 1.3-million-strong army may be slated for deployment in Russia, according to an analysis published by the European Council on Foreign Relations, an international think tank.

The ramifications extend far beyond Europe, it said. "Despite integration challenges — including communication barriers and differing military doctrines — the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia represents a significant shift in European and Asian security relations," the analysis said. "For the first time in generations, troops from East Asia are actively engaging in a European conflict." The North Korean troops, whose fighting quality and battle experience is unknown, are adding to Ukraine's worsening situation on the battlefield.

Ukrainian defenses, especially in the eastern

Donetsk region, are buckling under the strain of Russia's costly but relentless monthslong onslaught. Russian advances have recently accelerated, with battlefield gains of up to 9 kilometers (more than 5 miles) in some parts of Donetsk, the U.K. Defense Ministry said on the social platform X. It said Russia has superior troop numbers, and despite heavy casualties the Kremlin's recruitment drive is providing enough new troops to keep up the pressure. Russia has held the battlefield initiative in Ukraine for the past year. Ukrainian officials have long complained that Western military support takes too long to arrive in the country.

In early October, Russian forces drove Ukrainian troops out of Vuhledar, a town perched atop a tactically significant hill in eastern Ukraine. It was part of a key belt of Ukrainian defenses in the east. Russia's next targets likely are the key logistics hub of Pokrovsk and the strategically important city of Chasiv Yar. In the meantime, Russia has kept up its long-range aerial attacks on civilian areas of Ukraine, authorities say.

Attack on the southern city of Zaporizhzhia killed six people and injured 23 others, regional Gov. Ivan Fedorov said. The head of Ukraine's presidential office, Andrii Yermak, said the Russian attacks "must be stopped with strong action." "A stronger position by (Ukraine's Western) allies is needed," he wrote on Telegram.

Greek police arrest third suspect over bombing

ATHENS (AP): Greek police arrested a third suspect in connection with an explosion in central Athens last week that authorities have blamed on an alleged aspiring domestic extremist group. The 30-year-old woman surrendered to Greek authorities at Athens International Airport after being located in Switzerland, authorities said.

The Oct. 31 blast gutted a third-floor apartment in the central Ambelokipi neighborhood, killing a 36-year-old man believed to have been assembling an explosive device. A 33-year-old woman was severely injured and remains hospitalized under police guard. A 31-year-old male suspect surrendered to authorities. "It was a monstrous bomb with concentrated explosive material," Minister of Citizen Protection Michalis Chrisochoidis told private Skai television. "It would have caused great destruction, because it was very powerful." The apartment block has been declared uninhabitable due to blast damage.

Chrisochoidis said those allegedly involved were young people who appeared to aspire to become a new generation of domestic terrorists in Greece. Anti-terrorism units searching the blast site, three additional locations and a vehicle seized two handguns with magazines, digital devices, disguise materials including wigs and rubber masks, and handwritten diagrams.

Greece has a history of far-left extremism dating to the 1970s, with militants carrying out multiple bombings and assassinations, though major groups have been dismantled. Recent years have seen reduced activity, with the last significant incident occurring in December 2023 when police defused a bomb at riot police headquarters following an anonymous warning.

"I think we are dealing with an attempt of some young people who are aiming to become a third generation of terrorism in Greece," Chrisochoidis said. The intended target and timing of the planned attack remain under investigation. All three suspects — as well as the man killed in the blast — are Greek nationals.

Sudan reshuffles cabinet

DARFUR (BBC): Sudan's army leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, at war with paramilitaries, has announced a cabinet reshuffle that replaces four ministers including those for foreign affairs and the media. The announcement comes with the north-east African country gripped by the world's worst displacement crisis, threatened by famine and desperate for aid, according to the UN.

In a post on its official Facebook page, Sudan's ruling sovereignty council said Burhan had approved replacement of the ministers of foreign affairs, the media, religious affairs and trade. The civil war that began in April 2023 pits Burhan's military against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitaries under the command of his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Since then, the army-aligned Sudanese government has been operating from the eastern city of Port Sudan, which has largely remained shielded from the violence. But the Sudanese state "is completely absent from the scene" in all sectors, economist Haitham Fathy told AFP earlier this year. The council did not disclose reasons behind the reshuffle but it coincides with rising violence in al-Jazira, south of the capital Khartoum, and North Darfur in Sudan's far west bordering Chad.

The spokesman for United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said he condemned attacks by paramilitaries in al-Jazira, after the United States made a similar call over the violence against civilians. Among the key government changes, Ambassador Ali Youssef al-Sharif, a retired diplomat who previously served as Sudan's ambassador to China and South Africa, was appointed foreign minister.



BELGRADE: Protests rock the Serbian city of Novi Sad, where a train station roof collapsed last week, killing 14 people.

How the UK's 'big brother' role in Africa is changing

LONDON (BBC): UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy is coming to the end of his maiden tour of Africa with the aim of resetting relations with the 54-nation continent. "Our new approach will deliver respectful partnerships that listen rather than tell, deliver long-term growth rather than short-term solutions and build a freer, safer, more prosperous continent," he said as he set out the agenda for his trip to the continent's two biggest powers - Nigeria and South Africa.

Lammy's visit follows his appointment as foreign secretary in the Labour government that took office earlier this year. Since Labour was last in office in 2010, relations between African states and other world powers have changed massively. Today, China is the largest trade partner for many African countries, while Russia has increasingly made inroads, including by offering military support to West African states battling jihadists.

Oil-rich Gulf nations, along with Turkey, have also been increasing their influence on the continent by striking business and military deals. In contrast, UK-Africa relations have been "a lot more lacklustre", says Alex Vines, the head of the Africa programme at Chatham House, a London-based think tank. This is particularly the case between the UK and its biggest trading partner on the continent, South Africa, and the trip is an "attempt to reboot that", he adds.

"I want to hear what our African partners need and foster relationships that the UK and our friends and partners in Africa can grow together," Lammy said. Britain is no newcomer

to the continent. A long – and at times chequered – history underpins many of its relationships with African countries. Almost all its former colonies on the continent are part of the Commonwealth, although countries that did not have this historical link to the UK have joined the group, including Rwanda, Togo and Gabon. Angola has also applied to join.

"The Commonwealth will likely continue to be a key platform," says Nicole Beardsworth, an academic at South Africa's Wits University. As its former colonies gained independence in the middle of the last century, Britain continued to play a sort of "big brother" role. But this is now changing. Dr Vines says Africa did not feature significantly in a major document released last year to outline the UK's priorities on the global stage. "There were name checks to countries like Nigeria and South Africa and Kenya in it, but there wasn't much written," he says. Dr Vines adds that he expects South Africa-UK relations to improve under Labour because of its historic ties with the anti-apartheid movement that fought white-minority rule.

"That comes from the anti-apartheid struggle and the solidarity that Labour and people that were the Labour movement provided for combating apartheid," he says. Dr Beardsworth, however, notes that former Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May tried to bolster ties with Africa, but her efforts were "scuppered" after she resigned in 2019 following turmoil in the then governing party. The UK then had an unprecedented turnover of prime ministers

who had to deal with domestic crises, the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, and the Covid pandemic.

"Africa fell off the radar," Dr Beardsworth says, adding that the exception was the controversial, and now-scrapped, deal to send some asylum seekers from the UK to Rwanda. Being the world's youngest continent – with a median age of 19 – Africa presents opportunities for the future, the UK Foreign Office said. "Africa has huge growth potential, with the continent on track to make up 25% of the world's population by 2050," read a statement from the office.

With an ageing population in the UK – as with much of the developed world – Dr Vines says that the sharing of skills will increase. He adds that migration is an "emotive and complicated issue", but the UK and other Western nations should avoid "cherry-picking the best and corroding African states from being successful themselves". The UK Foreign Office said that "growth is the core mission of this government and will underpin our relationships in Nigeria, South Africa and beyond".

That will mean "more jobs and more opportunities for Brits and Africans alike," it added. The UK's Africa policy has long focused on development aid, but this has been slashed in recent years as the country faces its own economic crisis. Dr Vines says aid can be important to deal with humanitarian crises, climate shocks and to finance projects aimed at expanding the private sector in Africa, but he does not see the Labour government increasing funding.

French workers protest Michelin plans to close two plants

PARIS (BBC): Michelin factory workers burnt tyres in western France and vowed to stage a strike after the tyre company said it would close two plants by early 2026 over collapsing sales. Michelin said the decision to close down the plants in Cholet and Vannes in western France, which together employ more than 1,250 people, had been made "as a last resort."

In another sign of struggles in the European auto industry, German parts maker Schaeffler announced that it would cut 4,700 jobs in Europe. European car sales have fallen at home and in key market China as demand for electric vehicles has fallen and competition from Chinese manufacturers has grown.

Michelin, which employs almost 19,000 people in France, said the plant closure had become "unavoidable" due to competition from Asian tyre makers as well as the "worsening competitiveness of Europe", notably due to inflation and rising energy prices. Employees at the Cholet plant voted in favour of staging a strike, unions said. Thick black

smoke rose into the air as workers at the Cholet production site, which employs 955 people, set tyres on fire during a protest in front of the plant. Around 200 workers blocked traffic at a crossroads leading to the site.

"They put the 900 employees in a room like cows in a slaughterhouse and announced that it was all over," Morgane Royer, an employee and SUD union delegate, told AFP. "Either they keep our jobs, or they pay us until we retire," CGT secretary David Goubault shouted. "They've exploited us for years." Michelin had earlier said it planned to halt production at the two sites until November 13 "to give management and the unions time to propose collective and individual discussions with employees."

The right-wing mayor of Cholet, Gilles Bourdoleix, denounced "the rogue version of capitalism". "For us, it's heartbreaking," Bourdoleix said, calling the announcement "brutal" as Michelin has been in Cholet for five decades. Employees also burnt tyres and pallets in front of the Vannes plant, which was

built in the early 1960s and employs around 300 people.

Eric Boisgard, who has worked there since 2004, said the workers greeted the announcement with silence. "Everyone was devastated," he said. The right-wing mayor of Vannes, David Robo, said: "It's a black day for Vannes and an earthquake for the region." Michelin vowed to support the two regions by creating "as many jobs as those eliminated".

The company said it would support its employees, including with job offers in other companies or within the group, or early retirement. "It is the collapse in business that has led to this situation, and I want to say to all these employees that we will not leave anyone by the wayside," Michelin CEO Florent Menegaux told AFP. The Cholet plant mainly manufactures light truck tyres -- a segment that "has seen a significant decline" in Europe in recent years, with no prospect of recovery, said Michelin.

The Vannes site mainly produces metal reinforcements such as cables, which are then used to

manufacture tyres in countries including Spain and Italy. Production volumes have been declining at the plant due to changing demand from truck tyre plants in Europe, said Michelin. The group is going through a difficult year with a slowdown in the new vehicle market.

Michelin had already closed its La-Roche-sur-Yon site in western France in 2020, and is preparing to close two plants in Germany by 2025. The company said that in La Roche-sur-Yon more than 635 jobs had been created, compared with 613 jobs eliminated. Schaeffler said its cuts were in response to "the challenging market environment, the increasing intensity of global competition, and ongoing transformation processes affecting the automotive supply industry". Schaeffler, which specialises in making bearings for the automotive industry, currently has about 120,000 employees in 55 countries. In another blow to French employees, retail giant Auchan announced plans to axe 2,389 jobs in France and close around ten stores.

Palestinians build new lives in Cairo's 'Little Gaza'

GAZA (AFP): Palestinian Bassem Abu Aoun serves Gaza-style turkey shawarma at his restaurant in an eastern Cairo neighbourhood, where a growing number of businesses opened by those fleeing war have many dubbing the area "Little Gaza".

"It was a big gamble," said the 56-year-old about opening his restaurant, Hay al-Rimal, named after his neighbourhood in Gaza City, now devastated by Israeli bombardment. "I could live for a year on the money I had, or open a business and leave the rest to fate," he said. So less than four months after fleeing with his family to neighbouring Egypt from the besieged Palestinian territory, he opened his eatery in Cairo's Nasr City neighbourhood.

The establishment is one of the many cafes, falafel joints, shawarma spots and sweets shops being started by newly arriving Palestinian entrepreneurs in the area -- despite only being granted temporary stays by Egypt. These spaces have become a refuge for the traumatised Gazan community in Cairo, offering a livelihood to business owners, many of whom lost everything in the war.

"Even if the war stops now in Gaza, it would take me at least two or three years to get my life back on track," Abu Aoun said.

"Everything has been wiped out there," he continued. His patrons are mainly fellow Palestinians, chatting in their distinct Gazan dialect as they devour sandwiches that remind them of home.

On a wall next to his shop was a mural of intertwining Egyptian and Palestinian flags. "I have a responsibility to my family and children who are in university," said the restaurateur, whose two eateries in Gaza have now been completely destroyed. Abu Aoun and his family are among more than 120,000 Palestinians who arrived in Egypt between November last year and May, according to Palestinian officials in Egypt.

They crossed through the Rafah border crossing, Gaza's only exit point to the outside world until Israeli forces seized the Palestinian side in early May and closed it ever since. Although Egypt insists it won't do Israel's bidding by allowing permanent refugee camps on its territory, it had allowed in medical evacuees, dual passport holders and others who managed to escape.

Many drained their life savings to escape, paying thousands of dollars a head to the private Egyptian travel agency Hala, the only company coordinating Gaza evacuations. War broke out in Gaza on October 7, 2023,

after Hamas's surprise attack resulted in the deaths of 1,206 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures. Israel's retaliatory military campaign has killed 43,374 people in Gaza, most of them civilians, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory's health ministry which the UN considers reliable.

Opening the restaurant was not an easy decision for Abu Aoun, but he says he's glad he did it. "I'll open a second branch and expand," he said with a smile, while watching a family from Central Asia being served a traditional Gazan salad. Nearby is Kazem, a branch of a decades-old, much-loved Gaza establishment serving iced dessert drinks. Its Palestinian owner, Kanaan Kazem, opened the branch in September after settling in Cairo.

The shop offers ice cream on top of a drink sprinkled with pistachios, a Gazan-style treat known as "bouza w barad", which has become a fast favourite among the Egyptian patrons filling the shop. "There's a certain fear and hesitation about opening a business in a place where people don't know you," said Kazem, 66. But "if we're destined never to return, we must adapt to this new reality and start a new life", he said, standing alongside his sons.

First candidates grilled in parliament test

BRUSSELS (AFP): Lawmakers grilled the first four would-be members of the next European Commission, with a personal tale of bereavement bringing unexpected poignancy to the start of hearings to confirm Ursula von der Leyen's top team.

The hearings offer a rare opportunity for the EU parliament to flex its muscles against the bloc's powerful executive -- and the outside chance a candidate may stumble has kept Brussels on its toes. But the process got off to a smooth start, with the first four commissioner-designates -- Maros Sefcovic of Slovakia, Malta's Glenn Micallef, Apostolos Tzitzikostas of Greece, and Luxembourg's Christophe Hansen -- comfortably dealing with a three-hour quizzing and

being endorsed by members of the EU parliament.

Sefcovic, who is to take over as head of trade and economic security, sailed through his hearing. He was careful not to give a timetable for the signing of a controversial free trade agreement between the European Union and the Mercosur countries -- Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia -- which is being contested by France and has aroused the anger of farmers in Europe. "I hope that this agreement can be concluded on a very equitable basis", said Sefcovic.

Hansen, who is to take up the agriculture portfolio, became emotional during his hearing as he recounted the recent death of his brother, a farmer, when responding to a question on the mental

health pressures faced by farmers. His brother "fell in the stairs" in what Hansen said was an accident that, while not directly caused by mental health, was linked to work stress. "There are so many others that suffer accidents because they don't get to sleep, because they don't get to rest for a moment," he said.

Citing delays in the payment of subsidies, pressure from banks and the need for large investments, Hansen said his overworked brother had no time to seek professional help as he went through a divorce. "It is unacceptable. And it's killing me," he said. Tzitzikostas, who is to take charge of transport, vowed to put forward long-delayed plans for a "single booking system" for train travel in 2025.

Korea and Japan in a show of force. That drew condemnation from Kim's powerful sister Kim Yo Jong, who accused North Korea's rivals of raising tensions with "aggressive and adventurist military threats." South Korean officials have said that North Korea was likely to dial up its military displays around the US presidential election to command the attention of Washington.

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Israel sends a signal to next US president

IT should not be taken as a coincidence that Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant was sacked hours before the US presidential election finished on Tuesday.

In a recorded statement released on Tuesday evening, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "trust between me and the minister of defense has cracked".

The breakdown in relations between Gallant and the Israeli leader was evident months before in their differences over a Gaza cease-fire and it culminated late last month with an open letter from the defense chief to the Israeli Cabinet opposing a show-down with Iran.

Netanyahu took the long-expected move while Israel is making intensive preparations for a widely anticipated Iranian retaliation for Israel's attacks on Iranian targets late last month, which Teheran has threatened will be of a larger scale to make Tel Aviv feel the pain. It indicates that Netanyahu is seizing all the power in his own hands.

Israel Katz, currently the foreign minister, will become defense minister, and Gideon Sa'ar will replace Katz as foreign minister, the prime minister's office said on Tuesday. That neither has extensive military experience, though Katz has served in the Cabinet throughout the war, means Netanyahu doesn't want any military veteran to throw his weight around in the Cabinet upsetting his war plan.

Gallant is a close interlocutor for the United States, the enabler of Israel's military actions, and he reportedly has daily conversations with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. As the Joe Biden administration will continue to stay in power until the swearing in of the next president on Jan 20, even before he knew who would win the election, Netanyahu, by replacing Gallant with an amateur defense chief, has sent an unmistakable message to the US that he is hell-bent on throwing the helve after the hatchet in steering the Middle East crisis to develop according to his design.

Taking advantage of the critical power transition in Washington as a window of opportunity, he is trying to make that a fait accompli as neither the Democrats nor the Republicans can afford to overhaul the US' politically correct inertia in providing unconditional support to Israel at this moment, not to mention during a possible protracted brawl between the two main US parties over the result of the election.

After Gallant was fired, there was a massive protest in Israel's capital, Tel Aviv, demanding Netanyahu's resignation. Despite the Israeli leader's careful scheming, he cannot avoid the reality that his insistence on pursuing his goals is tearing Israel apart internally, nor that the anti-Netanyahu forces are growing stronger. On the day Gallant was fired, the Israeli police announced that they had launched a criminal investigation "into the events at the beginning of the war", which might incriminate Netanyahu.

Over the past year, the Israeli leader has only made his country more insecure by pitting the nation against seven opponents in its neighborhood at the same time. The more than 100 hostages that are still held by Hamas are no longer on his mind as their use value had been long overdrawn by Israel's brutal attacks on Gaza that have caused the deaths of more than 42,000 Palestinians, among whom two-thirds are women and children. In a televised statement on his dismissal, Gallant said it was the result of a dispute over three things: the issue of exempting ultra-Orthodox Jews from military service, the abandonment of hostages in Gaza, and the need for an official inquiry into Hamas' Oct 7 attacks. "There is and will not be any atonement for abandoning the captives," he said. "It will be a mark of Cain on the forehead of Israeli society and those leading this mistaken path."

These remarks will continuously ring true as long as Netanyahu presses ahead with his personal war.

Important Notice

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It was anger that won Trump this election

Belén Fernández

AT a campaign rally in the state of Wisconsin just days before yesterday's United States presidential elections, former US president and current president-elect Donald Trump registered his displeasure with a faulty microphone: "I get so angry. I'm up here seething. I'm seething. I'm working my ass off with this stupid mic."

The situation was so enraging, in fact, that it drew the additional soundbite from Trump: "Do you want to see me knock the hell out of people backstage?"

Now, there is no doubt Trump is a very angry person; just look at, well, everything he has ever said about his ubiquitous enemies, be they Democrats, immigrants, members of "the radical left" – or microphones. And, as his self-described "magnificent victory" against his Democratic opponent Kamala Harris in this election demonstrates, a whole lot of Americans are angry, too.

Despite obviously belonging to America's financial super-elite, the billionaire Trump has wooed a wide sector of the domestic working class into viewing him as a saviour from their economic plight in a plutocratic system of which he himself is an integral part. The indignant appeal to "Make America Great Again" deliberately ignores the

fact that there was never anything great about a nation predicated on mass socioeconomic inequality, where Republicans and Democrats alike perpetuate plutocracy under the guise of democracy.

Trump's first bout as president saw him enact tax cuts for – who else? – other rich people. And yet many voters perceive him as the only candidate poised to restore dignity to folks whose financial suffering is a direct consequence of the same capitalist arrangement that enables Trump to thrive.

To be sure, anger is a convenient antidote to feelings of powerlessness, and Trump is quite capable when it comes to channelling public discontent to his benefit.

Xenophobia is an ever-ready weapon in his respect, and so-called "border security" was a key issue driving this year's vote – with Trump promising mass deportations and hawking his signature propaganda on the alleged Democratic sponsorship of an invasion of the US by disease-ridden, pet-eating criminal migrant hordes.

Naturally, there are plenty of reasons to be angry – even "seething," to borrow Trump's term – at the state of US affairs under the outgoing Joe Biden administration, in which Harris serves as vice president. Complicity in Israel's genocide in

Palestine comes to mind – and specifically, the fact that the US sees nothing wrong with sending heaps of weapons and billions of dollars in assistance to the Israeli military to slaughter Palestinians en masse while millions of Americans cannot afford housing, shelter, healthcare or food.

But, hey, that's capitalism for you.

Meanwhile, the embrace of Trump as a figure outside the traditional system of elite politics – someone who can "knock the hell out of people backstage," if you will – is only facilitated by patronising comments made by certain Democratic leaders.

During a speech last month on behalf of Harris, for example, ex-US President Barack Obama lectured Black men that support for Trump implied a sexist rejection of Harris: "You're thinking about sitting out or supporting somebody who has a history of denigrating you, because you think that's a sign of strength, because that's what being a man is? Putting women down? That's not acceptable."

But there are reasons other than misogyny not to vote for California's former "top cop." And being scolded like children has also been known to engender anger.

In a 2022 article for the Washington, DC-based Center for Economic and

Policy Research, economist Dean Baker took a stab at explaining "the Trumpers' anger" – and how it had come to pass that a "large majority of non-college-educated whites (especially white men) are willing to follow Donald Trump off any cliff".

Noting that less-educated members of the US workforce had fared poorly over the past four decades even in the face of relatively healthy economic growth, Baker observed that this was because those in charge of steering economic policy "consciously structured it in ways to benefit people like themselves and to screw workers with less education".

That's all par for the course in plutocracy, of course. But Baker went on to speculate that one reason the punitive arrangement was blamed on Democrats was that "the people who benefit from these policies and then directly spread the nonsense that the upward redistribution was just the natural workings of the market are overwhelmingly associated with the Democratic Party". This was, however, not to discount the role in pernicious policy choices of the Republican Party, who "have not been any better, and are quite often worse".

And while "the Trumpers' anger" may have driven this year's election, there are quite a lot of things to be angry about.

Alliance for the two-state solution takes shape in Riyadh

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

RIYADH last week hosted the first meeting of the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. The alliance was launched in September in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 79th session. Saudi Arabia and Norway, together with the EU and the Arab League, were the main backers at the time, but many more have since expressed support and an interest in making it happen.

Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan opened the Riyadh deliberations on Oct. 30, with more than 90 countries and governmental organizations in attendance. He stressed the importance of intensifying efforts to make the two-state solution a reality and reiterated the Kingdom and its partners' commitment to attaining peace "through practical steps and specific timetables aimed at ending the occupation and realizing the independent Palestinian state."

He called for an immediate ceasefire, pointing out that the escalation and expansion of the conflict are undermining the chances for a two-state solution and increasing regional instability. He voiced grave concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza and expressed strong support for UNRWA to help it deal with these unprecedented challenges.

Speaker after speaker echoed those remarks. While the meeting's focus was meant to be the two-state solution, the cata-

strophic conditions in Gaza dominated the remarks of many delegates. Their concerns were heightened by Israel's measure, taken two days earlier, to ban UNRWA, whose chief Philippe Lazzarini took part in the meeting.

There was a clear universal consensus on the two-state solution and the right of self-determination for the Palestinians. The particular parameters for this solution, including the Arab Peace Initiative, were also agreed by an overwhelming global majority beyond the alliance, including by countries considered to be allies or very close friends of Israel, such as the US, UK and Germany. There was also a clear consensus on what needs to be done over the coming weeks and months to move the work of the global alliance forward, including putting together an action plan with clear steps and timetables.

However, given the monumental tasks before the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, a division of labor is clearly needed. The humanitarian situation in Gaza needs immediate attention to stop Israel's genocidal actions and alleviate the near-famine conditions there. It is therefore important to establish a separate track to deal with this rapidly deteriorating situation, including continuing efforts to reach agreement on a ceasefire and exchange of hostages, detainees and prisoners.

The humanitarian track should also focus on improving humanitarian

access and the delivery of aid, both of which are hampered by Israeli actions, including its measures against UNRWA. An immediate issue of concern is the protection of humanitarian workers to enable aid organizations to carry out their activities. The sincere sentiments expressed at the Riyadh meeting in support of this need to be translated into tangible diplomatic and financial steps to enable aid organizations to fulfill their mandates. Some participants proposed a UN-supervised cross-border mechanism to deliver aid akin to what is done between Syria and Turkey to improve access and aid delivery.

The second track should focus on economic issues, such as developing proposals to strengthen the Palestinian economy, improve living conditions for Palestinians and provide economic opportunities. Its work should also include improving governance by working with the Palestinian Authority and donors to strengthen state institutions and improve the delivery of basic services. More immediately, this track should also focus on the stabilization, recovery and resilience of the Gaza Strip and removing Israeli restrictions on economic activity in the West Bank.

The third track should deal with the political and security requisites of the Palestinian state. There are successful examples, such as Kosovo and Namibia, where the international community, including the UN and NATO, were able to provide the security support needed in such situa-

tions. These requirements include the protection of civilians in Gaza and the West Bank and the security arrangements needed to replace Israeli forces in the Occupied Territories. This track should also include Gaza-West Bank reunification arrangements.

Within each track, it would be useful to establish specialized working groups, where needed, to bring in specialized talent and input. One common objective of each of the working groups should be to coordinate the current efforts undertaken by many parties and build on what has already been done. These small working groups will be able to move relatively quickly and develop proposals for the larger group to adopt, while avoiding being slowed down or overwhelmed by a particular issue.

The alliance has great potential and its collective work is important to keep effective overall oversight and make sure it achieves its intended goals. In just one month, more than 90 countries and intergovernmental organizations have joined and many more have expressed support.

The alliance already represents about half of the UN's membership and has the potential to grow further. With the expanded membership, it would be useful to establish a steering committee to help the alliance organize its activities and oversee the work of its separate components along the three tracks and maintain the consensus and cohesion of the alliance, while avoiding divisive issues.

Expectations from Trump's return

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

AS the world watches the return of President Donald Trump to office, a range of expectations and cautious optimism emerge on the international stage, especially from Pakistan and its regional neighbors in the Middle East. President Trump's previous term showcased a distinctive approach to foreign policy-one marked by unpredictable decisions, a focus on "America First" policies, and a mixed legacy of both diplomatic breakthroughs and heightened tensions. In his new term, global actors anticipate that Trump will navigate regional challenges with renewed vigor, aiming to balance his national priorities with pressing international issues. Countries like Pakistan are especially interested in how his leadership might affect regional stability, security cooperation, and economic ties.

For Pakistan, a second Trump administration presents both opportunities and challenges. While Trump's previous stance on Pakistan showed ambivalence, there remains hope that he might work toward a more constructive relationship this time around. In the past, Trump's administration held a hardline position on Pakistan's role in counterterrorism efforts, voicing concerns about security and support for regional stability. However, there were also positive signals, such as the 2020 United States-Taliban peace deal, which Pakistan facilitated, leading to the eventual U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. This role in fostering peace efforts could serve as a basis for improved diplomatic and security relations between Pakistan and the U.S., where mutual interests in counterterrorism and stability may once again come into focus.

Furthermore, economic cooperation is an area that Pakistan hopes to expand under Trump's new term. Although Trump's previous administration did not prioritize economic engagements with Pakistan, his policies often leaned toward bilateral deals that could offer opportunities for countries willing to engage. Pakistan may seek more favorable terms in trade and investment, especially in sectors such as agriculture, technology, and renewable energy. With Pakistan facing economic challenges, a focus on strengthening trade ties with the U.S. could be crucial.

Additionally, Pakistan hopes that Trump's administration will acknowledge Pakistan's importance as a strategic partner in South Asia, a region becoming increasingly vital to global geopolitics. The Middle East remains a region of particular interest to Trump and his foreign policy team. The previous Trump administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, brokered the Abraham Accords, and imposed heavy sanctions on Iran, decisions that polarized opinion across the region. Expectations are high regarding how Trump will now approach key Middle Eastern issues, particularly the Palestinian cause, Lebanon's stability, and Iran's regional influence. For Palestinians, there remains hope that the U.S. will play a more balanced role in fostering peace with Israel. Trump's earlier stance was clearly in favor of Israel, but his legacy includes the Abraham Accords, which, despite their controversies, showed that new forms of engagement were possible.

Pakistan is hopeful that Trump might reconsider policies that previously appeared one-sided, encouraging a more just approach that acknowledges Palestinian sovereignty and rights.

In Lebanon, the hope is for greater American involvement in the country's recovery from years of economic instability, political gridlock, and social upheaval. Trump's administration previously placed pressure on Hezbollah and took a firm stance on limiting Iranian influence in Lebanon, moves that polarized local opinion. Moving forward, there is an expectation that the U.S. will offer more comprehensive support to help Lebanon stabilize without exacerbating sectarian tensions. By adopting a more balanced approach, Trump's administration could help mitigate internal divisions within Lebanon, supporting a recovery that respects the country's complex social fabric.

The re-election of Trump brings with it concerns in Iran, as Trump's previous term saw the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and a series of escalating sanctions that crippled Iran's economy. It remains uncertain whether Trump will pursue a renewed deal or maintain pressure on Tehran, a policy that often-strained relations across the region. Many hope that Trump will opt for dialogue over confrontation, potentially re-engaging Iran in discussions that prioritize regional stability over rivalry. Should Trump shift towards a more diplomatic approach, this could contribute significantly to easing tensions not only between the U.S. and Iran but also among other regional powers.

Perhaps one of the most pressing areas for Pakistan and South Asia is the long-standing issue of Kashmir. During his last administration, Trump offered to mediate between India and Pakistan, a move that drew both criticism and support. For Pakistan, there is hope that Trump will leverage his influence to promote a just and peaceful solution to the Kashmir conflict, which has been a major source of tension between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. The Trump administration previously aligned closely with India, viewing it as a strategic partner in countering Chinese influence in the region. However, if Trump seeks a more balanced approach, his administration could play a role in fostering dialogue on Kashmir, recognizing the aspirations of the Kashmiri people while encouraging diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan. This would be a significant shift that could not only ease tensions in South Asia but also reinforce America's role as a mediator in global conflict resolution.

Trump's party, the Republican Party, has generally championed strong military alliances and economic self-interest. However, the party's conservative principles also emphasize respect for national sovereignty and bilateral relations, two elements that may shape Trump's foreign policy this term. By focusing on bilateral ties rather than extensive multilateral engagements, Trump might prioritize individual relationships, enabling Pakistan and other nations to negotiate on equal terms.

This emphasis on direct engagements could allow countries like Pakistan to advocate for their unique strategic interests and seek a more balanced partnership with the U.S.

In sum, the world approaches Trump's return with mixed expectations, hopeful yet cautious. For Pakistan, there is the potential for stronger economic and security ties, a more balanced approach to regional conflicts, and support for diplomatic solutions in South Asia. In the Middle East, hopes revolve around a fairer approach to the Palestinian issue, constructive involvement in Lebanon, and potentially renewed talks with Iran. If Trump's administration takes a pragmatic approach, it could open new avenues for cooperation and understanding, fostering a legacy of stability and mutual respect that would benefit not only America but its global partners as well. As Trump prepares to navigate these complex issues, the world watches with anticipation, hoping his leadership will prioritize lasting peace and cooperation.

Grassroots roles the only way to shift US Middle East policy

HISTORY tells us that US presidential election results mean little in terms of how the country deals with two key audiences: the Middle East, including its current and future conflicts, and the role of Arabs in America. No matter the outcome of votes like this week's, American policy will continue to follow the same path, although it may be more nuanced and have a different tenor and tone.

While the conflicts in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran are being fueled by billions of American dollars, the actual policies are being driven by Israel's government. And in American politics, Israel enjoys Teflon-like protection from major change.

Republican Donald Trump's victory in Tuesday's presidential election will be little more than a news story and a subject of discussion for the pundits. Meanwhile, the Israeli genocide in Gaza will not stop until Israel wants it to stop. And Israel will also decide how far it will go in its wars with Lebanon and Iran.

As for Arabs in America, there will be a lot of pictures and smiles with the winning candidate. A lot of back-slapping. And maybe some jobs and appointments for some Arabs and Muslims. But this does not mean there will be a change in American foreign policy or any enhancement in their engagement with government.

Fundamentally, the US' Middle East policy did not change the last time Trump was president between 2017 and 2021. There was no recognition of a Palestinian state or easing of support for Israel. Accords were signed with several Arab countries that sought American financial

or diplomatic assistance.

America's support for Israel in the UN Security Council is rock solid and the US ambassador to the organization, regardless of who holds the seat, will continue to veto any resolution that tries to significantly change the path Israel is currently taking.

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American presidents do not brag about that veto record, but it is a fundamental fact that will not change just because one party or another has taken control of the White House.

It did not change under Democratic President Joe Biden either. Despite press

Ray Hanania

releases about engaging in a "partnership" with Arab Americans, that relationship was dead on arrival. All the Arabs and Muslims appointed to key White House and State Department posts were muzzled. They were not allowed to engage in media interviews unless they were

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tightly choreographed and controlled.

A Kamala Harris presidency would also not have been any different.

There is only one area of American politics that can change. It is not on the national level, such as the presidency or even representation in the US Congress. It is at the local level.

Despite the perception, the headlines and the news reporting, American politics starts at the grassroots level, not at the top.

Only when Arab Americans change the atti-

tudes and understanding of their neighbors in their cities, towns and counties will American foreign policy start to show a seismic shift.

That is how Israel did it. It funded huge public relations campaigns, involving the news media, movies and even entertainment, to change how Americans saw the Arab-Israeli conflict. It

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Change in America happens one person at a time. But that means that more Arabs and more Muslims need to run for local political office, pursuing a less grandiose goal.

Sure, serving as a congressman or senator carries much prestige and a semblance of authority and power. But a position as a trustee or alderman in a village or city in America, or even as a mayor or state legislator, has much greater weight in terms of impacting public perception in a substantive way.

When our peers at the grassroots level learn to trust us and understand our history, then and only then will American politics change at the international level.

It is a simple dynamic in which egos and arrogance have to be shelved in favor of pragmatism and less grandiose, less selfish personal airs.

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role in the world. Nonetheless, this moment in history presents an opportunity for the US to redefine what leadership means in a truly multipolar world. The US can still demonstrate leadership by fos-

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ter a global order that prioritizes cooperation, diplomacy, and mutual respect, rather than one rooted in rivalry, conflict and a zero-sum game mindset.

China's peaceful rise, coupled with its massive domestic market and growing technological prowess, can be seen as complementary to global growth rather than as a destabilizing force. The challenge for the US will be to change its mindset from one of containment and confrontation to one of engagement and partnership. By doing so, the US can help shape a

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Israelis and it is a mini version of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Israel then kills more than 44,000 Arabs and Muslims in response and it is a mere consequence of Israel defending itself.

Change will not come from electing a new president. But it will come from electing Arabs and Muslims to local government offices.

The lowest levels of government have the greatest power and the most direct and personal contact with the American people. Meanwhile, the offices of the highest levels of government reflect broader policies that are the result of societal perceptions.

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It is a simple dynamic in which egos and arrogance have to be shelved in favor of pragmatism and less grandiose, less selfish personal airs.

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Republican Donald Trump's victory in Tuesday's presidential election will be little more than a news story and a subject of discussion for the pundits. Meanwhile, the Israeli genocide in Gaza will not stop until Israel wants it to stop. And Israel will also decide how far it will go in its wars with Lebanon and Iran. As for Arabs in America, there will be a lot of pictures and smiles with the winning candidate. A lot of back-slapping. And maybe some jobs and appointments for some Arabs and Muslims. But this does not mean there will be a change in American foreign policy or any enhancement in their engagement with government. Fundamentally, the US' Middle East policy did not change the last time Trump was president between 2017 and 2021. There was no recognition of a Palestinian state or easing of support for Israel. Accords were signed with several Arab countries that sought American financial or diplomatic assistance. America's support for Israel in the UN Security Council is rock solid and the US ambassador to the organization, regardless of who holds the seat, will continue to veto any resolution that tries to significantly change the path Israel is currently taking. US ambassadors to the UN have cast 91 vetoes in the council since the world body was founded in 1945, with nearly half protecting Israel and more than 30 directly blocking Palestinian rights. These votes have been consistent under both Republican and Democratic White House administrations.
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A critical step toward realizing this goal is through dialogue and diplomacy. Working with China to address common global challenges such as climate change and public health, and to maintain economic stability is essential. Both countries have an interest in addressing these issues, and cooperation in these areas could serve as a foundation for building trust and reducing tensions.

Moreover, addressing the areas where US-China competition is most intense — such as technology and trade — requires a nuanced approach that balances national interests with the broader need for global stability.

The risk of escalating rivalry between the US and China is real but not inevitable. While competition between the two major powers will likely persist, it does not have to devolve into outright conflict. The new US administration has the opportunity to take a bold step in reassessing its understanding of China's strategic intentions and in crafting a more forward-thinking and cooperative approach to managing the Sino-US relationship. In doing so, the administration can maximize the chances of a peaceful and prosperous future for all mankind.

At this pivotal moment in history, the world is watching. How the US chooses to engage with China will have profound implications not only for the future of the two countries but also for the future of the global order. Now more than ever, the US must rise to the challenge of leadership by embracing diplomacy, fostering cooperation, and striving for a future where the rise of China does not signal the decline of the US but rather an opportunity for shared progress.

— China Daily

Enlightened Americans must now rise up and resist

THIS is clear: Much of America has voted for a fascist.

If that short, blunt opening offends your delicate sensibilities, then you, dear reader, best dispense finally with the saccharine-drenched myths about a divided, discordant nation that has elected a fascist as president — again.

This remains unclear: America's fate.

An urgent task faces enlightened Americans who have made plain their admirable opposition to and rejection of every obscene aspect of a grinning strongman who will exact the comeuppance that has festered in his soul and mind like a seething cauldron.

Long before his once closest aides and cabinet ministers took, belatedly, to The New York Times or CNN to "warn" Americans that the crude demagogue they had served with such cloying deference was a bona fide fascist, silly columnists like me were raising alarm after alarm about Donald Trump's defining autocratic character in column after column since 2016.

But we and, much more importantly, our blatant, billboard-sized injunctions were dismissed by the ever-so-polite cognoscenti as the hyperbolic musings of a clickbait-seeking polemicists who had little understanding of the true nature of fascism.

So, predictably and irresponsibly, the polite cognoscenti remained wedded to their agreeable delusions even after Trump organised and unleashed a violent insurrection on the supposed citadel of American democracy, the US Capitol, to overturn an election.

The polite cognoscenti preferred, of course, to explain away the, by now, indisputable fact that a breathtaking swath of Americans have supported a flagrant fascist as the unfortunate, yet perhaps

Andrew Mitrovica

understandable, act of angry "cultists" who share an affinity with Trump's rank rhetoric and parochial grievances.

This has been the jejune attitude all along — to deflect, to qualify, to excuse the obvious: Fascism has gone mainstream in America.

Trump is not the leader of a "cult". He embodies a shared set of values and beliefs that reflect, to his horde of followers throughout the expanse of America, an irresistible ideology; an ideology whose foundational principles are cruelty, vengeance and ignorance.

I have no doubt that when Trump takes the oath of office early next year and swears on a Bible to uphold the constitution, he will immediately desecrate it to satisfy the prevailing lust for cruelty, vengeance and ignorance.

The disloyal "enemies from within" will be persecuted and prosecuted.

The "vermin" immigrants who have hollowed out the white soul of America — whether they carry citizenship or not — will be rounded up without due process and deported, stripped of their jobs and segregated from their families — by egregious force, if necessary.

The fraying remnants of America's "free press" will be targeted with threats, intimidation and retributive sanctions. And the oligarchs who own the "major" newspapers and TV stations will bow in obeisance.

The civil and legal rights won through decades of loud protest and hard work will be retracted or abolished outright with the happy complicity of a suppliant Congress and the Supreme Court.

The onus, the obligation, the duty to try to stall, block, or, if possible, prevent America from "turning back" rests with enlightened America.

Resistance is not futile. Rather, it is an imperative. It will not be easy.

Enlightened America will be seized by fear and despair in the days and weeks ahead. This is to be expected in the jarring, disorienting face of a broad Republican victory.

When enlightened Americans emerge from this halting shock — and they will — they must resist the easy temptation to slip into recrimination and blame.

They must, instead, lock arms in defiance. They must mobilise and fashion a formidable force with one overarching aim: to be faithful to the constitution that they bear honest allegiance to and to protect each other, as best they can, from the harm and heartache that is sure to come.

It can be done. It must be done.

This grave mission will require a steadfast will and determination; the same will and determination that enlightened Americans have deployed in the past to make their beloved home a more fair, just and welcoming place.

This, I repeat, is your obligation and duty, enlightened America. You will need a little time to lick your raw wounds. Then, you have to go about the vital business at hand with the knowledge that you are the bulwark, you are legion and you are in the right. History tells us that, however ugly and destructive, fascists like Trump cannot prevail. Ultimately, they destroy themselves. The question is: Will Trump destroy America, too? Enlightened Americans will, I'm convinced, do all they can, with all their might, purpose and conviction, to prevent the ruin of America.

Will it be enough? I don't know.

But the alternative is awful to fathom.

— Aljazeera

Will new Myanmar sanctions make a difference?

IN a coordinated move underscoring the West's condemnation of Myanmar's military regime, the EU, UK and Canada last week imposed another round of sanctions on the brutal junta. This action follows reports that the military government has intensified its crackdown on civilians, committing systematic and escalating killings that amount to what many view as crimes against humanity.

While the sanctions aim to penalize the military regime and prevent it from acquiring equipment essential to maintaining its violent control, questions remain about how effective they will be in both pressuring the junta and practically impacting its capacity to wage violence.

With Myanmar now suffering under one of the most oppressive military dictatorships in recent memory, this round of sanctions comes as an attempt to isolate the junta internationally. But, as history has shown, while sanctions may curtail some activities, they often fail to deliver the transformative political pressure needed to instigate real change. In the case of Myanmar, achieving such an outcome will be even more challenging given the regime's adaptability and its deep ties with supportive regional powers.

Since the coup d'etat in February 2021, Myanmar's military, known as the Tatmadaw, has moved swiftly to dismantle any form of democratic resistance. Peaceful protests were met with brutal crackdowns, arrests and a propaganda campaign that demonized anyone opposed to the military's rule. The junta's campaign has continued to escalate, with an estimated 4,000 civilians killed, including dozens of children, while thousands more have been arbitrarily detained, tortured or subjected to forced labor.

Human rights groups and journalists have reported that the Myanmar military has shifted from conventional warfare to methods characteristic of a police state, terrorizing its own people in a bid to cement absolute control. Reports of villages being burned, summary executions and widespread displacement paint a horrifying picture of a state willing to use unrestrained vio-

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

lence. In recent months, this intensified brutality has forced the EU, UK and Canada to intervene more assertively, with the latest sanctions underscoring their commitment to holding the junta accountable.

The sanctions are aimed at curtailing the junta's military capabilities and impeding its ability to source equipment for oppression. They target companies associated with Myanmar's military conglomerates, particularly the Myanmar Economic Corporation and the Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited, which have provided the junta with significant revenue to fund their operations. These measures also ban the export of dual-use technology to Myanmar that could be repurposed for surveillance, cyberwarfare or military operations, as well as components crucial to weapons systems.

The objectives of these sanctions are twofold. On the one hand, they aim to squeeze the junta financially, cutting off the sources of revenue that fund its repressive apparatus. On the other hand, they seek to limit the military's access to technology and equipment that enhance its surveillance and offensive capabilities. In theory, this combination should stymie the junta's operations, forcing it to turn its focus inward on dwindling resources rather than outward on political repression.

The efficacy of sanctions against authoritarian regimes is a topic that stirs considerable debate and Myanmar's military government is no exception. While sanctions can certainly impose economic costs and logistical hurdles, the Tatmadaw has shown an almost preternatural ability to insulate itself from international pressure. A large part of this is due to its entrenched connections with powerful allies such as China and Russia. Both countries have consistently undermined Western-led efforts to isolate Myanmar, providing the regime with both direct support and indirect channels for sanctioned goods.

China, which shares a long border with Myanmar, has been a crucial ally for the junta. This relationship has given the Tatmadaw access to supplies, resources and even intelli-

gence support to help it weather the storm of international scrutiny. Similarly, Russia's open arms policy toward the junta has provided it with essential military hardware and expertise, with Russian-made helicopters, jets and artillery systems playing a significant role in the crackdown. As long as these nations provide alternative channels, the impact of Western sanctions will be limited.

F u r t h e r m o r e , Myanmar's military conglomerates are intertwined with almost every sector of the economy, allowing them to generate revenue through domestic means even as international business declines. The military has also developed complex networks for smuggling and black market trade, making it adept at circumventing restrictions and obtaining key resources illicitly.

While economic sanctions may have limited impact on the military's material capabilities, they could still serve to weaken the junta politically. The Tatmadaw depends on a degree of internal legitimacy to maintain its dominance and international isolation risks undermining this. By openly aligning with pariah states while the West targets it with sanctions, the junta is inadvertently eroding its standing among Myanmar's populace. As the general public continues to suffer under economic hardship, resentment against the military grows. Prolonged sanctions may amplify domestic opposition, especially if economic isolation contributes to inflation, food shortages and a failing economy.

One key aspect often overlooked in sanctions regimes is the need for proactive support for democratic resistance within Myanmar.

The national unity government, formed by members of Myanmar's ousted democratic leadership, and ethnic resistance organizations are critical voices for the people. Western nations must consider providing financial and logistical aid to these groups, allowing them to build a counterforce to the junta from within. For the people of Myanmar, who have faced more than three long years of relentless state violence, such support could prove invaluable.

New start or old patterns for Sino-US ties?

ACCORDING to US media, the American people have elected Donald Trump as the 47th president of the United States, a momentous event that is significant for not only Americans but also the entire world. The role of the US in global affairs makes every presidential election a matter of great international interest.

As the leader of the world's largest economy with unparalleled military and diplomatic reach, the new US administration's policies and direction will reverberate far beyond the country's borders. One area where the impact of this election will be felt most acutely is the US-China relationship, which stands as the most consequential bilateral relationship of our time.

It is a fact that the Sino-US relationship has evolved into a complex rivalry that encompasses economic, technological, military and ideological dimensions. This is not a rivalry likely to fade any time soon, and it risks becoming a source of greater global division. At its core, this rivalry is rooted in differing visions of global leadership and national identity, with both countries vying for influence on the world stage.

Hence, true change in this dynamic would require a major paradigm shift: a reassessment of the US' understanding of China's strategic intentions.

Much of the tension between the two major powers stems from a perception in Washington that China's rise poses a direct threat to the US' prosperity and the American way of life. This belief fuels a tendency toward defensive and adversarial policies, which only serve to heighten tensions.

Yet Trump should recognize that the inevitable renaissance of China does not have to be viewed through a lens of threat or antagonism.

While China's economic and political influence continues to grow, it does not necessarily follow that this growth will come at the expense of the US or its global standing. In fact, it is not only possible but highly

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Moqeen opposes proposal to suspend gas supply to industries and CNG sector

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqeen Khan rejected the proposal to suspend gas supply to CNG filling stations and industries for next two months.

Fazal Moqeen in a statement here on Wednesday urged government and SNGPL to reconsider the proposal, because this move will not only inflict huge financial losses to the business community but also further increase unemployment in the province. SCCI chief said according to reports, SNGPL, under gas load management

for winter, would suspend gas supply for CNG filling stations and industries in December and January, which is unacceptable.

Fazal Moqeen said KP is producing surplus natural gas and suspension of gas supply to CNG and industrial sector is against violation of article 158 of the constitution, which has given guarantee that the province will first take full benefits from its own natural resources.

Similarly, he added the move to suspend gas supply will tantamount to economic murder of the business community.

The chamber president reminded that 100 mmcf

gas was allocated for installation of power plants in Hayatabad, Gadoon and Hattar Industrial Estates, so it should be clarified that where is utilizing this 100mmcfds gas.

Similarly, he said 150mmcfds gas were halting from January 2025 to the captive power therefore, it should also clarify where this 150 mmcfds will be utilized.

Fazal Moqeen said industries were consuming only 40mmcfds gas despite that proposal is under consideration to suspend gas, which is a move of destruction of industries and would also have negative impacts on trade, business and export.

The SCCI chief urged the government and SNGPL to review its proposal regarding suspension of gas supply to CNG and industrial sectors because they are a major source of employment for a large number of people.

He warned of the further increase of unemployment if the industries and CNG stations were closed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which couldn't be favorable for the economy of the country.

He made it clear that if the government and SNGPL would implement its proposal so SCCI along with industries and CNG sector would compel on agitation and move court as well.

Pakistan Stock Exchange witnesses bearish trend, loses 282 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 282.88 points, a negative change of 0.31%, closing at 92,021.44 points as compared to 92,304.32 points on the last trading day.

A total of 889,166,479 shares were traded during the day as compared to 752,664,527 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs30,474 billion against Rs32,827 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 452 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 201 of them recorded gains and 200 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 51 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 88,684,180

shares at Rs6.21 per share, Cnergyco PK with 71,639,690 shares at Rs4.11 per share and Power Cement with 39,151,188 shares at Rs7.20 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs233.34 per share price, closing at Rs18,900.67, whereas the runner-up was Hoechst Pakistan Limited with Rs93.00 rise in its per share price to Rs2,353.00.

Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs35.49 per share closing at Rs1,239.22 followed by Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs35.43 decline to close at Rs7,406.66.

Rupee sheds 06 paisa against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 06 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading

and closed at Rs277.89 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.83.

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 Rs278.95 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by Rs3.43 to close at Rs299.09 against the last day's closing of Rs302.52, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen lost 02 paisa and closed at Rs1.80, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.01 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs358.49 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs360.50.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paisa each to close at

Rs75.65 and Rs73.97 respectively.

Gold prices decrease by Rs1,000 per tola

The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs1,000 and was sold at Rs282,200 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs283,200 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs857 to Rs241,941 from Rs242,798 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs221,780 from Rs222,565, 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 \$10 to \$2,727 from \$2,727 last day, the Association reported.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb addresses 8th Edition of The Future Summit, discussing Pakistan's economic prospects and future financial strategies.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, MSC Raina, Maersk Detroit, Karam-14, Maya Gas-1, Olympic Sea and Elliree, scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, LPG, Fuel oil and Coal, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal, FOTCO Oil Terminal and Multi-Purpose Terminal 3 & 4 respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Marathopolis, Khairpur and EVA Pearl are carrying Container, Mogas and Chemicals are also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them edible oil carrier 'Asia Liberty' left the port on today morning, while five more ships, MSC Raina, Maersk Detroit, Maya Gas-1, Morning and African Finfoot are expected to sail on today after noon.

Cargo volume of 212,525 tonnes, comprising 135,067 tonnes imports cargo and 77,458 tonnes export cargo carried in 7,380 Containers (5,050 TEUs Imports & 2,330 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

FPCCI demands package

LAHORE (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Atif Ikram Sheikh has urged the government to announce a comprehensive, effective and multi-sectoral winter package for trade and industry to mitigate and overcome challenges in industrial production.

He added that industries are in a dire need of facilitation, incentivization and cost-cutting measures to meet export targets through competitiveness in the export markets.

Embracing THR could offer Pakistan a realistic path to reducing the country's high smoking rates and achieving long-term public health goals. The benefits of THR, as outlined by experts at the roundtable, suggest that Pakistan's health policymakers have a valuable opportunity to rethink their approach to tobacco control. By taking bold steps to integrate THR into the national health agenda, Pakistan could pave the way toward a smoke-free future and protect millions of lives from the preventable harms of smoking.

Pak's first Sider honey shipment heads to Malaysia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's First Sider honey shipment heads to Malaysia, according to the Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan's vision leads towards this export milestone.

Demonstrating the effectiveness of strategic leadership in enhancing Pakistan's export portfolio, Jam Kamal Khan has overseen a significant breakthrough with the export of the first consignment of Sider honey from Tarnab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to Malaysia, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

The achievement of this milestone is a direct result of the minister's relentless focus on promoting Pakistani agricultural products in the global market.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan's vision has been the driving force behind initiatives that have positioned Pakistan as a serious contender on the international stage.

The Minister's proactive

policies culminated in the success of FoodAg 2024, an event that showcased Pakistan's agricultural capabilities.

The Trade Mission at the High Commission of Pakistan in Kuala Lumpur, operating under the minister's directive, played a critical role in facilitating connections between Malaysian companies and Pakistani producers.

This effort was notably evident during the Second International Agriculture and Food Exhibition in Karachi from August 9 to 11, 2024, where the seeds of future trade deals were sown.

Jam Kamal Khan's commitment to fostering trade relations has paved the way for this initial export of high-quality Sider honey, which not only highlights Pakistan's rich agricultural resources but also strengthens bilateral ties with Malaysia.

The minister's comprehensive approach to trade

promotion, which includes leveraging international exhibitions and targeted outreach, has proven essential in opening new markets for Pakistani goods.

Officials at the High Commission in Kuala Lumpur have commended the strategic guidance of Minister Khan, emphasizing that his policies and the sustained support from the Trade Mission have been central to this achievement.

The shipment marks a new chapter in Pakistan-Malaysia trade relations, promising further economic cooperation and prosperity.

This first consignment is seen as a gateway for future exports of diverse Pakistani agricultural products, signaling a promising path for strengthened trade links.

Both Pakistani and Malaysian stakeholders are optimistic that continued collaboration will enhance mutual economic growth and forge deeper ties between the two nations.

Govt to setup 10,000 EV charging stations by 2030

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday unveiled the government plan to transform the transportation landscape by setting up 10,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations by 2030.

Addressing an "exhibition of electric bike models" organized by the Engineering Development Board (EDB), he emphasized the government's commitment to reducing fuel dependency, cutting carbon emissions, and promoting cleaner, sustainable transportation.

With growing private sector interest and government-backed incentives, this push toward electric

mobility is poised to significantly benefit both the economy and the environment.

The ministers said around 31 companies have expressed interest in investing in electric vehicles in Pakistan while 2 companies were granted permission to manufacture electric vehicles.

He said "Pakistan is now in a position to export three-wheelers". The minister highlighted some key initiatives to promote electric vehicles across the country.

He said that manufacturing activities will soon begin by private companies, boosting the industry.

He said that the government would launch the second electric vehicle policy by November 30 to promote

eco-friendly transportation.

He said, Punjab government was also working on two and three-wheeler electric vehicles.

The minister also announced that 100 students will receive electric bikes based on merit through a bidding process conducted in a transparent and fair manner.

Court Notice

In the court of sidra jalal civil judge-III/Judicial Magistrate II, matta swat. Case # 20/1 institution Year 16/02/2024. Next Hearing date 13/11/2024. Mst. Sher Bano VS Muhammad ali shah. (Notice to defendant .3) Dost Muhammad s/o Habib ur Rehman r/o shooh chena raqba Namal tehsil matta swat. In above mentioned case the respondent can't be served in the ordinary way, it is therefore proclaimed that if said respondents will not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 13/11/2024.ex-parte proceeding will be held against the mentioned respondents under my hand and seal of this court

Court Notice

In the court of sidra jalal civil judge-III/Judicial Magistrate II, matta swat. Case # 96/1 institution Year 29/07/024. Next Hearing date 15/11/2024. Khona gul VS gul zada. Notice to defendant. 3/1) Muhammad Naeem 3/2) Muhammad salem 3/3) Iqbal Hussain sons 3/4) Mst. Farhat Begum 3/5) Bakht Ranra 3/6) Haleema 3/7) Perveen daughters Muhammad Ameen 4) Khyber khan s/o Habib gul r/o Bejoora Bedra tehsil matta swat.

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Synergy Group wins AFAA award for SBP's Asaan Mobile Account drive

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Synergy Group has been praised at the Asian Federation of Advertising Associations (AFAA) awards, winning in the "Banking Insurance & Finance" category for its creative campaign on the State Bank of Pakistan's Asaan Mobile Account.

The campaign was celebrated for its impactful messaging around financial inclusion, highlighting the ease and accessibility that the Asaan Mobile Account offers to individuals nationwide.

The campaign emphasises

es the State Bank of Pakistan's commitment to simplifying banking by enabling access through mobile phones, a crucial step in expanding financial services to unbanked segments.

Synergy Group's campaign successfully demonstrated how this solution brings banking to users' fingertips, promoting economic empowerment across diverse communities in Pakistan.

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Synergy Group, Mr. Ahmed Kapadia, expressed gratitude to the AFAA for

acknowledging Synergy's work. "We would like to thank the AFAA for recognising our work on the Asaan Mobile Account campaign. This award is a testament to our team's dedication to producing creative and effective solutions that not only meet our clients' needs but also create meaningful impact," said Mr. Kapadia.

"At Synergy, we are committed to making a difference in the world of advertising and marketing, always striving to push boundaries to create work that resonates and delivers. We look forward to contin-

uing this journey, setting new standards, and contributing to positive change in the industry," added Mr. Kapadia.

Synergy Group's win at the AFAA further strengthens its position as a leader in advertising and marketing innovation, highlighting its ability to drive growth and transformation for clients across various sectors.

This recognition further sheds light on the Group's commitment to purpose-driven campaigns that align with the evolving needs of Pakistan's dynamic marketplace.



In brief

Pakistan team gears up for T20 Blind WC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The training camp for Pakistan's Blind Cricket Team, in preparations for the fourth T20 Blind Cricket World Cup, is underway at the Uqab School Blind Cricket Academy in Mirpur, Azad Kashmir. The 21 participating players are rigorously training daily in three sessions, focusing on bowling, batting, fielding, and physical fitness. This camp will continue until November 20, after which a selection committee, comprising Masood Jan, Muhammad Jameel, and Tahir Mehmood Butt, will finalize the 16-member squad for the World Cup, said a press release. The players are committed to preparing thoroughly for the mega event, especially aiming to put their best efforts forward. The selection committee members highlighted that alongside experienced players, newcomers who showcased strong performances in the domestic season have also been given an opportunity. Each player's performance is being closely monitored, with special emphasis on physical fitness, to ensure the formation of a well-prepared squad for the World Cup.

Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 3rd round begins Thursday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Third Round Fixtures of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 2024-25 will kick off on Thursday (November 7) with matches being played across the country. The third Round Fixtures of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy will run from November 7 to 10. Group A- Faisalabad vs Hyderabad at Diamond Cricket Ground, Islamabad; Islamabad vs Lahore Whites at Margharza Cricket Ground, Islamabad; Abbottabad vs Larkana at National Ground, Islamabad. Group B- Rawalpindi vs Karachi Whites at Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi; Multan vs Bahawalpur at Abbottabad Cricket Stadium, Abbottabad; Azad Jammu and Kashmir vs Peshawar at Ashfaq Cricket Ground, Sirdheri, Charsadda. Group C- Quetta vs Lahore Blues at Saeed Sports City, Bedian, Lahore; Karachi Blues vs FATA at Multan Cricket Stadium, Multan; Sialkot vs Dera Murad Jamali at Rana Naved ul Hasan Cricket Academy, Sheikhupura. After the end of second round, Sialkot Region is leading the table with two wins followed by FATA Region (1), Karachi Region Blues (1), D.M.Jamali Region (1), Lahore Region Blues (1) and Quetta Region (0).

Pakistan gears up for 2nd ODI

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan national cricket team intensified their preparations for the second One-Day International (ODI) against Australia with a rigorous practice session at the Adelaide Oval on Wednesday. According to details, the players underwent batting, bowling, and fielding drills, fine-tuning their skills ahead of the crucial encounter. The team will also conduct another practice session on Thursday. Pakistan is set to face Australia in the second match of the ODI series on November 8, aiming to bounce back from their two-wicket loss in the first ODI. The hosts took an early advantage in the series with a thrilling two-wicket victory in the first ODI. However, Pakistan will seek to level the series in Adelaide.

Asif clinches IBSF World Snooker C'ship 2024 title

DOHA (Monitoring Desk): Pakistani cueist Mohammad Asif has defeated Iran's Ali Gharahgozlou to claim the International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF) World Snooker Championship 2024 title here on Wednesday.

The 42-year-old player made his entrance into the tournament as a qualifier, having received a nomination from the Pakistan Billiards and Snooker Association (PBSA) to participate as a wild card entrant.

He seized the opportunity with remarkable determination, delivering breathtaking performances throughout the tournament.

Mohammad Asif clinched the coveted IBSF World Snooker Championship 2024 title with a score of 5-3



against Ali Gharahgozlou in the final.

Asif started the match with an impressive display of skill, dominating the opening frame with a commanding score of 70-25.

However, Gharahgozlou quickly found his rhythm in the second frame, levelling

the contest with a resounding victory of 87-7.

Undeterred, Asif regained his momentum in the third frame, showcasing his talent by winning decisively at 82-8.

The Pakistani cueist then delivered a breathtaking performance in the fourth frame, executing a

flawless 106 clearance break, which was his sixth-century break of the tournament.

Asif continued to exhibit his prowess in the fifth frame, further solidifying his advantage with a convincing 82-12 win, bringing his lead to a solid 4-1.

Although Gharahgozlou fought back valiantly, claiming victories in both the sixth and seventh frames, Asif proved too strong. He sealed his victory in the eighth frame with a stellar performance, executing a remarkable 93-point break.

This is the third individual world title of Mohammad Asif, having previously won championships in 2012 and 2019.

Moreover, he has also clinched two team titles, which makes him the most decorated cueist in the history of Pakistan with five world titles.

Sui Northern Gas Annual Sports Gala commences



F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Sui Northern Gas Sports Gala 2024 commences yesterday with women's matches at Nishtar Park Stadium.

The event will be officially inaugurated today by Managing Director Mr. Amer Tufail.

The inauguration ceremony is scheduled for 02 PM at the Punjab

Stadium, where Mr. Tufail will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest.

On the opening day, women's teams competed in badminton and table tennis matches held at the Nishtar Park Gymnasium Hall. Ms. Kanwal Wazir, Finance Secretary of the Sui Northern Sports Cell, was the Chief Guest for

the women's matches.

The four-day Sports Gala, which began on November 6, will conclude on November 9. A total of 368 male and female athletes from 23 regional teams will participate in the event.

The Sports Gala features competitions in cricket, badminton, tug of war, table tennis, volleyball, athletics, and more.

Diaz hits hat-trick as Liverpool spoil Alonso's return to Anfield

LIVERPOOL (AFP): Xabi Alonso said his return to Anfield was bittersweet after Liverpool thrashed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0 on Tuesday, thanks to a Luis Diaz hat-trick, to go top of the Champions League table.

Cody Gakpo was also on target as the Reds maintained their 100 percent record in Europe after four games. Alonso, a Champions League winner during his playing days in the Liverpool midfield, turned his back on succeeding Jurgen Klopp to remain at Leverkusen after leading them to an unbeaten German league and cup double last season.

The Spaniard's name was chanted by the home support in the closing stages. Liverpool, though, are not left wondering what might have been as Arne Slot continued his stunning start as manager with a 14th win in 16 games in all competitions. "One thing is the game and the other thing was the reception," said Alonso, who played for the Reds between 2004 and 2009.

"I have a bitter feeling but I really appreciate and (I'm) thankful that after so many years I come here and still have that bond with the club. But it would have been nicer with a better result." Leverkusen remain on seven points from their opening four Champions League matches

after another sobering night for their ambitions to match the heights they hit last season.

Alonso's men sit fourth in the Bundesliga, seven points adrift of leaders Bayern Munich, and failed to master what their coach described pre-match as a "beautiful challenge".

Slot's decision to move Diaz into a central role up front proved inspired as the Colombian struck his first hat-trick for the club.

Sleepless night – Just like in Saturday's 2-1 win over Brighton that took Slot's men to the top of the Premier League, it took until the second half for both Liverpool and the Anfield crowd to come to life. "Second half we could adjust the gameplan, we took more risks and we were better with the ball as well," said Slot.

"If you work or play at Liverpool you always feel pressure but we embrace this because we want to complete for everything. You have to accept if you work or play here you can enjoy these incredible evenings." A cagey tactical battle was sparked into life on the hour mark by a moment of stunning quality. Curtis Jones spun his marker before splitting the Leverkusen defence with a pinpoint pass for Diaz, who nonchalantly chipped the advancing Lukas Hradecky.

Two minutes later,

Liverpool killed the visitors off with another flowing move. Mohamed Salah's driven cross was headed in at the back post by the flying Gakpo. The linesman raised his flag to momentarily silence the celebrations, but a VAR review showed the Dutch forward was onside for his sixth goal of the season.

Victor Boniface headed wide with a huge chance to bring Leverkusen immediately back into the game. Instead, Liverpool pulled further clear seven minutes from time when Diaz controlled Salah's looping cross and fired home.

The Colombian then rounded off the scoring with his ninth goal of the season in stoppage time with another clinical finish after Darwin Nunez's blocked shot fell into his path. Liverpool's return of 12 points means they are almost certainly already assured of a place in the knockout phase, but are closing in on sealing direct progression to the last 16 via a top-eight finish in the 36-team league.

Leverkusen slip to 11th but Alonso is confident of progressing with three of their remaining four games to come at home.

"We are in a good position to fight to go through to the next round," he added. "Today it will be tougher to sleep but we have time to see the positives as well."



Ramiz defends Babar Azam amid criticism

KARACHI (Web Desk): Former Pakistan Test cricketer and Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja has defended star batter Babar Azam amid online criticism after the first ODI against Australia.

Pakistan lost the first of the three-match ODI series by two wickets at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) after a spirited performance with the ball.

Babar Azam, who was playing his first ODI match after stepping down as Pakistan's white-ball captain, managed a meagre 37 runs from 44 balls with the help of four boundaries.

Pakistan's batting lineup folded for a paltry 203-run total, which Australia successfully chased in 33.3 overs at the loss of eight wickets. Ramiz Raja, during a recent video on his YouTube channel, heaped praise on Babar and expressed disappointment over the criticism against the star batter.

"If you got a player like Babar Azam by mistake, you should respect him. Babar Azam played better than all Pakistani batters in the first ODI against Australia," said Ramiz. "I get disappointed when I see keyboard warriors trolling and abusing Babar."

Notably, the second ODI of the series will be played on 8 November in Adelaide, while Perth will host the third ODI on 10 November. The ODI series will be followed by a three-match T20I series, scheduled to commence on November 14. Brisbane will host the first T20I, with the next matches scheduled for November 16 and 18 in Sydney and Hobart, respectively.

Pant, Mitchell surge in ICC Test Rankings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant and New Zealand's veteran Daryl Mitchell have been rewarded for strong performances during the recent third Test by making gains on the latest ICC Men's Test Batter Rankings that has caused a major shake-up inside the top 10.

New Zealand clinched a narrow 25-run victory in Mumbai to claim a 3-0 series whitewash over India, with Pant and Mitchell the main beneficiaries in an ever-changing landscape within the top 10 list for Test batters.

Pant rises five places to sixth overall on the back of a pair of half-centuries during the Test in a sure sign that he is back to his best following a serious car accident, with the attacking left-hander now just one spot behind the career-best fifth position he first occupied in July 2022.

Mitchell is one spot behind Pant - seventh overall - following his eight-place rise and first innings score of 82 against India, joining teammate Kane Williamson (second) as the only New Zealanders inside the top 10 rankings

for Test batters. England right-hander Joe Root maintains a healthy lead at the top of the category, with Williamson, Harry Brook (third), Yashasvi Jaiswal (fourth) and Steve Smith (fifth) his closest challengers.

India's Shubman Gill (up four places to 16th) also makes some ground on the list for Test batters following a score of 90 in the first innings against New Zealand in Mumbai, while Player of the Series Will Young gains 29 spots to move to 44th overall for the Black Caps.

Experienced spinner Ravindra Jadeja was the big mover on the latest rankings for Test bowlers, with the Indian left-arm gaining two places to move to sixth behind No.1 ranked South African Kagiso Rabada following his 10-wicket haul against New Zealand.

Teammate Washington Sundar improves seven places to move to 46th on the same list for Test bowlers, while spin duo Ajaz Patel (up 12 places to 22nd) and Ish Sodhi (up three rungs to equal 70th) are among the gains from a New Zealand perspective.

South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj is also on

the rise, with the left-arm jumping four places to 19th overall for Test bowlers following his 13 scalps across the Proteas' recent series sweep of Bangladesh.

There is also some movement on the latest ODI rankings following the opening two matches of West Indies' home series against England and the first contest of Australia's series against Pakistan.

West Indies captain Shai Hope gains five places on the list for ODI batters to move to 12th following a 17th ODI century in the second match against England, while counterpart Liam Livingstone jumps 32 spots to 58th after his hundred in the same clash.

A pair of left-armers made giant strides on the list for ODI bowlers following the opening game of Australia's series with Pakistan in Melbourne, with Shaheen Afridi gaining three places to move to fourth and Mitchell Starc improving four spots to 14th.

And Brandon McMullen is the big winner on the updated list for ODI all-rounders, with the Scotland dasher gaining three spots in this category to move to sixth.

Zheng moves into last four of WTA Finals

RIYADH (AFP): Zheng Qinwen continued to deliver in her breakthrough season as she advanced to the semi-finals of the WTA Finals in Riyadh on Wednesday with victory over Wimbledon finalist Jasmine Paolini.

Picking up a 30th win from her last 35 matches, the Chinese Olympic gold medalist swept past the fourth-seeded Paolini 6-1, 6-1 in a mere 67 minutes.

In the last day of round-robin action in the Purple Group, Zheng and Paolini were fighting for the second qualification spot behind Aryna Sabalenka, who had already secured her semi-final place on Monday.

With one defeat against Sabalenka and one victory over Elena Rybakina in her opening matches this week in Riyadh, the seventh-seeded Zheng locked down her spot in the final four with a dominating performance against Paolini.

It made the 22-year-old the first Chinese player since Li Na in 2013 to make it out of the group stage at the WTA Finals. "It was 11 years ago, I'm really proud I could make it. I didn't know what to expect coming to these WTA Finals for the first time. I was in a very difficult group," said Zheng. "It's one of the best per-



formances I had during this year, really good percentage of first serves, I felt really good on my groundstrokes and I made a couple of good volleys, I really enjoyed it." An aggressive return earned Zheng her first break of the match in game three and the seventh seed doubled her advantage to go up 5-1. Paolini, who was also a finalist at the French Open this year, saved a set point on her own serve in game seven but Zheng kept her foot on the pedal and closed out the set on her second opportunity.

The second set was just as impressive from Zheng and after saving a break point while serving for the match at 5-1, she wrapped up the encounter with her 12th ace of the match. It was Zheng's fourth victory in as many meetings with Paolini, who won't leave Riyadh just yet as she continues to fight for a semi-final spot in doubles alongside fellow Italian Sara Errani.

Josh Inglis named Australia's white-ball captain

SYDNEY (AFP): Josh Inglis will captain Australia for the first time in the third ODI against Pakistan and in the following Twenty20 series, selectors said Wednesday, with a number of stars absent.

Regular one-day skipper Pat Cummins plus Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood, Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith will not play the third ODI in Perth on Sunday so they can prepare for the Test series against India. Xavier Bartlett, Spencer Johnson and Josh Philippe all come into the squad.

With Twenty20 skipper Mitchell Marsh on paternity leave, the 29-year-old wicketkeeper Inglis will also captain the hosts in the three-match T20 series against Pakistan starting November 14.

"Josh is an integral member of the ODI and T20I teams and a highly respected player on and off the field," George Bailey, chairman of selectors, said.

"He has led Australia A previously and will bring strong tactical nous and a positive approach to the role." Australia won the first one-dayer on Monday by two wickets. The second match is on Friday. Australia's Test team, led by Cummins, will play five matches against India.

Haier Sports Gala: A Celebration of team spirit and excellence!

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Haier Sports Gala 2024 was nothing short of an exhilarating event, bringing together employees from across the organization to celebrate teamwork, athleticism, and the joy of competition. Haier Sports Gala was held on the 18th and 19th of October 2024. The two-day extravaganza was packed with thrilling games and energetic performances.

It was about building connections, promoting and reinforcing the values of teamwork and perseverance. Every employee was empowered to actively participate and create team harmony. The sports gala created a spirit of greater engagement and motivation among employees which resulted in a positive work culture.

The festivities began with a Grand Parade, as participants from different departments proudly marched onto the field. The Gala featured a diverse range of games that catered to every interest and skill level. From the fast-paced intensity of Badminton, Table Tennis to the strategy and precision of Chess, there was something for everyone. Cricket and



Volleyball had everyone on the edge of their seat and impressive plays that drew cheers from the crowd. The Relay Race tested both speed and coordination, while the classic Tug of War sparked enthusiastic rivalry between teams, filling the field with excitement and laughter.

All eyes turned to the arrival of the esteemed chief guest Arshad Nadeem, The Olympic Champion. Arshad Nadeem added a special highlight by demonstrating his javelin skills. He encouraged the participants to embrace sports-

manship and give their best. The world-class javelin thrower joined Haier as a brand ambassador for 2024-2025, and the signing ceremony also took place at the event. The event was also graced by national cricket stars, Mr. Kamran Akmal and Mr. Umar Gul.

Haier Sports Gala 2024 wasn't just about winning games. It truly was a testament to the Haier family spirit, and everyone walked away as winners, filled with memories that will last a lifetime. It was a platform for employees to foster teamwork, bravery,

and refresh their energy. These skills translate directly into better performance at work, making such events vital for organizational growth.

At Haier Sports Gala 2024, the grand closing ceremony brought the event to a memorable conclusion. Prizes were awarded to the winning teams in each category, with cheers and applause echoing across the complex. The champions lifted their trophies with pride, while others celebrated the fun, unity, and positive energy that made the event unforgettable.



In brief

55 vehicles fined in anti-pollution drive

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to rising air pollution, Islamabad's district administration has introduced tough new regulations, implementing Section 144 to control toxic emissions and curb smog levels in the Federal Capital. According to a notification, Islamabad's district administration has imposed Section 144 to limit the release of harmful gases in an effort to combat air pollution. The restrictions apply to emissions from vehicles, factories, kilns, and the burning of garbage and crops. Additional District Magistrate Islamabad, issued these orders for two months, during which violators will face legal consequences. As part of this crackdown, the Islamabad Transport Authority (ITA) is actively inspecting vehicles for compliance. In this connection, the ITA Secretary recently conducted an inspection at the vegetable market and checked 75 vehicles. During the checking, as many as 55 vehicles were fined for violating emission standards. One heavily polluting vehicle was impounded and moved to the police station. According to Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Memon, these daily inspections are part of the city's broader effort to manage air pollution and reduce smog. Warning letters have been issued to non-compliant vehicles, with fines imposed where necessary. The administration's preemptive measures aim to keep pollution under control as winter approaches, bringing with it heightened risks of smog. The district's intensified approach reflects a commitment to cleaner air and public health protection, as enforcement continues against sources of pollution citywide.

Nine outlaws held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended 09 outlaws involved in different criminal activities including drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons. Police teams also recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession on Wednesday. A police spokesperson told APP that the teams of Golra, Industrial Area and Khanna police stations took legal action against accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons. He said police team also arrested five accused's namely Awais, Sohail, Ghulam Haider, Firoz Khan and Shakir Khan and recovered four 30 bore pistols with ammunition and \$05-gram ice from their possession. Moreover, four absconders were also arrested from various areas of the city during the last 24 hours. DIG Raza said that the Islamabad Police was actively working to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital, emphasizing that nobody would be allowed to disrupt citizens' peace. Protecting the lives, property and dignity of citizens is the Islamabad Police's top priority, he said. He urged the citizens to report any suspicious activities to the respective police station or emergency helpline "Pukar-15" to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.

ICT admin bans wall chalking

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration launched a city-wide crackdown against unauthorized wall chalking, leading to several arrests and charges. This swift action aims to enforce the recent ban on wall chalking in public spaces, targeting those who deface city walls for promotional campaigns, said the spokesman of ICT administration on Wednesday.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam presenting a souvenir to Azerbaijan's Ambassador, Khazar Farhadov, during his visit to her office. —APP Photo

Sacrifices of Kashmiris will not go in vain: Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam on Wednesday expressed the resolve that the sacrifices and blood of Kashmiris, particularly Martyrs of Jammu, will not go in vain.

In his message on Jammu Martyrs' Day, being observed Wednesday, he paid homage to the martyrs saying that the Kashmiris have rendered matchless sacrifices for Pakistan.

Amir Muqam said the

Indian army in their nexus with Dogra Army and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh martyred three hundred thousand Kashmiris.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs, Engineer Amir Muqam, on Wednesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to Kashmir's freedom, pledging that the sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs will not be in vain and expressed confidence that Kashmiris will ultimately win independence from India.

In his message on Jammu Martyrs' Day, the minister praised the unparalleled sacrifices of Kashmiris, stating that the martyrs hold a significant place in Kashmir's struggle for freedom. The sacrifices of Jammu's martyrs, driven by their love for Pakistan, will be eternally remembered.

He commended the martyrs' contribution to the freedom movement, remembering how Indian forces, in collaboration with Dogra and RSS, martyred 300,000 Kashmiris.

IT, data role vital for sustainable development: Shaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said that the Information Technology and data are transformative forces driving sustainable development and socio-economic growth.

IT provides accurate, real-time data on water resources, climate patterns and agricultural needs, she said while addressing Parliamentary Dialogue Session on "Inclusive Policy Reforms for Improved Water and Food Security in a Changing

Climate".

She said data empowers policymakers to make informed decisions that are responsive to real-time challenges. By leveraging IT, policymakers can create data-driven, inclusive policies that promote sustainable water and food security, she added.

Shaza Fatima said that water security and its proper usage is being ensured through technology, adding that technology is also being used in agriculture sector today.

She said the Ministry of IT & Telecom launched

initiatives to enhance IT adoption, making data more open and accessible for improved public services and evidence-based policymaking.

She said the rapid advancement in Pakistan's IT sector underscores its critical role in securing the nation's economic future.

She said Ministry of IT is committed to fostering innovation, digital transformation and economic growth. Minister of State for IT said that exports of Pakistan's IT sector are increasing.

ANF seizes over 20 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations recovered over 20 kg drugs worth Rs 1.8 million and arrested two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday.

He informed that in an operation, 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested near a university on Lalazar Road in Rawalpindi. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions.

In another operation, 11.155 kg hashish was recovered from Kohat and 7.200 kg hashish and 1 kg ice were recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near East Bypass in Karachi. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

Health Authority issues smog advisory

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Health Authority Rawalpindi on Wednesday has issued an advisory regarding anti-smog measures, and urged the people to take precautionary measures in this regard.

Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, the District Health Authority chief advised the public to use face masks and goggles when leaving home, get the vehicles inspected to reduce smog pollution. He urged people to pay attention to construction sites and garbage areas so that dust, dirt, etc. does not mix in air. Also avoid burning garbage in streets.

He also emphasized that factories should install air pollution control devices. He highlighted that the plantation has a pivotal role in controlling smog. Maximizing tree planting can contribute to smog reduction. He said that farmers should not burn crop residues.

The advisory suggested that the use of wet cloth for floor cleaning in houses is better than that of the broom. Keep the windows and doors of the houses closed, drink as much water as possible. Dr. Asif informed that smog awareness counters have been activated in hospitals.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan pledge climate resilience

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov called on Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam at her office here on Wednesday.

The meeting focused on preparations for the upcoming COP29 summit and emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts for effective climate action.

During the meeting, Alam outlined Pakistan's ongoing efforts in preparing for COP29, highlighting the importance of building international consensus on key climate issues and enhancing the country's climate action plans.

She stressed that Pakistan's participation in COP29 would be aimed at ensuring its national interests are represented and strengthening its position within the global climate

discourse. "Pakistan's preparations for COP29 are part of a broader strategy to engage with international partners and bolster its stance on vital climate issues," she said.

She emphasized that the country is actively working towards meeting its emission reduction targets as part of its nationally determined contributions while underscoring the need for international support in achieving sustainable development goals related to climate change.

The Coordinator to the prime minister also highlighted the critical role of developed countries in fulfilling their financial commitments to assist developing nations in their climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Pakistan, she noted, has been making significant strides in transitioning to renewable energy, particularly solar and wind, and aims to

showcase its renewable energy initiatives at COP29.

The ambassador expressed Azerbaijan's strong commitment to enhancing cooperation with Pakistan, particularly in the context of climate action.

He emphasized the importance of closer bilateral ties between Azerbaijan and Pakistan in the areas of sustainable development, climate change, and regional cooperation, noting that the upcoming COP29 summit presents a significant opportunity for both countries to collaborate and advance their mutual interests in these critical areas.

The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to working together to address the challenges posed by climate change and to strengthen global climate action efforts.

Chinese delegation discusses urban development strategies with CDA

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Chinese delegation met with Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, at CDA here on Wednesday, aimed at fostering cooperation and sustainable urban growth.

The discussions centered on potential collaborations in urban planning, green initiatives, and environmental sustainability for the future development of Islamabad.

Chairman Randhawa extended a warm welcome to the delegation, expressing enthusiasm for the opportunity to learn from China's advanced development model, particularly in the areas of sustainable infrastructure and environmental management.

He presented several ongoing and upcoming

projects in Islamabad, emphasizing the city's commitment to a sustainable urban future.

A key topic of discussion was the revision of Islamabad's Master Plan, where Chinese expertise could play a vital role in ensuring that the city's growth aligns with international environmental standards.

The discussions also highlighted investment opportunities within Islamabad's urban planning and infrastructure sectors, with Chairman Randhawa encouraging Chinese businesses to contribute to the city's development. The Chinese delegation expressed a keen interest in supporting Islamabad's green initiatives, offering insights into successful methods for

reducing carbon emissions and implementing eco-friendly urban designs.

In the pursuit of transforming Islamabad into a greener and more sustainable city, the Chinese representatives pledged to share their expertise in carbon reduction and urban planning, showcasing best practices that have proven effective in China. The collaboration aligns with Islamabad's ambition to evolve into an environmentally conscious urban area.

Concluding the meeting, Chairman Randhawa expressed his appreciation for the Chinese delegation's interest and support, pledging CDA's full cooperation for future joint projects aimed at building a greener, more sustainable Islamabad.

Construction continues on all six fronts of Tarbela 5th extension project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The construction work on all six work fronts of 1530 MW Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project is swiftly being carried out to commission it in 2025-26.

The key sites included the Raised Intake, the Tunnel and the Power house, source told APP here.

Temporary support work in the tunnel has already been completed paving the way for commencement of construction on the connecting tunnel. Installation of equip-

ment such as draft tubes of all three units - Unit No. 18, 19 and 20 - is in progress at the Power house Site. While, the Contractor is all set to resume construction work on the Raised Intake structure once the water in the reservoir recedes to the required level, they said.

The project is likely to be completed in 2025-26. Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project is a component of green, clean and least-cost energy generation plan of WAPDA. World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment

Bank are providing financial assistance for the project to the tune of US\$ 390 million and US\$ 300 million respectively.

Under the 5th Extension, three generating units - of 510 MW each - are being installed at Tunnel No. 5 of Tarbela Dam Project and it will provide 1.347 billion units hydel electricity to the National Grid on the average every year. Installed capacity at Tarbela Dam will surge to 6418 MW from 4888 MW after completion of Tarbela 5th Extension Project.

Punjab Pavilion to showcase culture in Lok Mela

RAWALPINDI (APP): Executive Director Punjab Arts Council (PAC), Muhammad Majid Tanveer on Wednesday visited PAC Rawalpindi where he was briefed on the council's performance and activities.

Director PAC Sajjad Hussain, while briefing on forthcoming Lok Virsa Festival said 50 master artisans from across the province have been invited to the Punjab Pavilion.

He said, "Folk artists will perform at the festival, with traditional dances like

Bhangra, Luddi, Jhumar, and Simi being showcased in the pavilion."

He informed that the historical architectural structures and glimpses of a traditional village would also be featured as part of the Punjab Pavilion.

Executive Director Muhammad Majid Tanveer said the festival will vividly represent the colors of every part of Punjab, highlighting the province's rich cultural diversity.

He acknowledged that the Punjab government was playing a valuable role in

promoting arts and culture in the region.

Later, the executive director also inaugurated an art exhibition featuring artworks by Khurram Shahbaz Babri, Muhammad Azeem Iqbal, and Muhammad Younas Rumi. Majid Tanveer encouraged the artists, noting that artists are regarded as messengers of peace worldwide.

He appreciated PAC Rawalpindi's commitment to providing a platform for artists, where young painters can exhibit their work without any fee.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the ongoing development project as heavy machinery is being used in the construction of the PTCL Chowk Underpass in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

IRSA releases 123,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 123,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 57,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1523.16 feet and was 125.16 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 29,800 cusecs and 64,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1180.85 feet, which was 130.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,900 cusecs and 38,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 55,600, 45,100, 35,100 and 4,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Afghan national executed

TEHRAN (Amu TV): Iran has executed one Afghan citizen in Mashhad. The executions, which reportedly involved detainees from Sistan and Baluchestan and one Afghan national, were carried out over charges related to drug offenses and other alleged crimes. Human rights organization identified four of those executed: Mahmoud Shahraki and Mohammad Reza Davar, both from Zabol in Sistan and Baluchestan; Zahir Safari, Afghan national; and Majid Ghadiri, resident of Mashhad.

The Frontier Post

Jamadi-ul-Awwal 04 1446 — Thursday, November 07, 2024

Death anniversary observed

KABUL (Amu TV): Afghanistan's political figures gathered in a virtual meeting to mark the 17th anniversary of the death of Mustafa Kazemi, a former minister of commerce. Kazemi was killed on November 6, 2007, during a visit to Baghlan Province in northern Afghanistan, where he and five other members of parliament were targeted in a suicide attack at a local sugar factory. The bombing claimed the lives of Kazemi and five fellow MPs.

70 % of military vehicles repaired

KABUL (TOLOnews): Officials from the Ministry of Defense said that all military vehicles have been registered, and 70% of the inactive vehicles under the ministry's responsibility have been repaired.

The chief of staff of this corps said that technical engineers have repaired at least 6,798 military vehicles over the past three years. Among these, 2,018 vehicles have been made operational since the beginning of this solar year.

Naqibullah Azizi, Chief of Staff of the 209th Al-

Fath Corps, said: "Since the beginning of 1403, we have repaired 2,018 various types of vehicles in our workshops, including Rangers, Humvee tanks, other tanks, and motorcycles."

Meanwhile, the head of the Ministry of Defense's technical division, who visited the corps, said that all military vehicles have been registered with the ministry and that 70% of the repairs are complete.

Alauddin Agha, Head of the Ministry of Defense's technical division, stated: "About 70% of the vehi-

cles have been repaired, and we are committed to maintaining and repairing all military vehicles in the future."

Mohammad Hamed, an engineer, said: "There are more than 70 mechanics here. We can repair any type of vehicle. Some parts are repaired and used here, while others are provided to us from outside."

The Chief of Staff of the 209th Al-Fath Corps Corps also reported the repair and activation of 511 light and heavy weapons over the past three years.

DABS owed 12b AFN by former govt officials

KABUL (Ariana News): Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), the country's power utility company, said Wednesday that ex-officials of the former government and state institutions owe 12 billion afghanis (AFN) in unpaid electricity debt.

The head of DABS has warned the ex-officials that if they do not pay the electricity consumption fee, their houses and assets will be seized.

Last year, DABS announced that it had collected \$681 million dollars in debt from former officials and commercial and industrial companies.

Head of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), Abdul Bari Omar, said Tuesday that the utility company pays for their imported power on the 27th and 28th of every month.

According to Omar, the company is up-to-date on its payments.

Last year, DABS's spokesperson said the company had settled debt totaling \$627 million that had been carried over from the former government.

This money was paid to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Iran.

Omar stated that in the last three months, energy production projects worth \$400 million have been put into operation and other projects are on the agenda.

According to him, these projects include wind, gas, coal and solar energy initiatives. On the Kajaki dam in Helmand, he said the dam will be able to produce 150 megawatts of electricity within the next year.

While efforts are being made to increase electricity production, Afghans continue to struggle with little or no power.

At present, 950 megawatts of electricity is consumed annually in the country, of which just over 300 megawatts is produced domestically and the balance is imported from neighboring countries.

Taliban lash two more as public reaches 46 people

PARWAN (Amu TV): Taliban publicly flogged a woman and a man in the central province of Parwan on Wednesday, November 6, bringing the total number of people punished with public lashings over the past week to 46.

Taliban reported that a crowd, including their local officials and the chief of the Taliban's court in Parwan, Zabihullah Khalid, had gathered to witness the punishment.

According to a statement from the Taliban, each individual was lashed 39 times and sentenced to three years in prison.

Data gathered by Amu, shows that 46 people—including 10 women—have been publicly flogged by the Taliban across eight provinces in the past week, from October 31 to November 6.

Provinces where these punishments have occurred include Kabul, Nangarhar, Paktika, Ghazni, Parwan, Maidan Wardak, Takhar, and Jowzjan.

The return of public flogging marks a reversion to strict punishments that the Taliban resumed on November 19, 2022, nearly two decades after their previous rule.

Since regaining control of Afghanistan in August 2021, Taliban have increasingly implemented severe punishments under their interpretation of Sharia law. These include public executions, stoning, amputation, and lashings, all carried out in front of gathered spectators.

Afghans have expressed concern over the Taliban's methods, stating that such practices are enforced without transparency or information on legal proceedings.

Despite public outcry, Taliban have consistently withheld details on how these cases are adjudicated, raising concerns over due process and human rights violations.

Hanafi engages with officials on governance and development needs

KABUL (BNA): Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs of Afghanistan, recently held a meeting with several local officials and Mujahideen leaders from Sar-e Pol Province to discuss provincial matters and assess local governance.

According to the ARG's press release, Sar-e Pol officials provided an update on the overall situation in the province, highlighting their commitment to serving the people and improving living conditions. They emphasized ongoing efforts to create better living standards for residents, alongside appeals for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's increased focus on educational and developmental initiatives in Sar-e Pol.



In response, Mawlawi Hanafi underscored the importance of engaging with public feedback and suggestions. He advised

that central and provincial officials within the Islamic Emirate should remain attentive to citizens' needs and address them to the

best of their abilities with available resources, aiming to enhance local governance and development across Afghanistan.

UN Climate Change Conference COP29 to be held in Baku

KABUL (TOLOnews): The 29th annual UN Climate Change Conference, COP29, is set to take place in Baku, Azerbaijan, in a week.

The head of Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency recently met with the UN Special Representative and her delegation to discuss Afghanistan's participation in the conference.

Officials also discussed Afghanistan's environmental status, climate change mitigation efforts, and agreements.

Ruhullah Amin, head of Climate Change at the National Environmental Protection Agency, told

TOLOnews: "We had a comprehensive discussion on Afghanistan's vulnerability to climate impacts, strengthening cooperation to resume suspended projects, accessing new climate mechanisms, and Afghanistan's participation in COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan."

Previously, UN Afghanistan Representative Roza Otunbayeva emphasized the importance of COP29, saying that it will pave the way for Afghanistan's participation in future global meetings.

According to a report by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Afghanistan ranks

among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries. Afghanistan is fourth in crisis risk and 24th in vulnerability and readiness, per the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index.

The report notes that nearly 400 earthquakes, including a 6.3-magnitude quake in Herat in October 2023, have occurred over the past three years.

Economics expert Abdul Shakoor Hadawal, an economic expert, said: "The UN should implement measures to mitigate natural disasters so that, if they occur, damages remain minimal."

Separately, the head of the Islamic Emirate's polit-

ical office in Qatar, Suhail Shaheen, discussed humanitarian aid, health, and climate change with the Red Cross representative in Afghanistan.

Shaheen mentioned, "I spoke with the ICRC Head about humanitarian aid, the health sector, and constructing check dams. Katharina Ritz said they would increase their activities and budget in Afghanistan as needed."

Climate change in recent years has caused droughts and, in some areas, flooding, while earthquakes have affected many provinces and citizens across the country.

Saffron attracts global buyers, secures million-dollar deal

KABUL (TOLOnews): The US Agency for International Development (USAID) announced that a buyer has placed an annual order for 600 kilograms of Afghan saffron.

According to USAID, this order was secured at the 2024 Paris trade show, with an annual sales value reaching \$1.07 million.

USAID added that this order will bring a positive change to the position of Afghan saffron in global markets and will also improve the livelihoods of people in Afghanistan.

"A major buyer placed an order of 600 kg per year of Afghan saffron at the Paris 2024 trade show. Valued at \$1,070,000 annually, this deal elevates Afghan saffron as a luxury brand while improving the livelihoods of Afghans nationwide," USAID stated.

Abdul Nasir Rashtia, an economic analyst, told TOLOnews: "Unfortunately, Afghan saffron is often smuggled to a neighboring country, where it is then re-exported under that country's name to international markets. Conversely, saffron from neighboring countries enters Afghan markets and is exported as Afghan saffron, which can harm the reputation and credibility of Afghan saffron."

Afghan saffron, known for its unique quality and fragrance, has now gained a special place in global markets and plays an important role in Afghanistan's economy and the livelihoods of its people.

At the same time, the Chamber of Commerce and Investment has noted that

Afghan saffron, due to its distinctive quality, has high potential for growth in global markets. According to the Chamber, with proper investment and marketing, this product can become one of Afghanistan's key export goods, benefiting farmers' livelihoods and contributing to the country's economic development.

Khan Jan Alokozay, a board member of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment, told TOLOnews: "The more saffron is produced and the more international buyers there are, the more we produce. Our traders are compelled to invest in it."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce reported that from January to September 2024, Afghan saffron exports exceeded

\$36 million, with shipments to India, the United Arab Emirates, the US, Canada, Turkey, and European countries.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesperson for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, told TOLOnews: "In the first nine months of 2024, Afghanistan exported 46 tons of saffron, valued at over \$36 million. Most of the exports went to India, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the US, Canada, Turkey, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom."

Previously, Ali Mobaraki, the Director of Agriculture Jihad in Neyshabur, Iran had said that despite Iran's saffron exports to Afghanistan, the country has become one of Iran's main saffron competitors.

Afghanistan continues to rank as dangerous country for childbirth

KABUL (Khaama Press): The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has identified Afghanistan as one of the most challenging countries for mothers, noting that every two hours, a mother dies due to preventable pregnancy and childbirth complications.

UNFPA released a report expressing deep concern over the rising maternal mortality rate in Afghanistan.

The report states that every two hours, a life is lost due to preventable complications related to reproductive health.

According to the UN, Afghanistan's weak health-care infrastructure and limited access to reproductive health services, especially in rural areas, pose serious threats to the lives of mothers and newborns.

The organization attributes the prolonged humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan to factors such as ongoing economic instability, restrictions on women's employment and education,



the return of refugees, and the increase in internally displaced people.

The United Nations has also emphasized the importance of continuing health-care services for mothers and children in Afghanistan.

Previous UN data indicates that out of every 100,000 births, 638 Afghan mothers lose their lives.

For consecutive years,

Afghanistan has had the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in Asia.

The restrictions on women's rights, including the barring of education and employment, exacerbate the health crisis, as women lack the resources, knowledge, and support to access essential healthcare services, especially during pregnancy and childbirth.

The denial of education

and employment opportunities for women and girls in Afghanistan is not only a violation of human rights but also deepens the humanitarian crisis, limiting the country's potential for future stability and development.

Addressing these issues is crucial to ensuring the safety and well-being of Afghan women and their families.

Educational program with UN announced

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan has announced a joint educational program with the United Nations for Afghan citizens in the Surkh-andarya region.

The ministry issued a statement reporting a meeting between Ismatulla Irgashev, Uzbekistan's special representative for Afghanistan, and Akiko Fujii, a representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

According to the statement, the two representatives discussed the continuation of the joint educational project for Afghan citizens in Surkhandarya, the current situation in Afghanistan, and efforts to

prevent a humanitarian crisis in the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan emphasized its commitment to assisting Afghanistan and strengthening cooperation with international organizations to promote stability and development in the region.

Previously, Saida Mirziyoyeva, the daughter of Uzbekistan's president, expressed her country's readiness to support education for Afghan women and girls at an event marking the "International Day to Protect Education from Attack."

She emphasized that there is no better way to protect Afghan women and girls than providing free education.

Currently, approximate-

ly 1.5 million girls are deprived of education in Afghanistan due to restrictions.

Uzbekistan's ongoing efforts to support Afghan citizens through educational initiatives highlight the region's commitment to empowering Afghan women and girls, especially in light of the severe restrictions they face within Afghanistan.

Through collaboration with international organizations like the United Nations, Uzbekistan aims to play a key role in stabilizing the region and providing hope for Afghan citizens, who are increasingly isolated from educational opportunities in their own country.

Poppy cultivation grows 19% despite ban: UN



KABUL (Ariana News): Opium cultivation rose by 19 percent in Afghanistan this year, the UN reported Wednesday, despite a ban by the Islamic Emirate that almost eradicated the crop.

According to a new report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), there are currently 12,800 hectares of poppies being cultivated in Afghanistan.

The 19 percent increase year-on-year remains far below the 232,000 hectares cultivated when the IEA's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada banned the crop in April 2022.

UNODC also stated that

the center of poppy cultivation has shifted and is now concentrated in northeastern provinces instead of in the south.

The agency stated that following the poppy ban, prices soared for the resin from which opium and heroin are made.

During the first half of 2024, prices stabilized around \$730 per kilogram, according to UNODC, compared to about \$100 per kg before 2022.

For years Afghanistan was the world's biggest supplier of opium and heroin.

Many farmers in Afghanistan, one of the

poorest countries in the world, were hit hard financially by the ban and have not been able to reap the same profits from alternative crops.

Even legal crops are only a short-term solution, according to the International Crisis Group (ICG), "so the focus should be on job creation in non-farm industries".

The UNODC and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) called for international support for farmers to transition to alternative crops and livelihoods, something the IEA government has requested.

Historical monuments at risk of destruction

BADAKHSHAN (TOLOnews): The historical Pul-e-Khishti, over 300 years old in Faizabad, the center of Badakhshan, and the mausoleum of Ras al-Mulk in Wakhan District, are among significant historical monuments currently at risk of destruction.

Due to prolonged rainfall and officials' neglect over the years, these sites reportedly face the threat of collapse.

The Directorate of Information and Culture of Badakhshan reported that out of 29 registered historical sites, nine are in danger of destruction.

Zabihullah Amiri, head of the Department of Information and Culture of Badakhshan, said: "Twenty-nine historical monuments have been reg-

istered with the Ministry of Information and Culture. Of these, nine historical sites require essential restoration."

During a visit to Badakhshan to inspect some of the historical monuments, the Deputy Minister for Culture and Arts at the Ministry of Information and Culture pledged that these sites would be restored.

Atiqullah Azizi, the head of the Culture and Arts of the Ministry of Information and Culture, said: "We are committed to protecting and rebuilding them. Rest assured, these historical monuments in Badakhshan, especially this bridge, are among our top priorities."

Several cultural activists and residents of

Badakhshan believe that maintaining and restoring these monuments will enhance the tourism industry in the province.

Ahmad Nabil Qazi Zada, a cultural activist from Badakhshan, said: "We hope the government will support and protect all historical monuments in Badakhshan."

Ahmad Javid, a resident of Badakhshan, remarked: "Historical monuments are at risk of destruction. We urge the government and supporting institutions to restore these sites."

According to information from the Directorate of Information and Culture of Badakhshan, 29 historical monuments are registered, five of which were restored during the previous government.

Russia rejects links to bomb scares at polling places in key US states

MOSCOW: Moscow has described as “malicious slander” reports that fake bomb threats directed at polling locations in four battleground states in the United States election – Georgia, Michigan, Arizona and Wisconsin – originated from Russian email domains and were part of an interference operation. Several polling sites targeted by the scares in Georgia were briefly evacuated.

“None of the threats have been determined to be credible thus far,” the US’s Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said in a statement, noting that many of the hoax bomb warnings “appear to originate from Russian email domains”. An FBI official said that Georgia received more than two dozen threats, most of which occurred in Fulton County, which encompasses much of Atlanta, a Democratic Party stronghold.

Threats against 32 of the 177 polling stations in Fulton County, Georgia, led to five locations being briefly evacuated. The locations reopened after about 30 minutes, officials said, and the county was seeking a court order to extend the location’s voting hours past the state-wide 7pm (00:00 GMT) deadline for closing. About an hour before polls were to close, officials in DeKalb County, Georgia, said they received bomb threats against five polling places.

Officials in the overwhelmingly Democratic suburb said voting had been suspended at the locations until police confirmed there were no bombs. A court order would be sought to extend voting, which is routine in Georgia when a polling place is disrupted, officials said. Bomb threats were also sent to two polling locations in Wisconsin’s state capital Madison, but did not disrupt voting, the head of the Wisconsin Elections Commission, Ann Jacobs said.

A spokesperson for Jocelyn Benson, Michigan’s Democratic secretary of state, said there had been reports of bomb threats at several polling locations, but none was credible. Benson’s office had been notified that the threats may be tied to Russia, the spokesperson said. Adrian Fontes, a Democrat and Arizona’s secretary of state, the chief election official in the swing state, said four fake bomb threats had also been delivered to polling sites in Navajo County, Arizona.

Georgia’s Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger laid the blame directly on Russia. “They’re up to mischief, it seems. They don’t want us to have a smooth, fair and accurate election, and if they can get us to fight among ourselves, they can count that as a victory,” Raffensperger told reporters. The Russian Embassy in Washington, DC

said insinuations about Russian interference in the election were “malicious slander”.

“We would like to emphasise that Russia has not interfered and does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, including the United States. As President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly stressed, we respect the will of the American people,” the embassy said. US intelligence officials have accused Russia of interfering in previous US presidential elections, especially through cyber-operations in the 2016 race which the current Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, won against Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

The US later indicted 12 Russian military intelligence officers for their alleged roles in interfering in the 2016 election. A senior US cyber official said her agency had not seen any significant incidents on this Election Day. Cait Conley, of the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, told reporters there had been little evidence of significant disruption to election infrastructure.

“At this point, we are not currently tracking any national level significant incidents impacting security of our election infrastructure,” said Conley, whose agency is responsible for protecting critical American infrastructure, including election infrastructure. — Aljazeera



LAHORE: Students wearing facemasks amid smoggy conditions.

KP CM, Governor discuss issues

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, and Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, held a meeting on Wednesday at the Governor House to discuss the province’s law and order situation, as well as several other key issues and rights of the province.

During the meeting, both leaders agreed that ensuring peace was crucial for the economic development of the province. They expressed their commitment to working together to address security concerns and secure resources from the federal government to maintain peace. The discussion also touched on promoting tourism and other matters of public interest in the province.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi assured that he would engage with the federal government to resolve any issues related to the provincial government, acting as the province’s representative. Earlier, Chief Minister Gandapur arrived at the Governor House to attend the oath-taking ceremony of a new provincial minister Syed Fakhar Jahan.

Governor Kundi warmly welcomed the Chief Minister Gandapur. The meeting was also attended by Ahmad Karim Kundi, the parliamentary leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party in the provincial assembly, and IG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur.

Russia ratifies Pyongyang agreement

MOSCOW: The upper house of Russia’s parliament has ratified a landmark mutual defence pact with North Korea as top Ukrainian officials report clashes with Pyongyang’s soldiers on the front lines. Lawmakers in the Federation Council of Russia, which acts as a senate, approved the bill on ratification of the Treaty of Comprehensive Strategic Partnerships between the two countries on Wednesday, state media reported.

The treaty was signed in Pyongyang on June 19 during a lavish state visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is deepening ties with North Korea as the war with Ukraine approaches its third anniversary. The unanimous vote in the upper house formalises months of increasing security cooperation between the two nations, the largest since the time they were Communist allies during the Cold War. Lawmakers in the lower house of parliament, the State Duma, had ratified the legislation on October 24.

The pact obliges Russia and North Korea to immediately provide military assistance using “all means” if there is any “aggression” against either country. The parliamentary approval comes as Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov told the South Korean broadcaster KBS that the Ukrainian military had its first confrontation with North Korean soldiers. He said a “small group” of North Korean soldiers were attacked.

Umerov said he expects Ukrainian soldiers to force more North Korean forces in combat but there have been only small contacts so far and most North Korean soldiers are still undergoing training before being deployed. — Aljazeera

Restoration of Article 370 HIOJK assembly passes bill

RINAGAR: In a significant political move, the occupied Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, led by puppet Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, passed a bill seeking the restoration of Article 370, aiming to reinstate the territory’s special status that was revoked by the Indian government in August 2019.

According to media report on Wenesday, the bill was tabled by the ruling National Conference (NC) on Wednesday, in line with the party’s commitment to its manifesto promise of fighting for the restoration of the territory’s special status. The proposal was introduced by Deputy Chief

Minister Surinder Singh Choudhary, who called for the restoration of occupied Jammu and Kashmir’s special provisions, which were unilaterally abrogated by the Indian government during a controversial move on August 5, 2019.

A heated debate ensued on the floor of the Assembly, with NC members strongly supporting the resolution. However, the proposal faced fierce opposition from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members, led by legislator Sunil Sharma, who called the resolution “unacceptable.” Despite the opposition, the resolution was passed after a majority of legislators,

excluding BJP members, expressed their support.

Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather called for a vote, and after counting the opinions, the resolution was officially passed. This move comes after years of protests and continued demands from regional parties, including the National Conference, to restore Article 370 and reverse the actions taken by the Indian government in 2019. This bill’s passage marks a significant step in occupied Jammu and Kashmir’s ongoing political struggle for its special status, as the territory continues to face challenges following the abrogation of Article 370. — KMS

PHC approached for direct Senate elections in KP

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former senator Azam Swati has filed amended petition in Peshawar High Court (PHC) seeking to direct Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The petition argued that Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) decision to condition Senate elections on oath-taking by successful candidates on reserved seats is unconstitutional and illegal. ECP’s decision is biased and against the constitution, as it delays Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while elections have already taken place in other provinces.

This decision affects the transparency of Senate elections, the petition argued. The lawyer Ali

Zaman also pointed out that the ECP made this decision without hearing from candidates, including Swati himself in the plea. The petition requests PHC to declare ECP’s 26th March 2024, decision null and void and order the commission to ensure Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Notably, former Senator Swati’s initial petition was dispose-off by a larger bench after the 26th constitutional amendment but he was allowed to file an amended petition.

PHC directs KPRA to implement its decisions: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah observed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (KPRA) has

power to implement its decisions, on Wednesday.

PHC’s issued observation during hearing of M/s Mick Pump, a contractor, approached the court seeking implementation of KPRA’s decision regarding a contract for constructing 300 solarization tube wells.

The counsel Nauman Kundi advocate argued that the contractor had faced delays and increased costs due to fluctuations in the dollar rate, and KPRA had approved the cost escalation.

However, relevant departments refused to accept it, citing lack of implementation authority, the lawyer stated. PHC’s divisional bench comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah has granted 30 days to KPRA for implementation of its decisions.

Europe urged to unite in face of Trump election win

PARIS (Reuters): The European Union must be united and coordinate closely in view of Donald Trump’s coming return to the White House, the leaders of the bloc’s two main powers, Germany and France, said on Wednesday after holding talks to coordinate their response. French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz congratulated Trump on Tuesday’s election victory, but were also quick to stress the challenges posed by his “America First” protectionist trade policy and isolationist rhetoric.

“The European Union must stand close together and act in a united manner,” Scholz told reporters, adding that he and Macron were coordinating closely with other EU heads of state and government. Macron said on X that Berlin and Paris would work for a united, stronger Europe within “the new context”.

Achieving European unity will however be challenging, not least because over the past years Paris and Berlin have been increasingly at odds on issues ranging from how to finance increased defence spending to trade, and in particular tariffs on China’s electric cars. The French and Germany leaders are also in delicate political positions at home, with Macron losing much of his power after defeats in elections earlier this year and Scholz struggling to keep his coalition together.

“Contrary to claims, Europe is not prepared for the

economic impact of higher tariffs, the likely U-turn on Ukraine, and defence spending ultimatums – we expect the EU to divide on similar lines to the US itself,” Eurointelligence analysts said. Many European officials had said ahead of Tuesday’s election they were worried about a Trump win, given tense transatlantic relations in his first term, his strong criticism of NATO, his ambivalent view of Ukraine’s fight against Russia’s invasion and stance on climate change.

One particular concern for Europe is trade: Trump said last month the European Union would have to “pay a big price” for not buying enough American exports if he won the election. European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen congratulated the Republican former president on his victory but also said avoiding trade wars would be in the US interest as well as Europe’s.

“Millions of jobs and billions in trade and investment on each side of the Atlantic depend on the dynamism and stability of our economic relationship,” she said. Trump, who will take office in January, has said he would impose a 10% tariff on imports from all countries, and 60% duties on imports from China. This would hit supply chains throughout the world, likely raising costs, and China seeking to divert its exports towards Europe, economists warn.

Another worry for Europe is shifting US foreign policy,

in particular on the war in Ukraine. Trump has criticised the level of US support for Ukraine’s war effort and before the election promised to end the conflict before even taking office, without explaining how. Hungary’s nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who unlike other EU leaders had openly endorsed Trump’s presidential bid and posted enthusiastic messages on X on his victory, said Europe would now need to rethink its support of Ukraine. Orban has regularly angered Brussels with his close ties to Russia and opposition to aid for Ukraine.

NATO chief Mark Rutte was among many others in Europe who congratulated Trump and hoped for good cooperation, with several ministers saying his return to the White House would require Europe to take greater responsibility for its security. “We must now think big and make big investments in our European security,” German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock told reporters in Berlin.

France and Germany’s defence ministers were due to hold a hastily arranged meeting later on Wednesday in Paris, ahead of long-planned meetings of dozens of European leaders in Budapest on Thursday for a European Political Community summit and a meeting of EU leaders, also in Budapest, after that. The EU summit will allow for a first exchange of views but was unlikely to bring a full response to Trump’s win, one European diplomat said.

‘Going to be rough’: NATO braces for Trump’s return

BRUSSELS (AFP): US allies at NATO scrambled Wednesday to put a brave face on the return of Donald Trump to the White House amid fears the unpredictable Republican could upend European security and pull the plug on Ukraine support. Trump sealed a dramatic comeback to power after sweeping to victory in the US presidential election against Democrat Kamala Harris.

NATO chief Mark Rutte – chosen recently in part due to his good relations with Trump – was quick to congratulate the victor and played up the positive impact he could make. “His leadership will again be key to keeping our Alliance strong. I look forward to working with him again to advance peace through strength through NATO,” Rutte said.

But beneath the veneer of calm, there remains deep disquiet about what Trump could do to European security as an aggressive Russia wages war on Ukraine just beyond NATO’s border. The volatile former reality TV star rattled NATO during the campaign by saying he’d encourage Moscow to “do whatever the hell they want” to members not spending enough on defense. Senior diplomats at NATO, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive issues, sought to put a positive spin on his return for a second term, saying it could push Europe to get serious about protecting itself.

“Why be scared by Trump now? It is going to be rough, but at least he will pump some energy into the whole thing,” one diplomat said. Trump’s first term in power was a

rollercoaster for NATO as the bulldozing president lambasted European allies such as Germany for weak defense spending and reportedly even mulled pulling Washington out. But officials said that not only did the alliance survive – it actually emerged stronger as Trump and his no-holds-barred style pressured Europe to spend more.

“During his first term, our working relationship focused on bolstering transatlantic security and adapting NATO for the future. In a world of growing instability, strong US leadership remains essential,” former NATO head Jens Stoltenberg wrote on X. Analyst Camille Grand of the European Council on Foreign Relations said there are “two theories” on how a second Trump term could go for NATO. “One is that it will be like the first time, unpleasant but not catastrophic,” he said.

“Or, we are today in a different world with a Trump entourage who are unwaveringly Trumpist, who share his doubts about alliances, support for Ukraine; and especially during the first mandate there was no war in Europe.” In a bid to appeal to Trump, NATO leaders have sought to repeatedly credit him with making other allies cough up more on defense.

The urgency on spending in Europe was ramped up by Moscow’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine and now 23 of the 32 NATO members reach the target of spending two percent of gross domestic produce on defense – up from just three a decade ago. Now the feeling is that Europe will

have to do even more to make sure it can stand on its own.

“I expect a serious push to finally start taking our security and defense in Europe seriously, to invest much more, to finally do it,” said one former senior NATO diplomat. But the ex-official warned to expect more rhetoric from Trump questioning Washington’s commitment to NATO’s collective defense clause that would “undermine security” and could embolden Russia and China. For Ukraine, already struggling to hold back the Kremlin’s forces on the battlefield, the picture appears grim.

Trump has cast doubt on continuing US military support for Kyiv and promised to cut a quick deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war. “If Trump starts negotiations with Russia, it will be very transactional, not built on values and principles – and this may lead to a result that would be catastrophic for Ukraine and for the whole of Europe,” the former diplomat said. Other officials agreed that Ukraine was in a perilous position, but said Trump coming to power could give Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky the cover to make hard compromises. And if Putin pushes for too much he could find the notoriously whimsical Trump far from pliant – and even willing to back Kyiv harder if the Kremlin doesn’t give ground. “The Russians always make exaggerated demands,” said the first NATO diplomat. “If they annoy Trump too much, they will get something in return they weren’t counting for.”

Lebanon files complaint against Israel

GENEVA (AP): A Lebanese government minister said Wednesday his country was filing a complaint against Israel at the UN’s labor organization over the string of deadly attacks involving exploding pagers, saying workers were among those killed and injured.

The explosions in mid-September were widely blamed on Israel, which has neither confirmed nor denied involvement. The blasts killed at least 37 people, including two children, wounded more than 3,000 and deeply unsettled even Lebanese who have no Hezbollah affiliation.

Lebanese Labor Minister Moustafa Bayram said he traveled to Geneva to formally file the complaint against Israel at the International Labor Organization, a sprawling UN agency that brings together governments, businesses and workers. Bayram said the casualty count was even higher than first reported, saying “more than 4,000 civilians fell – between martyrs and injured and maimed – in a few minutes by this attack.”

“This method of warfare and conflicts may open the way for many who are evading international humanitarian law to adopt this method of warfare,” the minister told reporters at the UN compound in Geneva. “It’s a very dangerous precedent, if not condemned,” he said. “We are in a situation where ordinary objects – objects used in daily life – become dangerous and lethal.”

Hezbollah says fighters ready to battle Israel

BEIRUT (AFP): Hezbollah said Wednesday that tens of thousands of its militants were ready to fight Israel, adding that the US election result would have no bearing on the war in Lebanon. The Iran-backed group’s leader also warned that nowhere in Israel would be “off-limits” to attacks, as the Israeli military said about 120 projectiles had been fired across the border on Wednesday.

The Israeli military struck Hezbollah’s main bastion of south Beirut after issuing an evacuation warning. Israel and Hezbollah have been at war since late September, when the Israeli military widened the focus of its war in Gaza to securing its northern border with Lebanon. Hezbollah began launching low-intensity cross-border attacks on Israel last year, in support of its Palestinian ally Hamas following its October 7, 2023 attack.

Efforts to end the war in Gaza that was sparked by the Hamas attack have yet to bear fruit, and the war in Lebanon has killed nearly 2,000 people, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures. “We have tens of thousands of trained resistance combatants” ready to fight, Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem said in a televised speech marking 40 days since his predecessor Hassan Nasrallah was killed in a strike.

The address was aired after Donald Trump’s victory in the US election was announced, but had been recorded earlier. He said the result in the race between Trump and Vice President

Kamala Harris would have no impact on any possible ceasefire deal for Lebanon. “We don’t base our expectations for a halt of the aggression on political developments,” he said.

“Whether Harris wins or Trump wins, it means nothing to us. “What will stop this... war is the battlefield” he said, citing fighting in south Lebanon and Hezbollah attacks on Israel. Earlier on Wednesday, Hezbollah said it targeted a military base near Israel’s main airport close to commercial hub Tel Aviv, an attack that Israel’s Airports Authority said did not disrupt operations.

Earlier Wednesday, Lebanon’s official National News Agency reported Israeli air strikes on the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon and the southern city of Nabatiyeh. An AFP correspondent in the eastern city of Baalbek reported intense strikes in and around the city. The speech was Qassem’s second since he was named Hezbollah secretary-general last week.

Israel is “betting on prolonging the war so it becomes a war of attrition... We are ready,” he said. He also called for Lebanese sovereignty to be safeguarded in any truce talks. Qassem demanded explanations from the Lebanese army after Israeli naval commandos seized a man from north Lebanon on Saturday who they said was a senior Hezbollah operative. He said the operation was “a great offense to Lebanon” and a “violation” of its sovereignty. On Tuesday, a Lebanese judicial official told AFP that

Israeli commandos used a speedboat equipped with advanced devices capable of jamming UN peacekeepers’ radars for the operation, according to a preliminary probe.

The UN Maritime Task Force has helped the Lebanese military to monitor territorial waters and prevent the entry of arms or related material by sea since 2006, according to the mission’s website. In Gaza, where the 13-month war has had a devastating impact, people were desperate for a solution and voiced hope Trump might be able to offer one.

Hamas’s October 7 attack resulted in 1,206 deaths, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures. Israel’s retaliatory campaign has killed 43,391 people in Gaza, a majority of them civilians, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory’s health ministry the United Nations considers reliable.

“We were displaced, killed... there’s nothing left for us, we want peace,” said Mamdouh Al-Jadba, who was displaced to Gaza City from Jabalia. “I hope Trump finds a solution, we need someone strong like Trump to end the war and save us, enough, God, this is enough,” the 60-year-old told AFP. Umm Ahmed Harb, from the Al-Shaaf area east of Gaza City, was also counting on Trump to “stand by our side” and end the territory’s suffering. “God willing the war will end, not for our sake but for the sake of our young children who are innocent,” she told AFP.