

PM greets Green Shirts
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday congratulated the Pakistan cricket team for winning the second one-day international match against Australia. "Congratulations on yet another exceptional game! We knew you had it in you! Proud of our cricket team on the impressive win against Australia," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

PM unveils electricity relief package

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday unveiled a three-month Electricity Relief Package for the winter season providing a relief of up to Rs26.7 per unit for domestic, Rs15.5 for industrial and Rs22.71 for commercial consumers.

The prime minister, addressing an event to commemorate the birth anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal being celebrated on November 9 here, told the gathering of ministers, students, and artists that the relief package would remain in force from December 2024 to February 2025. "Under the package, the domestic consumers will get a relief of up to Rs 26.7 per unit for their power consumption surpassing 200 units of the protected category. It will help them save Rs11.42 to Rs26 per unit in the three months of winter," the prime minister said.

Similarly, the industrial sector will save 18-37% or Rs 5.27 to Rs 15.5 per unit under the package to help boost industrial production, growth and livelihoods. The commercial consumers will be given a 34-47% saving or Rs 13.46 to Rs 22.71 per unit subsidy in the package. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the package would stimulate a quantum jump in the country's economic progress by boosting agriculture, industrial productivity, business activity and exports.

He said that the commitments and vision of the current government were being translated into actions through the relief package that would become the harbinger of improved economic resilience. Besides thanking the IMF for permitting the government to announce the package, he also commended the cabinet members and relevant senior officers for their efforts and teamwork in working out the relief package. Coming to the Iqbal Day celebration, he motivated the youth and children to remain resolute in their ambition to achieve a glorious future for the nation. Highlighting the government's achievements on the economic front, Prime Minister Shehbaz informed that the for-

eign remittances in the first quarter of the current fiscal year were record high as the overseas Pakistanis had sent \$8 billion in remittances to the country. The Pakistani diasporas were the real ambassadors of the country offshore protecting the national interests and prestige, he added.

He paid tribute to Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal for his revolutionary philosophy that motivated Muslims and non-Muslims all across the world. He also recited different verses of the poems of Allama Iqbal that advocated for reawakening the passion of leadership, integrity, commitment, determination, courage, hard work, empathy, self-confidence and compassion to emerge as a leading nation in the world.

The prime minister also highlighted the current government's efforts in reviving the national economy as it was determined to provide the best education facilities to its youth in fields of AI, IT, vocational training, and emerging technologies that would help them regain the glorious status of the nation. He mentioned that the economic situation was improving as the inflation rate was down to 6.7% from 32%, policy rate down to 15% and expressed the hope that the indicators would boost investment, exports, development in agriculture, livelihoods and businesses.

A short documentary produced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting played featuring the life and philosophy of Allama Iqbal. Renowned singer Shehzad Roy and Dr Masooma Awan sang the famous poems of Iqbal while the young singers Mahnoor Altaf and Ashir Sultan recited "Lab Pe Aati he Dua Ban Ke Tamanna Meri" - a famous hymn written by Allama Iqbal. Prime Minister Shehbaz duly acknowledged the performance of the young kids and appreciated them warmly for their commendable show. Federal cabinet members Sardar Awaish Ahmad Khan Leghari, Musadik Malik, Jam Kamal Khan, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Shaza Fatima Khawaja and other senior government officers also attended the event.

Residents of Parachinar holds peace walk

F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: The people of Parachinar took to the streets on Friday to stage a peaceful demonstration, highlighting their growing concerns over the city's prolonged disconnection from the rest of Pakistan. For over 25 days, Parachinar has been cut off, with no essential supplies, including food items, reaching the city for the past 25 days.

The peaceful walk, aimed at drawing attention to their plight, underscores the urgent need for immediate action to restore connectivity and ensure the well-being of the

affected population.

Meanwhile, in a significant meeting chaired by CM KP, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, the Apex Committee convened to discuss the current law and order situation across the province. The meeting was attended by the Provincial Finance Minister, Corps Commander Peshawar, Chief Secretary, IGP, and senior civil and military officials, reflecting the strong commitment to enhance security measures.

During the session, participants conducted a comprehensive review of the law and order situation, especially

focusing on districts experiencing heightened security challenges. Lengthy discussions culminated in the formulation of a new action plan, aimed at reinforcing security protocols and addressing the deteriorating conditions in certain areas.

As a mark of respect, the committee recited Fatiha for the martyrs of security forces and law enforcement agencies who sacrificed their lives in service of peace. Chief Minister Gandapur expressed deep gratitude for their dedication, acknowledging their heroic contributions in safeguarding the province.

KP govt to file petition against ECP in PHC

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Barrister Dr. Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations said that the provincial government has decided to file a petition against the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the Peshawar High Court. The petition challenges the ECP's decision not to notify reserve seats allocated to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), despite the Supreme Court's majority decision.

Additionally, Dr. Saif expressed concern that the schedule for Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has not been released yet. The decision to file the petition was approved in a cabinet meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, and the provincial cabinet has authorized the Advocate General to proceed with the petition. Dr. Saif emphasized that the Supreme Court's eight judges have ruled in favor of allocating the reserve seats to PTI. He criticized the ECP for previously using delaying tactics and now openly defying the Supreme Court's orders, causing irreparable damage to PTI.

SBP injects over Rs9.62tr in market

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs9,620.2 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO) on Friday.

According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on Nov 08, 2024 for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted total 46 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs9,498.7 billion.

The central bank received 20 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs2,486.75 billion at the rate of return ranging between 15.05 to 15.11 percent while 26 bids were received for the 28-day tenor offering total amount of Rs7,011.95 billion at the rate of return ranging between 15.04 to 15.12%. The central bank accepted the entire amount offered through all the 20 bids for 7-day tenor at 15.05 % rate of return and 26 bids for 28-day tenor at 15.04 % rate of return.

Israeli defense minister quits

TEL AVIV (AP): Israeli defense minister Yoav Gallant officially stepped down Friday in a ceremony that replaced him with Israel Katz, the former foreign minister, after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired Gallant earlier this week. Israel has been rocked by Gallant's dismissal, with the news setting off mass protests across the country. Many in Israel view Gallant as the sole moderate voice in a far-right government.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with the Minister of Foreign Trade of UAE, Dr. Thani bin Ahmad Al Zeyoudi.

KP CM inaugurates Ehsaas Naujwan Program

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: As another significant step towards empowering youth of the province, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has launched two new initiatives i.e. the Naujwan Program and the Chief Minister Youth Internship Program. A ceremony in this regard was held at the Chief Minister's House Peshawar, in which Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur formally launched both the initiatives.

The Chief Minister also launched the online portal of Ehsas Naujwan online portal, through which, youth from across the province can apply online for interest-free loans to start their own business under the Ehsas Naujawan Program. On this occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between the Department of Youth Affairs, Bank of Khyber, and Akhuwat Microfinance to implement

the program.

The Ehsaas Naujwan Program a three-year project, would be implemented at a cost of Rs. 3.00 billion. Under the first component of this programme, interest-free loans worth Rs. 1.00 billion will be provided in partnership with the Bank of Khyber. Under this component, clusters of three to five young men aged 18 to 35, will receive interest free loans ranging from Rs.1.00 million to Rs. 5.00 million. The repayment period will span eight years, with the first 20-month as grace period during which, no repayments will be required.

The second component of the program, would be implemented in partnership with Akhuwat Microfinance Bank at a cost of Rs 2.00 billion. It will provide interest-free loans ranging from Rs 100,000 to 500,000 for small-scale businesses to individuals aged 18 to 40. A quota of 15% has been reserved for

young women, 2.5% for special persons, 5% for madrasa students, and 2.5% for minorities. Notably, the Ehsas Naujwan Program will continue in the future as a revolving fund, allowing the amount repaid by beneficiaries to be made available to assist more youth for starting new business or expanding existing ones.

Additionally, the Chief Minister Youth Internship Program launched on the occasion, will offer internships to 400 students annually, each lasting three months and providing a monthly stipend of Rs 25,000. Over three years, a total of 1,200 students will benefit from this program. Young individuals aged up to 29 with 16 years of education or an equivalent degree recognized by the Higher Education Commission will be eligible. Upon completion, internees will be provided with employment opportunities in various public and private sectors.

‘Indo-Pacific strategy’ key focus in US power transition

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: During a press briefing at the State Department, spokesperson Matthew Miller conveyed a sense of calm and professionalism, emphasizing the strength of American democracy during the upcoming transfer of power. Highlighting the importance of a seamless transition, Miller stated that the process will take place over the next 74 days, with the General Services Administration (GSA) Transition Team and Agency Review Teams facilitating the shift to the new administration. Miller refrained from mentioning the name of the incoming US president, Donald Trump, during his entire press briefing.

When questioned about whether President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken had engaged in discussions with their international counterparts since the election results, Miller confirmed that they had but declined to disclose specific details. "Everything will be done keeping the interests of America in mind," he assured reporters. Addressing foreign policy, Miller emphasized that peace efforts in Gaza and Lebanon along with humanitarian aid would remain priorities for the current administration in its remaining time. He also pointed to the Indo-Pacific strategy and US-China relations, noting the need for "tangible progress" as key areas of focus for discussions with the incoming administration.

At the Pentagon, Deputy Press Secretary Sabrina Singh echoed Miller's sentiments, assuring reporters that the transition process would be "smooth and professional."




Unlike Miller, Singh explicitly referenced President-elect Donald Trump by name, stating that coordination between the GSA, White House, and other government bodies would ensure an orderly handover. Singh took the opportunity to praise the US military, calling it "the finest military in the world" and underscoring its non-political nature.

Singh also addressed the Indo-Pacific strategy, reinforcing its significance in US foreign policy. Observers noted the repeated mention of the Indo-Pacific by both Miller and Singh, suggesting that US-China relations and the region's geopolitical dynamics will be pivotal in shaping foreign policy during Trump's presidency.

When asked about the presence of North Korean troops in the Karsik region of Ukraine, Singh stated that US military intelligence is closely monitoring the situation, highlighting the likelihood of North Korean and Ukrainian forces confronting each other. Singh emphasized that the US is not alone in its support for Ukraine, which continues to receive aid from a coalition of allied nations.


Meanwhile, President Joe Biden addressed the nation, underscoring the resilience of American democracy, which has endured for over two centuries. In his speech, Biden revealed that he had already called Donald Trump to congratulate him on his victory, reaffirming his commitment to a peaceful and professional transition of power. He assured the public that his administration would extend full cooperation to the incoming team to ensure stability during the transition period.

The emphasis on professionalism and cooperation from both the State Department and Pentagon underscores the significance of this moment for the United States. With foreign policy priorities like peace in the Middle East and navigating the complexities of the Indo-Pacific strategy at stake, the handover will be closely watched both domestically and internationally. As the Biden administration prepares to step down, it remains focused on preserving the democratic ideals that have been the cornerstone of American governance for centuries.



IQBAL DAY


دے ولولہ شوق جسے لذت پرواز
کر سکتا ہے وہ ذرہ مر و مہر کو تاراج



According to Iqbal's vision, national progress lies in the prosperity of individuals.

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From Khudi to Crisis How Pakistan strayed from Iqbal’s philosophy?

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

HAKEEM ul Ummat Allama Muhammad Iqbal, often regarded as the "Spiritual Father of Pakistan," envisioned a nation where justice, equality, and self-awareness would be the cornerstones of society. His vision went far beyond the mere establishment of a state; it was about building a community where Islamic values could flourish, guiding not only personal life but also social, political, and economic development.

Allama Iqbal's idea of Pakistan was founded on the belief that Islam was not just a religion but a complete code of life. He sought to create a nation that would demonstrate how Islamic principles could be harmonized with modernity. His philosophy of "Khudi," or selfhood, emphasized the importance of self-realization, not only for personal growth but also for the betterment of society. He urged individuals to awaken their sense of responsibility and strive toward collective well-being.

Allama Iqbal envisioned Pakistan as a model for the rest of the Muslim world—a place where Islamic principles of justice, equality, and freedom would be reflected in governance, law, and daily life. He believed that a nation built on these values would be capable of overcoming challenges and achieving moral and material progress. However, the Pakistan of today, more than seven decades after its creation, presents a stark contrast to Iqbal's ideals.

The country is mired in political instability, economic disparity, and social fragmentation. Corruption and nepotism have seemed to be polluted the responsible that are meant to uphold justice and equality. A small group of leading class enjoys immense wealth and power, while a vast portion of the population struggles to meet their basic needs. These issues are not only political and economic but also moral, revealing a deep disconnect between the principles Iqbal advocated and the current reality.

One significant factor in the unfulfilled realization of Iqbal's vision is the absence of robust morals and integrity. Since Pakistan's inception, the nation has been ensnared in a continuous cycle of crises. Iqbal posited that a nation's prosperity hinges on the moral fortitude and foresight of its decision makers. Regrettably, there have been accusations that many leaders have placed personal benefits above the nation's welfare, cultivating an environment of short-term gains and opportunistic behavior. Rather than steering the nation toward the principles of justice and equality, they have frequently acted out of self-interest.

Although Iqbal is frequently cited in speeches and national ceremonies, his teachings have not been genuinely integrated into the country's policies or governance. His philosophy is often reduced to symbolic references, with little effort to apply his ideas in practical ways. The educational system, which Iqbal believed to be the foundation of moral and intellectual development, has also suffered from neglect. Rather than nurturing thinkers and leaders who can address the nation's challenges, the education system tends to focus on rote learning, producing individuals who are ill-equipped to think critically or engage with the complexities of the modern world.

Tariq assumes charge as Special Assistant on Energy

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Energy & Power Tariq Mahmood Khan Sadozai has assumed charge of his newly portfolio and started working on his responsibilities regularly. The newly Special Assistant of Energy & Power KP has an extensive experience in the field of engineering and remained posted in various important and key positions in the energy sector. He was the Chairman of NEPRA for four years from 2014 to 2018, as well as the Chief Executive Officer of Peshawar Electric Supply Company PESCO for 3 years from 2012 to 2014, while he served as the Managing Director of Karachi Electric Supply Corporation KESE for 5 years from 2001 to 2006. Moreover, Engr. Tariq Sadozai during his career he took Important steps towards laying new transmission lines in domestic and industrial zones.

Moreover, the pervasive influence of external powers has diverted Pakistan from the path of self-reliance that Iqbal advocated. Geopolitical pressures have led to decisions that prioritize interest of others over national priorities. Iqbal emphasized the importance of self-reliance, both for individuals and the nation, but Pakistan has become increasingly dependent on foreign aid and loans, which has undermined its sovereignty and ability to implement policies that reflect its own values.

Another significant issue is the misuse and misinterpretation of Iqbal's philosophy. Speakers often invoke his name and poetry to lend legitimacy to their agendas, yet their actions frequently contradict the values Iqbal stood for. This superficial engagement with his work has reduced Iqbal's transformative ideas to mere slogans, stripping them of their deeper meaning and potential to guide meaningful reform.

To bring Pakistan closer to Iqbal's vision, there must be a fundamental shift in both leadership and national consciousness. A serious re-engagement with Iqbal's ideas is needed, not merely as part of intellectual discussions but as a practical framework for addressing the country's challenges. His concept of "Khudi" must be revived, encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own growth and the collective good of society. This involves promoting a culture of self-reliance, hard work, and moral accountability.

The educational system must also be reformed to reflect Iqbal's emphasis on intellectual and moral development. Schools and universities should not only teach Iqbal's works as part of the curriculum but should also encourage students to think critically, engage with contemporary challenges, and apply Iqbal's teachings to real-world problems. By producing a new generation of thinkers and leaders, Pakistan can move closer to realizing Iqbal's vision.

In addition, political leadership must embody the values of integrity, selflessness, and moral responsibility that Iqbal championed. It is not enough to merely invoke Iqbal's name for political purposes; leaders must commit to building a society that reflects the principles of justice, equality, and self-reliance that he advocated. This requires a shift from short-term political gains to a long-term vision for national progress.

Finally, Pakistan must reduce its dependency on external powers and focus on building a self-sufficient economy. Iqbal envisioned a nation that could stand on its own, free from the constraints of foreign interference. By prioritizing economic independence, technological advancement, and social justice, Pakistan can begin to fulfill the promise of becoming the just and prosperous nation that Iqbal dreamed of.

In conclusion, while Pakistan has strayed far from Iqbal's vision, it is not too late to return to the path he outlined. By sincerely embracing his teachings and applying them to the realities of today, Pakistan can still achieve the dream of becoming a nation that is not only free and independent but also just, moral, and self-reliant. Iqbal's vision is not a relic of the past but a living philosophy that holds the potential to guide Pakistan toward a brighter future.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Syed Fakhar Jahan addressing the three-day Horse and Cattle Show.

Efforts to combat drug trafficking across KP intensified

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In a determined push to rid Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of narcotics, the Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Department has ramped up its efforts against drug trafficking networks, with a special focus on protecting students from drug dealers operating near educational institutions.

Following guidance from the Provincial Apex Committee, Secretary Excise Syed Fayaz Ali Shah have implemented a robust action plan targeting drug sales in the province, with specific emphasis on educational areas where young people are especially vulnerable.

The department's recent operations highlight its commitment to tackling the drug problem from multiple angles, including intelligence-led actions aimed at intercepting drugs before they reach schools, colleges, and universities.

In alignment with these objectives, Secretary Excise Syed Fayaz Ali Shah reaffirmed the government's resolve, stating, "We are making every possible effort to curb drug sales in the province, particularly within and around educational institutions. Safeguarding our youth from this curse remains our highest priority."

As part of its comprehensive strategy, the Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control Department has been conducting routine and intensive operations against drug mafias across the province, working systematically to dismantle supply networks and apprehend dealers.

The department's dedicated squads are employing intelligence-based tactics to identify high-risk areas, leading to frequent drug busts and arrests that have disrupted supply chains at critical points.

KP govt demands equal share in NFC Award

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has demanded an equal share of the province in the 7th National Finance Commission Award. In this regard, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has written a letter to the federal government for not cooperating in the NFC award on the newly merged districts.

The letter has been formally sent to the Federal Minister of Finance and Revenue by the Provincial Minister for Finance and Inter-Provincial Coordination Muzammil Aslam.

Reacting to the written letter, provincial finance minister and inter-provincial coordination Muzammil Aslam said that the federal government has adopted a very cold attitude towards Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He added that under the NFC, the federal government should share the constitutional equal rights on the basis of geography and population.

He said that the federal government has been informed about its concerns in this regard, but the federal government hasn't responded yet. He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is currently facing security challenges and withholding funds at such a time is very unprofessional.

He further said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is fighting the frontline war against terrorism, for which it is beyond the rules that the federal government is withholding funds, but we will raise our voices for the rights of our province at every forum.

Presenting its position, the provincial government has written in the letter that in the context of the twenty-fifth constitutional amendment, they will not accept the extension of the 7th NFC award without registering the complete population and geography of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

It has been further written that in the Grand Jirga presided over by Chief Minister Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa on September 5, 2024, all the stakeholders have demanded payment of the remaining funds of the merged districts.

Expressing its concerns, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has written that NFC is a constitutional consultative forum under the Eighteenth Amendment, which is not being implemented.

It said that to bring the tribal districts into the national stream, these districts merged with already financially weak province.

The letter further clarifies that despite the passage of six years, 6.1 million people have not been accommodated under the inter-provincial transfer mechanism of the NFC award. It furthered that as referring 70 years of deprived merged districts to financially weak Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a continuous challenge.

Provision of funds for the merged districts, it has been written that despite the ten-year development plan for the merged dis-

tricts, the provision of funds have been stopped while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is also being deprived of federal payments.

In the letter, it is further explained that at the time of approval of the 7th NFC award, the merged districts were part of the federation, then there is no mention of it in the NFC.

In the letter written by the provincial finance minister, it is claimed that at the time of merger, the estimation of the last seven decades of deprivation of the merged districts was not done correctly, so the 7th NC Award should be corrected immediately, while meeting on NFC Award should be called as soon as possible. It has been written in the letter that the 7th NFC award is in conflict with the constitution, so the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa introduced in the constitution should be considered in the NFC award.

The extension of the 7th NFC award without recognizing the constitu-

PHC grants protective bail to two PTI leaders

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court has granted protective bail to two leaders of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party in Punjab including deputy opposition leader in the Punjab Assembly Imtiaz Mahmood, on Friday.

PHC has granted bail till November 22 Imtiaz Mahmood while Chaudhry Mehmood Hasan, a PTI leader from Hafizabad, has been granted bail until 9th December.

The counsel Alam Khan Adeenji argued that the

case against petitioner is false and politically motivated. He wanted to appear in the relevant court but feared arrest, so the court granted him protective bail.

Similarly, Chaudhry Mehmood Hasan's request for protective bail was approved due to fears of arrest.

Hasan faces four cases in Lahore and other regions and wants to appear in the relevant courts.

The court ordered both leaders to appear in the respective courts and directed the CCPO Lahore and concerned police sta-

tions to receive copies of the court orders.

Court orders children to pay monthly allowance to evicted father

Civil Judge Sajjad Khan ruled in favor of a father who was evicted from his home by his children. The judge ordered the children to provide their father with a monthly allowance of Rs. 10,000 each and to give him a room in the family home, on Friday.

The petitioner Haji Zarmat Khan, had filed a petition against his children, alleging that they had thrown him out of the

family home and were not taking care of him.

The court, citing Islamic principles and Pakistani law, ruled that children are responsible for taking care of their parents, especially in old age.

The judge's decision was based on Islamic teachings and Pakistani laws that emphasize the importance of respecting and caring for one's parents.

The court also referenced Quranic verses and Hadiths that highlight the significance of treating parents with kindness and respect.

Shaheen Spirit: Iqbal’s vision and valour of Pakistan Air Force

Izmi Herlani

IT is fascinating to discover that the figure who has most significantly shaped the spirit of Pakistan Air Force is not a military strategist or an aviation expert, but the revered Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. His poetry serves as a wellspring of inspiration for PAF personnel, transcending borders and ideologies alike. Regarded as Pakistan's national poet, Allama Iqbal's influence stretches far and wide.

Sarojini Naidu, a prominent figure in the Indian freedom movement, hailed him as the "Poet Laureate of Asia." In Iran, known as 'Iqbal-e-Lahuri,' his verses fuelled the revolutionary spirit among both the elite and the masses. The universality of Allama Iqbal's philosophy resonates with conservatives, modernists and socialists alike, but it is his enduring impact on PAF that stands out. As we commemorate Iqbal's 147th birth anniversary, it is fitting to revisit his profound messages in relation to PAF.

Allama Iqbal, as noted by scholar Ahmed Javed, is a unique intellectual in Islamic history who grasped the essence of Islam and preserved it through his poetry. This makes his work an invaluable resource for future generations. His poetry is distinguished not only by its rich content but also by its

striking style, imagery and allegory. This rare combination elevates Allama Iqbal to the ranks of the greatest Urdu and Persian poets. The deep connection between Allama Iqbal and PAF is rooted in the fact that the motto of Pakistan Air Force is adopted from Iqbal's poetry aptly depicting the attributes of Air Power.

صبرا اے کہ دریاست کہ بال و پر ماست
"May it be the deserts or the oceans, Everything is beneath my wings"

The mottoes of all squadrons / units of Pakistan Air Force are inspired from Iqbal's poetry, a testament to the spiritual linkage that PAF as a fighting arm attaches with Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal. For every Shaheen of Pakistan Air Force, Iqbal's words resonate powerfully:

فقط دوق پرواز ہے زندگی
"Life is only a taste of Flight"

PAF's bond with Iqbal is also illustrated through the symbols and language prevalent in his poetry, which resonate deeply with PAF's identity. The emblematic 'Shaheen' (Eagle) is a prime example. This majestic bird, frequently depicted in Iqbal's verses, embodies attributes of valour, grace, speed and endurance, inspiring a daring spirit in youth while challenging the status quo of passivity and complacency.

شاہین کبھی پرواز سے نہیں کر نہیں گرتا
بر دم ہے اگر تو نہیں خطرہ افتاد

"The falcon never falls tired from flight

But if it has breath, then there is no danger of falling"
The Shaheen symbolises the very qualities that PAF seeks to instil in its young combatants. Unlike other birds, the Shaheen stands out for its fearlessness and mastery of the skies, a spirit mirrored by PAF's warriors:

پرواز ہے دونوں کی اسی ایک فضا میں
کر کے کاہن اور، بے شائبہ کاہن اور

"Though both glide in the same blue sky

The lofty Hunting Eagle & the Vulture are in reality, world apart."

The warriors of the 1965 and 1971 conflicts stand as monumental embodiments of the Shaheen's spirit of resilience within Pakistan Air Force, exemplifying unmatched bravery and sacrifice in the face of daunting challenges. In the 1965 aerial combat, pilots like MM Alam and Sarfaraz Rafiqi etched their names in history with remarkable aerial feats, showcasing exceptional skill and courage that turned the tide of the battle. This legacy of heroism persisted into the 1971 war, where heroes such as Rashid Minhas made the ultimate sacrifice, epitomising the highest ideals of duty and patriotism. Their extraordinary acts, often at great personal cost, reflect a steadfast devotion to

the homeland, instilling a profound sense of pride in the nation. Today, the echoes of these brave souls resonate throughout PAF like a clarion call, igniting an intense sense of responsibility in every individual in Blues. Their remarkable legacies remind all of the unwavering commitment to defend the nation, infusing the ranks with an indomitable spirit within the hearts of those who serve. Time and again, PAF warriors, inspired by Iqbal's spirited poetry, have showcased their exceptional skills against numerically superior foes, as evidenced in the remarkable events of February 27, 2019. Iqbal encapsulates the essence of such asymmetrical battles in this couplet:

چڑھتی ہے جب فکر کی سان بہ تیغ خودی
ایک سپاہی کی ضرب کرنی ہے کار سیاہ

"The flashing sword of the 'Self', honed with the whetstone of spirituality

Makes the swift strike by a soldier, tantamount to the exploits of a whole Army"

Allama Iqbal emphasized the importance of leadership rooted in self-awareness and empowerment. He believed that true leadership arises from a strong inner self and a commitment to the collective good of the community. Iqbal's messages of dynamism, relentless struggle, self-actualization (Khudi) and the pursuit of excellence form the intellectual and spiritual

foundation of PAF's doctrines.

نگہ بلند سخن دل نواز جان پر سوز
بی ہے رخت سفر میر کاروان کے لیے

"High vision, heart-pleasing speech, and soul-stirring passion

This is the luggage for the journey of the leader of the caravan"

The current leadership of PAF has embraced a culture of innovation and excellence, empowering personnel to confront challenges with steadfast courage. As the Shaheen ascends to new heights, today's PAF exemplifies a commitment to operational readiness, indigenisation and technological advancement. This evolution has been driven by the dynamic leadership highlighting a legacy of bravery and determination while ensuring that PAF remains a formidable force, ready to defend the skies with unparalleled valour.

Numerous phrases from Iqbal's poetry resonate with PAF community, such as Zouq-e-Parvaz (passion for flying) and Uqabi-Ruh (indomitable spirit). While these expressions are accessible to all, they gain profound meaning within the professional context of PAF, transforming Allama Iqbal's poetry from mere literature into a lived experience. Another critical aspect of Allama Iqbal's philosophy is his emphasis on the spirit of self-sacrifice for the greater



good. For every member of PAF, this concept reinforces their sacred commitment to "Live for, Fight for and Die for" their faith, country and PAF.

As we reflect on Iqbal's enduring legacy, it is clear that his poetry continues to inspire PAF, urging its warriors to embody the fearless spirit of the Shaheen and to pursue excellence in every endeavour. Iqbal not only sought personal enlightenment but also envisioned a collective awakening, where the light of knowledge and courage

spread like wildfire, empowering each officer to rise above challenges and embrace their true potential. In this interplay of inspiration and aspiration lies the essence of what it means to be a part of a greater cause, igniting a relentless pursuit of greatness that transcends the individual and uplifts the whole. This call to action resonates deeply, echoing the profound yearning encapsulated in his words:

مرا نور بصیرت عام کر دے
"Illuminate my insight and make it widespread."



In brief

LG employees announce protest F.P. Report

SWABI: Local Government (LG) employees and pensioners have announced to stage a protest in front of provincial assembly for non-payment of salaries and pensions. Talking to media, Provincial President Local Government Employees Federation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shoukat Ali said that protest would be held on December 4 and participated by large number of LG employees and pensioners. He said that all the unions representing local government employees in KP have decided to close offices if these demands were not accepted. He also demanded to introduce reforms in LG system to generate revenue and revive taxes that were abolished. He also demanded merger of Tehsil Municipal Administrations that are facing financial difficulties.

Strike halts water supply F.P. Report

QUETTA: A strike by Balochistan's Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) employees has disrupted water supplies to the city of Quetta for the past seven days as workers press for better pay and benefits, union representatives said today. Members of the WASA Employees Union are demanding a 25% ad hoc relief allowance and other benefits, which they say have not been provided despite the availability of funds. Union leaders, addressing a protest today, condemned recent police complaints filed against union members, calling them acts of intimidation intended to stifle legitimate demands. The strike has shut down more than 400 water supply schemes, forcing residents in the capital of Balochistan province to buy water from private tankers. The protest, which union leaders say will continue until all demands are met, violates a Balochistan High Court ruling that bans strikes by government employees. However, WASA employees remain resolute, describing their demands as long overdue. The disruption has placed significant pressure on residents of the city, who have faced increased costs and limited access to clean drinking water.

DC says there are security concerns F.P. Report

QUETTA: The local administration of Quetta on Friday denied the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) permission to hold a public rally in the district, despite the "court order", owing to concerns related to the law and order situation. The PTI has announced to hold a protest at the Hockey Ground, Quetta, on Saturday. Requesting the PTI to postpone the rally, Deputy Commissioner Saad bin Asad said there were security concerns in the metropolis this month. Saad said examinations of public service commission were being held at the Ayub National Stadium. Whereas, he said, various games were being played in the Hockey Ground. The DC warned those who violated the orders would face the music. A PTI's provincial spokesperson said the court had obliged the local administration to provide a place for the rally. However, he said, the DC was employing delaying tactics in giving permission despite the court directive. On the other hand, the PTI is prepping to hold a public gathering in Service Area, near Swabi Interchange.

Cancellation of merger with homeopathy council demanded

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Pakistan Tibbi Conference (PTC) while rejecting the federal government's decision to merge the PTC with the Homeopathic Council, on Friday demanded reversal of the decision. An emergency meeting of the PTC in this regard was held at Chakdara with its provincial chief Hakeem Abdul Wahid Shamsi in the chair.

The PTC office bearers including senior vice president Hakeem Shahid Iqbal, vice president Hakeem Gul Nawaz, general secretary Hakeem Muhammad Jamal Khan, secretary information Hakeem Noor Faqir, secretary women wing Hakeem Tayyiba Shakira Shaheen, Hakeem Khidmat Hussain and others attended the meeting. The participants rejected the government decision to merge both the Pakistan Tibbi Council and Homeopathy Council of Pakistan.

The meeting announced that the PTC would stage a peaceful protest demonstration against the ministry of health for merging both the councils in every district of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was decided that a grand protest rally against the decision would be held on Nov. 17. The meeting constituted a three-member

committee to decide the venue of the rally. The PTC national leaders would address that rally.

Flood affected schools: The executive engineer, works and communication Engineer Immad Ahmad on Friday informed local journalists at Timergara that reconstruction and rehabilitation work on a total of 207 flood affected schools with the financial support of the World Bank was in progress.

The official said the projects would cost Rs 1 billion. He said that Rs 300 million funds would be released for rehabilitation of educational institutions in phase second. The XEN said that the projects would be completed within the stipulated time as per the WB standards.

Hydro power station: The chairman, district development advisory committee (DDAC) Lower Dir MPA Ubaid ur Rehman has said that 98 percent work on the much-awaited Koto Hydro power station project has been completed. Talking to local journalists at his office in Timergara on Friday, the DDAC chairman said that chief minister Ali Amin Gandhapur would soon inaugurate the station that would generate 40.8 megawatt of electricity.

The lawmaker said that classes at the Timergara Medical College would also commence from next year as a principal had been posted at the college. He claimed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was releasing funds for the repair and extension of the Balambat Irrigation channel which remained closed for the last three years due to unavailability of funds.

PTI Tehsil Chairman: The Pakistan Tahreek Insaf elected tehsil chairman, Khall Akhunzada Ashfaq ur Rahim has said that he along with other activists of the party were subjected to severe torture in jail by Punjab police. Talking to local journalists at Timergara after his release from the Attock jail, he alleged that the PTI jailed workers were deprived of their mobile phones and cash in jail.

He said that they were not for the first 36 hours after their arrest on Oct 5. He said the PTI workers would never hesitate to make sacrifices for the release of Imran Khan, the party founder, who had been imprisoned for the last year in false cases, he added. The elected tehsil chairman said that they would again take to streets if the party leadership gave them a call.



FAISALABAD: A painter applies the final touches to a portrait of Allama Muhammad Iqbal in preparation for his birth anniversary celebrations.

KUST shines at HEC Intervarsity C'ships Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: KUST Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) made a stellar impression at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Intervarsity Volleyball and Table Tennis Zone-A Championships, held at Gomal University in Dera Ismail Khan.

The KUST Volleyball and Table Tennis teams showcased exceptional skill and teamwork, securing 2nd position in both events. This impressive feat demonstrates the university's commitment to excellence in sports and academics.

We are proud of our teams' outstanding performance and hardworking of Director sports Wajid Khan" said Dr. Naseer Uddin Vice chancellor, KUST. Dr. Imran Ali, Registrar KUST added our teams dedication and hard work have paid off, and we look forward to continued success in future events.

Minister thanks CM: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate on Friday informed that the provincial cabinet has formally approved additional funds for the reconstruction of Liaquat Memorial Hospital (LHM) Kohat in its yesterday's meeting and hoped the project would now be completed within stipulated time.

In a statement issued here, the Law Minister expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on behalf of all the members of the assembly and the people of Kohat for approving funds for this important public project despite financial constraints. He said the credit for this goes to him and all the elected members of the National and Provincial Assembly of Kohat, Shehryar Khan Afridi, Daud Shah Afridi and Shafi Jan, whose tireless efforts made this possible.

Fisheries Dept stocks 15000 fishes seed F.P. Report

MARDAN: On the instructions of Director General Fisheries Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Deputy Commissioner Mardan, Assistant Commissioner Mardan Kamran Khan along with Assistant Director Fisheries Mardan and Aziz Khan of DG Fisheries Office stocked 15,000 thousand fish in the Kalpani nulla in Gujjar Garhi to increase the natural breeding of fish.

Speaking on the occasion, Kamran Khan appealed to the public to protect the water bodies from pollution and to avoid illegal hunting of fish to protect the natural environment, otherwise strict legal action will be taken.

It was said on this occasion that to avoid the harmful effects of climate change we have to save our environment which is impossible without public cooperation. He assured the fisheries department of full cooperation from the district administration and appreciated the performance of the fisheries department.

Two Levies men killed by colleague's firing

F.P. Report

MALAKAND: At least two personnel of Malakand Levies including a Hawaldar, Fazal Karim and constable Muhammad Riaz were killed while another constable Alamzeb was critically injured. The injured Levies official was referred to Peshawar due to his critical bullet wounds.

Police informed on Friday said, a Levies constable, Saddam Hussain who was on leave, came with his friend to Mosa Mina check post at around

12 a.m. and started indiscriminate firing at his colleagues. As a result of intense firing, Levies Hawaldar, Fazal Karim and constable Muhammad Riaz were killed while another constable Alamzeb was critically injured. The injured Levies official was referred to Peshawar due to his critical bullet wounds.

After the killing spree, the Levies official Saddam and his friends managed to flee the area. Police have started an investigation and launched a search operation

to arrest the killers. The relatives of the deceased and locals placed the dead bodies on main Malakand road, blocking it for every kind of vehicular traffic for hours.

The area Assistant Commissioner and local MPA Pir Musawir Ghazi came met with the protestors and assured them that a detailed investigation would be carried out and the killers be arrested as soon as possible. After the successful negotiation, the protestors dispersed.

DC for effective anti-dengue steps

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram has directed the authorities concerned to display banners regarding dengue prevention in mosques, union councils and offices, early cleaning of water tanks and holding awareness sessions for students on dengue virus in the morning assemblies of schools.

Similarly, Assistant Commissioners should organize regular awareness campaigns regarding dengue in their respective areas also, he directed while presiding over a meeting at his office on the prevention of dengue virus.

The meeting beside others was also attended by the

ADC (Gen), ADC (Relief), Assistant Commissioners, Heads of Line Departments.

The meeting was briefed in detail about the measures taken to eradicate dengue virus and its prevention.

The meeting was also informed about the available medicines stock and machinery used to eradicate dengue virus. The Deputy Commissioner directed the authorities concerned to ensure necessary steps for eradication of the dengue virus without any delay. He also appealed to the people to cooperate with the health department staff in this regard so that the dengue virus can be eradicated.

Meanwhile, an important meeting was also held under the chairmanship of

the Deputy Commissioner Kohat on the importance of water preservation and preventing its wastage. The meeting was briefed about the projects being launched for provision and preservation of potable water.

Deputy Commissioner Kohat while giving necessary instructions for the successful holding of the water seminar on November 13, next, said that stalls should also be set up on the occasion of the water seminar and awareness should be carried out at public level about the importance of water and containing its wastage. He also stressed effective awareness on proper use of water so that future generations could be provided with this essential means of life.

Inter-departmental trilingual speech hosted

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: In a vibrant celebration of patriotism and linguistic diversity, the Bureau of Students Training and Guidance Services (STAGS), University of Sindh in collaboration with the Sindh Higher education Commission organized the 'Interdepartmental Trilingual Speech and Milli Naghma Competitions' under the "Hamara Pakistan" program.

The event was held in the auditorium of the Department of Commerce, wherein hundreds of enthusiastic students and faculty members participated. The Bureau of STAGS organized the event in collaboration with the Department of History, Pakistan Study Centre and the Department of Political Science.

The program commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, fol-

lowed by Naat Sharif and the National Anthem. The speech competition featured trilingual segments in English, Sindhi and Urdu, evaluated by two judges per language.

In English speech competition, Miss Anfal Soomro from the Department of Political Science, Akash Gopang from the Institute of Law and Umer Ghani from Institute of English grabbed the 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.

In Sindhi speech competition, Sajjad Laghari from Institute of English Language & Literature, Muhammad Usama from the Department of Psychology and Miss Nirmal Arif from the Institute of Law received the top three positions respectively. In Urdu speech competition, Miss Aiman from the Department of Urdu, Miss Mazia Shaikh from the Department of Economics and Miss

Muskan from the Department of History got the 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.

In Milli Naghma competition winners, Jaffar Hussain from Pakistan Study Centre, Miss Fatima, Miss Humam Khan, Miss Nimra and Mr. Qayoom Ashfaq from the Department of Political Science and Miss Faliha Qazi from the Institute of business Administration took the top three positions respectively. The winners were awarded shields and all participants, volunteers and moderators received certificates in recognition of their dedication and contribution. The event was attended by Prof Dr Shujaa Ahmed Mahesar, Prof Dr Akbar Mahesar, Prof Dr Sanobar Rehman Shaikh and Prof Dr Irfan Shaikh. They also made speeches and highlighted the value of such events in fostering national pride and motivation among students.

Farmer found hanged from tree near Tharu Shah

F.P. Report

NAUSHEHRO FERROZE: The death of a farmer in village Molhan within the jurisdiction of Tharu Shah police remits has raised suspicions of either suicide or murder.

According to a report on Friday, the body of Khadam Hussain Jiskani was found hanging from a tree in the

vicinity of his rice fields, where he was reportedly sleeping when the incident occurred.

Family members alleged that Hussain was strangled to death while asleep at his field's camp, and that an attempt was made to disguise the murder as a suicide. Sources indicated that the area is embroiled in a land dispute between two

local landlords, fueling speculation that Hussain's death may be linked to this ongoing conflict. Police, however, initially treated the case as a suicide, though they have sent the body for a post-mortem examination. Authorities are awaiting the autopsy report to determine the exact cause of death, with further investigations underway.

SIAL, police conduct traffic awareness session

F.P. Report

SIALKOT: Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL) and the City Traffic Police successfully conducted a special awareness session at the SIAL secretariat, aimed at promoting road safety and responsible driving practices.

The event was paired with a driving license registration camp, providing an opportunity for SIAL staff to obtain and renew their driving licenses on the spot.

General Manager Admin and Security Air Commodore (Rtd.) Rashid Mahmood Bajwa and Senior Manager Vigilance Tariq Butt welcomed the Traffic Police officials at the venue.

GM Admin and Security Bajwa stated that "We appreciate the role of Traffic Police in the city and their domain of creating awareness is highly commendable". This awareness and driving license registration session was of important value

catering number of employees and raising traffic sense among them.

The awareness session was attended by a SIAL staff, including drivers and other members. Key topics covered during the session included traffic rules and regulations, the importance of seat belts, the dangers of distracted driving, and tips for safe driving in various conditions. Senior officials from both SIAL and the City Traffic Police Sialkot emphasized the significance.



MULTAN: Thalassaemia battling patient children raise their voices for awareness during a walk on National Thalassaemia Day.

Speakers pay tribute to national poet Iqbal

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: A colorful ceremony was organized here at Govt Primary school No: 1, Dera Ismail Khan in connection with Iqbal Day. The management organized the event in collaboration with NCHD.

SDEO DI Khan Muhammad Hamayun Khattak, NCHD Director Mehvoob Miankhel, Assistant Director Asma and School Head Teacher Kamran Khan addressed the event by shedding light

on life and services of the national poet Allama Iqbal. They said that Iqbal was not only our national poet but also a thinker and philosopher. They highlighted his presentation of the Two-Nation Theory, which led to the creation of a separate homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent.

The speakers emphasized Iqbal's role as a national leader and his significant contribution to the Pakistan Movement. They also appreciated his poetry,

particularly regarding self-respect, dignity, and the concept of 'Shaheen' (a symbol of courage and strength).

The program concluded with the distribution of certificates among students for their excellent performance in speeches, Hamd, Naats, and tableaux. SDEO Muhammad Hamayun Khattak and other dignitaries praised Head Teacher Kamran Khan and the students of GPS No: 1 for their outstanding participation.

E-Rozgar freelancing summit held at IUB

F.P. Report

BAHAWALPUR: The IUB e-Rozgar Freelancing Summit 2024 was held at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. More than 1200 students, who graduated from the e-Rozgar Markaz and the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, were awarded certificates. Director IT, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Zulfiqar Saeed, in his

address, highlighted the importance of information technology and artificial intelligence.

He said that the E-Rozgar Markaz, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, has enabled its graduates to earn more than 700,000 US dollars. He appreciated the tireless efforts of the team and thanked Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kamran for the patronage of the e-Rozgar Markaz.

Manager Punjab Information Technology Board Ijaz Farooq, and Program Manager Punjab Information Technology Board Hina Arshad also spoke on the occasion. Dean Faculty of Computing Prof. Dr. Dost Muhammad Khan, freelancing experts Tanveer Nandla, and Abdul Wahab, along with freelancers and renowned experts from the IT world participated in the event.



Ukraine must remain neutral for there to be peace: Putin

SOCHI (Reuters): President Vladimir Putin said that Ukraine should remain neutral for there to be a chance for peace, adding that the borders of Ukraine should be in accordance with the wishes of the people living in Russian-claimed territory.

"If there is no neutrality, it is difficult to imagine the existence of any good-neighborly relations between Russia and Ukraine," Putin said. Putin said Russia had recognised Ukraine's post-Soviet borders based on the understanding that it would be neutral. The US-led NATO military alliance has repeatedly said that Ukraine would one day join.

If Ukraine was not neutral, it would be "constantly used as a tool in the wrong hands and to the detriment of the interests of the Russian Federation," Putin said. Russia controls about a fifth of Ukraine after more than two and a half years of war. Putin on June 14 set out his terms for an end to the conflict: Ukraine would have to drop its NATO ambitions and withdraw all of its troops from all of the territory of the regions claimed by Russia.

Ukraine rejects those conditions as tantamount to surrender and President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has presented a "victory plan" for which he has requested additional Western support. "We are determined to create conditions for a long-term settlement so that Ukraine is an independent, sovereign state, and not an instrument in the hands of third countries, and not used in their interests," Putin said.

Asked about the future borders of Ukraine, Putin said: "The borders of Ukraine should be in accordance with the sovereign decisions of people who live in certain territories and which we call our historical territories."

Ukraine says that it will not rest until every last Russian soldier is ejected from its territory though even US generals say that such an aim would take massive resources that Ukraine currently does not have.

Meanwhile, Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu said, a day after Donald Trump became US president-elect, that the West should accept Russia was winning the Ukraine war and negotiate an end to it. Moscow's forces have been advancing at their fastest pace since the early weeks of the 2-1/2-year-old war.

Trump said during campaigning that he could bring peace in Ukraine within 24 hours, but has given few details on how he would seek to do this. Shoigu, an ally of President Vladimir Putin who had been defence minister since 2012 until Putin moved him in May, said the West had tried to use Ukraine to inflict strategic defeat on Russia but had failed. "Now, when the situation in the theatre of military operations is not in favour of the Kyiv regime, the West is faced with a choice - to continue financing it and destroying the Ukrainian population or to recognise the current realities and start negotiating," Shoigu said. Putin on June 14 set out his terms for an end to the war:

Ukraine would have to drop its NATO ambitions and withdraw its troops from all the territory of four regions claimed by Moscow.

Russia controls Crimea, which it unilaterally seized and annexed from Ukraine in 2014, about 80% of the Donbas - a coal and steel producing area comprising the Donetsk and Luhansk regions - and more than 70% of the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. Ukraine, which is backed by the United States and European powers, dismissed Putin's conditions, but Trump has said he has different priorities to Joe Biden, who has insisted Ukraine should decide when and how to negotiate. Kyiv's official position is that it will not rest until every Russian soldier is ejected from its territory.

The Wall Street Journal reported that Trump's transition team had proposed that Kyiv could promise not to join NATO for 20 years in exchange for Washington agreeing to arm it heavily to deter a Russian attack. Russia says it will not comment on media reports, and that it would need to see the details of any plan before commenting. The Kremlin reacted cautiously after Trump won the presidential election, saying the US was still an unfriendly state and that only time would tell if his rhetoric on ending the war translated into reality. Reuters reported in May that Putin was ready to halt the war with a negotiated ceasefire recognising current battlefield lines, but was prepared to fight on if Kyiv and the West did not respond.



BEIRUT: People inspecting the site of an Israeli strike on a vehicle, at the entrance of Sidon, Lebanon.

China's state secrets leak prompts rare death sentence

HONG KONG (Reuters): A former employee working for one of China's state agencies has been given a rare death sentence for leaking "state secrets," the Ministry of State Security said, after he was accused of handing over his USB drive to foreign spy agencies.

The case underscores China's intense crackdown on espionage activities and highlights escalating tension between China and other countries on national security issues. A man surnamed Zhang provided a "large number of top-secret and confidential state secrets to foreign spy intelligence agencies, seriously endangering China's national security," the ministry posted on messaging application WeChat.

It did not reveal his full name or his previous job position. Reuters was unable to contact Zhang for comment. Zhang was once "a core confidential personnel of a state agency" and was exposed to a large number of state secrets at work, the ministry said. After leaving his job, Zhang became an "important target for foreign spy intelligence agencies to win over and subvert."

Zhang, who was weak in character and could not resist the temptation of money, became a 'puppet' controlled and used by the other party," the ministry said. Zhang travelled outside of China to meet with a foreign spy surnamed Li who forced him to sign a cooperation agreement. Li seized Zhang's USB work flash drive and personal belongings, the ministry said. After receiving training from the foreign spy agency, Zhang became "a secret-stealing black hand controlled and used by the foreign intelligence agency". Chinese lawmakers passed a wide-ranging update to Beijing's anti-espionage legislation in April, banning the transfer of any information related to national security and broadening the definition of spying. In a separate case earlier this year, a Beijing court handed Australian writer Yang Hengjun a suspended death sentence on espionage charges in February, a decision the Australian government described as "harrowing".

NATO warns of NK threat in pitch to Trump

BRUSSELS (AFP): NATO chief Mark Rutte said that North Korea's involvement in Russia's war against Ukraine posed a direct threat to the United States, in a first effort to convince Donald Trump to keep backing Kyiv.

Trump's thumping victory to return to the US presidency has set nerves jangling in Europe that he could pull the plug on vital Washington military aid for Ukraine. NATO allies say keeping Kyiv in the fight against Moscow is key to both European and American security, and Rutte sought to join the dots for Trump between the conflict and Washington's major foes elsewhere.

"What we see more and more is that North Korea, Iran, China and of course Russia are working together, working together against Ukraine," Rutte told reporters at a European leaders' meeting in Budapest.

"At the same time, Russia has to pay for this, and one of the things they are doing is delivering technology to North Korea, which is now threatening in the future the mainland of the US, continental Europe," he warned. "I look forward to sit down with Donald Trump to discuss how we can face these threats collectively," Rutte said.

North Korea has become one of the strongest backers of Russia's war on Ukraine, and has been accused of recently sending troops to

fight alongside Moscow's forces. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy told journalists in Budapest that 11,000 North Korean troops were in Russia's western Kursk region and had already sustained "losses". "North Korea is now, in effect, waging war in Europe. North Korean soldiers are attempting to kill our people on European soil," Zelenskiy said. Iran meanwhile is accused of supplying Russia with missiles and drones, and China has been deemed a key backer for keeping technology heading to Russia that Moscow needs to maintain its fight.

Trump has rattled US allies by casting doubt on the tens of billions of dollars in military aid Washington has pumped into Ukraine since Russia's 2022 invasion. The volatile former reality TV star has sparked fears that he could force Kyiv to accept a peace deal on Moscow's terms after insisting he could end the war "in 24 hours". - 'Ukraine deserves our support' - Keeping Ukraine's single biggest donor on board is seen by most as essential for ensuring Kyiv stays afloat, especially at a time of political uncertainty in major European powers Germany and France.

On the battlefield Ukraine's fatigued troops are struggling to stave off Russia's advances as they approach three years of full-scale combat. Europe

together has spent around \$125 billion on supporting Ukraine, while the United States alone has coughed up more than \$90 billion, according to a tracker from the Kiel Institute. Washington has the deepest weapons reserves and has supplied many of the most effective weapons used in the war. "Any narrative that can help Trump look more favourably on Ukraine is good and worth trying," said one senior NATO diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive topics. Many EU leaders meeting at the summit in Budapest sought to downplay the threat of Washington ending its support for Ukraine -- and insisted Europe would keep going regardless.

"Ukraine deserves our support, no matter if we are the United States or Europe, because they were attacked, brutally attacked by the aggressor country," Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda said. "This is not only about Ukraine. This is about rules-based international order, and we have to preserve it." Outgoing Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said that if the United States "would decide to change, that does not mean that we need to change". "That the support for Ukraine stands or collapses with the United States is not true -- European countries play a very determining role in that," he said.

Unacceptable to offer Russia concessions on Ukraine: Zelensky

KYIV (AFP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said it would be "unacceptable" for Europe to offer the Kremlin concessions to halt its invasion of Ukraine, after Moscow demanded the West enter direct talks on ending the war.

Kyiv is scrambling to up the pressure on its allies for more support in its fight against Moscow following Donald Trump's victory in this week's US presidential election, which has raised doubts about future US assistance. Trump has boasted he could end the conflict within hours and repeatedly criticised American aid to Kyiv.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has demanded Ukraine cede swathes more territory in its east and south as a precondition to peace talks, while Kyiv has repeatedly ruled out giving up land in exchange for peace. Ukraine and many in the West fear any settlement that rewards Putin would embolden the Kremlin leader and lead to more aggression. Speaking to European leaders at a summit in Hungary, Zelenskiy blasted those who were pressuring him to give in to some of Putin's hardline demands. "There has been much talk about the need to yield to Putin, to back down, to make some concessions," Zelenskiy said in an address.

"It's unacceptable for Ukraine and unacceptable for all Europe," he added. Zelenskiy also dismissed as

"dangerous" and "irresponsible" Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's call for a "ceasefire" on the battlefield. Orban, the EU leader with the warmest relations with the Kremlin, earlier said a truce could "provide room and time for the warring parties to have communication and to start to negotiate about peace". Zelenskiy also accused some European leaders, without specifying which ones, of "strongly" pushing Ukraine to compromise. "We need sufficient weapons, not support in talks. Hugs with Putin won't help. Some of you have been hugging him for 20 years, and things are only getting worse," said Zelenskiy. He revealed however that he had discussed "military assistance" with French President Emmanuel Macron in Budapest. Russia earlier demanded that Kyiv's allies enter into negotiations with Moscow if they want to halt the attacks on Ukrainians. The head of Russia's Security Council Sergei Shoigu said the West faced a choice between opening direct talks with Moscow or the continuing "destruction" of Ukraine's population. "Now, when the situation in the theatre of combat is not in Kyiv's favour, the West is faced with a choice," Shoigu said at a meeting with defence officials of other former Soviet states. "To continue financing (Kyiv) and the destruction of the

Ukrainian population or recognise the current realities and start negotiating," the former defence minister said. They were among the first comments from a Russian official since Trump was confirmed to have been elected president of the United States.

Zelenskiy urged caution over Trump's claim to be able to end the conflict within a matter of hours. "Today I believe that President Trump truly wants a quick solution. But that doesn't mean it will happen," he told reporters in Budapest.

The Ukrainian leader said a quick deal could mean "losses" for Kyiv. In remarks at the Valdai forum in Sochi meanwhile, Putin repeated that Moscow was open for talks, but said parties to them must recognise the "realities of today". Russian officials have repeatedly used such language to refer to Moscow's military control of swathes of Ukrainian territory seized throughout the invasion. Putin said any initiative put forward by Trump would warrant attention, as he praised the President-elect as a "courageous" man. He congratulated Trump on his election victory and said he was "ready" to hold talks with him. Trump said he too was also prepared for some kind of conversation. "I think we'll speak," he told NBC News in an interview. Zelenskiy has previously said that without US aid, Ukraine would lose the war.

UN agency for Palestinian refugees urges world to save it from Israeli ban

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees urged the world to save it from an Israeli ban that would have "disastrous consequences" for millions of people caught up in the war in Gaza.

Philippe Lazzarini, who heads the agency known as UNRWA, told the 193 nations of the UN General Assembly that they must take action to prevent Israel from implementing legislation that prohibits the agency's operations in the Palestinian territories. The laws, adopted by Israel's parliament last month, take effect in 90 days. UNRWA was established by the General Assembly in 1949 to provide relief for Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes before and during the 1948 Arab-

Israeli war that followed Israel's establishment, as well as their descendants, until there is a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

UNRWA has been the main agency distributing humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip, where almost the entire population of around 2.3 million Palestinians relies on aid for survival amid Israel's more than yearlong war with Hamas. Experts say hunger is rampant. Assembly President Philemon Yang told members at informal meeting that Israel's legislation "constitutes an intolerable affront to the authority of this assembly, an affront to international law and, most importantly, an affront to the human dignity of innocent Palestinian civilians." Yang said the assembly extend-

ed UNRWA's mandate - most recently in December 2022 - by an overwhelming majority until June 30, 2026. He urgently called on Israel to comply with its international legal obligations, the UN Charter and UN resolutions.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has repeatedly said there is no alternative to UNRWA, and Yang stressed that a halt to its activities "would exacerbate an already catastrophic humanitarian situation." Israel alleges that around a dozen of UNRWA's 13,000 staff in Gaza participated in the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attacks in southern Israel that sparked the war in Gaza. It recently provided the UN, with over 100 names of UNRWA staff it claims have militant ties.

Mexico appears to abandon its ‘hugs, not bullets’ strategy

MEXICO CITY (AP): For the last six years, Mexico bragged about its oft-questioned "hugs, not bullets" strategy, in which its leaders avoided confrontations with drug cartels that were gradually taking control of large parts of the country. The thinking was that social programs, not shootouts, would gradually drain the pool of cartel gunmen.

Now, a month into the term of new President Claudia Sheinbaum, a string of bloody confrontations suggests the government is quietly abandoning the "no bullets" part of that strategy and is much more willing to use the full force of the military and the militarized National Guard. But the challenge Mexico now faces is different from that during the country's 2006-2012 drug war. Cartels today are more diversified, more deeply entrenched in migrant smuggling and more willing to use foreign recruits and adolescents to fill their ranks.

All of that has led to a string of violent clashes in which security forces who shoot at suspected drug cartel convoys wind up killing bystanders and migrants, and reporting lopsided death tolls in which sol-

diers aren't harmed but most of the suspects are wiped out. Sheinbaum has studiously avoided using the "hugs, not bullets" slogan popularized by her predecessor and mentor, former President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who left office on Sept. 30. She has, after all, pledged to continue each and every one of López Obrador's policies. Her office did not respond to a request for comment.

But Sheinbaum has had to perform some verbal gymnastics to avoid disowning the policy entirely. "Clearly, it isn't a question of hugs for criminals, nobody has ever said that," Sheinbaum said soon after taking office. The hugs, she said, were meant for impoverished youths, to avoid having them recruited as cartel gunmen.

"There are traces of a change in tone toward organized crime, but it's too early to call," said Falko Ernst, a security analyst. "It seems unlikely that the Sheinbaum administration would risk a politically inconvenient, steady stream of violent imagery by betting on wholesale balazos (bullets)-only strategy," but there may be more willingness to confront "the most overt and brazen displays of

power" by the cartels. But it is hard to imagine Sheinbaum issuing public praise for drug lords for behaving themselves, or saying - as López Obrador did - that she will "tell on them to their fathers and grandfathers" if they cause too much violence. She has also been unwilling to tolerate criminals taking police and soldiers hostage, or to crow about reductions in Mexico's "lethality index" - the measure of suspects killed, wounded or taken into custody, versus casualties on the law enforcement side - the way her predecessor did.

López Obrador famously called off the 2019 arrest of drug lord Ovidio Guzmán, and ordered his release, after his Sinaloa cartel threatened to plunge the northern city of Culiacán into chaos to win his freedom. López Obrador said he made the decision to avoid bloodshed. Sheinbaum's administration has been a tad different. On her first day in office, soldiers in the southern state of Chiapas opened fire on a truck that "looked like one used by criminal groups." But after shooting up the truck, they found only migrants, six of whom were killed and 10 wounded. Ten

days later, army and National Guard troops killed three innocent bystanders as they were pursuing suspected gunmen. And this weekend, the National Guard opened fire on a truck carrying migrants, killing two Colombians and wounding at least four.

Then there are the lopsided death tolls: López Obrador always criticized previous administrations for shootouts in which all the suspects were killed, and very few were taken alive. But in Sheinbaum's third week in office, soldiers in Sinaloa killed 19 drug cartel suspects and arrested one in a confrontation, but suffered not a scratch themselves. And toward the end of her first month in office, soldiers pursuing cartel gunmen who had killed two local policemen killed 17 of them but lost no soldiers. Most of the dead, and 10 of the 15 gunmen arrested in the confrontation, were Guatemalan. "The hugs not bullets strategy ended some time ago," said security analyst David Saucedo, pointing to an increased number of high-level drug arrests and extraditions of suspects. "The US government pressured Andrés Manuel López Obrador to resume the capture

of high-level drug lords."

One of the key differences Sheinbaum faces is that Mexican cartels have gotten involved in the lucrative trade of smuggling migrants from far-away countries. In the old days, the cartels took a cut from smugglers moving Central Americans, who used to make up the vast majority of those crossing Mexico to reach the United States. Those migrants paid hundreds or a few thousand dollars apiece. Since smugglers opened up a new route through the Darien Gap, people from farther away have been crossing Mexico, and they can pay far higher smuggling fees.

Simultaneously, an immigration crackdown in the US and Mexico has created a significant number of Central and South Americans now have no avenue to get into the United States, said military analyst Juan Ibarrola, noting, "It is big business, and it is a far more profitable business than drugs." Ibarrola claims the cartels are now using migrants both as human shields, and sometimes as cannon fodder for their squads of hitmen. "The recruitment of larger batches of foreign fighters is yet another sign of

the gradual deepening of Mexico's armed conflicts," said Ernst. "Left unchecked - much like the employment of homemade explosive devices - it's a trend that's been allowed to expand." Expand is exactly what the cartels did during López Obrador's six-year term from late 2018 to 2024.

"For six years we were ruled by the policies of a president who did not understand, or who did not realize, that the worst thing he could have done, the worst error he could have made, was not to use legal force against criminal violence," said Ibarrola, who is convinced the policy has now changed. The other problem Sheinbaum faces is the result of her determination to continue with López Obrador's strategy of militarizing Mexican law enforcement - essentially giving soldiers a task they weren't trained to do. Together with the mix of migrants and drug traffickers, it seems almost a certain recipe for more deaths of innocent bystanders. "It is a fact that the National Guard does not correctly apply the rules of engagement on the use of force," said Saucedo. "They tend to open fire before investigating or trying to detain criminal suspects."

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Why did voters abandon Kamala?

SINCE we'll hear a lot, again, about "populism", let's remember, again, that 19th-century US populism had a healthy strain of leftwing politics. Defending workers, riling up bankers, decrying the "cross of gold" and economic conservatism: look past his Bible-bashing, and William Jennings Bryan was a precursor to Franklin Roosevelt. Yet for much of this election year, the populists' modern-day successors in the Democrats have served up an anti-populism: telling voters they were wrong.

Americans were told they were wrong to see the corrosion of Joe Biden's abilities, and wrong to think that his replacement should not be decided in a giant back-room stitch-up. They were wrong not to enjoy the US economic miracle, and wrong not to worry about the future of democracy. Black and brown people and students were wrong to expect the party to oppose the bloodbath in Gaza. Latinos were ungrateful to desert the party of racial equality, while Black men were bone-headed not to back a Black woman. Everyone was wrong not to lap up the rallies opened by Beyoncé and Usher, the skits on Saturday Night Live and that clip of Barack Obama rapping. Why couldn't they just feel the joy?

For reasons I'll explain in a moment, I'm no fan of explanations that begin and end with the bogeyman of "populism". They almost always wind up with well-lunched commentators ventriloquising the opinions of people they've never talked to and in whose worlds they've never set foot. Look at the exit polls and you see a materialist explanation for what's just happened: two out of three US voters report their economy is bad. And they have an excellent point. As I wrote last month, look at the data over the long run and two big trends stand out.

First, for the vast majority of US employees - whether middle class or working class, teacher or shop assistant - wages have flatlined. Not for four or even 20 years - but for most of the past half century. Strip out inflation, and average hourly earnings for seven out of 10 employees have barely risen since Richard Nixon was in the White House.

I can't think of a more flammable political economy than a country with a few very rich people where most workers only get by because of low gas and food prices. Then what happens? A second blow. Covid peters out, the world comes out of lockdown and low-wage America is doused in that most combustible of economic substances: inflation. The entire system goes up - and Donald Trump spots his chance. Faced with the flames, what would be a left-populist response? It wouldn't be to resort to pedantry, to correct angry voters by showing them the aggregate figures - but that's what many Democrat supporters did. Nor would it be to roll back all the benefits extended over the pandemic: the improved child tax credit, Medicaid and unemployment insurance. But that's what Joe Biden did, even as he shovelled billions into infrastructure. The electoral result was that working- and middle-class voters peeled away from the Democrats. Kamala Harris won the most affluent voters, while Trump took those earning between \$50,000 (£39,000) and \$100,000 (£77,000). The two tied for those on \$50,000 and below. So much for Harris being part of the most pro-worker government since the 1960s.

Just as the electorate professed fury with the entire political and economic system, she and the Democrats made themselves the system's defenders. They weren't change but more of the same. They worried about the future of "democracy"; they warned about disrupting free trade. Harris's slogan of "we're not going back" said it all: a campaign defined by being anti-Trump rather than for anything. A strategy intended to woo "moderates" left nearly everyone cold. Harris started her campaign differently, by promising to hunt down price-gouging corporates. That policy was popular, but there was little else. She went policy-lite, so as to present Trump with less of a target. Among the supporters she wheeled out this autumn was the billionaire Mark Cuban. In a country where the richest 0.1% own nearly 20% of all wealth - almost as much as 90% of Americans put together - this is almost the definition of anti-populist politics.

We probably won't hear much about billionaires over the next few days. If the commentariat's form from 2016 is anything to go by, the sketch will be of angry left-behinds and rednecks rallying to a strongman. Never mind that last night's exit polls showed Trump as personally less popular than Harris, or that more than half of voters judge his views to be "too extreme". Not to mention that Trump is easily the richest man ever to serve in the White House, with a personal net worth of about \$5.5bn (£4.3bn). A marketing man, skilled at targeting discontent, Trump does not follow his crowds. Rather, he is led by the money men around him: the fossil fuel executives, the shadow bankers, the crypto bros and the world's richest man, Elon Musk. Mitt Romney and George W Bush could always rely on some stuffed shirts from the Fortune 500 to hand over a few tens of thousands. But Trump's donor class is very different. They include men like Stephen Schwarzman, head of the world's largest private equity firm, Blackstone, billionaire investor Nelson Peltz and Silicon Valley's David Sacks. They're not company men building relationships but, as Trump styles himself, dealmakers. This lot have shelled out a lot more to get in Trump (Musk alone has spent an estimated \$100m), and expect their money's worth. "They're less concerned about the photo op and a visit to the White House," as one former bagman for Trump told the New Yorker. "They want to essentially get their issues in the White House."

Trump has reportedly lined up Musk to become his "secretary of cost cutting", while in April, the US's next president demanded oil executives give him \$1bn to beat the Democrats. In return, he said, he'd let them do a lot more drilling. Slashed regulations and lower taxes are Trump's way of keeping donors on side. Last time he was in the White House, he brought in \$1.5tn of tax cuts that meant the richest 400 families in the US paid a lower tax rate than their secretaries, nannies, cleaners and anyone else in the working class. You can expect a lot more like it over the next four years. Trump will almost certainly plunder from the budgets for social security and Medicaid. The tech bros will suckle on government subsidies, while the suits from private equity get to set government policy. However this politics dresses itself, it's not populism. Try: theft - taking from the poor to give to the rich.

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Russia is playing a long game

Davit Zedelashvili

ON October 26, Georgians went out to vote in much-anticipated parliamentary elections, hopeful that the day would see their country remain on its democratic path and maybe even freeze oligarch former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili out of power.

The last dregs of that hope vanished shortly after the polling stations closed. Premature jubilation over the exit polls published by what remains of Georgia's independent media was soon replaced by despairing silence as the first official results were published. Exit polls had the ruling Georgian Dream (GD) party trailing at around 42% of the vote. The final results from the Central Election Commission catapulted GD to nearly 54%, giving the regime a solid governing majority but falling short of its stated aim of securing a unilateral constitution-amending supermajority.

For the last three decades, Georgia has remained a democracy, albeit a flawed one. Though elections were held, the playing field was engineered to allow strongmen leaders to dominate. But their removal at the ballot box remained a possibility. Russia recognized the potential of subverting Georgia from the inside through democratic means for Moscow's benefit. The 2012 election, which saw the Russian proxy billionaire oligarch Bidzina Ivanishvili break through and capture political power, marked the beginning of a comprehensive and iterative agenda of regime building.

Ivanishvili transformed the system so it still looked like an electoral democracy. But in practice, the crucial ability for the electorate to remove the leader was gone. Russia's long game in Georgia, which intensified with the start of Ivanishvili's rule, sought to transform Georgia's political system and society to bring them closer in alignment with Moscow. Elections are a central pillar of this effort. According to political scientist and Russia expert Timothy Frye, Putin needed to strike a balance between cheating too much and looking weak, or not interfering

enough to secure his desired outcome. "Fraud is a much blunter tool than many realize."

Like Putin, Ivanishvili has succeeded in this trade-off. However, the 2024 elections posed unique structural challenges that upset the careful balance of the extent of fraud necessary to win elections. For the first time in a decade, the Ivanishvili regime faced credible challenges to its electoral legitimacy. To win the October 26 elections, the regime had to skew the playing field so harshly that it had to sacrifice plausible pretenses of genuine popular support.

This can be seen in the distribution of the results. The "Russian tail" describes an unusual pattern of votes for Georgian Dream, deviating from a normal distribution. Graphics illustrating this bizarre pattern, especially in rural areas, appeared online almost immediately after the elections. This shape strongly points to the likelihood of mass manipulation of votes, including ballot stuffing and so-called "carousel voting"; however, such claims require further proof.

President Salome Zourabichvili, widely seen as the only remaining independent constitutional institution in Georgia, has called the elections "totally fraudulent" and "a result of Russian special operation." The four major opposition parties that crossed the 5% threshold condemned the elections as unfree, unfair and not reflecting the will of the Georgian people. They pledged to boycott parliament's work and refuse to cooperate until the regime concedes and launches an investigation into electoral fraud and reruns the elections under more exacting international scrutiny.

This is important insofar as the presence of Russian tail could be attributed to the regime's successful voter mobilization campaign in rural areas. Indeed, the regime has an extensive network in rural areas that includes local officials, law enforcement, and the party apparatus, who run sophisticated schemes of carrots and sticks to maximize voter turnout. Local election watchdogs and obser-

vation missions have concluded that the playing field was so systematically distorted and fraudulent manipulations were so widespread that the elections failed to reflect the will of the Georgian people. A local observer mission, My Vote, run by a coalition of leading Georgian civil society organizations, claimed that they had uncovered a fraudulent scheme, supplementing more traditional methods of voter mobilization.

The fraudulent scheme, according to the election watchdogs, involves the mass harvesting of personal documents (ID cards) and personal data of mainly opposition voters. Harvested personal documents were then used for a carousel voting scheme facilitated by the control of two key election officials at the precinct level: one would control the flow of voters into the polling station, while the other operated the electronic voting machines. If verified, this scheme could also explain why the opposition received fewer votes than in previous elections. Confiscating the documents of prospective opposition voters had a double effect: it demobilized those voters and decreased the opposition's overall support while contributing to the increase in votes for the regime.

It remains uncertain whether these allegations will ever be properly investigated. Georgian Dream vehemently denies the need for investigation into ballot fraud of any scope. International observer missions, without passing ultimate judgment on the vote's legitimacy, have criticized the heavily distorted playing field and the environment of systemic intimidation.

This air of pervasive intimidation, clearly visible to even short-term observers, lends plausibility to the widespread manipulation schemes alleged by the opposition and civil society. Georgian Dream's propaganda created an all-embracing aura of fear of an outbreak of war with Russia in the lead-up to the election. The threat to outlaw and prosecute the opposition and everyone who voted for them ampli-

fied this anxiety.

The opposition and civil society made a fatal mistake by failing to combat this fear-mongering head-on. They struggled to convince voters that new technologies to verify voter ID and count ballots guaranteed voter secrecy, which was especially egregious when voters arrived at ballot stations could barely cover the ballot paper and the regime's officials could through the thin paper to see who they had voted for. Many who voted, including myself, could attest that secret voting - a hallmark of modern democracy - was systematically disregarded. Georgian Dream's opponents framed this election as a referendum on whether Georgia should pursue integration with Europe. The EU made it clear before the elections and confirmed afterward that Georgia will not be able to pursue its European aspirations with the course of the current regime. EU institutions and member states are reluctant to recognize the elections as legitimate. They, joined by the U.S., are voicing increasingly harsh criticisms and are actively demanding measures to restore the integrity of elections, offering a glimmer of hope in this challenging situation.

However, the Ivanishvili regime is not alone. It has support from Russia and its allies, both outside and inside the EU. Tbilisi insists that it still aspires to EU membership. Nevertheless, the EU it aligns with is that of Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán and his allies. Orbán was the first to congratulate the regime on its apparent victory and soon after arrived in Tbilisi to solidify his support.

He reassured Georgian Dream that they could survive the legitimacy crisis. Sadly, their hopes are not delusional. Fellow strongman, Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, getting away with his contested victory earlier this year proves just that. Georgians, with their unwavering spirit, will continue their never-ending fight against Russian imperialism and their place in the European family. However, they will not be able to succeed against Russia's long game alone.

The Moscow Times

People appalled by Trump's win

Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett

IF Donald Trump's previous administration taught us anything, it's that women's bodies do not matter. The autonomy of those bodies, the frequent injustices and abuses inflicted on them, are of little consequence to a far-right misogynist administration that is - unbelievably to some - back in power after an all too brief period of reprieve, if not change. Women's bodies are also of little consequence to the people who voted for Donald Trump.

Shortly after Trump was elected in 2016, I saw Regina Spektor playing at the Royal Festival Hall. She sat down at a piano and sang her song Ballad of a Politician. "A man inside a room is shaking hands with other men," it opens: "This is how it happens / Our carefully laid plans." The almost physical weight of sadness in Spektor's performance, and that of the women in the audience, is something I have never forgotten.

Women across the world are today experiencing the visceral, secondhand body horror of another Trump administration, and that is nothing compared with the all-too-real feeling of peril that many American women will be having as I write. We hold fear, tension and trauma in our bodies, and though that is the kind of idea that strongmen such as Trump and their acolytes would snigger at, it's well documented that, to quote the psychiatrist and author Bessel van der Kolk, the body keeps the score. It is a complete tragedy that yet more American women are facing the prospect of their reproductive rights being curtailed even further.

This body horror will be felt by the many others on Trump's hitlist of undesirables: immigrants, gay and transgender people, disabled people, protesters. Anyone capable of empathy. Yet in the context of the assault on reproductive rights, and being a woman myself, it is women I am writing about today. I am thinking particularly of three women. Candi Miller died at home in bed with her three-year-old daughter next to her after being too afraid to seek medical care because of Georgia's abortion ban. She had a son as well as a daughter. Amber Nicole Thurman, also in Georgia, died after taking abortion pills at home and being made to wait 20 hours in agony for the dilation and curettage procedure that would have saved her life. She had a six-year-old son. And Josseli Barnica, who died when she was 17 weeks pregnant after doctors in Texas delayed treating her miscarriage for 40 hours. She had a young daughter. There are many more women, children and their families who have suffered profoundly as a result of the Republican-led rollback of women's reproductive rights.

The outcome of this election is not surprising. After last time, I didn't believe America's hatred of women could be overestimated; why should it elect one? The hatred all too evidently runs deep. Increasingly, its currents run separately to the mainstream: on podcasts, in the "manosphere" and on our online news feeds. Kamala Harris announcing that she was running for president coincided with my social media algorithms bombarding me with Christian "tradwife" content about the importance of serving and obeying one's husband, and not working

outside the home. This alternative reality isn't a side of America that many Europeans had seen. You might be dimly aware that historically the country was founded by religious fundamentalists deemed too extreme for European sensibilities, but there's something about seeing quite how unhinged and retrograde the content is that really brings the ideological disconnect home. Naturally, many people living in the US are just as horrified by the rise of these sorts of ideas, not to mention how they intersect with online misogyny and white supremacy, but their prevalence is less of a surprise because they have been exposed to them to some degree their entire lives.

At the same time, "childless cat lady" discourse was dominating the political debate, as if things weren't already feeling medieval enough. Having researched and written a book, The Year of the Cat, that is partly about childless cat ladies - and where the sexist myths about them come from - I found it as predictable as the "burn the witch" rhetoric deployed against Hillary Clinton. It's easy to laugh at the ridiculous notion that women who have not given birth are bitter, rageful harpies without a stake in the country they live in, and even easier to spin it into a clever "Cat Ladies for Kamala" campaign, but this fear of childless women is an old, old form of misogyny. That it was being deployed, especially in the context of global panic about the birthrate, did not bode well.

And, of course, there were yet more rape and sexual assault allegations to add to the pile - which barely seemed to make a dent in the election debate, despite the alleged involvement of the convicted paedophile Jeffrey Epstein. Many of us have been left wondering what exactly Trump would have to do to a woman that would be deemed sufficiently beyond the pale to prevent his return to power. If women didn't matter in 2016, we seem to matter even less in 2024. There is good news for American women to cling to, with Missouri and Arizona voting to expand abortion rights, and Colorado, New York, Maryland, Montana and Nevada all passing measures to protect them. Yet misogyny can be catching: in Europe, governments must take steps to protect our own laws (Labour must urgently decriminalise abortion here in the UK after the legislation fell by the wayside earlier this year).

I know I am not alone in saying that I had never experienced such profound physical revulsion as I did during the Trump years, whenever that man tweeted or went on television. When Trump was last in office, I had not ever been pregnant or given birth. I was, though, a survivor of assault, and found the "grab them by the pussy" rhetoric and the treatment of Christine Blasey Ford particularly sickening. You don't need to have been assaulted, or raped, to feel that revulsion, just as you didn't need to have had an IUD fitted to empathise with all the women who were suddenly rushing to get theirs. You don't need to have had an abortion, to have been pregnant or given birth to understand the trauma of being forced to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term.

The Guardian

Russia supporting Houthi rebels is diplomatic suicide

Saahil Menon

ON Dec. 8, 2022, Russian arms trafficker Viktor Bout had his 25-year prison sentence cut short by the Biden administration to secure the release of American basketball player Brittney Griner from a Mordovian penal colony on trumped-up drug possession charges.

Nonetheless, recent revelations that he is on the cusp of brokering \$10 million worth of automated weaponry sales to the Houthi movement suggest otherwise. Admittedly, Bout might not have received President Vladimir Putin's blessing for his post-incarceration wheeling-and-dealing given the immediate threat his Yemeni clients pose to Russia's regional allies such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Following a 2014 coup d'état in Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula's poorest nation, then Saudi Defense Minister Mohammed Bin

Salman waged an all-out military campaign and economic siege against the Iranian-backed Houthi insurgents with help from the UAE, hoping to bomb and starve them into submission. That said, the Houthis' capacity to bring the war home and imperil national security in expat-driven sheikhdoms which pride themselves on being safe havens for foreign direct investment forced the aggressors to pursue an off-ramp. The puritanical strand of Shia Islam the Houthis adhere to has, however, left them immune to being bought off by their neighbors' blood-soaked petrodollars.

Saudi Arabia's rationale behind entertaining Chinese-initiated peace talks with Iran last year was the misguided notion that normalizing relations would convince the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to yank on Ansarallah's leash. Though

routinely labeled an Iranian proxy, the Houthis have far greater agency and latitude than was presumed to be the case before Oct. 7, 2023. The Red Sea Crisis they manufactured in defense of Palestine bears testament to how ideology supersedes all other material or geostrategic considerations for the Houthis. By the first quarter of 2024, year-on-year maritime traffic through the Suez Canal and Bab El-Mandeb Strait had halved thanks to Houthi-led piracy. The Kremlin's underhanded cooperation with Yemen's de-facto government is just the latest example of its ineptitude at navigating the deeply complex rivalries dividing the Middle East.

The Russian Envoy in Tehran was summoned twice last year over Moscow endorsing the UAE's territorial claims to three disputed islands in the Persian Gulf. Needless to

say, arming and rehabilitating the Houthis is a whole new ball game that risks blowing apart Russia's alliance with the Gulf Cooperation Council. Saudi Arabia's holding pattern regarding BRICS accession coupled with Crown Prince MbS' no-show at the Kazan Summit last week suggests fault lines are already emerging.

Saudi-Russia ties under the Biden administration have been on overdrive. The two OPEC+ heavyweights famously colluded in December 2022 to slash oil output by 2 million barrels a day and send crude prices soaring in defiance of Washington's wishes. Riyadh also threatened to sell off its European debt holdings if the G7 went ahead with plans to seize \$300 billion in frozen Russian assets while Saudi investment company Kingdom Holding plowed

over \$500 million into Gazprom, Rosneft and Lukoil when the Ukraine conflict began. Yet, Russia's decision to equip the Houthis with satellite data with Donald Trump's potential re-election looming ahead could turn this thriving partnership on its head.

As signatories to the Abraham Accords which host United States Central Command's Al Dhafra Air Base and the US Navy's Fifth Fleet respectively, the UAE and Bahrain will be considered fair game by the Islamic Republic's foot soldiers should the shadow war between Israel and Iran spiral out of control. Whereas the Bahrainis have painted an even bolder target on their backs by agreeing to be part of Operation Prosperity Guardian, Russia has much more to lose if instability arises in the Emirates. Besides bilateral trade tripling to \$7 billion during the last three years, Dubai has positioned itself

as a welcoming hub" for sanctioned oligarchs no longer welcome in legacy Western capitals as well as white-collar Russians employed by multinational firms.

Notwithstanding the GCC states' continued willingness to invest in Russia, facilitating exchanges via mutual visa waivers and sending high-level delegations to flagship annual events like the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Putin appears prepared to sacrifice a profitable relationship with moderate Arab nations on the altar of burying Pax-Americana. Apart from their vast pool of battle-hardened manpower equally gung-ho about ending Western hegemony and paving the way for a more balanced world order, the Houthis - proscribed terrorist organization by the US - do not present any real value proposition to Moscow.

Where Harris' campaign went wrong

Edward-Isaac Dove

IT was supposed to be everything short of a free ad - a panel of women not containing their excitement to welcome Kamala Harris, ready to introduce her to their committed daytime audience of exactly the type of women the vice president's campaign always hoped were going to be critical to her base. It was a moment that encapsulated one of the biggest challenges facing her campaign - which, in the end, proved insurmountable. "What, if anything, would you have done something differently than President Biden during the past four years?" co-host of ABC's "The View" Sunny Hostin asked Harris, looking to give her a set for her to spike over the net. "There is not a thing that comes to mind," she said.

Even Harris realized she had a problem, trying to adjust a moment later by saying she would put a Republican in her Cabinet. Aides didn't wait until Harris was off the set to start trying to clean it up. A Democrat who had spoken with her told CNN at the time that she didn't want to name her differences with President Joe Biden - including a higher capital gains tax rate, a bigger child tax credit and a tougher border policy - because she thought it would look disloyal to the man who had picked her as his running mate and then stepped aside for her. The thud fell in a campaign already struggling with a listless October, which had replaced the late summer exuberance and a September debate that nearly every political observer other than Donald Trump acknowledged she crushed. As aides new to the Harris orbit exerted control, she struggled with preparation. She grew hesitant, losing some of the confidence and swagger that had defined the early weeks of her reintroduction to the country. Aides who had successfully pushed her out of her comfort zone earlier in the year felt like they were running into the kind of walls she used to put up.

CNN spoke with over a dozen senior Harris campaign aides both in the Wilmington, Delaware, campaign headquarters and on the ground in the states, as well as multiple volunteers and local elected officials, over the course of the final weeks of the race. A country crying out for change got a candidate who, at a crucial moment as more voters were tuning in, decided to soft-pedal the change she knew she represented. In the scope of a Democratic ticket that pulled off the biggest turnaround in approval ratings and the fastest consolidation around a new candidate in the history of modern presidential politics, this may have seemed like a minor moment. But it reflected deeper problems: some, like with the staff around her, that she might have been able to adjust; and one, with Biden, that she could never shake, with internal polls showing overwhelming majorities of voters thought the country was on the wrong track. By the time Harris got a clearer, sharper contrast answer out on the Biden question, the situation had congealed in ways she never got past - both among voters wavering in the center who wanted to hear her rebuff the president on his handling of the economy and voters on the left who wanted to hear her more

forcefully disavow Biden's support for Israel.

But perhaps the bigger problem with Biden, top Democrats fumed in the aftermath of that fateful debate in June and then again as they watched the results turn red on Tuesday, is that he should have never been anywhere near the 2024 race. If he had stepped aside after the midterms, as some aides urged him to, the Democratic Party process could have played out in a primary campaign. Candidates' kinks could have been worked out - or not. Almost certainly whoever emerged as the nominee would have gone into the final weeks without so many Americans complaining they didn't know enough, as they said about Harris. Biden could have taken on a role as steward and elder statesman, rather than a guy the Harris campaign never knew quite what to do with. If the election had been two weeks ago, senior aides to Harris were admitting in recent days, the vice president probably would have lost. But they went into Tuesday feeling like she had gotten herself to a likely squeaker victory. One-on-one conversations volunteers were having as they knocked on doors seemed to be clicking. For the first time in his nine years dominating American politics, Trump's character seemed to be breaking through as an actual weight on people who wanted to vote for him. Leading Democrats smiled just thinking about what it would mean to beat Trump with the first female president - a woman of color, a child of two immigrants, a prosecutor, and a candidate who talked about joy and offered up her smile against the scowl that had become his most common expression. Her candidacy sparked in them the unfamiliar feeling of hope.

That sentiment evaporated by 11 p.m. on Tuesday. But for many anxious Democrats, this is just the beginning. Going into Election Day, many top Democratic operatives across the campaign and in the states told CNN different versions of the same thought: If this didn't work - with the massive campaign they'd put together, with millions of doors knocked by volunteers who flooded into battleground states, with GOP former Rep. Liz Cheney and former President Bill Clinton united under the same tent stumping hard for her, with celebrities from Bad Bunny and Arnold Schwarzenegger throwing their cultural weight behind her - what will? "I can't imagine, I can't even get my mind around what it would be like if Donald Trump won, because he is telling us such dark and sinister things that he's going to do, and I believe him," Sen. Cory Booker told CNN after a campaign stop late Monday afternoon in Bucks County, Pennsylvania - one of the key swing districts in the crucial battleground state. The New Jersey Democrat said he had already warned his own staff about not giving up.

"We need to get up the next morning and forge forward," Booker said. "I told them how much I don't like hearing people say, 'Oh, if so-and-so wins, I'm going to go to Canada. That's just not our history. We've seen really bad outcomes out of bad historical

events in our country, and we're here because of the resiliency, the toughness, the strength of our country - and people even in the worst of times dug in and tried to do the best for our country." Harris' team would have gladly taken more time to introduce the vice president to the country, or to put together an operation, which, after the ticket switch in July, woke up every morning at campaign headquarters and in the states feeling behind on planning. But by the time the campaign pulled off its multi-state simultaneous rally across battleground states Monday evening - which ended with Lady Gaga singing her song "The Edge of Glory" and adding in, "I'm an American woman on the edge" on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art - a nervous feeling of maybe having made a movement happen was spreading among Harris aides and top supporters.

Those aides were a hodgepodge. Biden hadn't just struggled as a candidate, but had failed to attract some top talent to his campaign because a generation of up-and-coming Democrats could never get excited about him. Harris tried to graft some of her own team onto them, even overlooking tensions between them from the early days of the Biden administration with campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon and keeping her in charge. But some of those who had been in Wilmington for a year before Harris became the candidate bucked at their new bosses. Alumni of Barack Obama - most prominently his 2008, campaign manager David Plouffe, but also many others who moved into state operations - tried to flex a sometimes dated but often more incisive sense of how to win voters. Along the way, multiple aides told CNN how much they were grinding on one another. But the mission to beat Trump and the short timeline to try to get there helped paper over a lot of the infighting that might have exploded in a longer campaign. It instead just raged behind the scenes as aides like Stephanie Cutter moved to exert dominance over defining how and what Harris said what she said.

And those tensions manifested from almost the start of this short campaign, in the internal wrangling over who Harris should pick as her running mate. The case for Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro was strong, and not just because Harris' brother-in-law Tony West was telling her they looked like the future of the Democratic Party together, and that the popular governor would make sure she won Pennsylvania. Right-wing media types weren't the only ones who noticed how much Shapiro had made himself into an Obama clone, as much a Jewish guy from the Philadelphia suburbs could be: The Obama alumni suddenly rushing onto her campaign were pushing for Shapiro. Harris liked Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, though. She liked his line about Republicans being weird. She liked the way he came off as easy and unassuming. She liked the way they'd gotten along in their interview, including his very open stress that he would mess up in a debate with Trump's running mate, Ohio Sen. JD Vance. And she liked the way Walz had been so deferen-

tial to however she would define the job for him. In the end, Harris made a decision that simultaneously reflected her newfound confidence and her long-standing insecurity, solid with trusting her own instincts, fine with going against her family and against the Obama orbit, but also with no interest in having anyone who would possibly outshine her. Then, as top aides kept Harris away from interviews and unscripted moments for weeks longer than many on the campaign thought made sense, Walz was necessarily kept in a box too, so that he didn't come off more accessible than she was.

Tuesday morning, outside a canvas launch in northeast Philadelphia, Shapiro deflected a question about whether Pennsylvania - and the race - would have looked different had he been the choice. "I think she made a great pick in Tim Walz," he said. Biden, most Democrats were confident going into Tuesday, would have never even been in contention. The president watched the results come in from the White House, making a few calls to local winning candidates back in Delaware. Some who spoke with him as he made the decision to drop out in July briefly lingered on what might have been - maybe he could have won by keeping his numbers even in counties where he ended up outperforming Harris, or if he'd lost anyway, at least it wouldn't have put the burden on a Black woman. He said nothing publicly.

Harris ran on positivity. She ran on inclusivity. She convinced a party full of insiders who had gone into the year ready to write her off for the 2028 Democratic nomination that they should go all in on her for 2024. At the beginning of the night Tuesday, when victory seemed just hours away, the people who came to what was supposed to be Harris' celebration were dancing. A Howard University graduate seemed about to walk into history in the heart of her old HBCU campus. At one point, the camera found the student body president in the crowd and she blushed as she saw herself projected on the big screen. Anticipation mounted and cheers went out with every state called for Harris. Seconds after North Carolina was called for Trump, the audio was switched off the big screens and music blasted through the speakers to try to salvage the energy. Most kept staring silently at the numbers, trying to make sense of what had happened.

In state capitals with Democratic governors, break-glass plans that they had started to believe they would never need are getting yanked off the shelves - to protect access to abortion medications, but also to work up other protections from what they believe will be not just a stringent, but vindictive, administration. Early thoughts about who will be running and how in 2028 are starting to circulate. That was not on the minds of the people who started streaming out of the Howard campus early Wednesday before campaign co-chair Cedric Richmond had even finished telling them that there was still counting to be done. "We try to do it right, we try to be good Christians," one woman said to the man walking with her. "We've got to take a page out of their book."

Ukraine is forced to confront a brutal Trump reality that it hoped would never happen

Nick Paton Walsh

BETS were hedged, upsidies conjured and insurance policies crafted. But ultimately, most hoped it would not happen. Ukraine and its NATO allies have had for months to entertain the idea of a Trump victory, juggling conceits of a strongman US president who might be a yet tougher ally, a dealmaker who might bring a favorable peace, or fresh eyes who might see a new end to a fatiguing war.

This was but a comforting fiction: The road ahead for Kyiv is extremely stark. There should be no enduring mystery about what a Trump presidency means for Ukraine. Donald Trump has said he would end the war "in 24 hours," but not how. He also said that "Zelensky should never have let that war start," and dubbed him "one of the greatest salesmen I have ever seen" who gets \$100 billion on every visit to Congress. As of this morning, the fact these statements are wild exaggerations ceased to really matter. They became the warped lens through which the president-elect of the United States will perceive the largest conflict in Europe since the Nazis. Trump may appoint a cabinet that mildly adjusts the pace or tone of his instincts, but in the end he wants out. It doesn't matter that strategically Ukraine's war has so far provided the Pentagon with a comparatively cheap means of degrading its second greatest adversary at no cost to American life. It is an anathema to two of Trump's first term dislikes: costly US military engagement abroad, and upsetting Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Kremlin's initial response - that US-Russia relations could not get any worse than they are now under President Joe Biden - surely belies glee. The year ahead was for Russia, according to most analysis, a careful gamble. Moscow has been positioning forces on the hilltops around Ukraine's military hubs in the Donbas - near

Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, Chasiv Yar - to enable this winter the punishing squeeze of Kyiv out of the Donetsk region. Success in Donetsk could leave the path to major cities like Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia wide open, making the Ukrainian capital suddenly very vulnerable, and likely tipping the scales of the war. Yet the clock has been ticking on Russia's efforts. Western officials have suggested that its casualty rate - of perhaps 1,200 dead or injured a day - is unsustainable without another major, unpopular Russian mobilization, and that next year Moscow could see a genuine crunch in armor production and ammunition.

Putin played these recent cards hoping Trump would win, on the sure bet he would remain a man of instinct - isolationist and distrustful of America's long-term alliances. Trump is erratic and unpredictable, especially with complex and time-consuming matters like foreign conflicts. He prefers the fast fix of just leaving Afghanistan to the Taliban, or a Singapore face-to-face with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, or a drone strike on Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander Qasem Soleimani. We may never learn if he really studied the direction he imposes on Ukraine, or if he just never again wants to talk about the war, or spend money on it.

Whatever the speed or detail of the Trump approach, the damage will still be palpable in the weeks ahead. I recall in December of last year the massive blow to morale among Ukrainian troops when Congress stalled US military aid for around six months. Frontline troops told me they would have to flee their positions without that help, even if they knew the Biden administration still wanted - in principle - to have their back. Now they must deal with the tables turned: the possibility that some aid still drips through from the Pentagon and European NATO allies, but that the

Trump administration has instead taken a hostile posture at Kyiv's spine. Furthermore, Trump enters the White House at perhaps the most perilous time for Kyiv since the start of the war. Several analyses of the front line show Ukraine has lost ground in at almost unparalleled pace in October; losing small villages that are inconsequential by themselves, yet in the round amount to a strategic setback that leaves the east acutely vulnerable.

There has long been a policy flaw in NATO's approach; the Biden administration did not want to arm Ukraine forcefully enough that Russia might be militarily defeated, as it feared wider escalation. But Biden also could also not countenance letting Russia prevail. Instead the alliance sked Ukraine to endure, in the hope eventually Putin would crumble. It was the messy contradiction at the heart of the support for Kyiv, yet better than asking Ukraine to surrender. Without the will to fight - the belief that the battle is winnable - it is near impossible to ask Ukrainians to sit under shellfire in a trench, or drive their armor at the deadly fire of enemy positions. Nobody wants to be the last soldier to die in a war; nobody wants to lose their life fighting to protect a family who will likely live under Russian occupation anyway.

Trump's victory may also complicate the very position of Zelensky. For years Zelensky has - to paraphrase Trump - been foremost an outstanding salesman of Ukraine's cause. Now he is weighed down with immense baggage from Trump's first term when he was emboldened in Trump's requests to investigate the Biden family. Can Zelensky still be that salesman? Is a fresh face in Bankova more likely to garner military aid, or strike a viable peace deal? Those tired of the Ukraine war - be they Kyiv ally or frontline soldier -

should still not embrace the idea of a Trump-backed deal. Moscow has proven, in Syria in 2013 and Ukraine in 2015, that it negotiates to buy time to prepare for, or fulfill, its military goals. Putin will accept whatever territorial gains he can concretize - he already has the gains at the negotiating table. But he will then regroup, and not stop. He has sold the war domestically as Russia facing the massed ranks of the entire NATO alliance. An overheated Russian economy, astronomical death toll and retooling of Russia's industrial base, all in service of that supposed fight, cannot simply be undone. Putin is increasingly needy of the war to retain his grip on power.

This is apparent in his maximalist behavior towards Russia's neighbours in the last month. The recent turmoil in Georgia and Moldova, where pro-Russian forces have challenged pro-European movements with limited success, may see yet greater intervention from Russia in the months ahead. Putin is unlikely to suddenly abandon his hunger for greater regional influence. Remember his original motivation: This war began because he wanted to occupy Ukraine, and keep it out of NATO and the European Union. For the past two years, Putin's fiercest opponents have pushed the key idea that we need no longer fear Russia; that the Kremlin fanned the fear of its hulking Bear as a psychological weapon to make up for its military decrepitude. Ukraine's unexpected resistance showed that fear was misplaced, and that Moscow had struggled to defeat a neighbor it once scorned as unable to fight. Now a Trump White House may ask the world to quickly swallow an apparently similar contention that is terrifyingly different: that the West should not be afraid of Russia as it does not really mean much harm. That would be Putin's greatest victory, and the West's sorest weakness.

Trump thinks presidents have near-total power

Stephen Collinson

DONALD Trump believes presidents almost have absolute power. In his second term, there will be few political or legal restraints to check him. The president-elect's sweeping victory over Vice President Kamala Harris suddenly turned the theoretical notion that he will indulge his autocratic instincts into a genuine possibility.

When Trump returns to the White House in January as one of the most powerful presidents in history, he'll be able to take advantage of his own filleting of guardrails during his first presidency, which he continued through legal maneuverings out of office. It's not guaranteed that just because Trump has massive power he will spurn constitutional checks and balances. His past behavior doesn't have to predict the future. But the lesson of Trump's business and political careers is that he seeks to obliterate all constraints.

He has, for instance, crushed opposition in the Republican Party and driven out political heretics who oppose his "Make America Great Again" creed. This will be increasingly significant since the GOP has already flipped the Senate and still hopes to complete a monopoly on Washington power by keeping the House, which CNN has not yet projected. No other president has come into office armed with a Supreme Court ruling that grants significant immunity to presidents for official acts. The decision, a direct result of Trump's effort to challenge his federal indictment for 2020 election meddling, is limited - but he is certain to take an expansive view of its meaning. The ruling emerged from a conservative court majority fashioned by Trump in his first term and that many legal observers now see as a rubber stamp on future power grabs.

Perhaps most significantly, Trump can claim democratic legitimacy for what is already shaping up as the most intemperate presidency of the modern era, after increasing his vote share across multiple demographics. "Everybody knew this when they voted yesterday. So yes, the American people voted for basically this unchecked power that the president is going to have," said former Republican Rep. Adam Kinzinger, who alienated himself from his party by standing up to Trump following the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol. Trump tried to destroy democracy to stay in power after the 2020 election. Four years later, he presented his platform to voters and won an Electoral College majority. He may also bolster his legitimacy by becoming the first Republican president to win the popular vote since 2004.

"America has given us an unprecedented and powerful mandate," the former and future president said at his Mar-a-Lago victory party early Wednesday. Trump has denied that he wants autocratic power, saying his claim he'd be a dictator on day one is a joke and that he is instead the savior of democracy.

Yet millions of Americans chose Trump after his extreme closing argument in which he proposed the biggest deportation operation in US history, mused about using the military against "enemies from within" and vowed to prosecute political opponents and expel Haitian refugees in Ohio who are legally in the country and whom he falsely accused of eating people's pets. Trump's willingness to wield unchecked executive power will not only be facilitated by his interpretation of the Supreme Court ruling on immunity. He has already subverted constraints on presidential authority. His two impeachments - over trying to coerce Ukraine with aid and the Capitol insurrection - didn't rein in his impulses. And the Republicans' refusal to convict him in the Senate showed the toothlessness of this crucial constitutional remedy when a political party has chosen to appease an extreme president in return for power.

In Trump's first term, some Republicans sometimes hampered his agenda.

The late Arizona Sen. John McCain, for instance, thwarted an attempt to overturn key provisions of the Affordable Care Act with his thumbs down vote. But Trump ally Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene warned Wednesday that dissent would not be tolerated from GOP members. "I will not let them and neither will the American people who have given us this amazing opportunity to save this country," the Georgia Republican posted on X. Kinzinger scoffed at the idea that a GOP Congress would temper Trump. "On paper, it's a real thing, in practice no," the former Illinois lawmaker told CNN's Dana Bash Wednesday. "There is no chance, 0.0% chance, that Donald Trump says something and Republicans in the House buck him anymore."

Trump, by winning back the Oval Office, has also evaded the constraints of the law. So, in addition to having the Supreme Court's

It's good to have a strong man at the head of a country," Trump reflected at a rally in New Hampshire in January. Trump's conception of the presidency was encapsulated by his statement in July 2019 that the Constitution gave him untamed power. "I have an Article II, where I have to the right to do whatever I want as president," he said. Article II lays out the duties of the presidency - but it does not, in conventional interpretations, at least, suggest blanket executive authority.

immunity ruling in his back pocket, why would he be cowed by the possibility of future legal action against him? Within hours of election night. Special counsel Jack Smith was already talking with the Justice Department about ending two federal prosecutions against Trump - over his efforts to subvert the 2020 election and his hoarding of classified documents - in line with Office of Legal Counsel curbs on prosecutions of sitting presidents. A state election meddling case in Georgia is now imperiled. And huge doubts also hang over the pending sentencing of Trump after a conviction in a hush money case in New York.

The scope for Trump to stretch historic interpretations of his executive power is immense. "The danger is very real," said Corey Brettschneider, professor of politics at Brown University, and author of the book "The Presidents and the People: Five leaders who Threatened Democracy and the Citizens who Fought to Defend it." Brettschneider cited Revolutionary War hero Patrick Henry's disquiet about the possibility that the office of the presidency was so powerful that an incumbent with authoritarian ambitions could ascend an "American throne." While the founders modeled the presidency on the persona of George Washington, Brettschneider explained that Henry proposed this hypothetical: "What if a bad person gets in that office or even a criminal president? And his point is, you know, these supposed checks, because they assume a virtuous person, they're pretty weak."

Now that America has a convicted felon as its president-elect - and one who has massive ambitions for his own power - that's no longer a hypothetical. Trump has plenty of models for his second term. He has frequently praised foreign autocrats like Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping, who face no democratic accountability. He admires the rule of his friend, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who has eroded institutions of accountability, including government departments, the court system and the press. "Some people don't like him because he's too strong. It's good to have a strong man at the head of a country," Trump reflected at a rally in New Hampshire in January. Trump's conception of the presidency was encapsulated by his statement in July 2019 that the Constitution gave him untamed power.

"I have an Article II, where I have to the right to do whatever I want as president," he said. Article II lays out the duties of the presidency - but it does not, in conventional interpretations, at least, suggest blanket executive authority.

Trump's attitude moved then-federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to remark in a 2019 ruling, which ordered compliance by former White House counsel Don McGahn with a congressional subpoena, that "the primary takeaway from the past 250 years of recorded American history is that Presidents are not kings." So, are there any constraints? The greatest inhibition to presidential overreach is the sitting president himself, who can choose to remain within bounds of accepted executive action. But self-restraint is a concept alien to Trump. This is not just a personal trait. Such conduct is endemic to his political appeal - and he was just elected by millions of voters who endorsed his promise to eviscerate a govern-

ing system that they believe has failed them. In the past, Trump has sometimes been loath to take steps that might make him politically unpopular - yet he will take office knowing he does not have to appeal to voters ever again since he's in his second term.

The most effective clamp on Trump's future power would be a Democratic House majority, which could challenge the new White House with the power of oversight - even if Trump has already mocked the ultimate sanction of impeachment. But with races still outstanding, Republicans are closer to the 218 seats needed for the majority than Democrats. Then there are the courts. Activist groups are sure to lodge cases against Trump's immigration moves, as happened over his ban on travelers from certain Muslim nations in his first term. Such maneuvers can tie up a president for months - although the scores of Trump-appointed judges and the conservative Supreme Court majority may give the administration reprieves.

Attempts to prosecute Trump's political foes on spurious grounds, meanwhile, could theoretically see mass resignations of Justice Department staff. This is one reason why the new administration may roll out plans to sack entire echelons of the civil service to ensure total loyalty to the new president. And the former president is unlikely to make his first-term mistake of appointing officials who confront him - like former chief of staff John Kelly and former Defense Secretary Mark Esper. Brettschneider argues in his book published this year that an authoritarian president would not present a hopeless situation for US democracy. He examines five commanders in chief who threatened democracy and shows how they spawned protest movements, citizen activism and eventually democratic victories that created restorative presidencies.

Still, such responses can't often halt presidential acts in their commission, meaning that the fate of the country and its democracy often hinges on the president himself. The founders were "sitting there in the Constitutional Convention and looking at Washington, and they thought to themselves, 'this is a person of virtue. That's who they had as a model in mind.'" Brettschneider said. "When you have somebody who's not a model of virtue, they can really wreak havoc."

CNN



Governor SBP for increasing credit allocation to climate-resilient projects

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) emphasized the need to substantially increase credit allocation to projects that enhance climate resilience and promote environmentally sustainable growth. "It is essential that we leverage our financial sector's potential to align with the global shift toward sustainability, thereby contributing to both our national priorities and international commitments," said the Governor at the event titled, "Enabling Green Financing and Green Bonds via Credit Enhancement Solutions," organized by InfraZamin Pakistan.

The Governor's address focused on two main themes i.e. Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change and urgency of effectively tackling this challenge. He contextualized Pakistan's

vulnerability to climate change, highlighting the progress made so far and the role of stakeholders, especially policymakers and the financial services industry, in developing viable solutions.

The Governor highlighted the global urgency to address climate change, citing massive natural disasters such as the catastrophic floods in 2022, which caused economic losses of approximately \$30 billion in Pakistan.

Mr. Ahmad reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the Paris Agreement, which includes reducing emissions by 15 percent by 2030, with an additional 35 percent reduction contingent upon external financing.

He also noted plans to generate 60 percent of all energy from renewable sources. He also elaborated on the significant strides made by Pakistan despite

macroeconomic challenges, and the critical role played by SBP.

He shared that SBP has introduced refinancing schemes for renewable energy, disbursing Rs. 94.7 billion by end of June 2024, financing more than 4,500 renewable energy projects with a cumulative energy generation capacity of almost 2,061 MW.

SBP has issued comprehensive Green Banking Guidelines to enable regulated entities to recognize and manage environmental risks arising from their operations.

In collaboration with the World Bank, SBP is developing a comprehensive Green Taxonomy to establish a standardized framework for the classification of green and transitional activities. "This will provide a clear framework for identifying and classifying green and transitional activities, facilitating the flow of

capital into sustainable projects," added Mr. Ahmad.

The Governor shared that SBP has included climate change risk as a key theme in its Strategic Plan 2023-28. This Plan outlines a range of goals and policy initiatives for the next five years to ensure sustainable growth. "This theme aligns with other themes in the Plan, including technological innovation, diversity and inclusion, productivity and competitiveness, and strategic communications," said the Governor.

The event also featured addresses from Mr. Philip Skinner, Head of Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan at GuarantCo & Origination Lead at Nature at PIDG, Ms. Maheen Rahman, CEO of InfraZamin Pakistan and Mr. Muneer Kamal, CEO and Secretary General of the Pakistan Banks' Association.

PPL clarifies report on Suid Development and Production Lease

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) seeks to clarify the status of Sui Development and Production Lease.

The Company wishes to address recent news reports regarding Sui Development and Production Lease (D&PL), based on

approvals from the Federal Cabinet and the Economic Coordination Committee.

The Company emphasize that discussions with the relevant authorities and stakeholders remain positive and ongoing.

The execution of D&PL is contingent upon the signing of Sui Petroleum Concession Agreement and

fulfilment of terms specified in the Lease.

PPL wishes to clear any misperception that may have arisen due to the recent publication, and reaffirms its dedication to a positive, collaborative partnership with the Government of Balochistan (GoB). PPL remains steadfast in its commitment to actively engage

with GoB and to continue supporting the development and welfare of communities in Dera Bugti, Sui, and across Balochistan.

Notwithstanding above, the execution of lease beside Royalty shall attract Lease Extension and Production Bonus, approximately Rs 58.5 Billion over the duration of the lease period.

BoK registers 28% growth in profit

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Board of Directors of Bank of Khyber (Bank) held their 195th meeting on October 29, 2024, at the Bank's Head Office in Peshawar to review and approve the financial results for the nine month period ended September 30, 2024.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Ikramullah Khan, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Chairman Board of Directors of the Bank).

The Bank declared profit before tax of Rs. 6.016 Billion for the nine month period ended September 30, 2024 (9M-2024) as against Rs. 4.682 Billion for the same period last year, while profit after tax for 9M-2024 was recorded at Rs. 2.599 Billion as against Rs. 2.473 billion for the same period last year.

The Bank's total income for 9M-2024 increased and stood at Rs. 13.347 Billion as compared to Rs. 11.146 Billion during 9M-2023.

The Board expressed its satisfaction over the performance of the Bank and approved the financial statements of the Bank for the nine month period ended September 30, 2024.

The Board also emphasized that management should continue with

same level of dedication and devotion in pursuit of the Bank's goals and objectives.

The CFO & Managing Director (Acting) said that these results are reflective of the robust oversight by the Board of Directors and sincere efforts and teamwork of the employees and management of the Bank. He also thanked all the stakeholders of the Bank for their patronage and support.

Hamdard Foundation introduces skills-building training

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan (HFP) has introduced a new four-month skills-building and training program called Hamdard Skill Development Program (HSDP) to assist needy and deserving students in their pursuit of modern learning and skill-building at Berlitz Institute Karachi. Under this program, students will receive skill training, along with assistance in securing suitable employment opportunities through industry partners of this initiative.

The program was commenced in an auspicious ceremony yesterday at the Berlitz Karachi Office. Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of HFP attended the event as chief guest. Syed Muhammad Arsalan - Director, HFP,

Berlitz Country Manager Mr. Nadeem Huq and the 70 enrolled students of the first badge were also in attendance.

In her address, Ms. Sadia Rashid highlighted the importance of skill-building and advanced technical knowledge for national progress in modern times. She said that Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said's mission was to accelerate the socio-economic advancement of Pakistani youth, a vision HFP was dedicated to realizing by empowering young people and shaping a generation of skilled professionals. Ms. Sadia Rashid advised students to stay focused on their studies, avoid distractions like mobile phones, guard their health, and value time as an essential resource.

Syed Muhammad Arsalan

explained that, under this initiative, HFP would cover the program fees for enrolled students, while Berlitz would provide expert trainers and essential training sessions. He said "This is a Qarz-e-Hasna model, allowing students to repay their program costs in small installments after securing employment, enabling other students to benefit. With this strategic move, HFP has ensured that skill-building programs are available for all deserving students. This initiative aims not only to equip participants with essential skills but also to connect them to employment opportunities, supporting the ultimate objective of job placement for each candidate upon program completion."

He also encouraged students to share their experiences and feedback to help enhance the program.



Historic Partnership Between Two Champions - Olympic Gold Medalist Arshad Nadeem Signs Agreement with Sona as Brand Ambassador to Support Farmers' Welfare and a Brighter Future

Arshad becomes brand ambassador of Sona

F.P. Report

LAHORE: A significant and historic partnership has been established between two champions. Javelin Olympic Gold Medalist Arshad Nadeem has signed an agreement with Sona to become their brand ambassador, aiming to support farmers' welfare and a prosperous future.

The ceremony was attended by Sona's

Managing Director and CEO Jahangir Paracha, along with senior management, who recognized this initiative as a milestone for empowering farmers and securing their bright future.

On this occasion, Arshad Nadeem expressed his pride in joining Sona on this vital journey.

He stated that this partnership will be

immensely beneficial for the welfare and progress of farmers. Sona's management appreciated the decision to appoint Arshad Nadeem as their brand ambassador, highlighting that this alliance will provide farmers with modern facilities and great opportunities, ultimately contributing to the growth of the country's agricultural sector.

CSSP holds consultation on empowering women

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Civil Society Support Program (CSSP), in collaboration with NCA in Pakistan, organized a provincial consultation on creating an enabling environment for women and girls to live empowered lives in Karachi this Thursday. This consultation brought together key stakeholders including Minister for Women Development, and Chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC), to address policy related gaps and strategize improved support systems for marginalized women and girls. Other representatives included Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), faith actors, women activists, and district networks including Women Leadership Forum (WLF) and Community Support Group (CSG).

The Minister for Women Development, Ms. Shaheena Sher Ali, appreciated the role of CSSP and NCA in highlighting the role of different departments in strengthening the GBV referral mechanism and emphasized that with the collaborative approach of working together across sectors, we can build a stronger, more resilient support system that not only protects but also empowers survivors of Gender-Based Violence throughout Sindh. Representatives from relevant government departments, including the Women Development Department, Social Welfare Department, and SHRC, acknowledged the issues raised in the Charter of Demands. They appreciated CSSP, NCA, and both WLF and CSG networks for bringing the pressing issues to light and addressing them

at the provincial level.

Sindh Information Secretary Nadeem Ur Rehman Memon said that the social sector stands alongside the government in serving marginalized groups. He noted that during his postings across different districts and divisions of Sindh, he closely observed the work of social organizations. Now, through the Information Department, he is striving to highlight laws and facilities available for women, with efforts also underway to gender-sensitize the media.

Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson Sindh Human Rights Commission, shared that the Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) deserves appreciation for

CSSP's commitment to providing initial support for GBV survivors through establishing the safe house and women's help desk at the Women Development Department. He underlined the importance of collaboration across all sectors to ensure survivors receive prompt and effective assistance. "The main objective is to ensure that no survivor faces barriers to safety and justice. By strengthening referral pathways, we can build a more resilient and supportive system for those affected by gender-based violence". He added

Ms. Rida Zahra, Legal Advisor SHRC, provided insights of the existing survivor-centric referral pathways and free legal aid



organizing an important meeting focused on women's issues and presenting the basic issues of the Mirpurkhas. Additionally, we will plan to collaborate with the Information Department to organize awareness program as part of the upcoming 16 Days of Activism campaign. This will help raise awareness on gender-based issues and promote support for women's rights across the region.

The CSSP's Head of Programmes, Mr. Abdul Wahid Sangrasi, shared the

mechanisms available to support and protect survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). She further highlighted the importance of accessible and reliable resources for survivors navigating the legal and psychosocial support systems.

Aaliya Yousef Tahir Kheli, Program Coordinator NCA, thanked all participants for participating in the consultation dialogue and suggesting measures for creating enabling environment for gender inclusive society.

CSSP holds provincial consultation

F.P. Report

Karachi: The Civil Society Support Program (CSSP), in collaboration with NCA in Pakistan, organized a provincial consultation on creating an enabling environment for women and girls to live empowered lives in Karachi this Thursday. This consultation brought together key stakeholders including Minister for Women Development, and Chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC), to address policy related gaps and strategize improved support systems for marginalized women and girls. Other representatives included Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), faith actors, women activists, and district networks including Women Leadership Forum (WLF) and Community Support Group (CSG).

The Minister for Women Development, Ms. Shaheena Sher Ali, appreciated the role of CSSP and NCA in highlighting the role of different departments in strengthening the GBV referral mechanism and emphasized that with the collaborative approach of working together across sectors, we can build a stronger, more resilient support system that not only protects but also empowers survivors of Gender-Based Violence throughout Sindh.

Lost and found

I have lost my Changan Carwan Carry Invoice Model 2020 Chasesse No. NKMAAB3DL1001716 Engine#JL466Q9K69U501426. If any found Please contact us. Kashif Rasheed s/o Abdur Rasheed University Road Tehkal Payan Peshawar. Contact Number 03339291078.

Public Notice

My B.Com Degree and DMC roll no 979 year 1997 Peshawar University has been lost drilling traveling. It found try any one. Please send on following address, Muhammad Banaras s/o Muhammad Zaman Mohallah Narian Nagri Bala Tehsil & District Abbottabad. Cell No. 0341- 1921389

Court Notice

In the Court of Jauhar Ali Safi Civil Judge I/in. Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit No 472/ Institution 31/7/ 2023. Date of hearing. 3/12/2024. Sher Alam Khan etc.VS Said Zaman etc. Notice to No.14.Shad Mohmad Khan s/o Amer Rehman resident of Torwarsak tehsel Daggar district Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way,it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:00 am dated 3/12/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Afshen Civil Judge VII/Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit No 54/1.Institution 31/7/ 2023. Date of hearing. 6/12/2024. Abdul Majed VS Fazal Rahem etc. Notice to No. .1.Fazal Rahem s/o Said Rasan resident of Ajab Khatt Elai tehsel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 6/12/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

InfraZamin Pakistan seminar advocates Green Bonds for sustainable finance

F.P. Report

KARACHI: InfraZamin Pakistan, Pakistan's premier credit enhancement guarantor, in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA), and the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) hosted a seminar titled Enabling Green Financing and Green Bonds via Credit Enhancement Solutions today at a local hotel. The high-profile event brought together top officials from the State Bank of Pakistan and Ministry of Finance, CEOs, and investment heads from leading commercial banks in Pakistan, to discuss the potential of green financing, particularly green bonds, to accelerate sustainable economic growth in the country through support from the private sector.

The seminar featured notable speakers including

Jameel Ahmed, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Muneer Kamal, CEO of Pakistan Banks' Association, Maheen Rahman, CEO of InfraZamin Pakistan, and Philip Skinner, Head of the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan at GuarantCo, and Origination Lead for Nature at PIDG.

Expressing his views at the occasion, Jameel Ahmed, Governor, State Bank of Pakistan stated: "The SBP is leading from the front to provide a conducive environment to the financial industry and businesses to achieve the common objective of achieving climate resilience. For this purpose, SBP has taken both direct and indirect measures. Under the direct measures, SBP has introduced refinancing schemes for renewable energy, whereby financing of Rs. 94.7 billion has been disbursed by end June 2024. The scheme has provided



financing to more than 4,500 renewable energy projects, having a cumulative energy generation capacity of almost 2,061 MW. Whereas, under the indirect measures, the SBP aims to improve the capacity of the regulated entities to support uptake of green financing and enhance their resilience. In this regard, SBP issued 'Guidelines on Green Banking' with a view to enabling our regulated entities to recognize and prepare for managing environmental risks emerging

from their businesses and operations. Moreover, in collaboration with the World Bank, SBP is developing a comprehensive Green Taxonomy, which will establish a standardized framework for classification of green and transitional activities."

Adding her thoughts, Maheen Rahman, CEO, InfraZamin Pakistan noted: "For Pakistan to unlock the full potential of green financing, it is vital that we bring the private sector on board alongside govern-

ment and regulatory bodies.

At InfraZamin, our mission is to bridge financing gaps by providing credit enhancement solutions that reduce investment risk and make it feasible for the private sector to support green bond issuance and other sustainable projects."

"As a nation on the frontlines of climate vulnerability, Pakistan needs more than just incremental changes. Sustainable finance is not merely an option-it's a responsibility we, as an industry, must

embrace.

PBA stands committed to supporting green financing solutions and driving investments toward a low-carbon economy. Multistakeholder partnerships like these are critical for transforming the financial sector, ensuring a future where economic progress aligns seamlessly with environmental stewardship", underscored Muneer Kamal, CEO and General Secretary, Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA).

The insights shared by these speakers underscored the importance of advancing green finance through structured frameworks and strategic initiatives. They highlighted Pakistan's need to build on existing regulatory efforts, such as the State Bank of Pakistan's ongoing work on developing a green taxonomy, which aims to provide a common language for identifying and supporting green projects.

Additionally, they discussed the role of SBP's Green Banking Guidelines in shaping sustainable finance practices. Drawing on lessons from other emerging markets, the speakers explored ways to incentivize green financing, reduce associated costs, and derisk green projects to encourage private sector participation. The discussions also emphasized the need for capacity-building to support the growth of green finance and to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of sustainable investment.

The speakers also proposed practical ways to support issuers in adopting green financing solutions. PIDG suggested offering grants to help cover the costs of global certifications, while InfraZamin highlighted the potential of credit enhancements to reduce balance sheet burdens on issuers and lower investment risk for investors.



In brief

Asif all praise for PBSA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani cueist Muhammad Asif on Friday commended the role of Pakistan Billiards & Snooker Association (PBSA) for supporting and trusting in him. Asif claimed the IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship 2024 title, defeating Iran's Ali Gharahgozlou in a thrilling final. Asif, now a three-time World Champion, showcased exceptional skill and strategy throughout the tournament beating Ali by 5-3: 70-25, 7-87(84), 82(56)-8, 106(106)-08, 82-12, 43-91(58), 0-118, 93(80)-4. This victory marks Asif's third IBSF World Championship title, solidifying his position among the world's top snooker players. However, the World Masters Championship is ongoing at Doha. He lauded Alamgir Anwar Sheikh, the co-chairman PBSA, National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and other association's officials for their motivation and support to him for the World Snooker Championship, he told APP. While revealing the secret behind his success, he said he once again won the title due to consistent hard work, training and prayers from whole nation. He said he was optimistic regarding his future commitments and will try to win more titles for the country at international level. To a question, regarding his opponent in the final, he said he was also a good player, but I kept my calm and controlled my nerves in the final to get to victory.

Wakelin reaches Int'l C'ship final

NANJING (Agencies): Chris Wakelin beat Xiao Guodong 9-8 in a final-frame decider to advance to the final of the International Championship in Nanjing. The Englishman led 5-3 after the opening session and moved 8-5 ahead but began to falter, allowing China's Xiao to draw level in a tense finale. However, the former supermarket delivery driver sealed his win with a composed break of 67 and with it secured a place in the top 16 of the world rankings for the first time, which means he will be seeded for the UK Championship later this month. The 32-year-old, who compiled eight half-centuries and a century, will now face Ding Junhui or Xu Si in Sunday's final. "I've worked my entire life at this game for moments like this," said an emotional Wakelin. "That was the hardest match of my life. From 8-5 I threw it away. I made ridiculously easy mistakes. In the decider I knew it was now or never. "I had to forget about what had happened."

England's Botham hails Hughes

LONDON (APP): England cricket great Ian Botham said he was "nearly catch of the day" after being pulled out of crocodile infested waters by his former Ashes rival Merv Hughes while on a fishing trip in Australia. The pair were among a group on a boat on the Moyle River in northern Australia when the accident occurred. Botham, 68, escaped with nothing worse than heavy bruising. Writing on Instagram alongside a photograph of a large fish, the former England all-rounder said: "My catch of the day was the barra (fish) while I was nearly catch of the day for all the crocs and bull sharks... thanks boys for getting me out." England's Botham and Australian fast bowler Hughes crossed swords on the pitch in the late 1980s but have remained friends.

Naqvi: India yet communicate about participation in Champion Trophy

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi confirmed Friday that it has not been communicated to PCB whether the Indian cricket team has declined to play the Champions Trophy matches in Pakistan next year as reported by the Indian media.

Pakistan, who won the last edition of the Champions Trophy staged in England in 2017, will host the Feb 19-March 9 tournament.

Due to their soured political relations, India have not visited Pakistan since 2008 and the rivals play each other only at multi-team events. While speaking to the media in Lahore on Friday, Naqvi acknowledged that for the past two months, there have been reports in the Indian media related to the team's travel plans.

"We have a clear stance that they must give it to us in writing if they [the Indian cricket board] have any issues. Till today, we have not spoken about any hybrid model, but we're ready to speak on this," Naqvi said. "Now, if Indian media is reporting this, then there must be some letter the ICC will give us, or the Indian Board might have written this somewhere. Till now, no such letter has reached me or the PCB," he said.

"We want cricket to be devoid of politics. No sport in the world should have these kinds of politics. We will continue the preparations for the Champions Trophy that you're currently seeing, and God willing, it will be a successful event," he went on to say.

When asked by a reporter if Pakistan will adopt a hybrid model



for the tournament, Naqvi said that he would have to take the matter to the government and enforce whatever decision they make.

"For the past few years, Pakistan has continued to show good gestures, and we hope that we are not expected to show good gestures each time," Naqvi said. He expressed hope that the International Cricket Council (ICC) would announce the matches' schedule soon. "From what I know, every country wants the Champions Trophy to take place here. I'm in contact with several boards and various members have expressed their desire to come play in Pakistan."

"I hope that, God willing, everyone will be patient and coolheaded and play the tournament where it is happening," he said. Pakistan is determined to hold the entire 2025 Champions Trophy in Pakistan from February 19 to March 9 in three cities — Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi.

To address logistical and security concerns, it suggested staging all of

India's matches in Lahore, which is near the Wagah border, to simplify arrangements.

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India has not played an international match in Pakistan since 2008. Last year, the BCCI declined to send a team to Pakistan for the Asia Cup, leading to a hybrid format with later stages held in Sri Lanka.

However, Pakistan did visit India soon after for the 2023 ODI World Cup, where they fell short of reaching the semi-finals. The upsetting development comes as during his visit to Islamabad on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in October, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar had reportedly discussed the possibility of the Indian cricket team coming to Pakistan for the ICC event, the media reports added.

Following the meeting, hopes were raised about cricket normalcy as this was the first direct conversation of this level since 2015 between nations with an acrimonious past.

Following this cordial meeting, a thaw in relations seemed possible, sparking speculation about the resumption of cricket ties.

Haris, Saim lead Pakistan to record nine-wicket win

ADELAIDE (Monitoring Desk): Haris Rauf's second five-wicket-haul and half-centuries by Saim Ayub and Abdullah Shafique led Pakistan to a nine-wicket win over Australia in the second ODI at the Adelaide Oval in Adelaide. The win also leveled the three-match ODI series 1-1, with the series decider to be played at the Perth Stadium in Perth on 10 November.

Chasing 164 to win, Pakistan opening pair of Abdullah and Saim got off to a flying start as they knitted a 137-run partnership for the first wicket. Saim, playing his second ODI, scored his maiden half-century, scoring a 71-ball 82, which included five fours and six sixes.

The departure of Saim in the 21st over brought Babar Azam to the crease and the pair of Abdullah and Babar added an unbroken 32 runs for the second wicket take Pakistan over the line.

Abdullah's undefeated innings of 64 off 69 balls, included four fours and three sixes and it was his fifth half-century in this format.

Earlier, after being put into bat, the visiting fast bowlers never allowed the hosts to score freely as the wickets continued to fall. Right-arm pacer Haris, playing his 39th ODI, was the most successful bowler, bagging five wickets for 29 runs in eight overs. His fellow fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi, who took two

wickets in the first ODI, grabbed three wickets for 26 in eight overs. Captain Mohammad Rizwan grabbed six catches behind the stumps, missing out on a record seven catches.

For Australia, former captain Steven Smith, coming to bat at number three scored 35 off 48 balls, which included five fours and a six.

Scores in brief: Pakistan beat Australia by nine wickets. Australia 163 all out, 35 overs (Steven Smith 35; Haris Rauf 5-29, Shaheen Shah Afridi 3-26). Pakistan 169-1, 26.3 overs (Saim Ayub 82, Abdullah Shafique 64 not out). Player of the match — Haris Rauf.



ADELAIDE: Saim Ayub Hits one over the fence for 6 runs during game two of the Men's ODI series between Australia and Pakistan.

Pakistan U19 squad announced for UAE tour



LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) today confirmed the squad for the 50-over tri-series and ACC U19 Asia Cup 2024-25 set to take place in UAE from 13 November to 8 December.

Saad Baig, who led the Pakistan U19 team in the last edition of the ACC U19 Asia Cup and ICC U19 World Cup 2024, has been appointed the captain of the 15-player squad which will be trimmed to 14 for the Asia Cup beginning 29 November.

Six players including Saad, Ali Raza, Haroon Arshad, Mohammad Riazullah, Naveed Ahmed Khan, and Shahzaib Khan represented Pakistan at the ICC U19 World Cup 2024 in South Africa while Tayyab Arif is the other player to have played for the Pakistan U19.

Pakistan U19 squad for UAE tour:

Saad Baig (captain, wicket-keeper) (Karachi), Abdul Subhan (Abbottabad), Ali Raza (Sialkot), Faham-ul-Haq (Lahore), Farhan Yousuf (Lahore), Haroon Arshad (Karachi), Hassan Khan (Rawalpindi), Mohammad Ahmed (Lahore),

Mohammad Huzaifa* (Bahawalpur), Mohammad Riazullah (Abbottabad), Naveed Ahmed Khan (Karachi), Shahzaib Khan (Abbottabad), Tayyab Arif (Sialkot), Umar Zaib (Abbottabad) and Usman Khan (FATA)

*Mohammad Huzaifa only part of the squad for the tri-series

Non-travelling reserves: Ahmed Hussain (Peshawar), Mohammad Huzaifa (Bahawalpur), Rizwanullah (Karachi) and Yahya bin Abdul Rehman (Lahore)

Player support staff: Ghulam Ali (head coach-cum-manager), Agha Sabir Ali (assistant/fielding coach), Muhammad Aleem Bajwa (physio), Muhammad Talha (analyst), Rehan Riaz (bowling coach), Saboor Ahmed (strength & conditioning coach) and Syed Nazir Ahmed (media and digital manager)

The Men's National Selection Committee held trials and selection matches to assemble the 15-member squad out of a 120-player contingent recommended by the 16 regions based on the performances in Inter-District U19 tournament and the month-long

Regional U19 Academies held in August this year.

Saad Baig-led team will depart for UAE on 9 November from Lahore to feature in 50-over tri-series, where they will take on hosts UAE in the opening match on 13 November. The tournament will be played on a double league format with the final between top two sides slated on 26 November.

In the 50-over U19 Asia Cup, Pakistan U19 are placed in the Group A and will take on India on 30 November in their first match of the tournament before taking on UAE and Japan on 2 and 4 December, respectively at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium (DICS). The top two teams from Group A and B will take on each other in the semi-finals on 6 December with the final taking place on 8 December.

Pakistan U19's fixtures on UAE tour: (tri-series & ACC U19 Asia Cup)

All matches to start at 10.30am PKT.

(tri-series; all matches to be played at ICC Academy, Dubai)

13 November - Pakistan vs UAE

15 November - Pakistan vs Afghanistan

20 November - Pakistan vs Afghanistan

22 November - Pakistan vs UAE

26 November - Final (ACC U19 Asia Cup; Group A matches to be played at Dubai International Cricket Stadium)

30 November — Pakistan vs India

2 December — Pakistan vs UAE

4 December -Pakistan vs Japan

6 December — Semi final 1 (A1 vs B2 - Dubai) & Semi final 2 (B1 vs A2 — Sharjah)

8 December — Final.

Shahid Afridi lauds Rizwan's captaincy

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi has lauded the national white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan for his inspirational leadership during the second ODI against Australia.

Rizwan-led Pakistan thumped Australia by nine wickets in the second ODI and levelled the three-match series 1-1.

Pakistan pacers proved Rizwan's decision to bowl first right as they wreaked havoc and bundled Australia for a meagre 163, with Haris Rauf leading the pack with his five-wicket haul.

Meanwhile, Mohammad

Rizwan equalled the record for the most catches by a wicket-keeper in an ODI match. He assisted his pacers by executing six dismissals behind the stumps.

On the other hand, Saim Ayub (82) and Abdullah Shafique (64*) batted brilliantly to help Pakistan chase the modest target in 26.3 overs at the loss of one wicket only.

Following the remarkable victory, Shahid Afridi took to his official X (formerly Twitter) account and credited Rizwan for team's success.

"When a captain inspires, the team fires. What a phenomenal comeback perform-

ance by Pakistan in Adelaide — securing our first-ever nine-wicket win over world champions Australia on their home turf," Afridi posted. The former all-rounder also praised Haris, Saim, Abdullah and Shaheen Afridi for their performances.

"This victory is a huge confidence booster for the ODIs ahead. The word 'marvellous' barely does justice to today's stellar display from Rizwan, Haris, Shaheen, Saim, and Abdullah," he added.

"Lads, keep believing in yourselves and inshallah even more successes are just around the corner."

Guardiola will 'solve' Man City's malaise

MANCHESTER (AFP): Pep Guardiola is confident he can remedy Manchester City's issues after losing three consecutive games for the first time since 2018.

Defeat at Brighton would see the City boss lose four straight matches for the first time in his trophy-laden managerial career. The Premier League champions have been beset by injury problems, most notably the loss of Ballon d'Or winner Rodri for the rest of the season.

Guardiola will not be able to welcome back any of his injured stars this weekend, but the Spaniard hopes for a cleaner bill of health after the imminent

international break.

"It's football, it has happened. We know the reason why we struggled," Guardiola said at his pre-match press conference on Friday. "Looking forward to the game and, after the international break, a few players will come back better and recover. For all the problems that we have, little problems that every player has, we will solve it."

City's three defeats have all come in different competitions. After exiting the League Cup to Tottenham and suffering a first Premier League loss since December at Bournemouth, City were thrashed 4-1 by Sporting

Lisbon in the Champions League in midweek.

However, Guardiola dismissed the suggestion he could learn more about his players from their tough run compared to winning four consecutive Premier League titles. "They proved many times what they are capable of," added Guardiola.

Oscar Bobb, Ruben Dias, Jack Grealish and John Stones are set to miss the trip to the Amex Stadium. But Kevin De Bruyne could make his first Premier League appearance for two months, while Jeremy Doku, Savinho, Manuel Akanji and Kyle Walker are expected to make the squad.



KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Iram Javed's half-century led Invincibles to a 45-run win over Strikers at the HPC Oval Ground in Karachi on the opening day of the National Women's One-Day Tournament 2024-25. Meanwhile, in the second match in the day, Stars defeated Challengers by two wickets.

Batting first, Invincibles

were dismissed for 195 in 41 overs with Strikers' Zunish Abdul Sattar bagging five wickets for 46 runs. For Invincibles, Iram Javed coming to bat at number five top-scored with a 76-ball 81, which included nine fours and two sixes.

In turn, Strikers were bowled out for 150 in 43.2 overs with opening batter Gull Feroza top-scoring

with a 64-ball 60, smashing eight fours and a six. For the winning side, Saima Malik bagged three wickets, while Ghulam Fatima, Omaima Sohail and Tania Saeed managed to pick two wickets apiece.

At the UBL Sports Complex, Natalia Parvaiz* 59 helped Challengers post 164 in 49.4 overs. Stars' Rameen Shamim bagged

three wickets, while Anosha Nasir and Waheeda Akhtar took two wickets each.

It took Stars 45.2 overs to achieve the target losing eight wickets in the process.

Scores in brief: Invincibles beat Strikers by 45 runs at the HPC Oval Ground Invincibles 195 all out, 41 overs (Iram Javed 81, Muneeba Ali 33; Zunish Abdul Sattar 5-46)

Strikers 150 all out, 43.2 overs (Gull Feroza 60; Saima Malik 3-16, Tania Saeed 2-25, Omaima Sohail 2-31, Ghulam Fatima 2-33)

Player of the match — Iram Javed (Invincibles)

Stars beat Challengers by two wickets at the UBL Sports Complex

Challengers 164 all out, 49.4 overs (Natalia Parvaiz 59, Momina Riasat 31; Rameen Shamim 3-23, Waheeda Akhtar 2-27, Anosha Nasir 2-38)

Stars 165-8, 45.2 overs (Sadaf Shamas 34, Kainat Faheez 33; Momina Riasat 3-17, Umm-e-Hani 3-46)

Player of the match — Rameen Shamim (Stars).



In brief

ANF seizes over 558 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations, arrested four accused and recovered over 558 kg drugs worth over Rs 50 million, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday. He informed that 1.5 kg ice was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain at Islamabad Airport. 400 kg hashish was seized near Baloch Chowk in Kech area and 58.800 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested near Ring Road, Peshawar. 7.2 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted on GT road Rawalpindi and an accused was arrested during the operation. Over 7.2 kg hashish was recovered from a drug dealer rounded up in Sheikhpura. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

16 held for carrying illegal arms

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested 16 illegal arms holders and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession during a crackdown. According to police spokesman, City, Pirwadhai, Bani, Gujar Khan and Mandra police rounded up 16 illegal arm holders namely Riaz, Sajjad, Waleed Babar, Salman Shahid, Abdul Qadir, Riaz, Imran, Noor Rasheed and others and recovered 16 pistols 30 bore and ammunition from their possession. Police have registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was in progress. SSP Operations commended police teams and instructed to take strict action against those carrying illegal weapons.

IRSA releases 116,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 116,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 53,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1520.31 feet and was 122.31 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 27,200 cusecs and 64,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1178.60 feet, which was 128.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,000 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 64,300, 45,700, 36,600 and 4,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

CTP accelerates operation against polluters

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) has accelerated its ongoing operation against smoke emitting vehicles, said a CTP spokesman. He informed that CTP was making efforts to regulate traffic on city roads. He said CTP was also taking action in accordance with the law against unfit public service vehicles (PSVs). The spokesman said that on the special instructions of City Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Beenish Fatima, 10,162 challans were issued since August 25, 2024 including 4675 on violation of route permits, 4,665 for not having fitness certificate, 822 for driving without driving licenses while documents of 27 vehicles were sent to the departments concerned for further action.

Govt establishes first-ever “Cascade” service center to streamline services for foreign nationals

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday inaugurated the state-of-the-art “Cascade” service center in Islamabad’s Diplomatic Enclave, a facility aimed at providing a range of essential services to the diplomatic community and foreign nationals under one roof.

This is the first time such a comprehensive service center has been established in the history of the Diplomatic Enclave, aligning with the government’s focus on enhancing the convenience and safety of diplomats and foreign residents.

According to Minister Naqvi, the Cascade service center will offer over a dozen services for foreign nationals and diplomats, eliminating the need for them to

navigate multiple offices across the capital. Among the services available are the issuance and renewal of driving licenses, character certificates, police verification, reporting of missing persons, and tenant registration. These services are expected to significantly ease administrative processes for diplomats and international visitors, providing them with faster, centralized access to essential resources.

Furthermore, the Cascade center will also facilitate foreign citizens by offering additional services like registration for foreigners, domestic staff, and volunteers, vehicle verification, and access to copies of First Information Reports (FIRs). Minister Naqvi emphasized that

these services are intended to streamline processes and improve the overall experience for foreign nationals residing in or visiting Islamabad.

“This service center is a reflection of our commitment to creating a secure, welcoming environment for diplomats and international visitors,” said Naqvi during the inauguration ceremony. He added that the initiative aligns with the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to prioritize the comfort and security of foreign representatives. Naqvi also shared that over 1,500 police and FC personnel, along with 20 dedicated police vehicles, are stationed at the Diplomatic Enclave to ensure the highest

security. In his address, Naqvi stated, “Beautifying the Diplomatic Enclave and the entire capital is part of our mission, as we look to project Islamabad as a modern, secure, and visitor-friendly capital.”

The new service center aims not only to provide essential services but also to foster closer coordination and cooperation between law enforcement and diplomats. The presence of senior Islamabad Police officials at the inauguration reinforced the significance of the center in facilitating secure communication and collaboration. Islamabad’s Inspector General of Police provided a detailed briefing on the range of services available to foreign nationals at

the center, further highlighting the effort to ensure ease of access to these resources.

Following the inauguration, Minister Naqvi, accompanied by a delegation of diplomats, toured the various service counters at the Cascade center.

He inspected the facilities and expressed satisfaction with the infrastructure, expressing confidence that the center would serve as a model of efficiency and service delivery. Diplomats and foreign nationals attending the ceremony conveyed their appreciation to Minister Naqvi for the initiative, recognizing the Cascade center as a positive step toward strengthening Islamabad’s diplomatic and international standing.

The event saw a large turnout of diplomats from across the city, as well as high-ranking officials including the Federal Secretary of Interior, IG Islamabad Police, DC Islamabad, and other senior officers from Islamabad Police. Their participation underscored the importance placed on diplomatic relations and the commitment to a secure and supportive environment for the diplomatic community.

The Cascade service center is set to be a pivotal resource within the Diplomatic Enclave, offering streamlined, centralized services to foreign nationals and contributing to Islamabad’s reputation as a secure, efficient, and international-friendly city.

Romina highlights power of collaborative efforts against climate change

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam Friday emphasized the critical need for collective ambition to tackle climate change, stressing a holistic approach and societal cooperation are vital.

Talking to a private news channel, Romina Khurshid Alam stressed that addressing climate change’s far-reaching consequences demands a profound transformation across all sectors, encompassing environmental, economic and social dimensions.

This sweeping change requires bold action from governments, businesses and individuals to mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change, she added.

Alam also emphasized the critical role of youth in

tackling climate change, stating that recognizing their potential is crucial for shaping a sustainable future. By empowering youth, we can unlock innovative solutions, advocacy and community involvement that drive climate action, she said, adding, the government has already taken steps to address climate change, including promoting gender equity and population management to boost climate resilience.

Responding to a question, she said continuing on the path to green growth is vital, and it is equally important to strengthen existing partnerships and form new ones to share knowledge and achieve shared objectives. This collaborative approach will enable us to tackle climate change effectively, promote

sustainable development and ensure a resilient future, she added.

Government is taking bold steps to combat plastic pollution, reaffirming its commitment to protecting the health and well-being of its citizens, as well as preserving its rich natural heritage for generations to come, she added.

This dedication is crucial in addressing the devastating impacts of plastic pollution on the environment, wildlife, and human health, she added. To mitigate this issue, public cooperation is essential in adopting sustainable practices, such as reducing plastic use, recycling and proper disposal. Individuals, households and communities must work together to minimize plastic waste, she concluded.

Muqam slams PTI's self-serving agenda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister Engr. Amir Muqam Friday strongly condemned Ali Amin Gandapur’s statements as “irresponsible” and lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party for prioritizing Imran Khan’s personal interests over the welfare of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa citizens.

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, Engr. Amir Muqam stated that PTI’s sole agenda is to secure Imran Khan’s release from jail, however, he emphasized that Pakistan is an independent nation with its own constitution and laws,

where individuals like Imran Khan must face the courts and accept accountability for their actions.

Ali Amin Gandapur is an irresponsible individual who has consistently demonstrated a habit of blaming and blackmailing others, he further added.

His behavior is unacceptable and unbecoming of a public figure, particularly someone holding the office of Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he criticized.

I urge Gandapur to reflect on his behavior and take corrective measures to address these concerns as people of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa deserve better leadership and it is our collective responsibility to hold public figures accountable for their actions, he added.

Amir Muqam emphasized that Ali Amin Gandapur should prioritize governing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over criticizing others, stating that Gandapur’s statements are not being taken seriously.

Responding to a query, he said that President Donald Trump will prioritize state-to-state relationships over individual favors, potentially dashing the hopes of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Chairman PRCS meets British High Commissioner

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari on Friday held a pivotal meeting with Her Excellency Ms Jane Marriott, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, at the United Kingdom Embassy, Islamabad.

According to PRCS spokesman, the high-level discussion focused on enhancing humanitarian cooperation, with special emphasis on addressing health and climate challenges impacting Pakistan.

During the meeting, Chairman Laghari highlighted Pakistan’s critical climate vulnerability and outlined PRCS’s ongoing initiatives aimed at mitigating disaster impacts and building climate resilience.

Acknowledging the vital support from the United Kingdom in times of national emergency, the shared commitment to long-term rehabilitation, livelihood restoration, and sustainable development for disaster-affected communities across Pakistan.

High Commissioner Ms Jane Marriott on the occasion praised the significant strides PRCS has made under Laghari’s leadership, particularly in modernizing the organization and expanding its impact. She noted Pakistan’s troubling position as the seventh most vulnerable country on the climate risk



index and commended PRCS’s forward-thinking initiatives, including the establishment of a Climate Change Unit and the promotion of green office practices.

Ms Marriott encouraged further proactive measures, underscoring the urgency of collective action to address climate change.

The two leaders explored potential collaboration avenues between PRCS and the British Red Cross, focusing on areas such as Migration and Displacement, Cash and Assistance (CVA), Disaster Preparedness, and Risk Reduction.

PRCS’s climate action efforts were also a highlight of the conversation, including projects such as CACRA (Climate Advocacy and

Coordination for Resilient Action) and youth-led climate initiatives. Chairman Laghari shared PRCS’s vision for a climate research centre and about reforestation and waste management projects.

Laghari extended an invitation to High Commissioner Marriott to visit the PRCS National Headquarters, emphasizing the importance of ongoing dialogue and knowledge exchange in humanitarian work.

In recognition of their shared commitment, he presented her with a commemorative shield and a special souvenir symbolizing PRCS’s mission. High Commissioner Marriott also received a magazine celebrating recent PRCS milestones and Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari’s book “Dastan-e-Azam”.



ISLAMABAD: H.E Brig General Hoiyatollah Qoreishi Deputy Minister for Defence of Islamic Republic of Iran Called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif. —APP Photo

Dengue alert: 9022 dengue cases reported in twin cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday chaired a dengue review meeting for controlling the dengue outbreak in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The meeting highlighted the recent trends and ongoing efforts to combat the virus.

Health officials from various departments attended the session, sharing updates on infection rates, gender distribution among patients, and ongoing preventive efforts.

According to the latest data shared in the meeting, a total of 5,526 dengue cases have been reported in Rawalpindi, with 3,496 cases in Islamabad as of November 7.

Among the infected individuals, 67 percent are men, while 33 percent are women.

Most cases are in the age group of 20 to 39. In the last 24 hours alone, 48 new cases were confirmed, indicating the need for continued action.

The Islamabad administration has launched an anti-dengue fumigation campaign across the city to curb the spread of the virus.

Alongside fumigation, awareness camps are being set up under the anti-dengue campaign to educate residents about preventive measures.

Pirzada orders formation of committee to resolve FGEHA plot disputes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Friday directed the formation of a committee with members from FGEHA, CDA, Finance and Law division to resolve the longstanding FGEHA plot disputes through amicable negotiations.

Chairing the 36th Executive Board Meeting of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) at the Ministry of Housing & Works in Islamabad, the minister instructed that FGEHA’s claims with

Capital Development Authority (CDA) and other federal institutions be resolved through direct discussions, rather than engaging in costly litigation, in accordance with the Prime Minister’s directives.

The auction of commercial plots in sectors 24-B, 25-B, 19-C, and Scheme 33 at Gulzar-e-Hijri, Karachi, as well as the remaining plots to be allocated by CDA to FGEHA in sector I-8, and the 10% under the Islamabad Land Disposal Regulations, were also discussed.

The Board approved the revised brochure and

auction terms, designed to be more investor-friendly by offering easier possession, rebates, installment plans, and streamlined approval for building plans and floor area ratios. The chair emphasized to mold the terms and conditions to attract overseas Pakistanis and foreign investors.

The meeting agenda included the approval of the brochure and revised terms and conditions for the upcoming open auction of 24 commercial plots in sectors G-13 and G-14, Islamabad, scheduled for 13th and 14th November.

Hospital sealed for non-compliance with court orders

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) on Friday sealed a private hospital located at Marir Chowk for violating the rules and not obeying the court orders.

The hospital management was using the residential lease of the Military Estates Office for commercial purposes.

According to the details, RCB authorities issued notices to the hospital several times for its map violation and encroachment of government space. Al Ehsan Hospital located near Marir Chowk on Murree Road.

Instead of compliance

with the RCB rules and regulations, the hospital management approached the civil court that ordered the hospital administration to apply to the concerned offices within one month for the conversion and modification map of the commercial lease.

The RCB resources informed APP that before sealing, notices were issued again to the hospital administration, but the hospital administration completely ignored the cantonment rules and the court orders.

The Cantonment Board staff has sealed only the administrative offices of

the hospital in view of the patients under treatment in the hospital, while the indoor ward has not been sealed to avoid any difficulties of the patients in the hospital.

The related offices including the pharmacy and laboratory of the hospital have been sealed. Notices have been pasted on the main entrance of the hospital by the Cantonment Board administration.

The board has also requested the citizens to refrain from admitting or visiting in the hospital for medical treatment to avoid any problem.

BISP sets target to achieve youth employability: Rubina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Friday said that BISP has set a target to create employment opportunities for the youth of the country by imparting them skill-based training.

“BISP would soon launch a new initiative ‘Benazir Hunarmand Programme’ to impart skill-based training to the youth for their employability, enabling them to contribute positively to the country’s economy”, she said during a press conference, along with the senior officials.

Rubina Khalid said, “Pakistan is a country having major chunk of youth population which is directionless. This is the high time to focus on positively engaging their energies towards constructive purposes and create job opportunities for them”.

Under the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, women beneficiaries and their children will be given skill-based training to improve their economic

conditions and create space for new participants in the program. The chairperson said that BISP is an internationally acclaimed and largest poverty alleviation programme. “It is a matter of pride for us that international development organizations recognize the BISP as a model”, she added.

BISP’s National Socio-Economic Registry-based data aligns with international standards and the success of the program depends on this database. The identification of deserving individuals through modern and scientific methods, the trust of international partners, and the transparency of third-party monitoring programs are evident to its credibility. Considering BISP’s contributions towards provision of timely assistance to those affected during natural disasters, such as 2022 floods and COVID-19, the chairperson said, the other countries are inspired to implement similar social protection programs.

“This is a matter of pride for

Pakistan that our institution serves as a beacon for many countries worldwide”, she said and added that a number of foreign delegations have been visiting BISP as a case study for research. Rubina Khalid disclosed that the delegations from West African countries will visit Pakistan for an extensive briefing on social protection, particularly BISP from November 11.

She said these representatives will be given a detailed briefing on Pakistan’s social protection initiatives, specifically BISP and will be facilitating in visit to the regional BISP offices where they will meet with eligible women beneficiaries.

They will be briefed on the registration process for deserving families, visit the BISP One Window Center, and receive an overview of the payment system. A roundtable conference will be held on November 14 with officials and stakeholders to develop a collaborative action plan, she said.

Iran to deport undocumented migrants

TEHRAN (amu.tv): Nader YarAhmadi, an advisor to Iran's Ministry of Interior, has reiterated the government's commitment to deporting undocumented foreign nationals, emphasizing that this policy is a priority for the year. According to the state news agency IRNA, Yar Ahmadi highlighted that managing the legal status of Afghan migrants also remains a central focus.

Sheberghan residents concerned over halted project

KABUL (TOLONews): Residents of Sheberghan, the capital of Jawzjan province, have expressed concerns about the halt of the city's ring road project and are urging for its continuation. They said that with the winter season and rainfall approaching, their problems are set to multiply. Habibullah, a resident of Jawzjan, said, "Our problem is that in summer we face dust, and in winter we deal with mud, which has also led to a lot of illnesses among us."

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

Turkish, Uzbekistan leaders stress support for Kabul



KABUL (TOLONews): The Presidents of Turkey and Uzbekistan, in the 11th summit of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan's capital, reaffirmed their support for Afghanistan. The Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, highlighted in the meeting that, in his view, a comprehensive approach based on fundamental human rights by the interim Afghan government could open new doors for Afghanistan. Recep Tayyip Erdogan said: "We do not separate

the stability and peace of our region from Afghanistan's progress. As we have always said, we stand by our Afghan brothers. However, I believe that adopting an inclusive approach based on basic human rights by the interim government will open new opportunities." The Uzbekistan president also stressed the importance of establishing a regular communication framework to address Afghanistan's challenges, emphasizing that Afghanistan's issues should remain a focal point

for the Organization of Turkic States. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of Uzbekistan, also pointed out the significance of cooperation with the interim government in economic and infrastructure sectors to help address Afghanistan's current challenges. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the president of Uzbekistan, said: "The issue of Afghanistan must always remain central to our organization. In this regard, establishing regular communication at the ministerial and expert levels is crucial. We believe

that assisting the current Afghan government in addressing its critical and difficult problems, promoting Afghanistan's broader participation in regional economic processes, and implementing social and infrastructure projects must be considered."

Although the Islamic Emirate has yet to comment on these statements from the Turkic leaders, it has previously welcomed any efforts by regional countries aimed at improving the situation in Afghanistan. "We share close ties in terms of Islam, culture, and religion. We have Turkic communities in Afghanistan who can play a role in strengthening Afghanistan-Turkey relations," said Moeen Gul Samkanai, political analyst. The Organization of Turkic States was founded on October 3, 2009, with the participation of Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Currently, the organization includes eight member states, comprising seven Turkic-speaking countries along with Hungary.



ACCI meets WB country director

KABUL (TOLONews): Officials from Afghanistan's Chamber of Commerce and Investment (ACCI) held a meeting with the World Bank country director for Afghanistan to establish banking facilities and accelerate trade between Afghanistan and countries in the region and the world. The meeting focused on resuming incomplete World Bank projects, mechanizing agriculture, especially constructing cold storage facilities for farmers powered by solar energy, the allocation of water from the Qosh Tapa Canal, and other major national projects.

Discussions also addressed resolving banking issues and supporting the private sector.

"Talks were held regarding the challenges currently faced in transferring money globally through the TT system with the World Bank and banks," said Khan Jan Alokozay, a member of the ACCI's board of directors.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Industries and Mines stressed that it is essential for global institutions, particularly the World Bank, to resume their activities in Afghanistan to foster economic growth and development.

"We hope the World Bank will remove restrictions imposed on foreign currency exchanges between countries. This action could support the people of Afghanistan and the private sector. Lifting banking restrictions will undoubtedly lead to economic stability, sustainable employment, and poverty reduction, which is also the international community's goal," said Sakhi Ahmad Paiman, First Deputy of the Afghanistan Chamber of Industries and Mines.

"If the World Bank returns to Afghanistan and funds the 7,500 projects it pledged in 2021 with five billion dollars, it could increase employment, consumption, and demand within the country," said Sayed Masood, an economic analyst.

Earlier, the Afghanistan Business Council in the United Arab Emirates held a meeting on September 28 and 29 this year with representatives from global organizations, including the World Bank, to discuss investment opportunities and the country's economic development.

Despite these efforts, UNICEF stressed that many survivors continue to face significant challenges, including limited access to education and healthcare. The agency called on the international community to strengthen support for these vulnerable communities as they continue to recover and brace for winter's impact.

CSTO warns of terrorist threats from Afghanistan persist

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) warned that the risk of terrorism spreading in Central Asia remains persistent. I m a n g a l i Tasmagambetov emphasized that the CSTO continues to monitor the challenges and threats emanating from Afghanistan.

Thursday, November 7, Russia's state news agency TASS reported that Tasmagambetov, referring to Afghanistan, stated that the threats of expanding terrorist activities, illegal migration, and the trafficking of weapons and drugs still exist in Central Asia.

Tasmagambetov also announced that the CSTO's counter-terrorism center and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) would deepen their cooperation to prevent potential dangers by utilizing

shared resources and capabilities.

Simultaneously, Sergei Lebedev, Secretary-General of the CIS, expressed support for the CSTO's proposal to establish a security belt around Afghanistan. Lebedev voiced hope that this initiative would help curb terrorist group activities in the region.

The CSTO had previously declared, about two weeks ago, that it would soon approve a plan to strengthen Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan. This plan aims to enhance regional security by fortifying one of the key borders at risk of illegal crossings and potential terrorist infiltration from Afghanistan. The escalation in preventive measures reflects the growing concern among CSTO and CIS members regarding the stability of Central Asia and the impact of threats from Afghan territories.

These efforts underscore the CSTO's strategy to create a collaborative defense against terrorism, illegal migration, and trafficking to maintain peace and stability in Central Asia.

The recent surge in ISIS attacks and other terrorist group activities in the region has heightened security concerns, underscoring the urgent need for coordinated regional responses.

As tensions escalate, the presence of these groups is increasingly destabilizing, leading regional powers to intensify their focus on counter-terrorism initiatives and cross-border security.

The continuous threats from ISIS and other militant organizations in Central Asia pose serious risks, demanding enhanced cooperation and vigilance from regional security alliances to safeguard peace and stability in the area.

Residents struggle with rising electricity costs

ZARANJ (amu.tv): Residents of Nimroz province have voiced frustration over surging electricity prices, reporting that they are being charged six Afghanis per kilowatt-hour for power imported from Iran. By comparison, residents in neighboring provinces pay only four Afghanis per kilowatt-hour, they said.

The steep cost of electricity has become an acute burden for many in Nimroz, where the economy remains fragile. "The cost of electricity here is much higher than in other provinces. People have to cut down on their food expenses just to pay for power," said Ghulam Rabbani, a resident of Nimroz. "If the city goes without power for even a day, life is severely disrupted."

Abdul Nasir, another resident, emphasized the necessity of electricity despite the high costs. "Imported electricity comes from Iran, and people have no choice but to use it, but the price is very high," he said.

Shopkeepers in Zaranj, the provincial capital, echoed these concerns, stating that their businesses have suffered due to the increasing expenses. "We have 16 family members. I don't know how to cover the costs for all of them—it's just impossible," said Mohammad Rasul, a shopkeeper.

Nimroz, located in southwestern Afghanistan and sharing a border with Iran, has historically been known for its connection to the ancient Silk Road. According to local sources, Iran sells electricity to various provinces at different rates, resulting in higher prices for Nimroz compared to its neighbors.

New homes distributed to 288 earthquake survivors



HERAT (amu.tv): The Red Crescent Society announced on Friday the distribution of 288 newly constructed homes to survivors of last year's devastating earthquakes in Herat province.

According to the organization, 285 homes were provided to affected families in the Shakar Ab, Sang Kutal, and Band-e-Afzal areas of Gulran district, while three additional homes were distributed in Zindajan district.

The earthquakes that struck Herat last year claimed approximately 2,000 lives and destroyed thousands of homes across the province. Zindajan district, identified as the epicenter, recorded the most severe damage.

More than a year after the disaster, many survivors continue to voice frustration over inadequate living conditions. Reports indicate that millions of dollars in aid were pledged by countries and humanitarian organizations, yet the details of how this aid has been allocated remain unclear.

Last month, UNICEF described the recovery in Herat as fragile, urging sustained support for children and community resilience as winter approaches. "Communities are showing signs of recovery," UNICEF stated. "Families are slowly rebuilding their lives, but as winter approaches, community resilience remains weak, which could reverse recovery efforts for those still struggling with the loss of loved ones, homes, and livelihoods."

The initial 6.4-magnitude earthquake struck on October 7, 2022, displacing around 48,000 families. Reports indicate that approximately 1,480 people were killed and 1,950 were injured, with over 90 percent of the fatalities being women and children. Many survivors were forced to take refuge in makeshift shelters with limited resources.

In response, UNICEF targeted approximately 96,000 children for immediate relief, including healthcare, water and sanitation

services, cash assistance, and psychosocial support. Over the past year, the agency has worked to restore essential services and infrastructure. More than one million people, including 400,000 children under five, have accessed healthcare through UNICEF-supported facilities and medical teams.

UNICEF also reported rehabilitating damaged water systems, rebuilding classrooms, and ensuring the continuity of health and nutrition services for women and children. Clean drinking water has been restored for 21,600 people, and sanitation facilities have been provided for 25,000 individuals.

Despite these efforts, UNICEF stressed that many survivors continue to face significant challenges, including limited access to education and healthcare. The agency called on the international community to strengthen support for these vulnerable communities as they continue to recover and brace for winter's impact.

IE leader takes control of military equipment distribution

KABUL (TOLONews): The leader of the Islamic Emirate, through an eight-point decree, has removed the authority over the distribution of weapons, ammunition, and military equipment from the Ministries of Interior, Defense, and the Directorate of Intelligence.

Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, confirmed this decree to TOLONews and added that, from now on, for the proper use and safety of weapons, any use or distribution of arms and ammunition will only occur with the leader's direct order.

Mujahid said, "This measure is intended to ensure better protection of weaponry so that arms and other military assets are not used in situations where they aren't needed and to enhance the overall security



of these weapons." The spokesperson for the Ministry of Interior also elaborated on the directive, stating that henceforth, all arms and equipment stored in depots will only be distributed by the order of the leader of the Islamic Emirate.

Abdul Mateen Qani,

spokesperson for the Ministry of Interior, said: "From now on, any surplus weapons or those recovered from unauthorized individuals and stored in depots as public property will only be distributed under the directive of the Islamic Emirate's leadership. This policy aims to prevent the misuse

of public resources and to ensure proper preservation and protection. Any necessary requests from security departments or Islamic Emirate authorities will be submitted to the high leadership for approval."

Zalmay Afghan Yar, a military affairs expert, described the directive as a positive step, saying: "There have always been individuals in power who misuse weapons for personal gain."

According to the spokesperson for the Ministry of Interior, another directive from the leader of the Islamic Emirate requires that firearms licenses for civilians organizations, merchants, money exchangers, and citizens will now be issued exclusively by the Ministry of Interior.

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Information and Culture has dismissed rumors about the closure of media outlets in certain provinces, stating that no restrictions have been imposed on media activities nationwide.

The acting deputy minister for publications, in a visit to Balkh, noted that while Islamic Emirate leadership has religious concerns regarding the use of images, media is a social necessity, and media activities should continue.

Ziaulhaq Haqmal, acting deputy minister for publications, said: "We are hearing propaganda suggesting that there has been an order to close media outlets. Alhamdulillah, there is no such directive."

There are some academic considerations, but currently, no such obstacles stand in our way. Some government offices might have any academic considerations in this regard based on the principles set by the Ministry of Vice and Virtue.

However, there is no impediment to our work." In Balkh, some journal-



ists voiced concerns about the lack of a comprehensive media law.

However, the acting deputy minister pledged that efforts are underway to make the media law accessible in the near future.

Haqmal said, "There are certain issues in which we are advancing, and colleagues may be uncertain about how to proceed. For instance, on the matter of images and videos, we explained to colleagues

yesterday that our leadership holds scientific and religious concerns. However, these concerns have always existed, and since media is now essential, we work based on this need."

Spokespersons, journalists, media officials, and several supporting organizations see the ministry's clarification that visual media will not be halted as critical for the continuation of media operations. Abdul Latif Sahak,

head of the Journalists' Safety Committee for the North, said: "The Ministry of Information and Culture's explanation that it is interpreting the law in line with the principles of Ministry of Vice and Virtue brings an end to these concerns."

Previously, reports suggesting that the Islamic Emirate leadership intended to shut down visual media had raised concerns among media officials, journalists, and the public.

Economy on path of growth now: Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday said the national economy had not only been stabilised but now it was on the path of growth despite Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf tactics to create disorder and chaos.

Addressing a press conference, he said economic stability and growth had now started to benefit common man. He said the price of wheat and flour and petroleum products had markedly decreased in addition to reduced electricity tariff. Currently, all economic indicators were positive and foreign exchange reserves had crossed \$ 11 billion mark, besides enhanced foreign remittances, he added.

He said that the Prime Minister was working day and night to improvise the economy and milestones achieved on the economic front were the outcome of his efforts. He said a United Arab Emirates delegation would be visiting Pakistan to discuss prospects for investment. He said due to the efforts of the Prime Minister, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar were investing in Pakistan whereas Azerbaijan had also announced 2 billion dollars investment in Pakistan.

"The Prime Minister will leave for Saudi Arabia on November 10 to participate in the Riyadh Summit on the issue of Palestine. A detailed discussion will be held on the situation in the Middle East at the Riyadh Summit", he said. He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had always raised the issue of Palestine and ongoing Gaza genocide at every forum including World Economic Forum and United Nations General Assembly.

Tarar said that the Prime Minister's speech at the United Nations General Assembly was the most watched speech worldwide as he had represented the sentiments of entire Muslim Ummah. He disclosed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will also participate in the meeting of COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Lashing out at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf on its announcement to march towards Islamabad again, he said that Tehreek-e-Inteshar was still sticking to its policy of creating chaos and disorder in the country. He said that the PTI was hell bent on disrupting the peace and tranquility in the country by organizing protests, just to seek concessions for its jailed leader and added they would get no NRO.

He wondered why the PTI was organising a public rally in Swabi as its past rallies in Lahore and Islamabad had proved to be fiasco and they had to cancel it altogether in Quetta. He lamented that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was misusing its powers to suppress the rights of teachers in the province. The voice of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa teachers should be heard and their demands be accepted as the education system in the province was in ruins, he added.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he opined the

provincial government had no development agenda and no attention had been given to the affairs of the youth and added talented sports stars and innovative youth were totally ignored. He said that the only focus of the KP chief minister was on protest rallies and marches for release of the PTI founder who had been facing trial on corruption charges.

He said on the one hand Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was striving for development and prosperity of the country and on the other hand, the PTI was working on an anti-state agenda to damage national interests. He said that those who attacked the vehicle of Qazi Faez Isa will be brought to justice and nobody will be allowed to indulge in such activities.

He said that the results of the Supreme Court Bar Election was a manifestation of the legal fraternity's support for the 26th Constitutional Amendment. He said that defeat of PTI backed panels in Supreme Court Bar Association elections had exposed the claims of its popularity. The PTI leadership wanted Pakistan to default, but by the Grace of Allah, Pakistan had come out of its danger. They wrote letters to the International Monetary Fund, but Pakistan successfully reached an agreement with the IMF, he added.

The PTI attacked national institutions on May 9 but failed in its agenda of weakening them, he added. Tarar said that the people had refused to take to streets on the call of KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur who had left party workers on roads and himself took refuge in KP House. The minister said that Pakistan cricket team's historic victory against Australia in a one day international match in Adelaide was encouraging. He expressed the optimism that Pakistan cricket team will soon regain its past status through hard work and commitment.

Winning the Test series against England and levelling the ongoing ODI series against Australia will prove to be the beginning of a new era for Pakistan cricket, he remarked. Replying to media persons questions, he said Pakistan enjoyed time tested friendship with China and there was no impediment in its further growth in future. He said China Pakistan Economic Corridor was the lifeline of the country and with completion of its second phase, Pakistan's relations with China will reach to new level.

To a question, he said that PTI founder had snubbed his party leaders for giving proposals for a constitutional amendment package since his sole agenda was his release from jail. Answering a question about Donald Trump's victory in US elections, he said that in the past the PTI had built a fake narrative of 'absolutely not' and now they were claiming new US president will get Imran Khan released from jail. He ruled out any concession to jailed PTI founder by stating that he had to defend himself in courts on corruption charges and there was no other way out for him.

JCP names SHC all judges for constitutional bench

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Friday nominated all judges of the Sindh High Court (SHC) as members of constitutional bench for expeditious disposal of the existing huge backlog of cases.

All judges of the SHC can hear constitutional cases till 24th November 2024 as the Judicial Commission of Pakistan will take up the matter once again 25th November. The decision was taken in the second meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan, constituted under the 26 Constitutional Amendment held in the Supreme Court here.

The meeting was chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Yahya Afridi and discussed one-point agenda of formation of a constitutional bench within the SHC. Chief Justice SHC Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui proposed that all judges of the court might continue hearing the constitutional cases till November 24.

IHC orders PTI leaders meeting with Imran

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday directed the Adiala Jail superintendent to facilitate a meeting between Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, his family, PTI leaders, and the legal team on Tuesday.

IHC judge Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan heard the contempt petition for not meeting the PTI founder despite the court order. The court ordered the petitioner that the founders of PTI whom they want to meet, including family, friends, and lawyers, submit their list to the court and dispose of the contempt petition.

Founder PTI's lawyer, Faisal Farid Chaudhry, Superintendent Adiala Jail Abdul Ghafoor Anjum, and Advocate General Ayaz Shaikat appeared before the court. Faisal Chaudhry told the IHC that his meeting with Imran Khan was scheduled for yesterday, but it was not held, while PTI leaders including Asad Qaiser and Shibli Faraz were also stopped outside the Adiala Jail.

Advocate General Islamabad told the court that they have submitted a reply in this contempt of court case. He told the court that they had not been given any list that these six people wanted to meet Imran Khan. On this, Faisal Chaudhry told the court that they had given the list of persons who wanted to meet Imran Khan in jail.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi presiding over the meeting of Supreme Judicial Council.

Khokhar, Dawar among others move SC against 26th Amend

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The 26th Amendment has been challenged by former parliamentarians and an ex-president of the Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA) in two separate petitions, seeking nullification of the judiciary-centric constitutional tweaks.

In one of the petitions filed in the apex court on Friday, the petitioners include Balochistan National Party—Mengal (BNP-M) President Akhtar Mengal, former National Assembly speaker Fahmida Mirza, National Democratic Movement (NDM) Chairman and ex-lawmaker Mohsin Dawar, and former Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senator Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar.

The petition — making federation, Judicial Commission of Pakistan, Special Parliamentary Committee, Senate chairman, and Election Commission of Pakistan as parties in the case — sought the top court's order to declare the judicial package null and void. It also questioned the way of passing the 26th Amendment from parliament, terming it violative to the Constitution and law, and sought a thorough probe into the

"coercive" voting of the parliamentarians.

The former parliamentarians, in their joint petition, prayed the top court to strike down sections 7, 14, 17, and 21 of the 26th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2024, being violative of the independence of the judiciary besides nullifying all "all acts, decisions, notifications, proceedings or superstructure by any person, authority or body based upon the same". They also sought to strike down the "so-called" Judicial Commission and the "Constitutional Benches" besides voiding all their proceedings and acts.

In the second petition filed by former SHCBA president Salaudinn Ahmed today, the top court was also prayed to strike down the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) (Amendment) Act, 2024, and the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) (Amendment) Act, 2024. Speaking to journalists outside the Supreme Court, former PPP senator Khokhar alleged that the BNP-M members of parliament were "harassed" and booked in different cases. He said that the constitutional package was tantamount to the weakening the

state.

NDM Chief Dawar also slammed the incumbent government for "mocking the public opinion in the parliament" via passing the constitutional amendments in a questionable manner. Throwing shade at Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's administration, Dawar said that the government shied away from holding debates and following parliamentary procedures on the judiciary-centric legislation, whereas, there was no representation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in the Senate.

The ruling coalition had succeeded in pushing the highly contentious judicial reforms through the parliament via a two-thirds majority with 225 and 65 votes in the lower and upper house, respectively last month. During the process, the major opposition party — the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) — refrained from voting on the constitutional package which was passed on the night between October 20-21. Following the approval of the said legislation by the parliament, President Asif Ali Zardari had signed the "26th Amendment Bill" into law on the advice of PM Shehbaz on the same day.

Smog issue: LHC orders closure of markets at 8pm

F.P. Report

LAHORE: With the authorities appeared helpless about to combat the thickening fog, the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday stepped in ordering a string of measures including shutting the markets at 8:00 pm and day-long closure on Sundays.

The LHC also ordered a crack-down against the smoke-emitting vehicles and directed Punjab transport secretary to impound buses releasing thick smoke in the atmosphere. The LHC judge said staff of all private offices should work from home on two days of the week. The smog situation in Punjab has reached critical levels, with Lahore now ranked as the second most polluted city globally. Lahore city has risen to the top of Pakistan's most polluted cities, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 748 recorded. Alongside the pollution, a wave of illnesses has affected the city, as over 129,000 citizens have suffered from smog-related health issues in just one month.

Across Punjab, 1.9 million cases of respiratory illnesses have been reported, with hospitals experiencing an influx as at least 5,000 individuals seek treatment daily for various ailments. A report from Lahore indicates there has been no implementation of

anti-smog measures, and residents are disregarding mask usage. However, Lahore Police have intensified their efforts to tackle environmental violators, registering 200 cases and arresting 212 individuals as part of an ongoing anti-smog campaign.

Eight people were arrested for burning fuel, tar, and carbon boards, 87 for construction materials, and 18 for crop residue. Additional arrests include 25 for burning tyres and plastic bags, 49 for factory violations, and 25 for waste burning. Across different divisions of the city, multiple arrests have also been made, with City Division accounting for 57, Cantt for 75, and Model Town for 48 arrests.

According to CCPO Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana, the police have adopted a zero-tolerance approach and are utilising Safe City cameras to monitor pollution sources. The city of River Ravi has also witnessed a continuous "anti-smog night operation" now entering its fifth week, resulting in the sealing of one pyrolysis plant and five factories. Deputy Directors Waqar Ahmed and Kashan Ali led the operations, which included actions on Karol Ghatti, Turk Road, and Mahmood Booti, sealing plants and furnaces not equipped with scrubbers.

Meanwhile, Multan is also facing rising smog levels, ranking second in

air pollution across Pakistan. The Meteorological Department reported a minimum temperature of 20°C and a maximum of 33°C, with 94% humidity recorded. Dry weather is forecasted for the next 24 hours. In Toba Tek Singh, visibility has been severely reduced due to heavy smog and fog, leading to motorways M-4 and M-3 closure. The shutdown has shifted traffic pressure onto GT Road. The city recorded an AQI of 252.

District Okara and surrounding areas are also experiencing heavy smog, impacting traffic and causing respiratory issues for asthma patients. Citizens report eye irritation and breathing difficulties, with heart, diabetes, and kidney patients also feeling the impact. Medical experts have advised the people of Punjab to take precautions by wearing glasses and masks outdoors to avoid unnecessary travel. As many as ten cars were involved in a pile-up due to thick smog near Minar Interchange on Motorway-II near Sheikhpura on Friday morning. Five people were injured in the accident and were shifted to District Headquarters Hospital for treatment. Motorway police, FWO and Rescue 1122 were present on the accident site while loss of millions of rupees was ascertained due to destruction of the vehicles.

CASS and NICAT sign joint synergy charter

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) and the National Incubation Centre for Aerospace Technologies (NICAT) signed a Joint Synergy Charter in Islamabad, marking a new chapter in Pakistan's aerospace innovation and security collaboration.

Air Marshal Javid Ahmed (Retd), President of CASS, addressed the gathering, highlighting the importance of strategic part-



nerships in advancing research in the domains of Aerospace, Emerging Technologies and Security. He was followed by Mr Ayub Ghauri, President of NICAT, who underscored

the critical role of technological incubation in achieving self-reliance in the aerospace sector.

The CASS-NICAT Joint Synergy Charter formalises a collaborative framework for fostering aerospace innovation, research, and development, strengthening Pakistan's position in this critical field.

It signifies a shared vision for enhancing Pakistan's aerospace capabilities through concerted Research and Development efforts.

UN accuses Israel of 'deliberate' attack on peacekeeping position

NEW YORK: The UN peace-keeping force in Lebanon on Friday said two Israeli excavators and a bulldozer destroyed part of a fence and a concrete structure in one of its positions in Ras Naqoura in southern Lebanon. The UN Interim Force in Lebanon added that in response to its "urgent protest," the Israel Defense Forces denied any activity was taking place inside its position.

UNIFIL is stationed in southern Lebanon to monitor hostilities along the demarcation line with Israel, an area that has seen more than a year of fighting that turned into fierce clashes since last month between Israeli soldiers and Hezbollah fighters. Israel claims that UN forces provide cover for Hezbollah, and has told UNIFIL to evacuate peacekeepers from southern Lebanon for their own safety. But UNIFIL said the incident, which took place on Thursday, "like seven other similar incidents, is not a matter of peacekeepers getting caught in the crossfire, but of deliberate and direct actions by the IDF." UNIFIL issued a statement warning that "the IDF's deliberate and direct destruction of clearly identifiable UNIFIL property is a flagrant violation of international law and resolution 1701." It called on the IDF and all other actors to honor "their obligation to ensure the safety and security of UN personnel and property and respect the inviolability of UN premises at all times."

UNIFIL also expressed concern over the destruction and removal this week of two of the blue barrels that mark the UN-delineated line of withdrawal between Lebanon and Israel (the Blue Line). Peacekeepers said they directly observed the IDF removing one of them. "Despite the unacceptable pressures being exerted on the mission through various channels, peacekeepers will continue to undertake our mandated monitoring and reporting tasks under resolution 1701," UNIFIL said.

Meanwhile, the UN high commissioner for human rights on Friday called on Israel to "fully and immediately" comply with the provisional measures issued in January by the International Court of Justice demanding action to prevent a genocide from being perpetrated against the Palestinians. Volker Turk also called on states to honor their obligations under international law and "assess arms sales or transfers and provision of military, logistical or financial support to a party to the conflict, with a view to ending such support if this risks serious violations of international law." His warning comes as a new report by his office, published on Friday, warned that "if committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, (Israel's violations) may constitute genocide." — Arab News

خودی کو کر بلند اتنا کہ ہر تقدیر سے پہلے
خدا بندے سے خود پوچھے بتا تیری رضا کیا ہے

9th November

ایقبال
Iqbal Day

خودی سے خود اعتمادی، خودداری اور خود انحصاری

Iqbal's visualization of Self- realization (خودی) is the base of our tireless efforts. We opt the oath to raise an economically strong Pakistan and pledge all efforts to improve the living standards of people of Pakistan.



Government of Pakistan

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