

**Boiler blast kills five**  
**F.P. Report**

MURIDKE: Death toll reach five and two more injured are in critical condition when the boiler of a tyre oil extraction factory exploded other day at Muridke road in Sheikhpura. One laborer died on the spot while Shahid Butt, Syed Asad Abbass, Syed Tajumal Hussain and Arshad Shabbir succumbed to severe burn injuries at Mayo Hospital.

**Polio team attacked, 2 hurt**  
**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: A polio vaccination team was attacked within the limits of Korangi police station, leaving two polio workers and a policeman injured. The attack, carried out by a family, involved the use of shovels. A total of six individuals, including four women, were arrested in connection with the violence against the polio team.

# PM directs Ministry to resolve Madaris registration issue

Over 200 B2B agreements, MoU worth \$70m signed with Chinese firms, Prime Minister informed

**Saqib Mushtaq**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the Ministry of Law and Justice to amicably resolve the issue of madaris registration as per the constitution and law.

The matter was discussed as Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman called on the prime minister on Friday and the meeting marked a positive development regarding the suggestions put forth by Maulana Fazlur Rehman on madaris registration. PM Shehbaz Sharif directed the law ministry to resolve the issues soon. Members of the National Assembly Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Raja Pervez Ashraf, Senator Kamran Murtaza and senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Qamar Zaman Kaira also attended the meeting.

Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers Azam Nazir Tarar, Attaullah Tarar, Rana Sanaullah, and Attorney General Mansoor Usman were also present.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was apprised that over 200 business-to-business (B2B) agreements along with a memorandum of understanding worth \$70 million have been signed with several Chinese companies.

The prime minister (PM) chaired a review meeting regarding the progress of ongoing projects and various initiatives under the Board of Investment (BOI), a PM office news release said. PM Shehbaz Sharif said an effective and comprehensive roadmap should be formulated for the completion of B2B agreements and the implementation of signed memorandums of understanding with international investors.

"Work on regulatory reforms should be accelerated to provide a conducive environment for business

## Shehbaz warns against complacency in action against officers involved in human trafficking

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed to initiate of strict punitive action against officers involved in sluggish action against human trafficking post-2023 boat capsizing incident. The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting on the prevention of human trafficking here, derided human trafficking as a regrettable offence bringing "disgrace to Pakistan worldwide". He directed the relevant agencies to enhance coordination to prevent human trafficking and ensure the identification of FIA officials involved in facilitating human traffickers and take strict action against them. He also directed to complete the ongoing investigation into human trafficking incidents at the earliest and submit concrete recommendations to overcome the menace.

During the meeting, he was briefed on Greece's boat accident and steps taken to prevent human trafficking. The prime minister was informed that five Pakistanis who died in the said accident had been identified, while others' identification was underway. Pakistan Embassy in Athens is in constant touch with Greek authorities regarding the boat accident, whereas the Pakistan Embassy there can be contacted on helpline +30-6943850188 and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Crisis Management Unit number 0519207887, for information and assistance regarding the boat accident, it added. It was informed that the people from Gujranwala, Gujarat, Sialkot and Mandi Bahauddin districts are the most vulnerable to human traffickers and that legislation is being further improved to prevent human trafficking. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Rana Ehsan Afzal and senior government officials concerned. Pakistan's Ambassador to Greece participated in the meeting via video link.

in the country. Such targets should be set for investment that can be achieved as soon as possible," the PM said. Effective marketing of investment opportunities in Pakistan is essential to attract foreign investors, the prime minister said.

The prime minister directed to complete the construction of business facilitation centers in the country as soon as possible. He underscored that the construction of business facilitation centers, organization of road shows and other such initiatives were critical to attract foreign investment to the country. He was also briefed that some 35 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the country have been surveyed through Geographical Information System (GIS), whereas

extensive data was available on the SEZs to accelerate the progress of ongoing projects. During the meeting, the BOI officials informed that an 18-point plan was formulated to make special economic zones more effective. Moreover, suggestions regarding the Ease of Doing Business Act 2024 were also presented during the meeting.

Under the Ease of Doing Business Act 2024, the Board of Investment would be able to create a regulatory framework for business in the country in accordance with the modern requirements, he added. Federal Minister for Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan and senior officers of relevant institutions were present in the meeting.

## Premier forms National Youth Council

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has formed National Youth Council to engage youth, increase their empowerment in policy making and give them more meaningful role in strengthening of institutions.

The prime minister will be the chairman of the council and ministers of youth affairs of the provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan will be the members. The council will have 113 youth members and will work for and represent young people, aged 10 to 29 years. It will act as an official representative body of youth led civil society, both from the public and private sectors from across Pakistan.

The council will work to advance pro youth development and empowerment agenda as outlined in the National Youth Development Framework by advising on and facilitating processes and mechanisms that include and integrate young people into policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at all levels of government.

It will provide a sustainable platform for unified engagement with decision makers in public and private sector as well as international youth led development initiatives. It will mobilize the voice of young people and advocate with all levels of government to meaningfully engage young people. It will identify policy and institutional gaps and provide strategic advice and direction for youth development and empowerment.

The council will support federal, provincial and local government institutions in developing youth focused programmes, initiatives and institutional reforms. It will monitor and assess impact of pro-youth schemes and initiatives at all levels of government and will strengthen the structure and institutionalization of National Youth Council. The council members will broadly work around seven thematic areas including support in areas of policy, media, institutionalization of National Youth Council, support to marginalized youth, employment, reproductive health and youth engagement.

## Seven more terrorists killed

**F.P. Report**

TANK: Security forces gunned down seven Khwarij terrorists, including a most-wanted terrorist of Fitna Alkhwarij, in an Intelligence-Based Operation (IBO) in Tank, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to security sources, the operation was conducted on the night of December 17-18 in Tank. During the successful operation, security forces killed seven Khwarij terrorists, including a top commander, Ali Rahman alias Tauha Swati. Ali Rahman was a close associate of Fitna Alkhwarij's key commander, Mufi Fazalullah. He had joined the banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in 2010 and was a key member of the Khwarij's Shura.

Ali Rahman was also associated with Fitna Alkhwarij's key commander, Qari Amjad alias Mufi Mazahim. During the operation, the terrorists took two children hostage and tried to use them as human shields. The terrorist also wore a woman's dress to escape, but the security forces' successful strategy led to the safe recovery of the two children. The local population appreciated the Pakistan Army's efforts in rescuing the children safely. The security forces also recovered a vehicle loaded with arms and explosives from the killed terrorists. The explosives were intended to be used for a major terrorist activity.



ISLAMABAD: President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), Maulana Fazlur Rehman called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## KP govt finalizes plan to resolve Kurram issue

KP Apex committee takes key decisions for ensuring peace

**Syed Adnan**

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee, chaired by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, was held at the Chief Minister's House today. The meeting was attended by Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, provincial cabinet members, Peshawar Corps Commander, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Inspector General of Police, and senior civil and military officials.

The committee began with prayers for and tributes to the martyrs of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and security forces. A detailed consultation was held to resolve the longstanding issue in Kurram District, culminating in a unanimous decision to disarm both parties involved. The agreement, mediated by the government, will require both parties to surrender all weapons and dismantle bunkers by February 1, 2025. A special mechanism has been devised to ensure security during this process.

To address humanitarian concerns, the ground route in the affected area will be temporarily opened for essential movement under strict security arrangements by the police and Frontier Corps. Additionally, a special air service, utilizing helicopters from federal and provincial governments, will be launched to provide relief.

The committee also decided to shut down all social media accounts spreading sectarian hatred in the region. The security situation in Tirah and Jani Khel was reviewed, with officials noting a rise in terrorist activities. Temporary relocations may be implemented to ensure the safety of residents, who were urged to cooperate with the government in eliminating threats.

The Chief Minister emphasized the serious-

## No shortage of medicines in Kurram: Saif

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Chief Minister for KP for Information, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif clarified that there was no shortage of medicines in Kurram district and all emergency medicines provided to Parachinar hospitals.

He said that medical and life saving medicines were also dispatched in Kurram, adding that negotiation of grand tribal jirga on Kurram situation was in progress in Kohat and hopefully the problem would be addressed in next few days. Talking to media, Barrister Saif said that KP Govt was committed to provide all modern facilities to Govt hospitals in the province. He said that dismantling of bankers and handing over of heavy weapons to Govt authorities were necessary for lasting peace in Kurram. The CM aide sought cooperation of tribal elders and maliks of Kurram in persuading warring tribes in handing over of heavy weapons and rocket launchers besides vacation of bunkers. He said the Govt would not allow further unrest in the Kurram and strict action would be taken against violators.

## Educational institutions to remain closed in Parachinar

**F.P. Report**

PARACHINAR: All government and private educational institutions will remain closed in Parachinar due to worsening law and order situation. Nowadays, Parachinar which has the second highest literacy rate in the country is going through poor law and order situation.

Talking to media persons, heads of educational institutions said that all these institutions will remain closed till opening of main roads. MNA and Parliamentary leader of Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) Hameed Husain said that due to closure of roads, every sector of life affected badly. He said that visas and tickets of those overseas Pakistanis who arrived in the area for spending vacations expired while all those students who were studying in these institutions but were going on holidays to their native area were disconnected from their institutions. People are dying due to non-availability of medicines, meal and proper treatment. He appealed to provincial health minister to take measure to provide immediate relief to affected persons instead of giving unverified statements. He said that Barrister Saif is enough to destroy Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and we need no other enemy if he himself is available.

ness of the Kurram issue, describing it as a national challenge rather than a regional conflict. He criticized political leaders exploiting the matter for personal gains, calling such actions regrettable. The meeting reiterated that the provincial and federal governments, along with all relevant institutions, are united in their

approach. Allegations regarding child deaths in Kurram were dismissed as baseless. The efforts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and Pakistan Army in combating terrorism were lauded during the meeting, with the committee affirming its resolve to ensure peace and stability in the region.

## China's military expansion faces corruption challenges

**Jalil Afridi**

WASHINGTON: China's rapid military expansion, including a significant increase in its nuclear arsenal and closer ties with Russia, is encountering obstacles due to internal corruption, according to a Pentagon report released Wednesday.

The report indicates that China now possesses over 600 operational nuclear warheads, with projections to exceed 1,000 by 2030. This growth is part of Beijing's strategy to develop a more diverse and technologically advanced nuclear force capable of targeting a wider array of threats. However, recent corrup-

tion scandals within China's Central Military Commission, which oversees the People's Liberation Army (PLA), are impeding these advancements. At least 15 high-ranking officials have been ousted amid graft investigations, disrupting the PLA's modernization efforts. The Pentagon also highlights China's increased military activities near Taiwan, including a persistent naval presence and frequent incursions into the island's air defense identification zone. These actions have escalated regional tensions, as China continues to assert its claim over the self-governing island. Additionally, the report

notes China's support for Russia's war in Ukraine, providing dual-use items that bolster Moscow's military capabilities. This collaboration underscores the deepening ties between Beijing and Moscow, presenting complex challenges for US security interests. The US has responded by enhancing its military presence in the Asia-Pacific region and urging China to increase transparency regarding its nuclear program. The Pentagon emphasizes that, despite China's rapid military growth, internal corruption and governance issues may hinder its long-term strategic objectives.

## Sindh CM meets KP, Punjab Governors

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah held a meeting here on Friday with the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, and the Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider and discussed the overall political situation of the country. The meeting was also attended by provincial ministers Saeed Ghani, Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar, Jam Ikram Dharejo, and Jam Khan Shoro. During the meeting, the leaders discussed the overall political situation of the country and the law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Special focus was placed on the security situation in Kurram, with all leaders expressing serious concern over the issue.

They also criticized the roles of both the federal and provincial governments in addressing the crisis. The leaders praised the efforts of Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, acknowledging his role as the President of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They commended the performance of the PRCS under his leadership, highlighting its commendable services during challenging times.

## Judge irked over institutions' 'involvement in politics'

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: A pending trial of a 2017 murder in the Supreme Court prompted the senior judges to criticise the state institutions role in the political matters with Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail reprimanding them for involving in "political engineering" instead of performing their constitutional duties.

Besides Justice Mandokhail, SC's Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan also lamented the state of affairs prevailing in the country while hearing a bail petition of a murder suspect Ishaq on Friday. It is noteworthy to mention here that Ishaq fled after securing bail in the case and has yet to be arrested again. "This case has been pending in the Supreme Court since 2017," Justice Minallah remarked, adding: "[...] and the state is busy toppling and forming a government. All institutions are chasing political opponents. This situation would be different if the Constitution is implemented."

Justice Mandokhail also expressed displeasure over the performance of the state institutions and questioned what happened to cases after three prime ministers

were killed in the country. He also remarked that a senior-most judge was killed in Balochistan. The jurist noted that the major reason was the state institutions' "unwillingness to do something". "Compared to the other two provinces, the state of police prosecution is deplorable in Sindh and Punjab," he observed.

He went on to say that people lacked confidence in the institutions and expected everything to be done by the top court. He added that no one should expect any positive change until state institutions keep themselves engaged in political engineering. Regarding the apex court, Justice Minallah lamented that the admission of murder of a premier was made after 40 years, wondering what could be a bigger crime than this. He remarked that the court should have sentenced the responsible.

Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan also shed light on the level of uncertainty prevailing in the country. He remarked that what would happen to a common citizen in the country where a prime minister spends a day in the PM Office and the other day in the jail. Justice Malik added that no one could predict the tenure of a premier in the country. Later, the top court ordered the

police to arrest the absconding murder suspect and handed him over to the jail officials.

## CJP urges setup of Prison Complex

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: During his third day of visit to the remote areas of the country, the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Yahya Afridi, visited the District Prison Rahim Yar Khan on Friday.

During the visit, he was accompanied by Justice Shahbaz Ali Rizvi, a judge of the Lahore High Court, the Registrar of the Supreme Court, the District and Sessions Judge Rahim Yar Khan, and the Inspector General of Prisons, Punjab. According to a Supreme Court's press release, this visit forms part of his commitment to get first glimpse of the prison and inmates conditions.

This is part of his determination to introduce substantively reforming the Criminal Justice System to which prison are integral part. During the inspection of the District jail, the Chief Justice reviewed the facilities provided to the inmates.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur chairing meeting of Provincial Apex Committee. Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi and Corps. Commander Lt. Gen. Omer Ahmed Bukhari also present.





## Gas load shedding in Sindh Sharjeel asks Centre govt to take steps

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Senior Minister of Sindh, Sharjeel Inam Memon, has stated that the ongoing problem of gas load shedding in Sindh has reached alarming levels, people are facing severe hardships due to the gas shortage, which is adversely impacting daily life and industrial activities.

In a statement, Senior Minister of Sindh and

Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, stated that the entire province of Sindh, including Pakistan's economic hub, Karachi, cannot afford gas load shedding. He emphasized that the lack of a continuous gas supply has created widespread uncertainty and disappointment among the people. He said that the federal government should

take immediate and concrete steps to address this issue and ensure an uninterrupted supply of gas during the winter months.

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that it is the responsibility of the federal government to ensure the fair distribution of natural resources and urged the Prime Minister and the federal government to prioritize this issue.

## IBA Karachi organizes Winter Immersion Program

F.P. Report

KARACHI: IBA proudly conducted the "Winter Immersion Program 2024" at the City Campus, which was organized in collaboration with IBA's Centre for Entrepreneurial Development (IBA-CED). The program brought together renowned international trainers to shed light on the importance of entrepreneurship education, research, and incubation management in academia. Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, delivered the keynote address. He highlighted that there needs to be an overhaul of the curriculum taught to students to consider the ever-evolving realm of entrepreneurship. Dr. Zaidi added, "Workshops such as this allow participants to think creatively to keep up with changing trends in business."

Dr. Sanna Ilonen, University Teacher and Mr. Joachim Ramstrom, Education Expert on Entrepreneurship & Innovation Education, School of Economics, University of Turku, and Islam Mohamed, Chief



Investment Officer, Arweqah Al Reyadah, Saudi Arabia, were the trainers for the two workshops held over four days. The first workshop, "Fostering Entrepreneurship in Academia", was led by Dr. Ilonen and Mr. Ramstrom, who have over two decades of combined experience in Entrepreneurship. They allowed participants to develop a robust understanding of the tools and resources needed to create and deliver engaging entrepreneurship modules or courses. The participants included university faculty, incubation centre staff and media professionals in attendance. The second workshop, led by Mr. Mohamed, one of the brightest minds in the innovation ecosystem, on

"Elevating Innovators and Incubators", underscored the necessary hands-on knowledge and skills to design and manage a thriving university-based business incubator program. Dr. Lalarukh Ejaz, Director, IBA-CED, gave the closing remarks. She thanked the speakers and participants for being a part of the program. Dr. Lalarukh stated, "There was a dire need for universities and incubators to engage in such activities and workshops where the knowledge exchange and structured discourse took place."

A combination of lectures, interactive discussions, and case studies ensured that the WIP 2024 was a truly immersive learning experience for participants.

## Bilawal hails victory of Peoples Labor Union

F.P. Report

KARACHI/ISLAM-ABAD/LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed gratitude and termed the resounding victory of the Peoples Labor Union in the CBA elections of Port Qasim Authority (PQA) as a triumph for the workers associated with the Authority.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP congratulated the newly elected President of the Peoples Labor Union, Syed Lal Hussain Shah, General Secretary Sher Muhammad Baloch, and all other successful candidates. He also acknowledged the efforts of the President of the Peoples Labor Bureau (PLB), Habibuddin Junaidi, General Secretary Syed Fayaz Shah, and Karachi Division President Aslam Samoon for their contributions to the union's success in the Port Qasim Authority CBA elections.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari expressed hope that the newly elected office-bearers and members of the Peoples Labor Union would work with even greater zeal and commitment to empower the workers of the PQA. Addressing the workers of the PQA and laborers across the country, he reaffirmed that the Pakistan Peoples Party is the true representative of the working class and remains steadfast in its agenda to protect labor rights and promote their well-being without compromise.

## Punjab cabinet approves sending medicines to Parachinar

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired the 21st meeting of the provincial cabinet to discuss and decide on important agenda items.

The cabinet approved sending medicines and other goods on the request of people of Parachinar. The chief minister said, "A mobile healthcare unit will also be sent as per needs of the people of Parachinar." She directed the authorities concerned to send relief goods to the people of Parachinar as soon as possible. She added, "The people of Parachinar are our own people; we cannot leave them alone in trouble and difficulty."

The provincial cabinet congratulated the chief minister on her successful visit to China. She said that the extraordinary reception received by the delegation in China was a source of pride for the people of Punjab. She added that China developed by making 1.6 billion people its strength. She highlighted, "China's development is an example to be emulated, we too can achieve all that by working hard."

Maryam Nawaz said "not even a single piece of paper is seen lying in schools, hospitals and on roads of China." "The attitude of the Chinese people to recognise authority is worthy of imitation and there was an indescribable degree of harmony in the thoughts of Chinese people," she observed.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that she wish Punjab to develop like China every day. She added that Chinese investors were eager to invest in Punjab and despite holiday, the participation of representatives of large business organizations in the Punjab round table conference on Saturday was commendable. The Chief Minister said that representatives of 60 prominent and large Chinese companies expressed their willingness to invest in Punjab while China-Punjab Desk has been approved. "Cancer tumors can be eliminated with liquid nitrogen in a machine as big as an ultrasound while China's latest technique for cancer treatment eliminates the need for chemotherapy, she asserted.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that soon in a hospital in Punjab, a pilot project of Chinese cancer treatment technique will be started. She highlighted that PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif also appreciated the successful visit to China and said that he had not seen such a reception in 40 years.

## Annual parents' day ceremony held at Cadet College Pano Aqil

F.P. Report

SUKKUR: The 11th Annual Parents' Day ceremony was held today at Cadet College Pano Aqil with great enthusiasm. The Provincial Minister for Energy, Planning, and Development, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, attended the event as the Chief Guest. Sukkur Deputy Commissioner Dr. M.B. Raja Dharejo, Principal and Project Director Pano Aqil Cadet College Colonel (R) Saadatullah, Vice Principal Shafqat Shah, Principal Cadet College Ghotki Brigadier Animal Khan, Principal of Cadet College Khairpur Colonel Amir Hayat, faculty members, and a large number of parents were also present.

The Principal of the college, Colonel (R) Saadatullah, delivered the welcome address and presented the annual performance report of the institution. The Chief Guest, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, along with the college Principal, inspected the parade, during which cadets from Latif House, Z.A. Bhutto House, Bedil House, and Jinnah House displayed an impressive parade and saluted the Chief Guest.

A stunning gymnastics performance by the college cadets further highlighted the event. On the occasion, Provincial Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah distributed cash prizes and shields among cadets who excelled in academic and extracurricular activities. Latif House won the Champion House Trophy for the year 2024-25. Individual awards were



given to Cadet Muhammad Arsalan (Class 8), Cadet Ali Farhad (Matric), Cadet Mudassir Haider (First-Year Pre-Medical), and Cadet Abdul Razzaq (First-Year Pre-Engineering), while Cadet Murtaza received recognition for outstanding performance in sports. The Best Cadet of the Year award was won by Cadet Miraj Ahmed.

Later, the Chief Guest, accompanied by the Principal, visited the science exhibition and appreciated the innovative projects displayed by the cadets. He praised the cadets and faculty for their dedication to excellence in academics, discipline, and extracurricular activities.

Provincial Minister for Energy, Planning, and Development, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, while addressing said that Pakistan is on the path to improvement and will remain strong and steadfast. He

urged people not to heed on news circulating on social media. He added that Pakistan has recently hosted several international events, including SCO summits, attended by heads of state and high-level delegations. He emphasized that the world recognizes Pakistan's immense potential, which is why investment is now coming into the country.

He highlighted that the Parents' Day ceremony is a significant day for cadets' parents, as it reflects the hard work, dedication, and abilities of both the cadets and their families. Sharing his personal connection, he mentioned that his son was also a cadet, adding, "These cadets are the future of our country and will lead the nation forward." Mr. Shah said that the Sindh government is fully supporting all cadet colleges in the province to ensure that the new generation has access to quality education.

## نیلام عام

برخاس و عام کو بیچنے کے لیے ایک خاص قسم کی نیلامی ہے جس میں کچھ خاص چیزیں یا عمارتیں، زمینیں، گاڑیاں، یا دیگر اشیاء کو بیچنے کے لیے منظم طریقے سے پیش کیا جاتا ہے۔ یہ نیلامی عام طور پر حکومتی اداروں، نجی کمپنیوں، یا دیگر اداروں کے ذریعے کی جاتی ہے۔

نمبر شمار	مقام راشی	تعدادی رقم	تاریخ وقت نیلامی	سرکاری پولی (ساراند)	کال ڈیٹا ریٹ پری	مقام نیلامی	نوٹ راشی
1	دفتر راشی جی ایم کورنڈ چارسدہ	05-17	30.12.2024	7000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	زرگی
2	دفتر راشی شہباز گڑھی مردان	10-08	02.01.2025	17000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	ایٹیشن
3	دفتر راشی غزنی مردان	24-00		39000/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
4	دفتر راشی غزنی مردان	317-19		400,000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
5	دفتر راشی نجی رستم مردان	24-00		12000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
6	دفتر راشی نجی رستم مردان	73-00		78000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
7	دفتر راشی نجی رستم مردان	07-09		37500/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
8	دفتر راشی نجی رستم مردان	10-00		5000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
9	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	59-00		47700/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
10	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	80-00		243000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
11	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	163-14		502000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
12	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	153-10		230000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
13	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	03-00		90000/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
14	دفتر راشی ٹھات پور مردان	74-00		261000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
15	دفتر راشی قاسم پور مردان	12-00		31427/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
16	دفتر راشی قاسم پور مردان	84-04		276000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
17	دفتر راشی نیوہ موالی	09-16	06-01-2025	44740/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	زرگی
18	دفتر راشی نیوہ موالی	13-16		62000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
19	دفتر راشی نیوہ موالی	53-17		245000/- روپے	200000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
20	دفتر راشی نیوہ موالی	12-01		49715/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
21	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	13-10	09-1-2025	18000/- روپے	20500/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	ایٹیشن
22	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	21-07		23000/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
23	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	26-00		100000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	مزدور
24	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	10-19		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
25	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	05-05		9000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	فیروز زور
26	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	02-04		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
27	دفتر راشی گرامات دہرا شریف ادا کوٹ	15-03		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	فیروز زور
28	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	16-00		30000/- روپے	30000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	فیروز زور
29	دفتر راشی سوال	37-15		25000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
30	دفتر راشی سوال	20-15		6500/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
31	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	17-14		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	فیروز زور
32	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	10-10		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	فیروز زور
33	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	18-18		10000/- روپے	25000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
34	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	27-01		25000/- روپے	25000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
35	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	36-02		30000/- روپے	30000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
36	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	25-12		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	فیروز زور
37	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	25-00		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
38	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	09-18		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
39	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	19-17		15000/- روپے	15000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
40	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	36-18		30000/- روپے	30000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
41	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	47-18		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
42	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	19-13		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
43	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	54-16		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
44	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	29-19		25000/- روپے	25000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
45	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	20-01		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
46	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	61-19		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
47	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	16-12		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
48	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	17-00		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
49	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	20-01		20000/- روپے	20000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
50	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	55-02		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
51	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	41-18		30000/- روپے	30000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
52	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	145-18		100000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
53	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	17-00		10000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
54	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	769-14		50000/- روپے	50000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	فیروز زور
55	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	45-18		40000/- روپے	40000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
56	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	62-00	13-1-2025	100000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	مزدور
57	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	10-17		5000/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
58	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	05-17		2500/- روپے	10000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
59	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	113-00	14-01-2025	50000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن ڈی ڈی سی ماسکو	ایٹیشن
60	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	500-00		500000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن
61	دفتر راشی قلعہ آباد	59-13		61000/- روپے	100000/- روپے	ایٹیشن	ایٹیشن

ٹرانس: 1۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد میں زرگی قلعہ کیلئے ہوگا۔ اور مردہ پانچ سال کیلئے ہوگا۔ 2۔ محمد اوقاف کا کوئی بیٹا ملازم یا کارکنی مزید درشتدار ہوئی میں حصہ لینے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 3۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 4۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 5۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 6۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 7۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 8۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 9۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 10۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 11۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 12۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 13۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 14۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 15۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 16۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 17۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 18۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 19۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 20۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 21۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 22۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 23۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 24۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 25۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 26۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 27۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 28۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 29۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 30۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 31۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 32۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 33۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 34۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 35۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 36۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 37۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 38۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 39۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 40۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 41۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 42۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 43۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 44۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 45۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 46۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 47۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 48۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 49۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 50۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 51۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 52۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 53۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 54۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 55۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 56۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 57۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 58۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 59۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 60۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 61۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 62۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 63۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 64۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 65۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 66۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 67۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 68۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 69۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 70۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 71۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 72۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 73۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 74۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 75۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 76۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 77۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 78۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 79۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 80۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 81۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 82۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 83۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 84۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 85۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 86۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 87۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 88۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 89۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 90۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 91۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 92۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 93۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 94۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 95۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 96۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 97۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 98۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 99۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 100۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 101۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 102۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 103۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 104۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ آباد کیلئے کا مجاز نہ ہوگا۔ 105۔ زرگی راشی قلعہ 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PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Syed Fakhar Jihan talking to media during his visit to Arbab Niaz Stadium.

# Arbab Niaz Stadium to be completed by February 15

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Syed Fakhar Jihan has said that the construction work on Arbab Niaz Cricket Stadium in Peshawar will be completed by February 15, following its completion, the stadium will be available for Pakistan Super League (PSL) matches. He emphasized upon efforts to ensure PSL games are hosted in Peshawar.

He made these remarks during his visit to inspect the construction progress at the stadium where he was accompanied by Peshawar Zalmi Director and former test cricketer Mohammad Akram, DG Sports Abdul Nasir, Stadium Director Saleem Raza, engineers, and contractors.

Syed Fakhar Jihan stated that civil work at the stadium is being carried out in double shifts to meet the February deadline ensuring the stadium is ready for PSL matches next year.

He assured that funding issues will not hinder progress and expressed optimism that the work will be completed on time. When asked about security concerns the provincial minister said there are no security issues in the province highlighting the successful organization of several national-level events including a recent marathon race with participants from across the country. He also announced the hosting of a national polo event in January.

Peshawar Zalmi Director Mohammad Akram speaking to the media on the occasion, announced that PSL trials under the Peshawar Zalmi banner would begin on January 1 at the Arbab Niaz Cricket Stadium, attracting players from across Pakistan. He praised the stadium's construction saying it exceeded expectations and expressed hope that PSL matches would be held in Peshawar next year.

He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa players have made significant contributions to Pakistan cricket and emphasized that the people of the province deserve to watch live PSL matches in their hometown.

## Role of citizens in climate change mitigation

# One day seminar held at Abasin University

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: A one-day session on "The Role of Citizens in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" with the assistance of center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) and Individualland was held at Abasin University, Peshawar. The event was attended by Provincial Project Coordinator of CPDI Noor Alam Khan and Project Coordinator of Individualland Aziz Ahmad, as well as university students.

Speaking to the session, CPDI's climate change mitigation expert Saima William said that, like other countries in the region, Pakistan is also experiencing the clear impacts of climate change. These include glacier melting, rising temperatures, the presence of hazardous elements in the air, and flash floods. She emphasized that to address these impacts, all stakeholders - including the government, media, community, community based organizations, and youth - must play a collective role, as climate change affects everyone indiscriminately. She further stated that Pakistan can only tackle the impacts of climate change through the timely and active role of its citizens.

The session also included various practical activities aimed at enhancing students' capacity to deal with climate change. Students pledged to take steps in their daily lives, such as reducing the use of plastic, properly disposing of waste, planting trees, and ensuring their care.

While addressing the participants, CPDI Project Coordinator Noor Alam Khan, highlighted the crucial role of youth in dealing with the long-term effects of climate change. He stressed that everyone must take a personal interest in playing their role in this regard.

Project coordinator at Individualland, Aziz Ahmad, remarked that both urban and rural residents are equally affected by the adverse effects of climate change. He pointed out common issues such as extreme heat and cold, urban floods, and the extinction of wildlife species. He emphasized the urgent need to take serious action to address these impacts and to adopt safe and sustainable measures.

# 7 illegal medical centres sealed during crackdown on quacks

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration sealed seven illegal medical centres during a crackdown on quacks here on Kohat Road on Friday.

The crackdown is being launched in light of the directives of the provincial government issued under its public agenda.

Two gynae centres that were operating sans qualified gynecologists were also sealed.

The sealed centres not only operated without qualified doctors rather the environment inside them was insecure and unhealthy and could have posed severe threats to the lives of the patients.

The three other sealed medical centres were neither having any legal license nor their laboratories and pharmacies following the officially fixed standard operating procedures (SOPs).

These centres were also lacking appropriate arrangements for keeping surgical instruments and medicines and were illegally operating in the residential houses.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar has reiterated his resolve that the protection of health and lives of the people would be given top priority.

# Islamabad declaration: A milestone for democratic progress

**Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal**

Those nations can never face ruin that steadfastly adhere to the rope of Allah and remain united, avoiding divisions among themselves. This divine guidance found its most eloquent reflection recently in a remarkable and dignified building nestled in the serene hills of Margalla-the National Assembly of Pakistan. Within its grand chambers, a historic gathering unfolded under the guidance of the Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq. Demonstrating his unwavering commitment to family, parliamentary, and moral traditions, he united political leaders across the nation to forge a shared vision for Pakistan's future.

For three days, from December 18 to December 20, speakers from Pakistan's National and Provincial Assemblies, the Legislative Assemblies of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) set aside their political differences to deliberate on a collective roadmap. This unprecedented gathering was characterized by an atmosphere of mutual respect and an unyielding resolve to uphold democratic values. The discussions spanned a wide array of critical topics, including democracy, tolerance, human rights, and adherence to the Constitution of Pakistan. These meaningful exchanges culminated in the adoption of the Islamabad Declaration, a landmark document encapsulating their shared commitment and vision.

The Islamabad Declaration reflects an unwavering resolve to uphold the Constitution of Pakistan as the supreme law of the land. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring its effective implementation across all tiers of governance. The declaration outlines a commitment to accountability and transparency in legislative work, recognizing these as essential pillars for rebuilding public trust in democratic institutions. The participants reaffirmed their dedication to safeguarding parliamentary supremacy and addressing the pressing needs of the people through meaningful, issue-based interventions.

Central to the declaration is a renewed commitment to the principles of parliamentary democracy. It reiterates the time-honored dictum: "The Treasury may have its way, but the Opposition must have its say," emphasizing the need for constructive dialogue and mutual respect within legislative processes. By fostering a culture of civility, the declaration aims to counteract the divisive impact of populism, fake news, and social media slander, which have increasingly infiltrated political discourse and undermined the values of decency and respect.

The Islamabad Declaration also recognizes the pressing challenges of climate change, socio-economic inequality, and the evolving technological needs of the nation. It calls for comprehensive legislative and policy measures to address these issues, with a particular focus on sustainable development. The participants underscored the need for federal and provincial legislatures to collaborate effectively, promoting national cohesion and fostering solutions to shared challenges.

Parliamentary diplomacy emerged as a recurring theme throughout the discussions. The declaration highlights the critical role of diplomacy in advancing regional and international cooperation. It underscores the importance of fostering peace and connectivity as prerequisites for sustainable development. Additionally, it calls for the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions and demands an end to atrocities in Gaza, urging the international community to uphold justice and provide humanitarian assistance to the oppressed.

One of the most significant aspects of the declaration is its forward-looking vision for institutional reform. It advocates for the modernization of parliamentary operations through the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, to enhance efficiency, accessibility, and transparency. Recognizing the importance of financial accountability, the declaration proposes the establishment of the Association of Public Accounts Committees to strengthen oversight mechanisms across all legislatures.

The declaration also emphasizes the empowerment of youth and women, recognizing them as vital agents of change. It addresses pressing child-related issues, including polio, malnutrition, child labor, and child beggary, and calls for coordinated legislative and policy initiatives to address these challenges. The participants resolved to foster collaboration between parliamentary forums dedicated to women, children, youth, and sustainable development goals, creating synergies to achieve shared objectives.

A unique feature of the Islamabad Declaration is its emphasis on inter-legislature knowledge-sharing. The participants highlighted the need for capacity-building initiatives and resource-sharing to strengthen institutional performance across all legislatures. They pledged to adopt evidence-based legislative practices and conduct social audits of laws to ensure their effectiveness and relevance in addressing emerging challenges.

The declaration also recognizes the vital role of academia, media, civil society, and think tanks in shaping legislative processes. By engaging with these stakeholders, the legislatures aim to create a more inclusive and participatory governance framework. The transformation of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services into a center of excellence for legislative research and capacity-building is a key step in this direction. This initiative seeks to equip legislators with the knowledge and tools needed to address complex policy issues effectively.

The conference concluded with a spirit of unity and mutual respect, as participants resolved to uphold democratic values and constitutional principles. The Azad Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly graciously offered to host the next Speakers' Conference in 2025, underscoring the continuity of this collaborative effort. The Islamabad Declaration, adopted on December 20, 2024, stands as a testament to the collective resolve of Pakistan's legislative leaders to foster cooperation, innovation, and inclusivity.

This landmark gathering serves as a powerful reminder that unity, dialogue, and adherence to constitutional principles are the bedrock of a strong and progressive nation. By prioritizing the needs of the people and addressing critical challenges, the participants have set a precedent for future collaborations.

Their efforts have not only reinforced the foundations of parliamentary democracy but have also sent a resounding message of hope and resilience to the people of Pakistan and the international community.

The Islamabad Declaration is more than just a document; it is a beacon of hope and a roadmap for progress. It embodies the shared aspirations of a nation striving to overcome its challenges and build a brighter future.

Through their unity and determination, the custodians of Pakistan's legislatures have demonstrated that when political differences are set aside, and collective wisdom prevails, the possibilities for growth and development are boundless. This spirit of collaboration and mutual respect will undoubtedly continue to guide Pakistan on its journey toward becoming a more inclusive, equitable, and prosperous society.

# Kundi calls for swift relief measures for Kurram affectees

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday called for prompt relief measures for the affectees of Kurram district hoping that the provincial government would the indifference regarding the situation in Kurram.

He made these remarks during an online session with overseas Pakistanis on "Parachinar Humanitarian Relief," organized by Sehar International, Peace Network, and IMI International, said an official statement issued here.

The session included participants from the US, Canada, Dubai, Kuwait, Sharjah, London, Frankfurt, and other Central Asian and European countries.

Governor Kundi highlighted ongoing relief efforts in Kurram, stating that medicines are being provided, and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) is distributing food and essential items to internally displaced persons (IDPs) daily.

"Tents have been provided to the displaced families, but the role of NDMA has been disappointing, with only 75 tents sent.

He criticized the KP government saying that it remained criminally silent on Kurram's plight, not even offered prayers in the provincial assembly for the martyrs of Kurram," he deplored.

The governor emphasized the urgency of reopening blocked roads and urged the federal government to send utility store trucks to Kurram immediately after road access is restored to address food shortages and provide affordable supplies.

He thanked the session organizers, including Sehar International Chairman Allama Qaiser Abbas, IMI International Chairman Dr Wajid Rizvi, and social activist Mustahsin, acknowledging their efforts to support Pakistan from abroad.

"Your compassion and commitment to the oppressed people of Kurram are commendable," he added, calling for their continued collaboration.

The session concluded with a decision to form a relief committee under the governor's supervision, comprising representatives from the Governor's House, PRCS, and an Overseas Relief Committee.

This committee will accelerate relief efforts and ensure the provision of essential facilities in Kurram.

Participants and organizers praised Governor Kundi for his proactive role during this crisis, describing his efforts as exemplary and deeply appreciated.

The governor also announced plans to engage the Sindh government for additional support for Kurram's victims.

Meanwhile, under the directives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) for Merged Districts on Friday organized a medical camp at Bagan in Lower Kurram for the affectees.

The camp, conducted in collaboration with the district administration and District Health Lower and Central Kurram, provided free medical check-ups and medicines to patients.

Chairman of PRCS Merged Districts, Imran Wazir, stated that high-quality antibiotics for pneumonia prevention in children and top-grade allergy medicines were distributed at the camp.

The medical camp was supported by a team of specialists, including Dr Amjad Khan Pediatrician, Dr Jalal ENT Specialist, Dr Khalid Gul Medical Officer, Dr Waheed Medical Officer, and Dr Hasina Akbar Gynecologist. Assistant Commissioner Lower Kurram Hafeez Ullah also visited the camp.

A total of 1,002 outpatient cases were handled during the camp, benefiting residents of Bagan, Talo, Konj, Badshah Kot, and nearby areas.

# Transgender community hails their inclusion in drug free Peshawar drive

PESHAWAR (APP): The transgender community has hailed the offer of their inclusion in the ongoing Drug Free Peshawar Campaign for availing from the rehabilitation services.

In a press statement issued on Friday, President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter of Trans Action (Provincial Alliance of Transgender Community), Farzana Riaz termed the offer necessary and timely for providing an opportunity to drug addicted transgender for benefiting from the initiative.

The transgender community can benefit from the rehabilitation services by contacting district administration.

Provincial Minister for Social Welfare, Syed Qasim Ali Shah and Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud during a press briefing on Drug Free Peshawar Campaign agreed with the suggestion of making the initiative fully gender inclusive by providing rehabilitation services to the transgender community.

Apart of it, both Provincial Minister and Commissioner Peshawar also announced reservation of a separate gender specific section for transgender community in the upcoming phase of drug free campaign.

President Trans Action, Farzana Riaz said that she requested the concerned quarters for inclusion of transgenders' community in the third phase of the drug addiction-free Peshawar campaign. Like other segments of society, transgender community members are also getting drug addicted at a fast pace, Farzana warned.

Due to psychological stress, being disowned by family members, societal mistreatment, poverty and deprivation, the community members are inclined towards drug addiction, Farzana explained.

She also requested for ensuring the provision of necessary facilities to transgender during treatment while keeping in view the behavioural response of people with them.

She said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had recently announced the reservation of a separate room for the transgender community at every district headquarters hospital to encourage them to benefit from the government's supported public health schemes.

Similarly, in rehabilitation services, the privacy of transgender should also be confirmed to ensure availing of the service with peace of mind, she went on to say.

# Isotherm Inc. and UET to establish Pressure Equipment Training Center

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Isotherm Inc, Texas USA, a custom manufacturer of specialized heat exchangers, pressure vessels, and packaged systems for various industries and UET Peshawar are taking a significant step towards establishing a specialized Pressure Equipment Training Center at the Mechanical Engineering Department.

This collaboration, marked by the signing of a letter of agreement, aims to provide hands-on training to students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the field of Computer-Aided Design (CAD), with special applications in the oil and gas, industrial refrigeration, and energy sectors.

Dr. Zahid Ayub, the CEO of Isotherm Inc. and an alumnus of Mechanical Engineering Department of the 1971 session came up with a highly impactful and rewarding idea to give back to his alma mater.

His vision for setting up a center is to empower the region's talented youth by equipping them with the technical skills needed to thrive in these important industries.

He has set up an example for other alumni working in prominent companies or industries globally to collaborate with their alma mater in number of ways and reconnect with the faculty to foster stronger ties between the university and the professional world.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Shakoor from the Mechanical Engineering Department played a crucial role in setting the foundation and basis for the establishment of the training center under the leadership of Prof Dr Rizwan Gul Dean Faculty of Mechanical, Chemical and Industrial Engineering and Prof Dr. Hamid Ullah, Head of Department of Mechanical Engineering Department in outlining the framework for this initiative, which marks a significant achievement for the department.

This much-needed training center will serve as a major step towards providing students with technical skills the opportunity to learn CAD and advanced technical skills from international experts of Isotherm Inc.

This collaboration manifests an ideal example of academia and industry linkage, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and industry-driven experience. The training center will not only enhance the students' skills sets but also prepare them to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving global workforce.

In recognition of Dr. Zahid Ayub the university will honor him by placing his name on its Wall of Fame.

This prestigious gesture acknowledges his visionary efforts and significant impact, particularly his initiative to establish the Pressure Equipment Training Center at the university. The Wall of Fame at UET Peshawar serves as a symbol of appreciation for alumni and individuals who have made exemplary contributions to the university and society. The first batch of the center will commence from April 2024. Application forms are available online on <https://petc.pk/>.





## In brief

### Army holds free medical camp F.P. Report

MIR ALI: A free medical camp was organized by Pakistan Army in Tehsil Spinwam of North Waziristan. Medical teams comprising doctors, LHVs and other paramedical staff of District Health Office and District Headquarters Hospital carried out treatment of the patients. More than two hundred ninety patients were treated and provided medicines as per doctor's prescriptions free of cost. Gynecologist, surgeon, medical specialist, child specialist along with modern facilities like x-ray, ultrasound and lab tests were also provided in the free medical camp. The residents of the area thanked Pakistan Army for arranging free medical camps particularly in remote areas.

### Court fines car dealer, company

HYDERABAD (INP): A judge at Hyderabad Consumer Court has imposed Rs400,000 fine on Indus Motors, a car dealer and the relevant bank for their failure to deliver a car to its owner as per agreed schedule. According to details, Indus Motors, car dealer and the relevant bank were bound to deliver the car to Anjum Ahmed after collecting Rs41,00,000 full payment in February 2023. But all the relevant parties failed to deliver the car to the owner. The disheartened owner approached the consumer court praying for early delivery of his car. Consumer Court Munir Ahmad Magasi imposed a fine of Rs400,000 on the relevant bank, car company, dealer and also directed them to pay the victim profit as per the policy at the earliest.

### Kot Addu, Taunsa notified as districts

TAUNSA (INP): Two more districts have been notified in Dera Ghazi Khan Division resolutely total no of districts in the Division have reached five. According to an official notification, Kot Addu and Taunsa have been made new districts in DG Khan Division. Newly established Taunsa district comprised Tehsil Taunsa, Tehsil Wehova and Tehsil Koh-e-Suleman. While Tehsil Kot Addu and Tehsil Chowk Sarwar Shahed have been added in newly set up Kot Addu district. After new districts, District DG Khan will now have two Tehsils, Tehsil Dera Ghazi Khan and Tehsil Kot Chhata. Muzaffargarh district will now have three tehsils instead of five tehsils. Muzaffargarh district includes Muzaffargarh, Alipur Tehsil and Jatoti Tehsil.

### Husband, wife severely burnt F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: A man and his wife were severely injured in a powerful gas leak explosion at a house in Al-Shifa Colony of Hyderabad. According to rescue sources, the explosion occurred because the gas valve was left open. As a result, 27-year-old Waqas and his 26-year-old wife Anika were burned and injured. The Rescue 1122 rushed to the scene on information and shifted the injured to Hyderabad Civil Hospital for treatment. It is reported that the explosion was so intense that its sound was heard from a far distance. The explosion also caused one of the house's walls to collapse. Rescue sources told the media that the family had forgotten to close the gas valve. Roshan Chandio, the registrar of the Burns Ward at Civil Hospital Hyderabad said that fire victims Waqas and Anika had both suffered 40% burns on their bodies and were in critical condition.

# Four killed in road accidents and firing in Lower Dir

## F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Three youths were killed while two others were injured when a speedy car collided with a motorcycle at Tazagram area in the jurisdiction of Ouch police station here late on Thursday night, residents and police said.

They said the incident occurred late at 12:30 AM when some friends were returning home after attending a function. According to police Fahad Khan from Thana Malakand, Hazrat Umar from Sheringal Upper Dir and Azmat from Asbanr Adenzai were killed on the spot. The Rescue 1122 emergency team shifted the injured persons to the Chakdara hospital from where one of the injured youths was referred to Swat due to their critical condition. The Ouch police registered a case and started further investigations.

Similarly, a man identified as Syed Nawab 34 was killed while three others including Sardar 29, Fazal Wahab 30 and Amir Zaman 36 were injured in an armed clash between two groups at Mayar bazaar here on Friday, residents and Rescue 1122 officials said. They said the incident was related to an old enmity between the families of Malik Ayub Zarin and Malik Khan Badshah. They said the groups resorted to firing when they came across. The Rescue 1122 medical team rushed to the site and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital.

Meanwhile, three persons were injured when a car met with an accident at Siar Dara in the jurisdiction of Khall police station here on Friday. The Rescue 1122

recovery team shifted the injured to a nearby hospital and recovered the car. A man identified as Sultanat Khan 55 was injured when he was hit by a motorcycle at Tarai bypass road here on Friday. The injured man was shifted to the DHQ hospital Timergara.

**Breastfeeding importance:** Experts in a seminar stressed upon mothers to regularly breastfeed their newborns at least up to two years as breastfeeding protects them from various infectious diseases. The Lower Dir health department in collaboration with the Unicef and World Food Programme organized a seminar for religious scholars, media persons and community leaders at Timergara here the other day to create public awareness regarding the importance of breastfeeding.

District health officer Lower Dir Dr Muhammad Nisar, coordinator Benazir Nashunoma Programme Afaq Adil, Unicef divisional coordinator Ahmad Ali, nutrition coordinator Zarin Khan, social activist Izharul Haq Durrani, Maulana Hameedullah, Maulana Abdul Basir and others spoke on the occasion. The speakers asked prayer leaders and media representatives to play their active role in making the public aware about breastfeeding.

They said that two years of breastfeeding was vital for infants' physical and mental health. The experts said that nothing could be an alternative to breastfeeding. They were of the view that breastfeeding protected the newborn of several infectious diseases. They also insisted that mothers should also take a balanced diet for their children.

health. Later the participants also participated in an awareness walk in the city.

Meanwhile, talking to local journalists, DHO Dr Muhammad Nisar said that the installation of biometric attendance of staff at all the 72 health facilities in the Lower Dir had been completed. The DHO said that there was no room for ghost employees and strict action would be taken against the habitual absent staff. Dr Nisar said that health units had been provided with 62 types of medicines worth millions of rupees.

**AIOU regional director assumes charges of duties in Dir:** The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) regional director Shahid Orakzai assumed the charge of his duties at Timergara here on Friday. The office staff, AIOU coordinators and its tutors warmly received him on his arrival at the office.

Speaking on the occasion, Shahid Orakzai said that all staff were like the same family and they would collectively deliver the message of Allama Iqbal Open University to every student. He said the AIOU would make every effort to register as many students as possible. He said that tutors were also part of this family and they would also try to impart education. The official said the AIOU staff would not only register students but would also ensure their guidance and counselling. He said that those tutors would be encouraged who assisted the varsity achieving its goal. He urged the coordinators and tutors to join hands with him and help him spread the light of knowledge. He said that in the Timergara region, only merit would prevail.



HYDERABAD: Brides stand on stage during a mass marriage ceremony.

## Father of five girls dies of police torture

SILAKOT (INP): A father of five daughters died due to severe physical torture by police at Saddar Police Station in Sialkot. According to details, the deceased who was identified as Haji Faryad was in police custody since December 2, 2024. The man was a resident of village Sohwal.

Soon after receiving the report, senior police officials immediately suspended SHO Ikram Shahbaz and also issued charge-sheet against him. Police also registered a case against him under Section 302 and started investigation.

Earlier in August 2024, the Lahore High Court (LHC) ruled that it was the responsibility of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to investigate the allegations of torture, rape and murder in police custody. In a 19-page verdict on the petition filed by Zubaida Qureshi against custodial torture, Justice Tariq Salim Sheikh wrote that Pakistan had signed the United Nations (UN) convention on torture and inhuman treatment in 2010. "And it was because of that that a bill against custodial torture was passed in Pakistan in 2022," the judge said, adding in the same year the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPC) was assigned the task to ensure that there was no partiality in the application of the law.

## Three persons killed in firing F.P. Report

LODHARAN: Three persons were killed while two others sustained injuries due to firing between two groups near Shah Pur Wali Pattan Kahrpur Pacca last night.

The two groups started quarrelling over grazing goats in wheat crop near Shah Pur Wali Pattan Kahrpur Pacca area. As a result, two persons died on the spot with bullet fire while three sustained serious injuries.

Upon receiving the information, Rescue teams rushed to the spot, shifted the injured to Tehsil headquarters Hospital (THQ) Kahrpur Pacca where one other victim succumbed to injuries.

# Intra-schools sports Gala concluded

## F.P. Report

BUNER: Intra-schools district Sports Gala concluded at Sentinel Model High School in Daggar. Chairman Swat Education Board Tasbiullah, PA Sardar Ali, In-charge District Sports Gala Nasrullah Zeb and District Education Officer Umar Farooq distributed trophies and prizes among the position holders of public and private schools.

A large number of principals, teachers, players and students of government and private schools participated in the ceremony. The chief guest of the ceremony told the media that hundreds of government and private schools thousands students participated in various

sports and speeches and demonstrated their skills in a peaceful manner and received praise and trophies and prizes in this grand closing ceremony proved their talents.

On the occasion, Nasrullah Zeb said that he is grateful to Allah for the peaceful conduct of the month-long co-curricular activities and the achievements at the district to division level and is proud of the cooperation of the students, teachers and parents for this dedication. He said that 3250 players from 86 public and 32 private schools participated in this sports gala and thousands of teachers, students and parents watched and appreciated their games.

DEO Umar Farooq said that the public and private schools organized a joint sports gala and the students showed their ability and the teachers gave better training while the parents supported, for which all the applause are deserved. He praised the administrative skills of the management committee, especially the leadership skills of sports secretary Nasrullah Zeb.

The famous poet and writer Mohsin Iqbal gathered everyone on the stage and at the end, he presented such poems that the ceremony was full of happiness and slogans. The event ended with a bang and Sports Secretary Nasrullah Zeb sent everyone away with respect.

# Residents hold protest against shedding

## Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: The residents of Nowshera protested against unscheduled and prolonged load shedding of electricity and gas in the district. The protesters, including leaders of various political parties, social and religious organizations and traders, have demanded that the government take immediate action to end the load shedding.

In a joint statement of former MNA and Vice Chancellor of Darul Uloom Haqqania, Akora Khattak, Maulana Hamid ul Haq,

former District General Secretary of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Fazal, Maulana Mufti Hakim Ali Haqqani, social and political activist Muhammad Waleed Akhtar, Jamaat-e-Islami District Amir, Haji Inayat ur Rahman, Qaumi Watan Party District Chairman, Wali ur Rahman, Awami National Party leader, Engineer Hamid Ali Khan, Jamiat Business Forum Provincial President, Alhaj Perviz Khattak, and former Deputy General Secretary of Anjuman Tajran Nowshera, Muhammad Nadeem, have said that the

unscheduled and excessive load shedding of electricity and gas has made the lives of the people of Nowshera miserable.

They said that the electricity and gas departments are collecting billions of rupees from the consumers, but the supply of electricity and gas is like a medicine, which is given to the people in limited doses. They said that the load shedding has paralyzed the business and social life of the people, and the students are forced to go to schools and colleges without breakfast due to the gas load shedding.

# PPC delegation visits Mardan press club

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Senior Journalist and President Peshawar Press Club Arshad Aziz Malik visited Mardan Press Club. He was accompanied by senior journalist and former president M. Riaz, on Friday.

On reaching Mardan Press Club, President M. Bashir Adil welcomed him along with cabinet members. Arshad Aziz Malik along with the delegation

inspected various offices, auditorium, conference room and other parts of the Press Club, President Press Club briefed them regarding the activities of the club. In his address to the journalists, Arshad Aziz Malik said that journalism is a sacred profession and regional journalists are performing their duties as a mission despite the lack of service, which is commendable.

The president said that the regional journalists are

performing their professional duties as Jihad without compensation and have dedicated their entire lives to public service. He said that he will continue to play his full role to make the government aware of the problems of journalists.

Former president of Press Club Peshawar M. Riaz said that he will continue to try to eliminate small differences among the journalists of the province.

# Welcoming winter: Snowfall attracts tourists to N Pakistan

SWAT (APP): As December arrives, northern Pakistan transforms into a winter wonderland, captivating snow lovers and adventure tourists alike, enjoying pleasant change in weather. The snow-covered mountains and landscapes in Murree, Nathiagali, Ayubia, Swat, Kaghan, Naran and adjacent areas offer perfect opportunities for families and adventure snow sports enthusiasts to enjoy moderate to heavy snowfall during winters.

Upstream from these areas, stand tall Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Himalayan mountains ranges, blessed with stunning natural beauty and known for their snow covered peaks, picturesque landscapes and thrilling winter sports. If popular snowfall resorts like Murree and Nathiagali offer family-friendly tourism, Naran, Kaghan, and Ayubia boast exhilarating activities like chairlift rides, skiing and snowboarding, drawing adventurers in droves from across the country.

For those seeking more unique winter snowfall experi-

ences, the valleys of Hunza, Skardu, Naltar, Chitral, and Swat offer beautiful snow-covered peaks and numerous opportunities for enjoying nature's bounties and snow sports. Swat, often referred to as "Switzerland of Pakistan," has become an increasingly popular winter sports destinations, especially for skiing.

The valley's Malam Jabba is a snow-covered snowfall paradise, known for its mesmerizing beauty with an average snowfall of around 10 feet annually. Malam Jabba is also considered one of Pakistan's premier skiing destinations for skiing lovers. "Skiing history of Malam Jabba dates back to 1962 when the first skiing competition was held there," informed Tashfeen Haider, Director General (DG), KP Culture and Tourism Authority.

"The area has earned international recognition as a leading skiing destination in South Asia, especially after the establishment of a skiing resort in 1988. Today, it offers world-class skiing and snowboarding facilities,

making it a must-visit for snow sports lovers." Beyond skiing, Swat's natural attractions like ancient Gandhara civilization and pristine snow covered mountainous landscapes, contribute to its appeal. The valley is also home to a range of adventure sports including river rafting and fishing, with the famous trout fish of Swat offering a unique taste.

Malam Jabba skiing resort and adjacent Kalam, Mankial and Flaksair offer breathtaking backdrops for winter sports. The skiing season here typically lasts from December to March, attracting thousands of visitors. The resort's chairlift, one of the longest in Pakistan, provides sweeping views of the surrounding snow-blanketed mountains.

As they wait rest of year, the tourists from different parts of country rush to these destinations even with the first snow fall to enjoy captivating scenery and mountain tops, sample Swat's famous trout fish and take part in winter sports. "I love snowfall. I travelled to Swat valley to experience its winter

charm," said Nasir Khan, a property dealer from Peshawar.

"Travelling to nearby peaks on snowy tracks is an unforgettable thrill. Brown trout fish and skiing are excellent and priceless." As monsoon and snow fall occasionally damage travel routes in region, Nasir Khan urges authorities to take care of these routes during months from August to November to ease out tourists travelling difficulties. "Sometimes, pathetic roads conditions spoil enjoyment mood even becoming dangerous at multiple spots."

As he focuses overall situation, Nasir Khan stated, "If condition of roads leading to snowfall destinations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is improved besides curtailing hotel charges and providing other facilities, Swat can be turned into winter tourism capital of Pakistan." Manzoorul Haq, former ambassador said he visited many countries but Swat's unique features were hardly seen anywhere the world. "Its natural beauty and traces of Gandhara civilization, make Swat a popular terminus

for tourists and adventure sportsmen."

"If snow-covered peaks of Falaksair and Elum offer thrill for mountaineers and trekkers, Swat's rich archaeological history with its ancient artifacts is less to none in its fascinating beauty. Saidul Sharif Museum is another feather in Swat's cap and a source of indulgence for history lovers," Manzoor said. As winter tourism is also a source of revenue generation for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the KP Tourism Department is working on different projects to fully exploit its potential.

"Winter gala and first-ever sports rafting event at River Swat are some of the exciting events being planned," informed DG Culture and Tourism Authority Tasfeen Haider. "Besides Kalam and Malam Jabba, new tourist areas like Sola Tanar, Puchar and Jargo valley are being developed to reduce congestion at popular places."

He said the provincial government is also focusing on environmental preservation

by setting up camping pods at new tourist destinations and planning road developments including construction of Mankyal-Bada Sarai road to ease access to snow destinations. Tasfeen also mentioned to plans to build jeep tracks, tourist facilitation centers and construction of roads to facilitate tourists. "An Integrated Tourism Zone with modern facilities for tourists would be established at Mankyal, Swat under the KITE project as we have also planned feasibility studies for a mega project to identify new tourist spots."

"For added convenience and safety, a tourism police force has been deployed across key tourist spots in Swat, Naran and Kaghan to assist visitors and ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience," he said. As winter comes to full swing, northern Pakistan once again offers captivating scenic beauty and thrills for nature lovers with its snowy landscapes, adventure sports and rich cultural heritage, making it a must visit place.





# I should have invaded Ukraine earlier: Putin

MOSCOW (BBC): Russian President Vladimir Putin has said Russia should have launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine earlier and been better prepared for the war.

In his end-of-year press conference, Putin said with hindsight there should have been "systemic preparation" for the 2022 invasion, which he refers to as a "special military operation". Russia seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and pro-Russian forces began a conflict in eastern Ukraine, but it was eight years later that Putin tried to seize Kyiv.

During his four-hour long appearance, Putin also talked about Syria's deposed leader, Russia's more aggressive nuclear doctrine as well as domestic issues. Billed as "Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin", the event was broadcast live across the main state TV channels. Putin appeared in front of a large blue screen emblazoned with a map of the Russian Federation, complete with annexed parts of Ukraine.

He took questions from members of the public, foreign journalists and pensioners - but it was a highly choreographed and tightly controlled affair. When asked at the end by the BBC's Moscow correspondent Steve Rosenberg whether he felt the country was in a better state than where his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, had left it 25 years ago, Putin said Russia had regained its "sovereignty". "With everything that was happening to Russia before that, we were heading towards a complete, total loss of our sovereignty."

Asked about the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, Putin insisted it was not a defeat for the Kremlin - which supported President

Bashar al-Assad militarily for years - but he admitted the situation was "complicated". He said he had not yet spoken to ousted Syrian leader, who fled to Moscow as rebel forces closed in on Damascus earlier this month, but planned to do so soon.

He added that Russia was in talks with Syria's new rulers to retain two strategically important military bases on the Mediterranean coast and that Moscow would consider using them for humanitarian purposes. On US President-elect Donald Trump, Putin said the pair had not spoken in four years, but he was ready to meet him "if he wants it".

When put to him he was in a weak position compared to Trump, who is set to take office in January, Putin quoted American writer Mark Twain: "The rumours of my death are much exaggerated," prompting a smattering of laughs in the conference hall. Moving on to China, Putin said Russia's relations with its eastern neighbour had reached an all-time high and the two countries were coordinating actions on the world stage.

"In the last decade, the level and quality of our [Russia-China] relations have reached a point that has never existed throughout our entire history," he said. A lengthy portion of the session was focused on the war in Ukraine, with Putin saying he was "open to compromises" to end the war - although it was unclear what such compromises could entail. Russian forces are making progress on the frontlines "everyday", he said, describing his troops as "heroes".

At one point, he produced a signed flag he said

was given to him by Russian marines who were "fighting for the motherland" in the Kursk region, and ushered two observers to hold it behind him for the cameras. He also talked up Russia's construction projects in areas it has seized from Ukraine, claiming the standard of roads in the Ukrainian region of Luhansk had greatly improved since it was seized by Russia-backed forces in 2014. When asked by an audience member if the West had "received the message" on Russia's change to its nuclear doctrine, which Putin pushed through in November, he said "you'll have to ask them." The new nuclear doctrine allows Russia to conduct a nuclear strike on any country, if it is backed by a nuclear power.

That means if Ukraine were to launch a large attack on Russia with conventional missiles, drones or aircraft, that could meet the criteria for a nuclear response, as could an attack on Belarus or any critical threat to Russia's sovereignty. Putin also emphasised the capabilities of Russia's new intermediate-range ballistic missile, Oreshnik, which was used in a strike on Ukraine in November.

In order to test its power, he suggested Russia should fire the Oreshnik towards Ukraine, and Ukrainian air defence - using US-supplied systems - should try to bring it down. As for the name "Oreshnik"? "Honestly," Putin said with a smirk, "No idea. No clue." A dominant theme throughout the event was "Russian sovereignty", with Putin claiming that less reliance on international partners - partly a result of Western sanctions - was one of the key achievements of his invasion of Ukraine.

## Arms control is thing of the past, Russia's top general says

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia now views arms control over the vast nuclear arsenals that were built up during the Cold War to be a thing of the past due to the lack of trust between Moscow and the West, Russia's top general said.

Russia and the United States, by far the biggest nuclear powers, have both expressed regret about the disintegration of the tangle of arms control treaties which sought to slow the arms race and reduce the risk of nuclear war.

Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov accused the United States of stoking conflicts across the world and sinking key Cold War arms control treaties. He said Russia, in response, would develop ties with China, India, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela. "On the whole, the topic of arms control remains in the past, since a return to a minimum level of trust is impossible today due to the double standards of the West," Gerasimov was quoted as saying by the defence ministry.

"Without trust, it is impossible to create an effective mechanism for mutual control," he said. "Many countries have begun to think about adequate response measures." The United States, which casts Russia and China as the biggest nation-state threats to the West, blames Russia for the collapse of agreements such as the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

The United States formally withdrew from the INF Treaty in 2019, citing Russian violations which Moscow denied. The United States withdrew from the ABM treaty in 2002. President Vladimir Putin in 2023 suspended Russian participation in the New START treaty that limits both sides' strategic nuclear weapons, blaming US support for Ukraine. However, Moscow has kept to the warhead, missile and bomber limits imposed by the agreement - as has the United States.

Gerasimov said that the deployment of US missiles in Europe and Asia was stoking "a strategic offensive arms race", with a build-up of US forces in the Philippines of particular concern to Russia. He said Russia had seen increased activity by the US-led NATO military alliance near Russia's borders. After Ukraine struck Russian territory last month with long-range missiles supplied by the United States, the US had become a direct participant in the conflict in Ukraine, the general added.

He said Russia had seen increased activity by the US-led NATO military alliance near Russia's borders. After Ukraine struck Russian territory last month with long-range missiles supplied by the United States, the US had become a direct participant in the conflict in Ukraine, the general added.



GAZA: Women and children were among victims of Israeli forces air raids, were taken to al-Ahli Arab Hospital.

## Guns and defense training surge in Finland

KERAVA, Finland (AP): Unsettled by Russia's expansionism and emboldened by its recent accession to NATO, Finland is rallying to strengthen its national self-defense beyond its traditional military capabilities.

The popularity of weapons training in the Nordic country has soared in recent months. Few places tell the story of the rise in Finnish affinity for self-defense more than shooting ranges that are riding a boom of interest. Russian President Vladimir Putin's order for a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine - another big Russian neighbor - in February 2022 continues to resonate in many Finnish minds, and partially explains the ballistics binge.

The Vantaa Reservist Association, which operates a gun range in a warehouse once used to make sex toys, in Kerava, north of Helsinki, has more than doubled its membership over the last two years and now counts over 2,100 members. "They have something in the back of their head ringing that this is the skill I have to learn now," said association chairman Antti Kettunen, standing among bullet-riddled targets. "I think that the wind has changed, now it's blowing from the east."

Earlier this year, the coalition government announced plans to open more than 300 new ranges - a big jump from the 670 in operation today. Authorities are encouraging citizens to take up interest in national defense

in the country with a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia, where firing shots in ice hockey has been more of a pastime than shooting bullets.

"Interest in national defense is traditionally very high in Finland and especially these days with the Russian aggression on Ukraine, the interest has risen even more," lawmaker Jukka Kopra, who chairs Finland's defense committee, told AP earlier in December. Inspired largely by concerns over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Finland became the 31st member of the NATO military alliance last year. Western neighbor Sweden followed suit in March. The two countries last month announced plans to boost their civil defense strategies, without mentioning Russia by name.

The surge in self-defense strategies doesn't stop at shooting ranges. The National Defense Training Association says it has hosted a collective total of 120,000 training days this year, more than double the number three years ago. The national reservists' association, which is about 90% composed of military reservists but also some hobbyists, has grown by more than two-thirds to over 50,000 members since the invasion of Ukraine.

And unlike some other European countries, Finland has kept around 50,000 Cold-War era civil defense shelters, which could accommodate roughly 85% of the population of

about 5.5 million people. "This is the new era of civil defense shelters, which is against the newest developments of war," said Tomi Rask, of Helsinki Rescue Services, during a recent tour of one shelter in the capital. "We know that all of our neighbors have the capability of harming us, of harming our citizens, and we think that we need to prepare."

Wearing camouflage at the range in Kerava, military reservists and firearm hobbyists bob and weave their way through an obstacle course, at times opening fire with deafening Glock handguns against human-shaped targets. "Some people do this just for fun," said member Miikka Kallio, a 38-year-old firefighter. "Some (do) maybe because of our eastern neighbor: I've heard comments that they've joined the reservists because of the Russian attack (on Ukraine)."

Finland is no stranger to tensions with Russia and a big part of the country's national identity was forged battling its eastern neighbor - gaining independence from the Russian empire in 1917 and then fending off a large Soviet force with its tiny, ill-equipped army in what became known as the Winter War at the start of the Second World War. Kettunen said learning to shoot guns is a bit like learning to swim: Both require training and preparation. "When you need to know how to shoot or swim, and you don't, it's too late," he said.

## Corruption may have disrupted Chinese military modernization goals

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Corruption in China's military may have disrupted its progress towards its 2027 military modernization goals, the Pentagon said in its annual report on Beijing's military that was released. Since last year, China's military has undergone a sweeping anti-corruption purge and last month the defense ministry said a top-ranking military official had been suspended and was under investigation for "serious violations of discipline."

The wide-ranging Pentagon report said that between July and December 2023, at least 15 high-ranking Chinese military offi-

cers and defense industry executives were removed from their posts. "In 2023, the PLA experienced a new wave of corruption-related investigations and removals of senior leaders which may have disrupted its progress toward stated 2027 modernization goals," the report said, using an acronym for the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

US officials, including the head of the Central Intelligence Agency, have said that Chinese President Xi Jinping had ordered his military to be ready to conduct an invasion of Taiwan by 2027. China's official 2027 modernization goals include accelerating the

integration of intelligence, mechanization and other tools while boosting the speed of modernization in military theories, personnel, weapons and equipment, the Pentagon said.

China's foreign ministry described the report as "irresponsible" and called it an excuse by the US to maintain its military hegemony. "The US report, like previous similar reports, ignores facts, is full of bias," ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said at a news briefing, urging the US to stop issuing such reports but instead take practical actions to maintain the stability of China-US military relations. The removal of

the 15 senior officials was likely the "tip of the iceberg," Ely Ratner, US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, told a Washington think tank after the report's release. China's leadership would not be taking such extreme anti-corruption measures unless they felt the PLA's operational effectiveness was being impacted, he said.

"I don't think this is just ... some guys are taking some money and putting it in their pocket, or maybe their banquets, they're buying too expensive whiskey," Ratner said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

## Non-Syrian Kurdish fighters to leave

HASAKAH, Syria (Reuters): Kurdish fighters who came to Syria from around the Middle East to support Syrian Kurdish forces will leave if a total ceasefire is reached in the conflict with Turkey in northern Syria, the commander of Syrian Kurdish-led forces told Reuters.

The withdrawal of non-Syrian Kurdish fighters is one of the major demands of neighbouring Turkey, which deems Syria's dominant Kurdish groups a national security threat and is backing a new military campaign against them in the north. Hostilities have escalated since Bashar al-Assad was toppled less than two weeks ago, with Turkey and Syrian armed groups it backs seizing the city of Manbij from the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)

on Dec. 9.

SDF commander Mazloum Abdi's comments mark the first time he has confirmed that non-Syrian Kurdish fighters, including members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), have come to Syria to support his forces during the Syrian conflict. Turkey, the United States, and other countries deem the PKK a terrorist group. Ankara views the main Syrian Kurdish factions as an extension of the PKK. Abdi said that while PKK fighters had come to Syria, the SDF has no organisational ties to the group.

He credited the non-Syrian fighters with helping the US-backed SDF battle Islamic State over the last decade. He said that while some of them had returned home over the years, others had stayed to help fight

Islamic State, and that it would be time for them to go home if a ceasefire was reached. "There is a different situation in Syria, we are now starting a political stage. Syrians must solve their problems themselves and establish a new administration," he said.

"We are now preparing, after a total ceasefire between us and the Turkish forces and their affiliated factions, to join this stage," he said. "Because there are new developments in Syria, it is time for the fighters who helped us in our war to return to their areas with their heads held high," he added. The United States, which views the SDF as a key partner in countering Islamic State, has been mediating to stop fighting between Turkey and the Syrian Arab groups it supports, and the SDF.

## Don't underestimate N Korean troops in Russia, ex-soldiers tell BBC

SEOUL (BBC): What Haneul remembers most about his time in the North Korean military is the gnawing, continuous hunger. He lost 10kg in his first month of service, due to a diet of cracked corn and mouldy cabbage.

Three months into training, he says almost his entire battalion was severely malnourished and needed to be sent to a recovery centre to gain weight. When they were later deployed as frontline guards to the border with South Korea, rice replaced corn. But by the time it reached their bowls, much had been siphoned off by rear units, and the remainder had been cut with sand.

Haneul says his unit was among the best-fed, a tactic to stop them defecting to South Korea. But it failed to prevent Haneul. In 2012, he made a death-defying dash across the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) - the strip of land dividing the North from the South. His experience and that of other military defectors helps shed light on the condition of thousands of North Korean troops deployed to the frontline in Russia's war against Ukraine.

Pyeongyang has reportedly sent around 11,000 troops to help Russian forces reclaim part of its Kursk region taken by Ukraine in a surprise summer offensive. Earlier this week, Seoul, Washington and Kyiv said the soldiers had now entered the fight "in significant numbers", and reported the first casualties, with South Korean officials estimating more than 100 had already been killed and more injured. This figure has not been con-

firmed.

However, defectors and other military experts have told the BBC these troops should not be underestimated. According to South Korean intelligence, most belong to the elite Storm Corps unit, and have "high morale", but "lack an understanding of contemporary warfare". Only the taller, sportier men are selected for the Storm Corps, says defector Lee Hyun Seung, who trained North Korea's special forces in the early 2000s before defecting in 2014. He taught them martial arts, how to throw knives and make weapons out of cutlery and other kitchen utensils.

But even though the Storm Corps' training is more advanced than that of regular North Korean units, the soldiers are still underfed and even malnourished. Online videos, reportedly of the troops in Russia, show younger, "frail" soldiers, Haneul says. They are a stark contrast to Pyongyang's propaganda videos, where men are seen bursting out of iron chains and smashing blocks of ice with their bare hands. During his entire time in the army, Haneul says he fired only three bullets in a single live-fire training session. The closest he came to combat was when a hungry farmer stumbled into the DMZ looking for vegetables. Haneul says he ignored instructions to "shoot any intruders" and let the man go with a warning.

It is difficult to know how much has changed in the decade since Haneul defected, given the scarcity of information from North Korea. It appears that the country's leader Kim

Jong Un has directed much of his limited resources into missiles and nuclear weapons rather than his standing army. But according to another soldier, Ryu Seonghyun, who defected in 2019, the first three years in the military are "incredibly tough", even for the special forces. The 28-year-old, who worked as a driver in the air force for seven years, says that during his service, conditions deteriorated and rice gradually disappeared from meals. "The soldiers are sent into the mountains for days with a small amount of rice, and are told it is part of their survival training."

Given these troops have been trained to fight in the mountainous Korean Peninsula, the defectors question how well they will adapt to fighting on the flatlands and in the trenches of Kursk. Crucially, the Storm Corps are not a frontline unit. "Their mission is to infiltrate enemy lines and create chaos deep within enemy territory," Ryu says. But, he adds, Kim Jong Un has no alternative to sending special forces, as regular soldiers spend most of their time farming, building or chopping wood.

"Kim Jong Un had to send men who could demonstrate at least a certain level of combat ability, to avoid damaging North Korea's reputation in Russia." The language barrier seems to have created an additional hurdle. Ukraine's defence intelligence unit said communication issues had resulted in North Korean soldiers accidentally firing on a Russian battalion, killing eight. With these assessments, it could be easy to dismiss the troops as "cannon fodder"

and a sign of Russian President Vladimir Putin's desperation. But that would be a mistake, the defectors say. Their loyalty to the regime and fighting spirit will count for a lot. "Most of the soldiers in the Storm Corps come from working-class or farming families, who are highly obedient to the party and will follow orders unquestionably," says Haneul, whose father and cousin were in the special forces.

Intense, ideological "brainwashing" sessions, held every morning, will further ensure they are mentally ready, Lee adds. He believes the North Korean troops "will become accustomed to the battlefield, learn how to fight the enemy, and find ways to survive". Although the soldiers will not have been given a choice over whether to be deployed, Ryu thinks many will have wanted to go. The ambitious will see it as an opportunity to advance their careers, he says. And given how tough it is to serve in North Korea, some will have relished the chance to experience life abroad for the first time.

"I think they'll be more willing to fight than Russian troops," he adds, admitting that in their situation, he too would have wanted to be sent. Chun In-bum, a former commander of South Korea's special forces, agrees with the defectors' appraisals. "Just because they lack food and training, does not mean they are incapable. They will acclimatise quickly. We should not underestimate them." While 11,000 troops are unlikely to turn the tide of such an attritional war - it is estimated Russia is suffering more than a thousand casualties a day

- experts and officials believe this could be just the first tranche, with Pyongyang potentially able to send up to 60,000 or even 100,000 if they are rotated.

In these numbers, Mr Chun believes they could end up being effective. Also, Kim Jong Un will be able to shoulder big losses without affecting the stability of his regime, the former soldiers say. "Those who have been sent will be men without influence or connections - to put it bluntly, those who can be sacrificed without issue," Haneul says. He remembers being shocked to learn there were no children of high-ranking parents in his frontline unit: "That's when I realised we were expendable." He does not expect much resistance from the families of the deceased, whose sons, he says, will be honoured as heroes.

"There are countless parents who have lost a child after sending them to the military," he adds, recalling his second cousin who died. His aunt received a certificate, praising her son for his heroic contribution. The loyalty of the soldiers and their families could blunt Ukrainian and South Korean hopes that many will simply defect once they enter the fight. Kyiv and Seoul have discussed conducting psychological operations along the frontline to encourage the men to surrender. But it seems they do not have access to mobile phones. According to Ukrainian intelligence, even Russian soldiers' phones are seized before they encounter North Korean troops. So, possible infiltration strategies include broadcasting messages

through loudspeakers or using drones to drop leaflets.

Both Ryu and Haneul decided to defect after reading anti-regime propaganda sent across the border from South Korea. But they are doubtful this would work so far from home. They say it takes a long time to build up the desire and courage to defect. Furthermore, Haneul suspects the officers will have been ordered to shoot anyone who attempts to flee. He remembers his comrades opening fire as he made his daring sprint across the DMZ. "Twelve bullets flew just a metre over my head," he says.

Even capturing the North Korean troops may prove challenging for Ukraine. In the North, being a prisoner of war is considered extremely shameful and worse than death. Instead, soldiers are taught to take their own lives, by shooting themselves or detonating a grenade. Ryu recalls a famous military song entitled Save the Last Bullet. "They tell you to save two bullets, one to shoot the enemy and one to shoot yourself."

Nevertheless, the former special forces trainer Lee is determined to help. He has offered to go to the frontline to communicate directly with the soldiers. "It's unlikely they will defect in large numbers, but we have to try. Hearing familiar voices like mine, and others from North Korea, might impact their psychology," he says. Haneul just hopes they get home to North Korea. He knows there is a chance some of his relatives are among the troops sent to help Russia. "I just hope they make it through and return safely."



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## We must stand up to hijab bans

GROWING up I had to avoid exercise and could not participate in sport. I had eczema, and any exertion caused a painful flare-up. But in university, I decided to try to break this cycle and signed up for various sport classes. Beginning with badminton and archery, I gradually found myself connecting more closely to my body, learning to listen and take care of it. Eventually, I was brave enough to consider a contact sport. I wanted to train in English boxing, but when I tried to sign up for it, the coach turned me down. His reason: my turban.

I never made it to the ring but was drawn into a fight anyway: a fight for my rights as a woman and as a Muslim to be fully recognised as human and be free from discrimination. I wear a turban for reasons that should not concern anyone except myself. The turban and other forms of headwear such as a "headscarf" or "hijab" have always been part of my sport outfit and are fully in line with hygiene and safety rules.

I thought perhaps going for another sport would solve the problem, but it didn't. I joined a volleyball club and applied to take part in amateur competitions. But soon after I had filled in the forms, the coach took me aside and informed me that the referee had told her I would be allowed to train but could not join the team or participate in matches due to the statute of the French Volleyball Federation (FFVB).

The justification I was given was false. The FFVB's decision to prohibit the wearing of "religious symbols" including the headscarf did not come into force until September this year, after I had applied to participate in amateur competitions. "Laicite", or "secularism", which is theoretically embedded in the French constitution to protect everyone's religious freedom, has often been used as a pretext to block Muslim women's access to public spaces in France. Over several years, the French authorities have enacted laws and policies to regulate Muslim women's and girls' clothing. Sport federations have followed suit, imposing hijab bans in several sports, including football, basketball and volleyball, at both the professional and amateur levels.

Motivated by prejudice, racism and gendered Islamophobia, such rules in effect police Muslim women's choices and bodies. In schools, beaches, swimming pools and other public spaces, we are not allowed to dress in ways in which we feel comfortable. I know from personal experience how devastating the consequences of these exclusionary and discriminatory bans can be. They can cause a feeling of deep humiliation and trauma and result in women and girls dropping out of sport or other activities they love, being subjected to harmful discriminatory treatment and experiencing devastating impacts on their mental and physical health.

As a result of the hijab ban, I have been forced to take a break from volleyball. I have felt deeply rejected, treated like a being without a soul, without a heart, without rights. For me sport is such an intimate physical activity and it is so closely tied to my physical and mental wellbeing. I miss it every day. In the summer, the hypocrisy of France's hijab ban came to global attention during the Paris Olympics. The fact that French women athletes who wear headscarves were not permitted to compete at the Olympic Games laid bare the racist gender discrimination that underpins access to sport in France. It brought such unfair regulations under more public scrutiny.

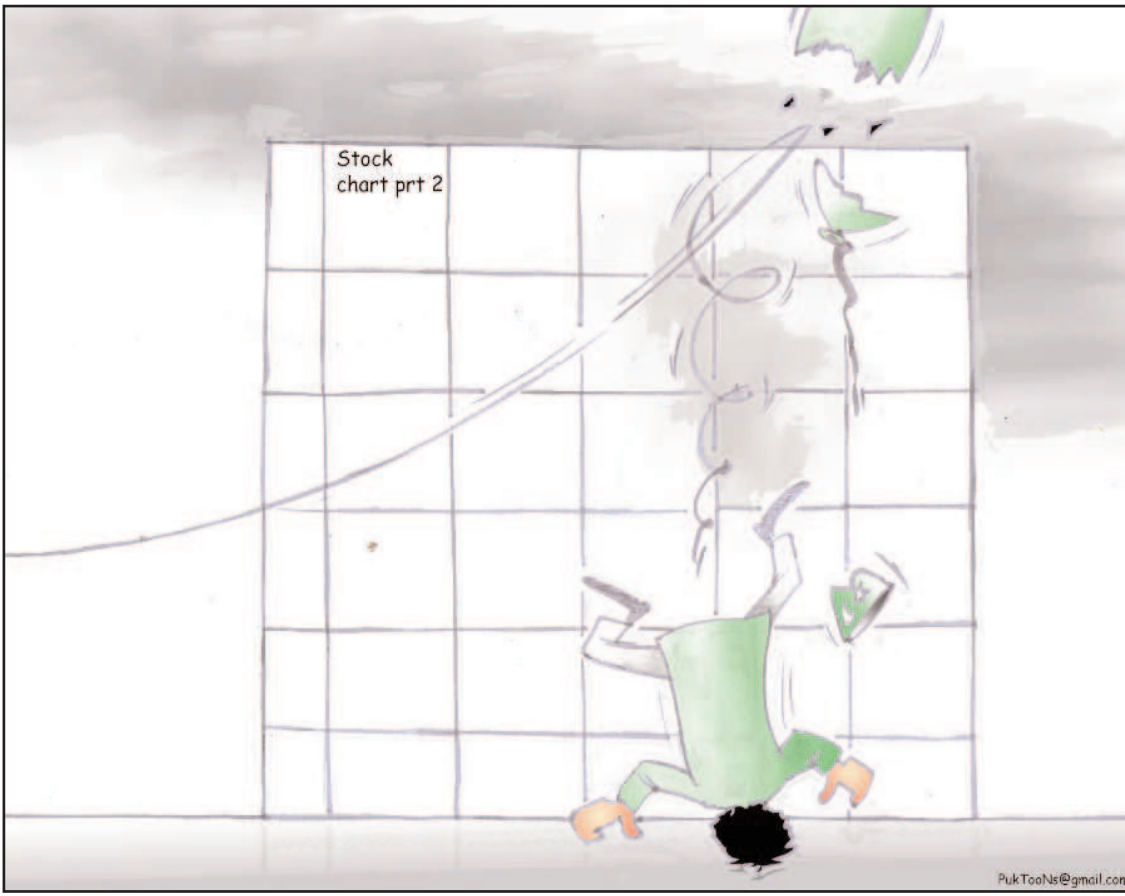
An Amnesty International report published before the Olympic Games made clear that under international law, "secularism" is not a legitimate reason for imposing restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and religion or belief. France's bans on religious sport headgear contradict the clothing rules of international sport bodies such as FIFA (the International Federation of Association Football), FIBA (the International Basketball Federation) and FIVB (the International Volleyball Federation). In its research, Amnesty International looked at rules in 38 European countries and found that France is the only one that has imposed bans on religious headwear.

In October, United Nations experts condemned these bans as "disproportionate and discriminatory" and called for their reversal. In a statement delivered to the UN Human Rights Council, the UN special rapporteur on cultural rights said the bans infringe on the rights of Muslim women and girls in France "to freely manifest their identity, their religion or belief in private and in public, and to take part in cultural life". The UN experts made an unequivocal call on France to "take all measures at its disposal to protect [Muslim women and girls], to safeguard their rights and to promote equality and mutual respect for cultural diversity". Despite such calls and the growing national and international outcry, two bills that seek to ban the hijab in all sports were submitted to the French Parliament in the past year. I, along with many others, will oppose these outrageous proposals and continue our fight to lift the existing bans. I remain hopeful. I firmly believe that we can come together to stand up for our rights.

Organisations like Amnesty International, the Collective Against Islamophobia in Europe and Lallab, the feminist and antiracist association that I'm part of, should be heard and supported in addressing this gendered Islamophobia. I also want to acknowledge the collectives working on inclusivity in sport like the Hijabeuses, Sport Pour Toutes and Basket Pour Toutes and sincerely thank them for their courage and bravery. This is not a political or religious fight but one that is centred on our human right to participate in sport. While we are being affected by the violence and oppression that we suffer, together we are creating spaces of struggle, care and solidarity to combat this blatant discrimination.

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## Palestinian freedom cannot rest on oppression of others

Ahmad Ibsais

WHEN injured Yahya Sinwar hurled a stick at the Zionist war machine, resisting even in the last moments of his life, he embodied the unbreakable Palestinian cause for liberation. For 75 years of relentless brutality, we Palestinians have remained steadfast in our pursuit to see freedom on our land.

Our resistance endures because it is driven by a profound truth: that the struggle for Palestinian liberation is inseparable from the universal fight for human dignity. It is this commitment to collective freedom, rather than narrow national interests, that has both sustained Palestinian resistance and ignited a growing tide of global solidarity.

That is why as we Palestinians watch Syrians flood the streets of Damascus, Aleppo, Hama and Homs, tasting freedom for the first time in generations, our hearts are full of complex emotions: grief for those who have been lost, hope for what might be possible, and an unwavering commitment to our own liberation. Some now claim that Palestine's cause is weakened by the fall of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, that our struggle for liberation somehow relied on his iron grip over Syria. They speak of "axes of resistance" and geopolitical necessity. But they fundamentally misunderstand the nature of our struggle.

The Palestinian cause has never depended on dictators who oppress their own people. Our resistance has never needed those who murdered Palestinian refugees, who imprisoned our fighters, and who maintained decades of cold peace with our occupiers. We know the al-Assad family - like other regional tyrants - used the Palestinian cause as a source of national and regional legitimacy while seeking to control and even suppress the Palestinian liberation drive.

The truth of the Yarmouk camp stands as a testament to this bitter reality. What was once the vibrant heart of Palestinian life in Syria - a place where refugees rebuilt some semblance of the homes stolen from them - became a death trap. When Syrians rose up demanding freedom in 2011, regime forces laid

siege to the camp, bombing and starving Palestinian refugees alongside Syrians. Thousands were killed, detained, and disappeared into prisons. More than 100,000 Palestinians were forced to flee, becoming refugees twice over. This was the true face of al-Assad's "support" for Palestine. Now, as his prisons are opened, we learn more dark truths. More than 3,000 Palestinians had

Egypt.

Those of us truly guided by the Palestinian cause cannot separate our struggle for justice from the wider liberation of all peoples. The love that emanates from an unwavering commitment to a just cause has sustained our resistance through eight decades of displacement and betrayal - not alliances with oppressors, not the support of dictators, but the

*Those of us truly guided by the Palestinian cause cannot separate our struggle for justice from the wider liberation of all peoples. The love that emanates from an unwavering commitment to a just cause has sustained our resistance through eight decades of displacement and betrayal - not alliances with oppressors, not the support of dictators, but the*

been forcibly disappeared into Syrian prisons since 2011; only 630 of them survived and were released over the past two weeks. Among the survivors is Sabri Daraghma from the West Bank village of al-Lubban al-Sharqiya, who used to be a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization. He disappeared in 1982 and spent the following 42 years imprisoned in Syria.

For 50 years, the al-Assad regime maintained its quiet accommodation of Israel through the 1974 disengagement agreement even as Israeli jets violated Syrian airspace with impunity and the Israeli army maintained its occupation of the Golan. The rulers in Damascus offered nothing but empty rhetoric about responding at the appropriate time - a time that never came. Some say Palestinians "owe" the al-Assads for their support.

But we do not "owe" anyone for supporting our struggle against a common enemy. Palestinians are fighting against a settler-colonial force pursuing a plan of "Greater Israel" that goes way beyond the borders of historic Palestine and into neighbouring Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and

unbreakable will of a people who refuse to accept subjugation. This spirit, perhaps, is why the Palestinian flag is raised whenever Arabs gather for freedom as a symbol of our collective yearning for justice. During the Arab Spring, Palestine stood at the heart of protests - not just as a cause, but as an example of unbreakable resistance. It's no coincidence that those who sought to crush these revolutionary dreams worked so desperately to sever this connection.

It has been 13 years since the Syrian people took to the streets demanding freedom. They endured barrel bombs, chemical attacks, torture chambers, forced disappearances, and the world's indifference. Yet they persisted. Now, as they return home, they walk the streets not as refugees but as Syrians.

Those who hurl insults at people who have gained freedom by their own hands should be ashamed. Of course, there is plenty of reason to be critical of the forces involved in al-Assad's fall. We harbour no illusions. The opposition armed groups that now control Syria have colluded

with imperial forces. Some of them have received funding from the United States, others have been supported by Israel; others still have been involved in oppressing Syrians themselves.

Since al-Assad's fall, Israel has launched a massive air bombardment campaign against military and civilian infrastructure targets across the country and advanced further into Syrian territory. There has been largely no response from the new government in Damascus. Some have celebrated this as Syrians "getting" what they deserved" for toppling al-Assad. Others have wondered why Israel has bombed the military capabilities of an expected "ally". Perhaps it is because Syrian victory has awakened hope in a generation that had been crushed into submission. There is a real possibility that the millions of newly freed Syrians will claim this liberation for themselves, that they will not abandon the revolutionary principles they've had for decades.

For us, Palestinians, the images of Syrians returning home have stirred something deep in our collective consciousness - the possibility of a return, of roads reconnected, of borders erased by the simple act of people walking home. Even in Gaza, where people have experienced 14 months of genocide that has claimed so many lives, destroyed thousands of years of history, and annihilated whole towns, the news of Syria has reverberated. The Palestinian cause endures because it is just, because it is right, and because we carry within us something that cannot be defeated: a collective memory that withstands erasure. Israel remains what it has always been: a settler colonial project that we Arabs will continue to resist.

From the refugee camps of Lebanon to the besieged streets of Gaza, from the divided hills of Jerusalem to the diaspora scattered across the globe, we Palestinians remain unbowed, unbroken, and un beholden to anything but our inalienable right to freedom. The fall of a dictator does not weaken what was never his to strengthen. Our cause is carried in the hearts of millions who know that true liberation lifts all and chains none.

## World's displacement crisis is only getting worse

Chris Doyle

CAN one imagine a year passing now-days when the number of refugees and internally displaced people declines? Sadly, these circumstances are hard to imagine. The trends are stark and terrifying. According to the UN, there are a jaw-dropping 120 million-plus in this category, 1.5 percent of the global population. If they formed a country, it would rank as the 13th most populous in the world. This is almost double the figure of a decade ago.

Back in 2014, the figure was 60 million, an alarming figure in itself. If this pace continues, it will be 240 million by 2036. What are the drivers of this massive displacement? Conflict remains key. In 2024, two stand out: Sudan and Gaza.

The horrendous fighting in Sudan, which kicked off in April 2023, has led to 1.2 million refugees and 6 million internally displaced. Chad has taken in by far the most, about 700,000. This replicates the feature of most conflicts, with refugees staying within the same region, largely in neighboring countries and largely never making it to a richer state. It is the poorer ones that still carry the burden. This might confuse a huge percentage of those on the far right in Europe, who think somehow that their countries have a refugee crisis. The other conflict generating an ever-larger number of refugees is the Middle East war, principally in Gaza and Lebanon. About 90 percent of Palestinians in Gaza have been displaced, some as many as 10 times. One has to remind politicians in Europe and even those in the media that 70 percent of the population in the enclave were already refugees prior to last October. This displacement is forced and, in the case of northern Gaza, Israeli officials have made clear that it is permanent. This is why human rights groups openly refer to it as ethnic cleansing.

In the West Bank, Palestinians are also being displaced and, with formal de jure Israeli annexation planned for 2025, many more Palestinians will be ethnically cleansed there too. As for Lebanon, the Israeli bombing and invasion of the country led to the internal displacement of about 900,000 before last month's ceasefire deal was reached. More than 550,000 crossed into Syria and thousands more made it to Iraq. This is a country where a quarter of the population were already refugees prior to the latest war. Meanwhile, the Ukraine war has now lasted for more than 1,000 days. This also continues to drive displacement. Therefore, much of the global displacement comes down to a failure to resolve or even deescalate conflicts. If the global community remains divided and inward-looking, where will the necessary resolve and patience to handle such wars be found? The UN appears impotent. Climate change both drives refugee flows and affects refugee communities. Research published in November showed that, of the 120 million displaced, three-quarters - some 90 million people - live in countries with high to extreme exposure to the effects of climate change. For example,

Bangladesh, a state prone to flooding, has had to host refugees from Myanmar. What then happens is that the displaced feel forced to move again as a result of flooding, droughts or other climate-related issues. It also makes it less likely that they can return if their areas of origin are so gravely impacted.

This trend is only going to get worse if massive action is not taken. The dangers of displacement continue, not least during the perilous journeys many take by sea and land. The International Organization for Migration has calculated that, since 2014, more than 70,000 have gone missing while trying to reach safer areas. The Mediterranean alone accounts for more than 30,000 of these.

The Central Mediterranean route remains the most lethal. As a result of 212,100 attempts to cross this route in 2023, about 3,100 are known to have lost their lives. If the Middle Eastern regional war continues, then many more refugees will once again seek to cross the Aegean Sea to Greece. What is clear is that the dangers are far from putting these migrants off, such is their desperation. Many of the refugees who have succeeded in reaching the richer states of the world have found these countries to be less than hospitable. Prejudice and racism are more openly expressed and it has proved harder to settle in such environments.

Elections across Europe showed how immigration is now perhaps the top issue, as well as arguably the most divisive. Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Slovakia all have far-right elements in their governments. The far-right Alternative for Germany was victorious in a state election this year. In France, Marine Le Pen's National Rally thrives. The extremes have become dangerously normalized. Even in Ireland, a country rarely associated with far-right trends, riots broke out in Dublin in July. Slogans such as "Irish lives matter" showed the febrile nature of the debate.

The reality is that the international community has utterly failed to find solutions to this issue. Consequently, one can only forecast that these numbers will continue to rise and that migrants will take ever greater risks to reach their desired destinations. Solutions seem scarce and, as long as that is the case, the lure of extremist, racist, far-right political trends will continue to grow. The tragedy is that, with greater effort and investment, the richer world could help in dampening the drivers of migration through effective policies that assist the affected countries and by helping to resolve long-running wars. Greater consideration should be given to safe routes, whereby migration can take place away from the criminal gangs and be managed more effectively and safely. Finally, a change in attitude is also required. Immigrants are often victims of overt hostility. They are always portrayed negatively. Yet so often the real story is one of extraordinary success, in which immigrants have helped transform and energize economies and societies.

The Moscow Times

## What does Regime change in Syria mean for Russian-Turkish relations?

Dimitar Bechev

RUSSIA has reportedly asked Turkey for assistance in withdrawing its troops from Syria. Mere weeks ago, such a headline would have been hard to imagine. Yet in the wake of the jaw-dropping collapse of Bashar al-Assad's regime, the report by CNN Türk has a credible ring to it.

Russian troops stationed in various parts of Syria, such as the central desert and the Kurdish-populated northeast, appear to have returned to Russia's military bases in Latakia province, and according to GUR, Ukraine's military intelligence, Russia has been airlifting military personnel and equipment back home.

The fate of those bases - Russia's Khmeimim airfield and naval facility at Tartus - is a matter of speculation. The Russians may well have no choice but to abandon them, unless they are able to secure a deal

with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) allowing them to stay on. Russian media have overnight rebranded the Islamist militia that toppled Assad from "terrorists" to "armed Syrian opposition."

Whatever scenario materializes, one thing is beyond doubt. The power dynamic between Russia and Türkiye has shifted. Now Ankara clearly has the upper hand. This is a sharp turnaround from the previous state of affairs. When Russia intervened in Syria together with Iran and Hezbollah, they thwarted Türkiye's ambitions to orchestrate regime change in Damascus.

The Syrian deployment was just one part of the puzzle, as Russian President Vladimir Putin piled geopolitical pressure on his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. After the Turkish air force shot down a Russian Su-24 ground attack jet in November 2015, Russia

imposed economic sanctions against Turkey, thereby further tightening the screws. At the same time, Russia built up its presence in Armenia - a country hostile to Turkey - and the militarization of annexed Crimea, described by Putin as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" just across the Black Sea from Turkey, continued apace. Erdoğan and Turkish policymakers more broadly were jittery. They felt vulnerable with regard to Russia, yet did not trust the West either. The US partnership with the Syrian Kurds affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), outlawed in Turkey and the EU (and the United States too), was and still is a particularly acute irritant.

For that reason, Erdoğan reconciled himself with Assad's survival in power, along with Russia's entrenchment south of Türkiye's border. In return,

Türkiye obtained a buffer zone in Syria and a seat alongside the Russians and Iranians in the Astana process aimed at resolving the conflict in Syria. Occasionally the deal was tested, such as during the 2019-2020 regime onslaught against Idlib province, the most significant pocket of land the anti-Assad forces controlled at that point. A Turkish intervention headed off the offensive, which had been backed by Russian troops.

Overall, however, the equilibrium between Moscow and Ankara proved stable. Both parties learned to coexist on the ground and even do each other favors. As recently as this summer, Putin was calling on Assad to engage with Erdoğan at a time when the Turkish president was keen to strike a deal with Damascus on repatriating at least some of the

3.9 million Syrian refugees in Turkey. Now that Russia has largely lost Syria, a large chunk of its leverage over Türkiye is gone too. Ankara's interlocutor is no longer Assad but HTS, with which it has a history of cooperation. Instead of Putin, Erdoğan must talk to Donald Trump - because of the US sponsorship of the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) that controls much of northeastern Syria as well as to the Gulf countries and possibly the EU, which will be supporting the country's reconstruction.

Turkey is often seen as dependent on Russian energy supplies and therefore susceptible to strong-arm tactics. Now that might be changing too. With Gazprom's transit contract with Ukraine's Naftogaz expiring on January 1, TurkStream will be the only pipeline export route from Russia to the rest of Europe. Turkey will use its role as a conduit to



# Biden’s immigration legacy is a complex one

Aline Barros

IMMIGRATION has been a defining challenge of the Biden presidency, marked by record numbers of asylum-seekers and other migrants arriving at the US-Mexico border. President Joe Biden pledged to modernize the nation's immigration system and rebuild a refugee resettlement program that had hit historic lows under the previous administration. But despite issuing a record number of immigration-related executive actions - surpassing the Trump administration - Biden's efforts drew criticism from both sides of the political spectrum. Critics on the right said the administration was being too lenient, while those on the left said it was too harsh.

The Biden administration inherited a fractured immigration system, including a backlog of asylum cases, a reduction in refugee processing capacity, and policies such as Title 42 that significantly shaped migration patterns. During a webinar, Muzaffar Chishti, a senior fellow at Migration Policy Institute (MPI), provided an overview of the Biden administration's record. He noted that Biden's approach to enforcement away from the border has been seen as largely favorable by experts and immigration advocates.

He said Biden administration officials focused on enforcement guidelines, rather than trying to deport everyone, yet the crisis at the border cast a long shadow over his legacy.

He emphasized the success of legal immigration under Biden, pointing to the high numbers of visas issued, the record number of naturalizations and the resurgence of refugee admissions.

About "3.5 million people were naturalized under the Biden administration, the highest of any one-term presidency," he said. However, Chishti said the administration's handling of border security was less successful. The administration faced overwhelming numbers of

migrants, many arriving from countries beyond Mexico and Central America.

"The Biden presidency entered office with a crisis at the border, which was precipitated by the COVID crisis and Title 42," he said. The administration's failure to call the situation a crisis, he added, contributed to a perception of mishandling, despite efforts to manage it through new programs like the CBP One app and various parole initiatives. Marielena Hincapie, a visiting scholar at Cornell Law School who participated in the webinar, praised efforts under the Department of Homeland Security's leadership to increase naturalization rates, expedite work permit processing, and implement innovative policies such as deferred action for undocumented workers who had experienced labor disputes.

These measures, she said, benefited not only immigrants but also the broader US workforce and economy. Hincapie also criticized the administration's handling of border issues, calling it mismanagement.

She highlighted the role of Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis in exacerbating the crisis by busing and flying thousands of migrants to New York, Chicago and elsewhere. Hincapie also pointed to additional involvement at the state level, saying, "There's not only the busing and flying of migrants, which DeSantis did, but also litigation."

"And I really see this as the Biden's inner circle, his political and communications folks, failed to understand that this was a narrative war and the fact that they refused to call it a crisis when that is what voters were seeing. ... They fell silent and decided not to prioritize immigration, and by doing so, they ceded the narrative," she said. The Biden administration also faced shifts in migration patterns.

Colleen Putzel-Kavanaugh, asso-

ciate policy analyst at MPI, said the reality at the US-Mexico border shifted once again during Biden's term with migrants arriving in large numbers from across the Western Hemisphere and from countries around the world. The demographics of migrants also changed, she said, from single adults to families, and many were seeking asylum, further complicating border processing. US law offers asylum to people facing persecution in their home countries on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular group.

Though there are two kinds of asylum, affirmative and defensive, not all asylum claims come from migrants arriving at the border. Immigrants may claim affirmative asylum within one year of their latest arrival in the United States or request a defensive asylum while fighting an order of deportation. "All this resulted in a high number of migrants released into the interior of the US," Putzel-Kavanaugh said. This brought the border crisis into the interior of the nation, with large numbers of newly arrived migrants heavily concentrated in cities like New York, Chicago and Denver - cities already facing housing shortages.

Putzel-Kavanaugh also praised the Biden administration's work to pair increased enforcement with options for safe and orderly legal migration.

"We saw the introduction of programs like CBP One app, which allowed migrants to make appointments at ports of entry along the border, and the parole program for nationals from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela," she said. Despite these efforts, Putzel-Kavanaugh said many saw the measures as "too little, too late."

But that shift in migrant arrivals from irregular crossings to legally arriving at ports of entry has been one of the few success stories of

Biden's border management strategies. Monthly migrant encounters dropped significantly from the highs of December 2022, with a decrease from more than 300,000 encounters to about 106,000 in October 2024, according to CBP figures. While Biden's efforts to modernize immigration systems and address asylum claims were significant, experts said the ongoing challenges of irregular migration and border security will remain a focal point in US immigration policy for years to come.

"I do think in summary, we do have two real important crises in our country," Chishti said. "We do have a labor market crisis across occupations from low, mid to high levels [and a border crisis]. This is why a lot of these people who have come in, even though they came irregularly, have been absorbed." Chishti pointed to remarks in 2022 from Jerome Powell, chair of the Federal Reserve, about the US labor market and its dynamics. Powell said immigration is a key source of labor supply, and the significant decline in immigration levels during the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the labor supply-demand mismatch. That shortfall in immigration resulted in fewer workers available to fill jobs, particularly in sectors that traditionally rely on immigrant labor, such as health care, hospitality and agriculture. Powell acknowledged that addressing the labor supply constraints, including through immigration policy, could help ease pressure to raise wages and reduce inflation without significant harm to employment levels.

"The reason nothing is happening on changes or reform to our legal immigration system - so we can get more people legally for our labor market needs - is because of the crisis of the border," Chishti said. "These are twin crises, but they're getting interlinked," he said. "Unless we get the border crisis under control, we won't be able to address our labor market crisis."

VOA

# Starmer is on the brink of erasing Brexit - but Kemi can still rescue it

David Frost

LABOUR'S promised "reset" with the EU came back under scrutiny this week. About time too. Starmer's Labour refuses to set out its objectives for this renegotiation in any detail - contrast the 30-page document in which Boris Johnson and I set out our aims in 2020 - so we are left guessing.

Luckily, as so often nowadays, we learn more from the EU side than our own - from an admittedly leaked paper setting out the EU's own planning for the reset, approved by EU ministers on Tuesday. It shows just what a mess the Government has got itself into and how difficult it is going to be to get out of it without embarrassing concessions to the EU. That's what happens when you don't think things through. A re-run of Theresa May's disastrous negotiating tactics is now distinctly on the cards.

The EU is doing what it always does. First it makes clear what can be on offer and what can't. Its paper notes, awkwardly for Labour, but entirely correctly, that "significant further reductions" in trade friction, the avowed aim of the reset, "would require a different model for cooperation, ie participation by the UK in the single market and/or customs union", that is, a Norway or Swiss model.

But Labour has ruled these out. So the reset already appears a little pointless - unless, of course, you don't trust Labour's words. After all, we've learnt not to. Second, it turns on the pressure. It launches court cases - as it did this week, taking us to the European Court of Justice on the basis of claims it first made 15 years ago. It activates its

friends in the media and academia to publish a barrage of reports claiming, wrongly, that trade is collapsing.

And it sets out preconditions for talks: issues that must be resolved before any discussions can begin. So it notes so-called "deficiencies" in implementing the Windsor Framework, telling us we must make "significant further efforts", and that "only the full and faithful implementation of all obligations by the UK ... can create the solid basis for moving ahead." It goes on to insist that current access by EU fishermen to UK waters must be maintained as "long-term commitments" and that the reset "is only credible if it is based on an early understanding on this". In short: do what we tell you in Northern Ireland, sign away fishing rights, and then we might talk.

Try to set aside the language, redolent as it is of the imperial capital addressing a recalcitrant protectorate, and consider that this behaviour ought to be a total try-on. But the EU senses weakness. It can see that Keir Starmer and Labour don't really understand what they are doing and don't know what they want (the EU's paper itself notes that Britain has offered a security and defence agreement but "without providing details").

The Government is starting off in the traditional fashion of British negotiators: just start the talks and let's see what we can get. That always ends up with us persuading ourselves that whatever feeble concessions we can get are what we

wanted all along. Unless it can be stopped, the outcome is entirely foreseeable: Labour is about to be taken to the cleaners by the Commission.

It will end up giving away fishing rights; accepting EU law and European Court jurisdiction over our food and veterinary trade, where the balance is already hugely in the EU's advantage; endorsing a foreign policy and defence agreement that gives priority to participating in EU arrangements; and agreeing to unbalanced youth mobility provisions, perhaps even taking some EU asylum seekers too. The naive bumblers in Labour will represent this as a "balanced package" that smooths our trade with the EU, and the ideologues behind the scenes will be quietly pleased that the first step has been taken back towards EU membership once again. And everyone will tell you: nothing to see here.

The truth is Britain doesn't need to do any of this. We lose a lot and gain almost nothing from it. All these arrangements benefit the EU much more than us. But Labour just wants to be part of the club again and to be liked by the Euro-elites. It is blind to the reality of the EU, of failing economies, of slow growth, of the dead hand on innovation, and of political systems that are in free fall because they can't respond to their voters' needs. Labour doesn't care about this and that's why it will give so much away.

Labour has a huge majority and there is only so much we can do about its plans. But we need the Opposition, that is, for now, princi-

pally, the Conservative Party, to step up. There are three things Kemi Badenoch could and should do.

First, ask Starmer: will you accept the EU's preconditions? In the unlikely event that he says no, the reset has failed before it starts. If he says yes, or flannels, then we know he'll give away anything to get a deal. Second, make clear that whatever Labour negotiates will be reversed if the Conservatives return to power. This is necessary not just on its own merits but because the EU has less interest in negotiating substantial change if it might lose it all again in a few years' time. So watch out for Labour trying to sign a deal without an exit clause.

Third, and finally, commit explicitly to finishing the Brexit job. It was largely done at the end of 2020, but we never took full advantage, partly because of the drag of the Northern Ireland arrangements, partly because the ECHR filled the space previously occupied by the EU. All this must now be swept away. There needs to be a firm commitment to scrap the Windsor Framework and make the British state sovereign again in Northern Ireland; to end what is left of the Withdrawal Agreement and put it into UK law, so we can't be summoned before the EU's court any longer. For me, this is a crucial test. Historically, the Conservative Party is the party of national sovereignty and national democracy. Everything in its DNA should tell it to stand up for these things. If it won't do so, people will start asking: why is it there at all?

# Europe must take holistic approach to migration issue

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

MIGRATION is one of the most pressing issues in Europe today, as countries grapple with a significant influx of people fleeing conflict, poverty and environmental crises. The movement of individuals across borders has sparked heated debates about border control, integration and the responsibilities of host countries.

As Pope Francis eloquently stated last week, migrants must be "welcomed, encouraged and integrated." He urged Europe to confront the challenges of migration with compassion and practicality.

Europe has experienced an unprecedented surge in migration in recent years, driven by factors such as conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, the Russia-Ukraine war, economic hardships and climate-induced displacement. Countries like Italy, Greece and Spain, which serve as entry points for many migrants, are particularly strained by the sheer volume of arrivals. Border control has subsequently become a contentious issue, with some countries implementing stricter policies to curb irregular migration. These measures, however, often lead to overcrowded detention centers and dangerous journeys for migrants attempting to reach safety.

However, once migrants arrive in Europe, their journey is far from over. Integration into host societies presents a significant hurdle, with language barriers, cultural differences and limited access to education or job opportunities often impeding progress. Many migrants face discrimination and social exclusion, further complicating their ability to contribute to their new communities. The lack of cohesive integration policies exacerbates these issues, leaving both migrants and host societies struggling to adapt.

Another issue is that immigration has become a divisive topic across Europe, fueling political polarization and giving rise to far-right movements that capitalize on anti-immigrant sentiments. This polarization often results in fragmented policies and a lack of unified action among EU member states. The absence of a cohesive framework undermines the ability to address migration effectively, leaving front-line countries to shoulder disproportionate responsibilities.

The existing asylum systems in some European countries are overwhelmed and underfunded, leading to delays in processing applications and inadequate support

for asylum seekers. This is partially why migrants often face prolonged uncertainty about their legal status, which hinders their ability to settle and integrate. The disparity in asylum policies among EU countries is further complicating the situation, creating inequities in how migrants are treated.

Countries on the front lines of migration, such as Greece, Italy and Spain, appear to bear the brunt of the crisis. These nations are often ill-equipped to handle the scale of migration they face, leading to overcrowded camps, insufficient resources and strained public services. The lack of equitable burden-sharing among EU member states exacerbates the challenges faced by these countries.

Despite the challenges, however, migrants bring significant benefits to their host countries, contributing to economic growth, cultural enrichment and demographic balance.

Migrants often fill labor shortages in critical sectors such as agriculture, health-care and construction. Their contributions boost economic productivity and address gaps in aging labor markets. Studies have shown that migrants are more likely to start businesses, creating jobs and fostering innovation. Furthermore, remittances sent back to migrants' home countries play a vital role in alleviating poverty and promoting economic stability globally.

In addition, migration fosters cultural exchange, introducing new perspectives, cuisines, traditions and artistic expressions to host societies. This diversity, when managed effectively, enriches local cultures, promotes tolerance and enhances social cohesion. Migrants also contribute to the global interconnectedness of communities, bridging gaps between different parts of the world.

Many European countries face declining birth rates and aging populations, which pose challenges to sustaining economic growth and social welfare systems. Migrants help to offset these demographic trends by bringing younger populations into the workforce. Their presence ensures the long-term sustainability of pensions and healthcare systems, benefiting the broader society.

Addressing the challenges of migration requires a multifaceted approach that combines humanitarian values with practical strategies. To manage large influxes of migrants, Europe must invest in more efficient and humane border control measures.

This includes enhancing the capacity of border agencies to process arrivals, while ensuring compliance with international human rights standards. Establishing safe and legal pathways for migration can reduce the reliance on dangerous and irregular routes, saving lives and improving the overall management of migration flows. Expanding resettlement programs and issuing humanitarian visas are practical steps in this direction.

Integration is also key to maximizing the benefits of migration. European host countries should invest in language and skills training programs to empower migrants to contribute effectively to their new communities. Promoting intercultural dialogue and combating discrimination through public awareness campaigns can foster social cohesion. Additionally, creating mentorship programs that pair migrants with local residents can facilitate smoother transitions and mutual understanding.

To counter political polarization, European leaders must adopt balanced narratives that highlight both the challenges and benefits of migration. Transparent communication about migration policies and their impacts can dispel misinformation and reduce fear-driven rhetoric. Encouraging cross-party collaborations and civil society engagement can also foster more inclusive policy-making processes.

Finally, a fair distribution of responsibilities among EU member states is crucial to alleviating the strain on front-line countries. This could be achieved through a quota system that allocates migrants based on each country's capacity and resources. Establishing a central EU fund to support migration-related expenses can also ease the financial burden on individual countries. In other words, solidarity and cooperation among member states are essential to building a sustainable migration framework.

In conclusion, migration presents both significant challenges and profound opportunities for Europe. While issues such as border control, integration, political polarization, inadequate asylum systems and the strain on front-line countries demand urgent attention, the benefits of migration - economic growth, cultural enrichment and demographic balance - cannot be overlooked. By adopting a holistic approach that addresses these challenges while harnessing the potential of migrants, Europe can transform migration into a driver of prosperity and unity.

# This festive season, Gaza is starving

Esraa Abo Qamar

WINTER has now come to the Northern Hemisphere and has ushered in a festive mood in many places. In Gaza, it has brought more misery. The cold weather and rain have made the lives of the 1.9 million Palestinians displaced in Gaza that much more unbearable. It has rained hard several times already. Each time, tents of the displaced have been flooded, damaged, or destroyed, and what little some have had, has been taken away by the floodwaters.

That has left many destitute families even more destitute. A new tent in Gaza right now can go up to \$1,000. A makeshift shelter - with the wood and plastic needed for cover - costs hundreds of dollars. A new blanket can be as much as \$100. No one in the camps has such sums of money. Many of the displaced had run away from the bombs with just the clothes on their backs. Some have tried to salvage clothes from the rubble, but few have succeeded.

As winter approached, the prices of clothes skyrocketed. A light pyjama now costs \$95; a coat - as much as \$100. A pair of shoes - a rare commodity - can go for as much as \$75. Second-hand clothes markets have appeared throughout Gaza to address overwhelming demand, but the prices there are also too high. As a result, the camps are full of people shuddering in the cold in thin summer clothes. Children walk around barefoot in the mud and puddles. Fuel for heating, which is either unavailable or unaffordable for most families. The cost of 8kg of gas has reached \$72.

Wood is a bit less, but also too expensive for most. The lack of clothes and fuel for heating is increasing the risk of colds, flu and other diseases during the winter which in Gaza can become life-threatening. A malnourished, vulnerable body, exhausted by fear and trauma, struggles even against a simple cold.

Gaza's hospitals are barely functioning, taking care mostly of people gravely wounded in the bombardment. Suffering from a lack of supplies and staff, they can no longer provide care for simple illnesses. Diseases are spreading also because hygiene has also become nearly impossible to maintain. Living in tents, without access to warm water, the displaced cannot shower or sometimes even wash their hands. A bar of soap is now \$5, while a bottle of shampoo can be as much as \$23. But perhaps the most unbearable fact of life in Gaza now is the famine. The amount of humanitarian aid that has entered Gaza has significantly decreased since October and we have felt its devastating impact across the Strip. It is not just the north that is experiencing famine. All of Gaza is.

The price of what little food is available is beyond belief. A single sack of flour now costs more than \$300. Other foodstuffs have also become expensive. A kilo (2.2 pounds) of lentils or a kilo of rice is \$7. Vegetables are hard to find and also very expensive; 1kg of tomatoes is \$14; a single onion is \$2. Red meat and chicken cannot be found at all. We have not seen any for months. The

bakeries that were once a lifeline for families are closed because they can't get supplies. Bread, the simplest and most basic of foods, has become a luxury few of us can afford. Even if a family is able to get flour, it is often infested with bugs and tastes stale.

People are now forced to rely on "takaya" - charity soup kitchens - that provide small portions of food that are barely enough for a family. These organisations open at 11:00am, which results in large queues forming in front of their distribution centres. Most families who manage to get a meal from them have nothing else to feed their children. Hunger is not just limited to the physical pain that starving people experience. It also has an unbearable psychological impact. Parents are forced to watch their children cry for food during the long, cold nights. Some parents have also had to watch their children die from starvation. This psychological torment cannot compare to anything else.

As I write these words, I am starving myself, having eaten nothing since morning. As I look around me, I see children and adults, pale and thin, exhausted by hunger and cold. I wonder how much more they can take; how much more any of us can take? The cruelest part of this suffering is the silence of the world that watches from afar but doesn't act. As the cold bites us and the hunger makes it worse, we are feeling isolated and abandoned, like we have been cut off from the rest of humanity. And as much of the world prepares for a holiday season, we prepare to face loneliness, despair and death.

# Addressing AI’s bias from a humanistic perspective

Patrizia A. Ecker

ARTIFICIAL intelligence has transformed how we live, work and interact, promising efficiency, precision, and even objectivity. Yet, beneath the shiny veneer of algorithms lies a pressing issue that remains insufficiently addressed - bias. Far from being impartial, AI often reflects the same prejudices and inequalities embedded in the societies that create it. Bias in AI is not just a technical glitch; it is a social and ethical challenge that demands our attention.

AI systems are only as unbiased as the data they are trained on and the people who design them. Training data often mirrors historical inequalities, stereotypes, or underrepresented groups, leading to biased outcomes. For example, a widely cited 2018 MIT study found that facial recognition algorithms had an error rate of 34.7 percent for darker-skinned women compared to just 0.8 percent for lighter-skinned men.

This disparity is not just an abstract technical issue - it manifests as a real-world disadvantage for those who are already marginalized. Bias in AI also stems from the lack of diversity in its creators. With technology sectors still largely homogenous, the perspectives shaping algorithms often miss crit-

ical nuances. As someone with experience in digital transformation projects, I have observed these biases firsthand. For instance, in one project involving AI-powered customer care agents, the system struggled to interpret diverse accents and cultural nuances, leading to a subpar experience for non-native speakers.

The impact of AI bias extends beyond theoretical concerns, influencing decisions in critical areas such as hiring, healthcare, law enforcement, and digital marketing. In hiring, Amazon's algorithm famously demonstrated bias against women because it was trained on male-dominated data. This perpetuated existing inequalities in a field that already struggles with gender diversity. Similarly, in healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic, pulse oximeters were found to be less accurate on individuals with darker skin tones, highlighting how biased technology can exacerbate health disparities.

In digital campaigns, in a discussion about targeted marketing, such as those used by fashion brands including Mango, concerns arose about AI reinforcing stereotypes. For example, the reinforcement of narrow definitions of

beauty. These examples underscore the human consequences of biased AI systems. Some argue that AI bias is inevitable because it mirrors the flaws of human data. While refining datasets and improving algorithms are essential, this perspective oversimplifies the issue. Bias in AI is not just about better coding; it is about understanding the broader societal context in which technology operates.

Others propose that AI can also serve as a tool to highlight and address biases. For example, AI can analyze hiring trends and suggest equitable practices or identify disparities in healthcare outcomes. This dual role of AI - as both a challenge and a solution - offers a nuanced perspective. Tackling bias in AI requires a comprehensive approach. An essential requirement is diverse development teams to ensure that AI systems are built by groups with varied perspectives and experiences. This is vital to uncovering blind spots in algorithm design.

In addition, there should be transparency and accountability so algorithms are interpretable and subject to scrutiny, and allow users to understand and challenge decisions. There should also be ethical

considerations integrated into every stage of AI development. This includes frameworks for bias detection, ethical audits, and public-private collaborations to establish guidelines.

A further requirement is for education and media literacy, to equip individuals and organizations with the tools to recognize AI's limitations and question its outputs. Critical thinking and media literacy are crucial for fostering a society that demands fairness from technology. AI is neither a villain nor a savior - it is a reflection of humanity. Bias in AI challenges us to confront uncomfortable truths about inequality and injustice in our societies. While the journey toward unbiased AI may be complex, it is one we cannot afford to ignore.

As someone deeply involved in driving digital transformation and fostering human-centered skills, I have seen firsthand the potential of AI to either entrench inequality or unlock unprecedented opportunities. The choice lies in how we build, deploy, and use these systems. By addressing the roots of bias and fostering an inclusive approach to AI development, we can ensure that technology serves all of humanity - not just a privileged few.

Arab News





# Minister reiterates govt’s resolve to reform tax system

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb Friday reiterated the government’s resolve to restructure and transform the country’s tax machinery for ensuring an efficient tax system and equitable taxation by introducing people-processed technology and ensuring end-to-end digitalization to end human intervention, bring transparency and reduce corruption.

The Minister said the government remains committed to raising the country’s tax-to-GDP ratio by broadening the tax base and rationalizing a disproportionate burden on the organized sectors of the economy such as manufacturing and the salaried classes, said a press release issued here.

He expressed these views during a meeting with Mr. Karim Yahi, Global CEO of Coca-Cola İçecek (CCI), who along

with Mr. Ahmet Kursad Ertin, Regional Director (South Asia & Middle East); Mr. Sunay Sanli, General Manager CCI Pakistan; and Syed Omar, Director Corporate Affairs & Sustainability CCI Pakistan, called on the Finance Minister today.

Senior officers from the Finance Division and FBR were also present.

The visiting delegation provided the Minister an overview of CCI’s extensive operations in Pakistan, which include seven state-of-the-art production facilities and substantial contributions to the national economy through investments and the creation of thousands of direct and indirect jobs.

They also emphasized their commitment to sustainability and shared their vision for continued expansion of their business in Pakistan.

The Finance Minister appreciated CCI’s role as a

key investor and economic contributor in Pakistan. He commended the company’s efforts to promote sustainable business practices, boost industrial growth, and create employment opportunities across the country.

Highlighting the government’s commitment to fostering an investor-friendly environment, Senator Aurangzeb stated: “The Government of Pakistan deeply values the contributions of multinational corporations like Coca-Cola İçecek in strengthening our economy and generating employment. We are committed to ensuring a business environment that promotes innovation, growth, and sustainability.”

Discussions during the meeting touched upon taxation policies and their impact on the beverage sector. The Finance Minister underscored the government’s commitment to

equitable taxation policies that foster economic growth while ensuring sustainable revenue generation.

He expressed appreciation for CCI’s proactive approach in engaging with the government on policy matters, emphasizing that such dialogue is vital to aligning business practices with national economic goals.

The Minister reiterated that the Government of Pakistan recognizes the importance of maintaining a balanced taxation framework that supports industrial growth while ensuring fiscal responsibility.

The meeting concluded with mutual commitment to a continued stakeholder engagement for better policy framework and exploring collaborative opportunities aimed at promoting sustainable development and fostering long-term economic growth in Pakistan.

# Economy shows promising signs of growth as inflation eases: Advisor

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Finance Minister Khurram Shahzad on Friday expressed optimism that the inflation rate has significantly declined compared to previous years, driven by the favorable impact of international oil market prices, which is expected to trigger a further decrease in energy costs in the coming months.

In an interview, the Advisor to the Finance Minister expressed confidence about Pakistan’s economic future, adding, that the country has made significant strides, with the inflation rate plummeting to a 79-month low which is a notable achievement.

In a welcome development, Pakistan’s inflation rate has witnessed a signifi-

cant decline, paving the way for the country’s long-awaited economic turnaround, he added.

This downward trend in inflation is a testament to the government’s prudent economic policies and is expected to boost economic growth, increase investor confidence, and provide relief to the common man, he highlighted.

The reduction in energy costs is also expected to have a positive impact on various sectors, including industry and commerce, he added.

Furthermore, the decrease in the inflation rate is also expected to attract foreign investment, improve the country’s trade balance, and strengthen the value of the Pakistani rupee.

The adviser also mentioned that the prices of other essential items, such as wheat, tomatoes, and pulses have also decreased compared to previous years.

He stated that the prices of tomatoes, which had skyrocketed in previous years have now stabilized and decreased, providing relief to consumers.

These decreases in prices are expected to have a positive impact on the overall inflation rate and provide relief for middle man consumers, he mentioned.

Responding to a query, the adviser to the finance minister stated that the government is taking drastic measures to curb losses and theft, while also expanding

the tax network.

This multifaceted approach is expected to bring significant relief to the people and potentially boost the economy, he added.

By closely monitoring and addressing losses and theft, the government aims to increase revenue and allocate it more efficiently, he mentioned.

By leveraging technology and digital transformation, the government is also enhancing the accuracy and efficiency of tax collection, ultimately benefiting the economy and the people, he said.

The expansion of the tax network is also expected to promote economic growth and provide relief to citizens, he concluded.

# Honda and Nissan merger talks: what’s at stake

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Japanese auto giant Honda and its struggling rival Nissan will reportedly begin talks on a merger to boost their strength in electric vehicles, where Chinese brands are racing ahead.

At the same time, Taiwanese electronics behemoth Foxconn has approached France’s Renault to buy its large stake in Nissan, according to Taiwan’s Central News Agency.

Here are some key points:

Severe situation

Lacklustre consumer spending and tough competition in several markets is making life hard for many automakers.

Business has been especially tough for foreign brands in China, where electric vehicle manufacturers such as BYD are leading the way as demand grows for less polluting vehicles.

Last year China overtook Japan as the biggest vehicle exporter, helped by government support for EVs -- a sector where Japanese firms have lost ground by focusing on hybrids.

Germany’s Volkswagen and the Stellantis group are

also among those suffering, but Nissan in November warned of a “severe situation” as it announced 9,000 job cuts.

Foxconn interest

Nissan has weathered a turbulent decade, including the 2018 arrest of former boss Carlos Ghosn, who later jumped bail and fled Japan concealed in a music equipment box.

However, it last month reported a 93 percent plunge in first-half net profit. It is also saddled with billions of dollars of debt that will reportedly mature over the next two years.

So a merger with Honda could be welcome news for Nissan -- but other companies have also sensed an opportunity.

Foxconn, which builds devices for tech companies including Apple’s iPhones, unsuccessfully approached the firm with a bid to acquire a majority stake, according to Bloomberg News.

Now, it has emerged in a Taiwanese report that Foxconn’s Jun Seki -- a former Nissan executive -- visited France to ask Renault to sell its 35 percent stake in Nissan.

Honda’s economy of

scale

A Honda spokesman told AFP that a merger with Nissan was one of the “possibilities for cooperation” between them.

The pair could get down to the merger talks as early as Monday, according to Japanese media.

Japan’s number two and three automakers behind Toyota had already agreed in March to explore a strategic partnership on software and components for EVs.

In August Mitsubishi Motors, of which Nissan is a majority shareholder, joined the initiative.

“The escalating costs of EV and battery development, coupled with the recycling of used batteries, highlight the necessity of collaboration to manage risks and reduce the financial burden,” Tatsuo Yoshida, of Bloomberg Intelligence, told AFP.

A merger will help Honda “benefit from scale of economy in terms of slashing costs and expanding lineups”, said Seiji Sugiura at Tokai Tokyo Intelligence Laboratory.

Potential impact

The mega-merger would create the world’s third

biggest automaker after Toyota and Volkswagen.

Together, Honda, Nissan and Mitsubishi sold four million vehicles in the first half, compared with nearly 5.2 million for Toyota.

Honda does not yet sell EVs but the company is aiming to be 100 percent electrified by 2040.

Technology has been a challenge for Honda: its negotiations with US automaker General Motors to develop a joint vehicle failed, and the Afeela brand it launched with Sony two years ago has not put any cars on the market.

Nissan launched the world’s first mass-market electric car, the Leaf, in 2010 but hasn’t become a top name for EVs.

A merger between Honda and Nissan would not be a marriage of equals. Honda’s market capitalisation is around \$41.2 billion, while Nissan’s is around \$10.5 billion.

## Japanese inflation jumps to 2.7 per cent

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Japanese inflation accelerated in November, with prices rising 2.7 percent on-year partly due to higher energy costs, government data showed Friday.

The core Consumer Price Index (CPI), which excludes volatile fresh food prices, topped market expectations and was up from 2.3 percent in October.

It remained above the Bank of Japan’s key two percent inflation target, set over a decade ago as part of efforts to boost the stagnant economy.

The two-percent target has been surpassed every month since April 2022, although central bank policymakers have sometimes questioned the role of temporary factors such as the war in Ukraine.

Analysts had forecast a core CPI reading of 2.6 percent for November. “Core core CPI”, which excludes both fresh food and energy prices, stood at 2.4 percent.



PESHAWAR: President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fazal Moqem Khan and senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan in a group photo with representative delegation of Azerbaijan and Turkiye.

## Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Friday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.41 against the previous day’s closing of Rs 278.35.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.95 and Rs 279.45 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 42 paise to close at Rs 289.05 against the last day’s closing of Rs 289.47, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.77, whereas a decrease of Rs2.95 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs348.09 as compared to the last day’s closing of Rs351.04.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal went up by 02 and 01 paise to close at Rs75.80 and Rs74.07, respectively.

## NK hackers stole \$1.3b of crypto

LONDON (BBC News): A total of \$2.2bn (£1.76bn) in cryptocurrencies has been stolen this year, with North Korean hackers accounting for more than half that figure, according to a new study.

Research firm Chainalysis says hackers affiliated with the reclusive state stole \$1.3bn of digital currencies - more than double last year’s haul.

Some of the thefts appear to be linked to North Korean hackers posing as remote IT workers to infiltrate crypto and other technology firms, the report says.

It comes as the price of bitcoin has more than doubled this year as incoming US president Trump is expected to be more crypto-friendly than his predecessor, Joe Biden.

# SCCI chief calls for concrete steps — to improve regional trade

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqem Khan called for concrete steps to improve regional trade.

Talking to a representative delegation of Azerbaijan and Turkiye headed by Sohail Sajjad here at the chamber house on Friday, Fazal Moqem said KP/Peshawar is a gateway for trade and export to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries.

He stressed joint initiatives to improve mutual trade with Azerbaijan and Turkiye.

The meeting was attended by SCCI senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan, executive committee member Ashfaq Ahmad, a representative from Turkiye

Muhammad Afzal, Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan and others.

The SCCI chief stated that traders from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa mostly depended on trade with Afghanistan and Central Asian countries.

He, however, said cross border trade and transit trade had been adversely affected owing to non-consistent policies and imposition of heavy duties/tariffs by the both governments, which should be reviewed.

Moqem also mentioned about imposition of Infrastructure Development Cess on export by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government that has become the cause of complete shift of export from KP to other provinces, owing to which traders were faced with dif-

ficulty.

He demanded complete abolishment of provincial IDC on the export.

Earlier, the delegation briefed the SCCI president Fazal Moqem Khan about initiatives for improving trade with Azerbaijan and Turkiye, especially efforts for bringing the business community of both countries closer to each other and fully capitalizing potentials and experiences.

Fazal Moqem fully agreed with proposals of the delegation and urged federal and provincial governments to provide facilities to investors under a one-window operation.

Abdul Jalil Jan also spoke on the occasion and presented a number of proposals for enhancing trade with Turkiye and regional countries.

# Soya bean oil imports decreased 10. 01%

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imports of soya bean oil into the country during the first five months of the current financial year decreased by 10.01 per cent and palm oil increased by 7.13 per cent as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-November 2024, over 74,385 metric tons of soya bean costing \$73.647 million were imported to tackle the local requirements as against the imports of 74,745 metric tons valued at \$81.840 million in the same period of last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

However, the imports of palm oil into the country during the period under review grew by 7.13 per cent as 1.319 million metric tons of palm oil worth of \$1.259 billion were imported

to fulfill the domestic requirements as compared to the imports of 1.248 billion metric tons valued at \$1.175 billion of the same period of the last year.

On month on month basis, the import of edible oil including soya bean and palm into the country during the month of November 2024 grew by 113.99 per cent and 11.69 per cent respectively as compared to the imports of the same month of last year.

In November 2024, over 15,045 metric tons of soya bean valued at \$15.138 million were imported as against the imports of 6,410 metric tons worth \$7.047 million in the same month of the last year.

During the last month of the current financial year over 234,885 metric tons of palm oil costing \$235.590 million were imported as compared to the imports of

231,701 metric tons valued at \$210.932 million of the same month of the last year.

It is worth mentioning here that the food group exports from the country during the first 05 months of the current financial year grew by 19.58 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-November, 2024, food commodities worth \$3.155 billion were exported as compared to the exports of \$2.638 billion of the same period of the last year.

On the other hand, the food group imports into the country during the period under review decreased by 11.13 per cent and it was recorded at \$2.977 billion as against the imports of \$3.350 billion of the corresponding period of the last year.

# Markets struggle as traders digest Fed’s hawkish pivot

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Equities fell Friday while the dollar maintained gains against its peers as investors assessed the fallout from the Federal Reserve’s revised outlook for interest rate cuts and prepared for a second Donald Trump presidency.

Data showing Japanese inflation rose more than expected last month did little to help the yen, which took a hefty hit from the US central bank’s more hawkish tilt and the Bank of Japan’s refusal to tighten monetary policy.

Traders are now awaiting the release later in the day of data on US personal consumption expenditure -- the Fed’s preferred gauge of inflation and the last major piece of data for the year.

Wall Street provided a meek lead, having squandered an early bounce from Wednesday’s plunge that was sparked by the Fed’s changed rate forecast, with sentiment weighed by a jump in Treasury yields to their highest level since May.

Asia also failed to recover from the previous day’s

losses.

Hong Kong, Tokyo, Shanghai, Sydney, Singapore, Seoul, Taipei, Mumbai and Bangkok all fell, though Wellington, Jakarta and Manila edged up.

London, Paris and Frankfurt all opened lower.

US monetary policymakers on Wednesday cut rates as expected, but their closely watched “dot pot” guidance on future moves showed they saw two reductions next year, compared with four previously targeted.

Data showing a forecast-topping rise in US economic growth and consumer spending did little to ease concerns that the Fed will keep borrowing costs higher for longer.

Meanwhile, swaps markets are pricing in less than two for all of 2025.

Fed boss Jerome Powell acknowledged Wednesday that Trump’s economic plans, including tariff hikes, tax cuts and mass deportations, have been a consideration as policymakers weigh their rate cut estimates.

Economists at Bank of America Global Research

said in a commentary: “We stick with our forecast for two more rate cuts next year, but the risks have clearly shifted in the direction of fewer (no) cuts. The onus is now on the data to justify additional cuts.”

“The dramatic reaction in markets clearly indicates that an extended pause is now on the table.”

They added that if the jobs market ran into severe trouble in the next few months “the Fed would turn more dovish, and (Wednesday’s) meeting will feel like a bump in the road, rather than a paradigm shift, a few months down the line.”

Investors are keeping a watch on developments in Washington after the House of Representatives rejected a Republican-led funding bill to avert a government shutdown, with federal agencies due to run out of cash on Friday night and cease operations starting this weekend.

The legislation would have kept the government open through March and suspended the borrowing limit for president-elect Donald Trump’s first two

years in office.

But it was sunk by Republican debt hawks, dealing a blow to their leader and his incoming “efficiency czar” Elon Musk, who had put the package forward after sabotaging a bipartisan one amid complaints about items in the text allegedly ballooning its overall cost.

The dollar held on to its latest gains against its major peers, briefly hitting a five-month high near 158 yen before easing slightly after the government warned Friday against speculators and hinted it could step in to support the currency.

Finance Minister Katsunobu Kato said: “The government’s deeply concerned about recent currency moves, including those driven by speculators.

“We will take appropriate action if there are excessive moves in the currency market.”

The greenback was also near two-year highs against the euro, while bitcoin tanked to around \$97,000 -- having earlier in the week hit a new record of more than \$108,000.

**SUIT ADVERTISEMENT**

In the Court of Miss Ambareen Navid Judge Banking Court-I Peshawar  
Federal Judicial Complex, Phase-7 Hayatabad Peshawar

Case No: 166/1 of 2024 Date of Hearing: 27-01-2025 Suit for the recovery of Rs.266,974.89 UBL, UBL Tower Ground floor sector B-1, Phase 5, Hayatabad, Peshawar Vs: Muhammad Ayub

Notice Versus: Muhammad Ayub son of Haq Nawaz Khan, R/o:- Post office Rangpur Shumala Lar Dera Ismail Khan Where as the plaintiff bank has instituted a suit for the recovery of Rs.226,974.89/- against you under section 10(2) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001, you are hereby summoned to obtain leave of the court to appear and defend the suit within 30 days after receipt/ publication of the notice in the newspaper. Failing which an ex-parte decree shall be passed in favour of the plaintiff Bank with costs.

Issue today on 14-12-2024 under my signature and seal of the Court.

**Registrar | Banking Court-I Peshawar**

**Court Notice**

In The Court of Nazia Parveen, Civil Judge-VIII/JFC-I, Abbottabad, Suit No. 45/FC, Next Date of hearing: 17.01.2025, Nature of Suit: Family Suit, Mst. Shehnaz etc, VERSUS, Ahmed Ali, 1.Ahmad Ali son of Bashir Ahmad resident of House No. TC-18/6, Nawanshahr, Town committee, Tehsil & District Abbottabad presently residing at amin Khouri Building, Muhammad Bin Zaid City, United Arab Emirates. Whereas in the above-mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above-mentioned defendant cannot be served in ordinary way. It is, therefore, proclaimed Under order-5, Rule 20 CPC that if the said defendant will/ shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in Court on 17.01.2025 at 08:30 A.M, the proceeding will be taken ax-parte.No arguments of any nature shall be entertained thereafter.

**SUIT ADVERTISEMENT**

In the Court of Miss Ambareen Navid Judge Banking Court-I Peshawar  
Federal Judicial Complex, Phase-7 Hayatabad Peshawar

Case No: 166/1 of 2024 Date of Hearing: 27-01-2025 Suit for the Recovery of Rs.448,906.78 M/s UBL, UBL Tower Ground floor sector B-1, House 5, Hayatabad Peshawar Vs: Muhammad Tariq

Notice Versus: Muhammad Tariq son of Salamattullah (Late) R/o:- House No.3, Bijlaj Colony, Tehsil and District Mardan Where as the plaintiff bank has instituted a suit for the recovery of Rs.448,906.78 against you under section 10(2) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001, you are hereby summoned to obtain leave of the court to appear and defend the suit within 30 days after receipt/ publication of the notice in the newspaper. Failing which an ex-parte decree shall be passed in favour of the plaintiff Bank with costs.

Issue today on 14-12-2024 under my signature and seal of the Court.

**Registrar | Banking Court-I Peshawar**





RAWALPINDI: Markhors batter Nasir Ahmed in action during the Bahria Town Pakistan Champions T20 Cup 2024-25 match between Markhors vs Stallions at Pindi Cricket Stadium.

## ‘Ugly rabbit’ v ‘Greedy belly’ - Usyk & Fury’s epic rivalry

RIYADH (BBC): World heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk, like many mere mortals, often contemplates hammering the snooze button.

"My phone alarm is like 'Hey, Oleksandr, wake up, it's time for training at five o'clock in the morning!'"

He says this while puffing out his cheeks with an exaggerated sigh.

Usyk became the first undisputed heavyweight champion in 25 years when he outpointed Briton Tyson Fury in May.

After vacating the IBF belt, he returns to Saudi Arabia to defend his WBA (Super), WBC and WBO titles against Fury on Saturday.

The rivalry has catapulted him from a boxing great to a sporting icon. Having reached the summit, however, is there a danger of Usyk's hunger and motivation dwindling?

Already in fight week we have seen Usyk glaring from the cockpit window of a plane and delivering his trademark dance moves.

Usyk v Fury 2 - all you need to know

But the best heavyweight on the planet, possibly of his generation, struggles with the necessary sacrifices and finds preparation a chore.

"I don't like training, but I like boxing. I cannot box if I do not train. It's all together," the 37-year-old tells BBC Sport.

"When I'm in camp, every day and every minute I think 'what am I doing here? What am I doing here without my children and my wife?'"

"But it's my choice, boxing."

Usyk was followed by an entourage of around 20 fellow Ukrainians into a hotel suite in Riyadh at Monday's media day.

With rosary beads tightly clutched in his right hand, he quietly recited a prayer between questions.

"God gave me the opportunity but God told me 'you must work, you

must not rest'," he said.

Usyk insisted on answering questions in English. Although he relies on a translator at times, his grasp of the language has improved drastically in the past six months.

"For me, I do not think about legacy. For me, it's important, it's my chance again to say 'listen, if you work, it's possible'," Usyk said.

Usyk, as always, is at ease with the limelight. Tuesday's extravagant grand arrivals event took place on a Boeing 777 at a makeshift runway in the Boulevard attraction park. Within moments, Usyk had mischievously made his way into the captain's seat.

On Saturday, it will be fight or flight time for the soaraway heavyweight, who seems just as composed outside of the ring as he is during the heat of battle.

Fury has promised a

knockout which will send Usyk into retirement but, by his usual standards, the brashness was generally toned down early in this fight week.

Instead there was an edginess and intensity. Fury appeared disengaged, a little short, during media commitments. He laced up the gloves at a media workout but did not throw a single punch.

The Gypsy King - having grown a beard - says he stopped speaking to wife Paris Fury for three months during his training camp for the rematch.

For those wondering whether Fury had been humbled by defeat and adopted a new-found focus, the mask slipped a little after the remarkable face-off that lasted 11 minutes and 20 seconds on Thursday.

Following a staredown in which neither man would look away, Fury hurled a number of

insults at Usyk and insisted he was the real champion. Moments later, he danced with a group of drummers waiting outside.

This was the Fury to whom we are all accustomed, although Usyk had already spoken about Fury's unpredictability a few days earlier.

"Bad guy, good guy; bad opponent, good opponent; win, not win. I don't know. Crazy man. Change opinion every time," Usyk said.

Usyk, who also unified the cruiserweight division, is keeping Saturday's gameplan close to his chest.

"I learned a little bit [from the first fight] but I [will] not tell you. After my second win I will talk to you. It's not secret but maybe greedy belly will watch the TV," he says.

The "greedy belly" taunt and Fury's "ugly rabbit" jibes at Usyk should be taken with a pinch of salt; this is a rivalry built on mutual respect and admiration.

Fury versus Usyk has captured the wider public's attention and elevated the sport - and each other's profile - to a new level. It has flourished because of just how little there is to separate two elite-level operators.

If a third judge had given one of the closer rounds to Fury instead of Usyk six months ago, Britain would have celebrated an undisputed heavyweight champion.

"Tyson Fury is very important for my boxing career. He's a very strong opponent. He's important but not only for me but for future history, for boxing in the world," Usyk says.

No rivalry should end on a tie, and a Fury victory this weekend could set up the trilogy.

Usyk will not be drawn on how long he has left in the sport, but a win could just be a fitting way to bow out of the sport.

And maybe then he can enjoy that well-deserved lie-in.

## Conquerors, Stars advance to final of National Women’s One-Day tourney

ISLAMABAD (APP): Conquerors and Stars beat Strikers and Invincibles, respectively to qualify for the final of the National Women’s One-Day Tournament.

At the Diamond Cricket Ground, batting first Strikers were bowled out for 150 in 41.3 overs. Aleena Masood top-scored with an unbeaten 64 off 131 balls, hitting four boundaries and one six, while also carrying the bat. Conquerors’ Hafsa Khalid was pick of the bowlers with four wickets for 23 runs in 6.3 overs. Nashra Sundhu bagged two wickets for 14 runs in nine overs.

In turn, Conquerors achieved the target in 30.4 overs losing four wickets in the process. Fatima Sana (56 not out, 43b, 7x4s, 2x6s) and Najiha Alvi (40 not out, 49b, 2x4s) knitted an unbeaten 94-run partnership for the fifth wicket.

At the Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, after being put into bat, Stars scored 223 for seven in 45 overs. No. 8 batter Tuba Hassan scored an unbeaten 61 off 31 balls, smashing seven fours and three sixes, while Kaynat Hafeez (50, 90b, 6x4s) and



Sidra Nawaz (50, 74b, 4x4s) scored half-centuries. Invincibles’ Tania Saeed bagged three wickets for 38 in her nine overs. In reply, Invincibles were bowled out for 141 in 40.2 overs with opening batter Ayesha Zafar top-scoring with a 54-ball 46, hitting seven fours. She also shared an opening stand of 71 runs with Aisha Naeem (19, 47, 2x4s).

For Stars, right-arm off-spinner Neelam Mushtaq bagged five wickets for 22, while Tuba with her leg-spin bowling took three wickets for 38 in 8.2 overs.

At the end of match,

Stars qualified for the final after having a superior net run-rate to Invincibles as both sides finished with 10 points each. The final will be played on Sunday at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, with the first ball of the 45-over match to be bowled at 9.30am. The match will also be live-streamed on PCB YouTube channel.

**Scores in brief:**

Match 19 – Conquerors beat Strikers by six wickets at Diamond Cricket Ground, Islamabad

Strikers 150 all out, 41.3 overs (Aleena Masood 64 not out, Nida Dar 29; Hafsa Khalid 4-23, Nashra Sundhu 2-14)

Conquerors 155-4, 30.4 overs (Fatima Sana 56 not out, Najiha Alvi 40 not out, Dua Majid 33)

Player of the match – Hafsa Khalid (Conquerors)

Match 20 – Stars beat Invincibles by 82 runs at Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi

Stars 223-7, 45 overs (Tuba Hassan 61 not out, Sidra Nawaz 50, Kaynat Hafeez 50; Tania Saeed 3-38)

Invincibles 141 all out, 40.2 overs (Ayesha Zafar 46; Neelam Mushtaq 5-22, Tuba Hasan 3-38)

Player of the match (joint) – Neelam Mushtaq and Tuba Hassan (Stars)

## LeBron James sets new NBA record in Lakers win

NEW YORK (BBC): LeBron James broke the record for the most minutes played in NBA history as he helped the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Sacramento Kings.

The 39-year-old American surpassed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar when he completed his 57,447th minute on court in the 113-100 victory on Friday.

James, who eclipsed Abdul-Jabbar for the NBA all-time scoring record ear-

lier this year, scored 19 points while team-mate Austin Reaves led with 25 points. "It's just a commitment to the craft and to the passion and love I have for the game," said James.

"I don't take much time in the off-season, a little bit more time now."

Elsewhere, Brooklyn Nets centre Nic Claxton was ejected from the court for throwing a ball into the crowd during his side's 101-94 win over the Toronto Raptors.

Claxton showed his frustration after being fouled on his way to the basket before being escorted off court by officials after attempting to throw a cushion.

Meanwhile, Zach LaVine scored a season-high 36 points as he guided the Chicago Bulls to a 117-108 win over defending champions the Boston Celtics.

LaVine sunk six three-pointers while adding six rebounds and four assists

as the Bulls recorded their third straight victory.

French star Victor Wembanyama scored 42 points to help the San Antonio Spurs to a 133-126 overtime triumph over the Atlanta Hawks, while Shai Gilgeous-Alexander's 35 points led Oklahoma City Thunder to a 105-99 win over Orlando Magic.

There were also victories for the Memphis Grizzlies, the New York Knicks and the Houston Rockets.

## Tottenham avoid late Man Utd scare to enter League Cup semis

LONDON (BBC): Tottenham survived a Manchester United comeback and their own attempts at self-destruction to reach the Carabao Cup semi-final.

Ange Postecoglou's side were cruising at 3-0 up with less than half an hour to go until two calamitous errors from Spurs keeper Fraser Forster opened the door to an unlikely United revival.

Dominic Solanke pounced on United keeper Altay Bayindir's error after 15 minutes as Spurs edged a tight, entertaining first half - and the real drama unfolded after the break.

Dejan Kulusevski drove home an emphatic finish seconds after the restart and, when Solanke struck his second after 54 minutes, United looked like they were being brought down to earth with a crash after

Sunday's stunning derby win at Manchester City.

Forster made his first mistake after 63 minutes when an attempted pass from his goalline, intended for Radu Dragusin, was intercepted by Bruno Fernandes, who provided substitute Joshua Zirkzee with a simple finish.

The keeper was the villain of the piece again seven minutes later when he hesitated over another clearance before a poor first touch allowed Amad Diallo to charge in and profit from his moment of indecision.

Spurs eased the rising tension two minutes from time when Son Heung-min's corner drifted straight in, with more questions asked of Bayindir.

There was still time for Jonny Evans to head home a United third, four minutes into injury time with

Forster again making an error, but Spurs managed to hold on for victory.

Spurs were braced for the traditional insults to be aimed in their direction when they looked in serious danger of casting aside a position of complete superiority in embarrassing fashion.

And it would have been all their own work.

The sense of panic among Spurs supporters - and indeed their players - inside the stadium was palpable as keeper Forster, in for the injured Guglielmo Vicario, did not just throw United a lifeline but threatened to drag them to the most remarkable salvation.

Spurs were surrounded by a sense of serenity after 54 minutes, three goals ahead and in complete control, United looking like their fate would simply be

one of damage limitation.

Instead, Spurs ended up in danger of engineering a painful downfall until they managed to gather themselves and get over the line, and into the semi-finals, amid scenes of celebration and relief.

Even after Son's fourth goal looked to have finally halted United's comeback, Tottenham still managed to concede a third goal to set up tense final seconds.

It was magnificently entertaining in an edge-of-the-seat, error-riddled way but that seems to be the fashion under Postecoglou and does not look likely to change any time soon.

Once the chewed fingernails are cleared away and nerves calm down, Spurs are still in with a shout of winning their first trophy since the 2008 victory in this competition.

## The resolution of the India-Pakistan Champions Trophy standoff was a win? Not by a long shot

L A H O R E (ESPNcricinfo): First of all, a round of applause for cricket for finally ending what seemed at first to be the saga with no end but which quickly became the saga that if nobody cared much about it, might just go away. Second of all, everyone involved can claim a win.

The PCB has its equitable and just agreement, the sense that it is being treated as an equal with the biggest board in the game. The BCCI is not going to play in Pakistan, which is what it has wanted from the off. The ICC has a tournament, and all members their ensuing revenues from it. We all get our tournament and perhaps, somewhere down the line, a triangular or quadrangular series involving both India and Pakistan.

Third - and realest - of

all, though, better make that a really slow handclap for cricket. If anyone thinks the outcome of this entire sorry drama is a win - least of all for cricket - then it is not the game's interests they have at heart, no matter how much they tell us otherwise.

Consider the ICC. Their perfunctory statement on the resolution is, by one count, six paragraphs long. By another, less generous, count, it is actually six sentences long, two of which spell out the decision and two being space fillers about a schedule that will come soon and about how many teams will take part. That's it. Six sentences, with no explanation or context as to why there is a statement in the first place. Why do we need a hybrid model, ICC, when the tournament was awarded three years ago to Pakistan as the sole hosts?

And how come this arrangement will last until at least 2027?

Remarkably, it is the only statement the ICC has made since November 9, when the BCCI first informed the ICC that India were not going to travel to Pakistan. Not a single statement about the uncertainty around one of their premier events, a tournament essentially held hostage by two of their biggest members who together form their events' biggest rivalry. There's Stockholm Syndrome and then there's this.

It used to be said, a little disparagingly in the years after Malcolm Speed was forced out as CEO, that the ICC had become a mere event management company and was no longer a global governing body. What, then, might it be left as these days, given

its lack of management of the 2023 World Cup and then the fallout from the T20 World Cup this year? An event management company that is no longer managing events at all, or at least not managing them very well?

If you conclude that this is down to a complete absence of leadership, or the total subjugation of the ICC to the game's strongest constituents, then you would not be entirely wrong. But I think a more illuminating insight can be drawn from Greg Barclay's recent interview with the Telegraph, in which the outgoing chair deploys a curiously detached gaze on the game, as if he were a fond - but mere - observer, with no real skin in it. The game's a mess, isn't it? Lost a bit of perspective, hasn't it? Sure hope Jay Shah uses India to grow

the game and not put it under the yoke of India. Gee, somebody should really do something about all this. Er, who's going to tell him, guys?

And so, in this reflection, the ICC has stood aside and shrugged, watching the game not grow but grow more unruly, pulled here, pushed there, stretched out so that it loses all shape and meaning. Yep, it's a mess, fellas. Yep, there's challenges. If only somebody would do something about it.

If there's a smidgen of sympathy here, it's because the ICC has been wedged in between in this anti-romance between the BCCI and PCB. Nothing brings out the worst in either board than having to deal with the other. And this time the charade that the wrangling is anything other than a proxy for their

governments to point-score has been especially risible.

Mohsin Naqvi has repeatedly argued that politics and sport should not be mixed. At the best of times this is a reductive line. For Naqvi, concurrently, the incumbent PCB chair and Pakistan's interior minister (and an especially influential one) it's a supremely disingenuous line to push. To the extent that it feels like it's pure trolling.

In India, meanwhile, cricket is to politics as smoke is to mirrors, which, given the BCCI secretary had a direct line to the sitting home minister, was something. The BCCI said it was the government not allowing the team to travel. The government didn't say anything. Until one day, in response to a question, the ministry of external affairs

referred to a BCCI statement on the decision. The BCCI, said the spokesperson, had cited security concerns in Pakistan and so was unlikely to send the team there.

**Umm, what now?**

The BCCI had made no statement at all, then or now; had, in fact, made clear the decision was not in their hands: Rajiv Shukla, the forever BCCI grandee, once said to the media the decision was not the board's. That was half the problem, that the PCB wanted to know from the BCCI (and not the ICC) why it wasn't going to send its team, and what the Indian government had said. And security concerns? A security plan had been presented and no objections raised at an ICC meeting in October. None of the eight Full Members who have travelled to Pakistan since 2019 have

raised any issues, nor the teams who are actually in the Champions Trophy.

And in the middle of this impasse, Jay Shah ascended (or should that be demoted?) to the ICC chair. One day he was fighting for the BCCI's interests. The next, a switch was flicked and he was meant to be fighting for the ICC's interests. It's quite the to-do list to have left on the last day of your old job to pick up on the first day of your new job. It was entirely fitting. This is, after all, a members' body in which members routinely do things that undermine the members' body, and then, as members of said members' body, bemoan those undermining actions.

Still, at least everyone won. Only, if this is what cricket winning feels like, may we never find out how cricket losing feels.



**In brief****Police reunites girl with family**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police's Sumbal police station team reunited a missing 12-year-old girl, Shumaila, with her family on Friday. A public relations officer told APP that the girl had gone missing on December 18. Despite the family's extensive search efforts, they were unable to locate her. Shumaila's father, Seraj Ahmad, a resident of Sector G-12, reported the matter to the Sumbal police station. Following the report, he said Sub-Inspector Sanaullah Tareen and his team immediately launched a search operation. He added the team employed both technical tools and human resources, ultimately locating the girl in Sector G-9 and ensuring her safe return. Sub-Inspector Sanaullah Tareen said, "Our focus was on ensuring the girl's safety and reuniting her with her family as soon as possible. The Islamabad Police remain committed to public service with dedication and integrity." Shumaila's family expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the ICT Police, particularly Sub-Inspector Sanaullah Tareen, for their swift action and support. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police Ali Raza lauded the efforts of the Sumbal police team. He emphasized that the protection and well-being of citizens remain a top priority for the Islamabad Police.

**Eight patients hospitalized**

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi witnessed the first day without any new dengue cases in four months, as no patient with positive dengue symptoms was reported during the last 24 hours. According to the details released by the health authority on Friday, the continuously declining graph of the endemic has touched down to zero. The variable declining average of dengue cases remained 2 per day during the last week, finally reaching null. The dengue stats show only 8 patients who are still admitted in hospitals for treatment. However, the pace of discharging from the hospital suggests that a less than or equal to a week, is required for the complete recovery of the under treatment patients.

**Commissioner visits RWMC**

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Amir Khattak along with Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi here on Friday visited Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) and reviewed arrangements finalized for the 'Suthra Punjab Program' Chief Executive Officer (CEO) RWMC briefed the Commissioner on the 'Suthra Punjab Program.' Engineer Amir Khattak on the occasion expressed determination to make Rawalpindi Division zero waste. The cleanliness campaign was launched according to the vision of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, he said and directed the authorities to ensure immediate implementation of the 'Suthra Punjab Program.' The cleanliness campaign could not be successful without cooperation of the citizens, the Commissioner said and instructed to take solid steps to include the citizens in this campaign through effective awareness. The cleanliness process should be made effective and sustainable, he ordered. All the institutions concerned should make concerted efforts and negligence in this regard would not be tolerated, the Commissioner said.

**Climate change disasters:**

# Achieving SDGs in Pakistan at risk

ISLAMABAD (APP): Co-ordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam emphasised that despite contributing less than one percent in the total global carbon emissions, Pakistan ranks as the 5th most impacted country in the world due to climate change.

Speaking at a national meeting on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) here on Friday, she informed the participants that the effects of global warming are already visible in Pakistan, citing increasing frequency of droughts, floods, erratic weather patterns, changing agricultural practices, dwindling freshwater supplies, and loss of biodiversity.

The recurring adverse impacts of global warming on the country's various socioeconomic sectors, particularly agriculture, energy, water, health and education have already put the country's efforts for achieving sustainable development goals at stake, she added.

"Frequent, prolonging and intensifying droughts and floods disrupt agriculture, jeopardising food security and livelihoods across Pakistan," remarked Ms. Romina and added: "The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; and thus, environmental protection is a fundamental human right for all Pakistanis."

She recalled that the devastating climate-induced floods of 2022, which resulted in over \$30 billion in damages, served as a stark reminder of

Pakistan's vulnerabilities. These costs continue to rise as Pakistan grapples with severe economic challenges, including rising inflation, high indebtedness, currency depreciation, and depleted foreign reserves, the PM's climate aide added.

She highlighted that SDG-13 (Climate action) underpins and is the cornerstone for achieving our ambitious sustainable development goals and targets, which calls for taking urgent coping actions to combat climate change and its adverse impacts on various socioeconomic sector.

"To achieve the climate action SDG goal, we need to focus on integrating climate change concern into national policies, enhancing education and awareness, and improving institutional capacities for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and strengthening early warnings for effective disaster management," the PM's climate aide suggested.

Ms. Romina warned that the cost of inaction on climate change is staggering. Referring to the World Bank's Climate and Development Report for Pakistan, she pointed out that the country needs \$348 billion in climate finance from 2023 to 2030 to address its adaptation, mitigation, and resilience needs. However, the available financial resources remain limited, the PM's aide highlighted.

Despite these challenges, Pakistan has made significant strides, using its own limited budgetary and technical resources.

Sharing adaptation and mitigation policy measures of the present government, Romina Khurshid Alam explained, "The Green Pakistan Programme, launched by the climate change and environmental coordination ministry is helping sequester 149 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e through reforestation, biodiversity initiatives and the protection of critical areas. Our Electric Vehicle (EV) policy is set to reduce emissions by 23 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030, while our renewable energy policy is expected to save 70 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e by the same year.

Romina also informed the participants that the MoCC&EC is actively working on Pakistan's BTR and TNC, fulfilling UNFCCC and Paris Agreement reporting obligations.

Efforts on NDC 3.0 are in progress, aligning Pakistan's climate goals with the Paris Agreement. Additionally, policy guidelines for carbon market trading are nearing completion, and a national climate finance strategy has been developed to enhance resource allocation, she added.

"Climate budget tagging is also underway to track climate-related expenditures transparently. A Green Tech Hub has been launched to drive innovation in climate technology, and we have strengthened international cooperation through engagements with the CVF-V20, Global Shield, UK Green Compact, and other partners to mobilize climate finance for resilience-building initiatives," the PM's climate aide said.

## Govt taking various steps for promotion of tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): The development and prosperity of Gilgit Baltistan were the top priority of the Federal Government and in this regard, various projects of development had been launched for the promotion of the tourism sector, health facilities, improvement in the education sector and mitigate the pressure of unemployment in this area.

An official source told APP here on Friday, he said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has recently announced a series of mega development projects for the development of the remote areas of the GB. He said the incumbent

regime also focused on developing the road network and connectivity of slum areas with each other to facilitate the local community.

The local government also upgrading the basic health units in the far-flung areas of the GB.

He underlined that tourism is a lucrative business of the local community and in this regard, GB government provides training facilities to the youth of the area. Tourism is the best source of income for the local population, as millions of tourists visit this area every year. He commended the federal

government's efforts in promoting tourism and emphasized the need for its enhancement.

He proposed the establishment of camping sites and tourism facilitation centers across all provinces aimed at facilitating tourists and promoting local attractions.

Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of extensive promotion of the Salam Pakistan portal, a dedicated platform designed to guide and assist tourists visiting Pakistan.

He stressed the significance of leveraging technology to provide seamless experiences for travelers.

## NLPD organizes sixth session of 'Muqalma'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Language Promotion Department (NLPD) here late Thursday organized the sixth session of the 'Muqalma' series with acclaimed poet and critic Farrukh Yar.

"Farrukh Yar avoids self-promotion and refrains from participating in poetry recitals," said notable poet, columnist, and writer Muhammad Izhar ul Haq on the occasion. "Farrukh is not only an excellent poet and writer but also a skilled banker," he noted.

"Farrukh's poetry emerges from his love for language, land, people, history, and culture, said renowned writer Muhammad Hamid Shahid.

The Director-General of the NLPD, Professor Dr. Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, on the occasion said, "Islamabad is rich in literature and culture." He added that individuals associated with literature, culture, and the arts in Islamabad recognize and respect each others stature and achievements. The younger generation must inherit this reverence for literature and its creators," he said.

Farrukh Yar shared that he began reciting poetry in 1985 at the sessions of Halqa Arbab-e-Zauq but soon realized that ghazal was not his true calling and gradually gravitated toward writing nazms.

He revealed that he studied the works of Nasir Kazmi, Sahir Ludhianvi, Mustafa Zaidi, and Majeed Amjad.

Farrukh emphasized that literature held a significant role in his life, and it was his responsibility to uphold its dignity and contribute his share.

Renowned poets and writers, including Dr. Naheed Qamar, Dr. Shazia Akbar, Sultan Nasir, and Rashad Bukhari, were also present on the occasion. They actively participated in the question-answer session with Farrukh Yar.

In the end, Farrukh Yar recited his poetry, and DG NLPD presented him with a bouquet.

## WPC hosts National Meet 'Poverty has a women's face'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) today hosted a transformative conference under the theme "Poverty Has a Woman's Face: Gender-Sensitive Legislature to Advance Gender Equality and End Poverty", at the Parliament House, on Friday.

This event gathered distinguished parliamentarians, policymakers, and development leaders to discuss the urgent need for gender-responsive policymaking to address poverty, which disproportionately affects women in Pakistan.

Secretary WPC/MNA Dr. Shahida Rehmani, Member of the National Assembly and Secretary of the WPC. Dr. Shahida

Rehmani emphasized the transformative power of gender-sensitive legislation and stated "Legislation is not merely the crafting of laws; it is the architecture of justice. By enacting and implementing gender-sensitive policies, we can transform aspirations into achievements, ensuring that poverty no longer bears a woman's face."

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Nafisa Shah, Member of the National Assembly, who provided an in-depth analysis of poverty's multidimensional nature and the ways it disproportionately impacts women.

She urged a shift from social protection initiatives to addressing social injus-

tices and disparities.

She emphasized the importance of grassroots-level data collection, gender-responsive budgeting, and intersectional approaches to map and tackle inequality in Pakistan.

Special remarks were delivered by Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative of UN Women Pakistan, who reaffirmed UN Women's commitment to advancing gender equality in Pakistan.

The conference also showcased the Women's and Girls' Manifesto, a strategic roadmap developed by the WPC, which outlines actionable priorities, including increased women's representation in leadership roles, targeted

economic support for women entrepreneurs, and gender-inclusive solutions to climate challenges.

Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and Members of the Provincial Assemblies (MPAs) emphasized the need for legislative implementation, economic empowerment, and social reforms to advance women's rights in Pakistan.

MNA Syeda Shehla Raza u highlighted critical issues such as equal pay, the establishment of day-care centers to support women's development, and the protection of property rights for women. MNA Ms Asia Naz Tanoli advocated for incorporating social and moral values, inheritance

rights, dowry issues, and the importance of women's respect into the national curriculum. MNA Ms. Sofia Saeed Shah proposed including the CNIC numbers of brides and grooms on marriage contracts (Nikahnama) to address the issue of child marriage effectively.

Addressing property rights, MPAs highlighted the pivotal role of mothers in promoting gender equality. Participants noted that societal norms often pressure women to relinquish their property rights and suggested to enact legislation to nullify practices like stamp paper transfers and Hiba in favor of male relatives.

Ms. Ishrat Ashraf, MPA

and Convener of the Punjab Women's Parliamentary Caucus, emphasized the need for economic empowerment as a precursor to achieving broader human rights for women.

She called for collaborative efforts among parliamentary caucuses and expressed gratitude to UN Women for their technical assistance.

MPA Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani recommended allocating funds for women's projects and proposed the establishment of committees at the federal and provincial levels to collaborate effectively.

MPA Tanzila Umi Habiba highlighted the Sindh Rural Support Organization, which pro-

vides interest-free loans with a 90% repayment rate, and noted that 200,000 houses have been constructed and registered in women's names under government initiatives.

MPA Ms. Taqqadus Gilani emphasized the necessity of financial education and empowerment for women.

She reiterated that women are simply seeking the rights already granted to them by Islam.

The event concluded with a collective commitment by all stakeholders to champion the principles of gender equality and to ensure the eradication of poverty through sustained, inclusive, and actionable policy measures.



ISLAMABAD: Country Representative of UN Women Jamshed Kazi meeting with Minister of State of Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

**ANF seizes 1565 kg drugs**

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 7 operations across the country managed to recover 1565 kg drugs worth Rs 420 kg and arrested 5 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that 367 kg opium, 55 kg hashish, 19.5 kg ice, 79 kg cannabis seeds, 58 kg poppy seeds and 554.232 kg suspicious material were recovered from Bharabcha area in Balochistan.

180 kg heroin was recovered from Akhtarabad Hazarganj, Quetta and 169 kg hashish was recovered from Jabal Noor in Quetta while 2 suspects were also arrested.

24 kg opium and 48 kg hashish were recovered near Tablighi Markaz on Srinagar Highway Islamabad.

In 5th operation, 6 kg ice was recovered near a hotel in Satellite Town Kech.

In 6th operation, 2 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of a suspect rounded up near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza, Attock.

In 7th operation, 1.1 kg weed and 1.3 kg ice hidden in a car near Sher Shah Toll Plaza Multan were recovered and 2 suspects were arrested during the operation.

Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act and further investigations are under process.

**Three liquor suppliers held**

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Friday arrest three liquor suppliers and five illegal arms owners from different areas of the district.

According to a police spokesman, the Gujar Khan Police nabbed accused Aqib with 10 liters of liquor and the Jatli Police held Munir on the recovery of 10 liters of liquor, while the Naseerabad Police recovered five liters of liquor from accused Umar.

Likewise, the New Town and Civil Lines Police arrested accused Yasir and Ayan Sohail respectively and the Morgah Police held accused Naimatullah and Ayan with a 30-bore pistol each along with ammunition, while the Rawat Police recovered a 9 mm pistol along with ammunition from accused Khurram Shahzad.

The Waris Khan Police held accused Sohail in a case of breach of trust and accused Danish in a bank cheque dishonor case.

## PCCR organises Conference on eradication Polio

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR), as part of the 18th Speakers' Conference, held a National Meet, titled "Eradicating Polio: A Collective Effort for Healthier Future", at the Parliament House on Friday.

The Convenor of Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR), Dr Nikhat Shakeel Khan extended a warm welcome to all the esteemed participants and guests including Honourable Parliamentarians, Distinguished Parliamentary Delegations of Provincial and Legislative Assemblies, Experts and civil society.

Member of National Assembly (MNA) Dr Nikhat Shakeel Khan delivered a keynote address and declared the rise of Polio cases in Pakistan as a National Emergency.

She further stressed linking vaccinations to birth and school registrations, enhancing worker safety, and improving vaccine storage and funding. She further outlined that the aim of this national meet is to foster collaboration between provinces and the Federal government and to successfully propose the nationwide adoption of

"Pakistan's commitment to Eradicate Polio".

The Guest of Honour, Barrister Aqeel Malik (MNA, and Advisor on the Law and Justice, Govt. Spokesperson on Legal Affairs), provided the legislative insights and intervention for Polio eradication.

He highlighted the brief history of the legislation present for polio eradication and control during which he lauded the "Sindh Immunization & Epidemic Control Act, 2023".

Guest of Honour, Dr Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath (Co-ordinator to Prime Minister on National Health Services) outlined the efforts and unwavering commitment of the Government of Pakistan from the past 3 decades for the eradication of polio.

He also addressed the questions raised by MNA Ms Sofia Saeed Shah regarding the way forward to tackle the issue of lower-risk perception due to which the polio virus has emerged again, Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) Ms Sarah Ahmed regarding the way forward for the legislators to ensure the eradication of polio through legislative efforts, MPA Ms Saadia Javed for

the possible efforts that can be carried out by the legislators of Pakistan, collectively, to ensure that the bordering areas of Pakistan are free of the strains of poliovirus, and MPA/Advisor to CM Balochistan Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi regarding the way to tackle the rise in Polio cases in Balochistan due to inter-division migrations & the issue of sub-optimal polio vaccines.

Guest of Honour, Dr Zainul Abedin Khan (WHO representative on Global Polio Eradication) delivered a comprehensive keynote address to highlight the broader context of global and national efforts for the eradication of Polio in the WHO Regions and assistance extended in this regard.

Noshewan Khalil Khan Focal Person Rotary International Polio Plus to National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC), briefed the participants regarding the Rotary's commitment & efforts in Polio Eradication, including setting up Health Camps for the underserved communities, providing social mobilization items to facilitate polio eradication efforts and advocacy efforts among other notable efforts.

## ISSI to host '9th Adab Festival Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Lightstone Publishers, is all set to host the 9th edition of the "Adab Festival Pakistan" on Sunday, December 22, 2024.

This premier literary and cultural event will be held at the Institute's premises from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Joint hosting of the Festival illustrates the ISSI's growing outreach and its endeavours to promote intellectual discourse in close engagement with civil society, said a press release.

The "Adab Festival Pakistan" has established itself as a significant platform to celebrate Pakistan's rich literary heritage, while fostering meaningful discussions on critical socio-political and cultural themes. This year, the Festival promises an engaging lineup of sessions,

reflecting on Pakistan's historical, cultural, and geopolitical narratives, featuring some of the esteemed intellectual and writers.

Key highlights of the Festival include a thought-provoking book talk on Jinnah's Vision for Pakistan – A Call for Action by Yasser Latif Hamdani and Ilhan Niaz, followed by the launch of Zahid Hussain's A Dialogue with History: Interviews with World Leaders with Dr. Maleeha Lodhi and Arifa Noor as panelists. Engaging panel discussions will explore topics such as reimagining education, celebrating women's empowerment through the lens of Fouzia Saeed's Tapestry: Strands of Women's Struggles Woven into the History of Pakistan, and Pakistan's evolving role in the global scenario, featuring distinguished speakers like

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Ms. Nasim Zehra, and Ambassador Masood Khan.

The Festival will also feature a cultural interlude with Sufi Kalaam and Dhamal by Arieab Azhar, encapsulating the richness of Pakistan's spiritual traditions, and conclude with the launch of Dr. Sania Nishtar's latest book, Delivering Welfare at Scale: Ehsaas 2047, offering insights into the future of welfare and development in Pakistan.

With sessions aimed at celebrating the confluence of literature, history, and policy dialogue, the "Adab Festival Pakistan" shall serve as a vital conduit for intellectual exchange and cultural dialogue. Join the ISSI and Lightstone Publishers for a day of rich, insightful conversations and cultural festivities.



**Two companies suspended**

KABUL (Ariana News): The Ministry of Transport and Aviation announced that it suspended two transportation companies following deadly traffic accidents on Kabul-Kandahar highway. Recently, two traffic accidents on the highway in Ghazni province left more than 50 people dead and scores injured. The Ministry of Transport and Aviation said in a statement that the companies involved have been suspended and a joint technical team has been dispatched to the scene to investigate.

**11 russian tanks repaired**

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of National Defense has announced the repair and reactivation of 11 Russian combat and artillery tanks. According to a statement from the ministry, the technical and professional teams of the 207th Al-Farooq Army Corps successfully repaired and prepared 11 Russian tanks for operational use. The statement further noted that, to date, the ministry's technical and professional teams have repaired and reactivated 48 Russian tanks.

## Afghanistan needs both male, female doctors: Army Chief



KABUL (Ariana News): Fasihuddin Fitrat, the Chief of the Army Staff of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, said that studying medicine is necessary as people need both male and female doctors. Fitrat said this in a conference at the Armed Forces Academy of Medical Sciences in Kabul. The statement comes amid reports that the leader of the Islamic Emirate has decided to close medical institutes to girls across the country.

## Afghanistan awards two major gold mines

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum of Afghanistan announced that two major gold mines in the country have been handed over to domestic and foreign companies. According to Homayoun Afghan, the spokesperson for the ministry, an investment worth \$350 million has been made in the gold mine located in Samti Takhar. Afghanistan is considered one of the richest countries in valuable mineral resources, particularly gold. Most gold mines are in the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, and Faryab. "The Samti Takhar gold mine in Chah Ab district, one of the largest mines in the country, was awarded last year to a Chinese company and its Afghan partners. This five-year contract covers an area of 12 kilometers, and drilling activities are currently underway," said Homayoun Afghan. The Chamber of Commerce and Investment emphasized the importance of gold and other precious stones mines in Afghanistan and stressed the need to establish gold processing factories within the country to increase domestic revenue. "We believe that traders and countries interested in purchasing Afghan gold should obtain these resources directly from within the country. All mineral resources should be processed inside Afghanistan and then offered to global markets," said Jan Aqa Nawid, the spokesperson for the chamber. Economic experts consider investment in the mining sector, particularly gold, to be effective in economic growth and reducing unemployment. "If domestic and foreign investors invest in Afghanistan's mining sector, they can help reduce unemployment and contribute to the country's economic growth," said Zabihullah Aslami, an economic analyst. According to information from the Economic Deputy Prime Minister's office, investments worth 415 billion afghani were made last year in the exploration, extraction, and processing of 21 major mines in Afghanistan, including gold mines.

## Investor interest growing in power-generating sector

KABUL (Ariana News): Domestic and foreign investors are showing an increased interest in investing in the electricity-producing sector in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Energy and Water says. According to the spokesperson of the Ministry of Energy and Water, Matiuallah Abid, keen interest has been shown by investors from Turkey, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and China. Afghanistan currently produces only 20% of its energy needs, while 80% of its electricity is imported from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Iran at a cost of about \$300 million a year. Since regaining control of the country in August 2021, the Islamic Emirate has made it a priority to encourage domestic production of power. Omar has met with potential investors on numerous occasions and has encouraged them to invest in the sector. Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) this week announced it had signed a contract for the purchase of electricity from Uzbekistan for the year 2025. This agreement was signed in Tashkent by DABS CEO Abdul Bari Omari. Late last month, Tajikistan's national electric power company, Barqi Tojik, and DABS signed a similar agreement for 2025. According to Barqi Tojik's press secretary, Kurbon Ahmadzoda, the agreement is expected to be extended annually until 2028.

## 600 soldiers complete training in Kunduz



KUNDUZ (BNA): A total of 600 personnel from the 207th Omari Army Corps in Kunduz have graduated after completing a three month professional and ideological training program. The personnel have been deployed to various parts of the country to serve. The spokesperson for the corps, Mawlawi Ajmir Afghan, stated that the graduates received training in military tactics, technical skills, intellectual development, and ideological principles. A ceremony marking the occasion was attended by Kunduz Governor Mohammad Khan Dawat, Commander of the 207 Omari Corps Major General Mawlawi Amanuddin Mansoor, Commander of the 209 Al-Fath Corps Mullah Rahmatullah Aka, as well as civil and military officials from the northeastern zone, scholars, and a large number of mujahideen. Officials emphasized that the graduates are committed to safeguarding the country's territorial integrity, upholding national values, and ensuring the security of citizens. It is worth mentioning that thousands of personnel have previously graduated from the training center of the 217 Omari Army Corps, equipped with professional and ideological skills, and have been deployed to serve the nation.

## Kazakhstan to supply railway materials for Herat project

KABUL (TOLONews): Kazakhstan's Vice Minister of Transport Maksat Kalikaprov said that Kazakhstani companies seek to supply railway tracks and other products for the railway sector of Afghanistan. Kazakhstan's railroad tracks and ties suppliers are to participate in the project as part of the North-South international transport corridor, providing for the construction of one of the first railway sections near Herat Province, according to Kazakh media reports. "The country seeks to supply materials at the initial stage," he said on the sidelines of the 6th International Conference 'Transport and Logistics Market' and the 1st International Forum on the development of air cargo transport GLOBAL AVIA DAY in Astana. Kazakhstan's company Integra already built a railroad between Afghanistan and Iran at the expense of Afghanistan, said the vice minister. Kazakhstan, as one of Afghanistan's key regional partners, is striving to play an effective role in the country's economic development by investing in infrastructure projects such as railways. This cooperation, within the framework of the North-South International Transport Corridor, creates extensive trade and transit opportunities for both countries.

## 12 media outlets closed in Afghanistan in 2024: RSF

KABUL (Ariana News): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) has closed 12 media outlets — both public and private — in seven provinces this year, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has said. Eleven television stations and one radio station have been forced to completely cease their activities, while three radio stations were closed temporarily before they were allowed to resume operations on the condition that they agreed to stop broadcasting music, RSF said in a statement. "The ideological hardening of the Taliban (IEA) in recent months has accelerated repression and increased threats against media outlets in Afghanistan. The proliferation of bans on images of living beings in certain provinces, in particular, has led to a series of closures of television stations," said Célie Mercier, head of RSF's South Asia Desk. She called for the unconditional reopening of all silenced media outlets, so they can continue their mission of informing the people in complete freedom. The Islamic Emirate says it has shut media outlets serving banned political parties, and some outlets have stopped operating due to economic problems. Earlier, Political Deputy Foreign Minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai also said that the Islamic Emirate should allow media to operate freely.

## Mine blast leaves four injured

MAIDAN WARDAK (Khaama Press): Local sources in Maidan Wardak province report that four children were injured in a mine explosion. Report indicated that the incident occurred in the village of "Ali Khan" in the Chak district of Maidan Wardak. Four children, including two brothers, were injured in the explosion. The injured children, aged between 7 and 12, are in critical condition, with one of them being in serious health. The mines that injured the four children were remnants of over four decades of conflict in the province, left behind as ordnance from past wars and continuing to pose a threat to civilians.

## Economy Ministry denies interfering in int'l aid

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Economy has denied the Islamic Emirate's interference in the process of humanitarian aid delivery in Afghanistan and emphasized that such aid is provided directly. Abdul Rahman Habib, spokesperson for the ministry, stated that the Islamic Emirate is working to create greater facilities for aid organizations. "International humanitarian organizations have, from the beginning until now, provided assistance directly through offices related to the United Nations and without the interference of Emirate authorities, both via domestic and foreign NGOs. We are working to stimulate the economy and reduce poverty by offering more facilities to these organizations," said the spokesperson. These remarks come as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) earlier reported that 164 cases of interference in the humanitarian aid process were recorded in Afghanistan in November of this year. According to the report, 99% of these interferences were carried out by Islamic Emirate officials, mainly concentrated in southern, central highland, and western regions. OCHA also announced that these restrictions suspended 72 humanitarian projects and led to the permanent halt of two projects. "A total of 164 access incidents were documented, representing an 11% increase compared to the same period last year and a 56% increase compared to the previous month," the report said. Some economic experts said that an agreement between the Islamic Emirate and international aid organizations could mitigate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. "If foreign organizations like OCHA and other bodies can reach an agreement with the Islamic Emirate to prevent the humanitarian crisis, especially during the winter season, it would yield positive results," said economic expert Sair Quraishi. Economic expert Abdul Naseer Rashtiya emphasized the importance of coordination between aid organizations and the government, adding: "If these efforts are coordinated with the Afghan government and the projects align with the government's strategic plan, it will create employment opportunities and enhance the effectiveness of aid." According to information from the Ministry of Economy, 2,477 non-governmental organizations are currently active in Afghanistan, including 2,199 domestic organizations and 278 foreign ones.

## Taliban flog 52 people in one month as corporal punishments continue

KABUL (Amu TV): Over the past month, the Taliban have publicly flogged 52 individuals, including 10 women, across 14 provinces of the country, according to statements released by the Taliban's Supreme Court. The individuals were accused of crimes such as extramarital relationships, theft, fraud, and sodomy, with the punishments carried out in full view of local residents. These actions have drawn sharp criticism from human rights advocates and Afghan citizens, who are urging the international community to take action against the resurgence of corporal punishment in the country. Despite widespread international criticism and calls from human rights organizations to end public corporal punishment, the Taliban have ramped up such practices under the rulings of their Supreme Court. An investigation by Amu, based on statements from the Taliban's judiciary, reveals that the Taliban have conducted public floggings in provinces including Kabul, Parwan, Balkh, Maidan Wardak, Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kapisa, Kunduz, Faryab, Badakhshan, Samangan, Ghazni, and Ghor. The highest number of cases occurred in Khost, which has seen 38 recorded instances of flogging over the past two months. From November 22 to December 21, 2023, the Taliban reportedly subjected the accused to public lashings for crimes labeled as "moral corruption," extramarital affairs, theft, fraud, and same-sex relations. Last month alone, an additional 123 individuals were flogged under similar accusations. Human rights advocates, alongside global organizations, have strongly condemned the Taliban's escalating use of public punishment. Mina Rafiq, a human rights activist, called on the United Nations and the international community to intervene. "These acts of flogging and stoning are on the rise, and they violate basic human rights," Ms. Rafiq said in a statement. "If the international community does not act, Afghanistan will become a hub of terror, jeopardizing global security." Some Afghan citizens echoed these concerns, highlighting the lack of due process under the Taliban's judiciary. "The floggings, especially of women, are deeply troubling," said Marwa, a Kabul resident. "These punishments are carried out without legal representation or proper trials. The international community must step in to stop such unlawful and inhumane practices." The United Nations and Amnesty International have both expressed concern over the absence of fair judicial proceedings under the Taliban and have called for an immediate halt to what they describe as "cruel and inhuman" punishments. In response, the Taliban have defended their actions as being in line with Islamic law. However, critics argue that the lack of access to a fair judicial system, coupled with public executions and floggings, constitutes a serious violation of human rights.

## Girls demand education 2 years since being banned from varsity

KABUL (TOLONews): As the second anniversary of universities being closed to girls in the country approaches, some female students have once again criticized this situation. They are urging the interim government to reopen universities for them as soon as possible. Azada, a second-year university student, said: "I thought that by the month of Hamal, girls might be allowed to return to universities. Unfortunately, we have still not been permitted to go to university this year." Adiba, a graduate from the faculty of therapeutic medicine, said: "Our request to the Islamic Emirate is to open the doors of schools and universities to all girls. A society without education is a society headed towards stagnation." Zakiullah Mohammadi, a university professor, stated: "When we block higher education for our sisters, we cannot expect to progress." Ahmed al-Sharaa, the leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, said: "There are significant differences between Syria and the Taliban. The way we govern is different. Afghanistan is a tribal community, Syria is completely different. The people just don't think in the same way. The Syrian government and ruling system will be aligned with Syrian history and culture." On Qaws 29, 1401 solar year, the Ministry of Higher Education issued a statement banning female students from attending universities until further notice, a decision that sparked widespread domestic and international reactions.



## Herat shopkeepers report declining sales as economic hardship deepens

HERAT (Amu TV): Shopkeepers in Herat province raised alarm over declining sales, attributing the drop to the worsening economic conditions that have left many residents struggling to afford even basic commodities. Ghulam Farooq, a grocery store owner, said the purchasing power of residents has diminished significantly over the past year. "Our sales depend on people's economic ability. People no longer have the purchasing power for food items as they did before," he said. "This year cannot be compared to last year." Many residents, facing deteriorating financial circumstances, are now buying only enough to meet their daily needs. "People are buying just enough to avoid hunger," said Nisar Ahmad, another shopkeeper. "Last year, sales were better. This year, people are less interested in buying anything." Ahmad noted that purchasing patterns vary for those in rural areas, depending on whether they can sell their produce. "People from villages buy more food if they sell their products at a good price. If not, they buy less," he explained. The situation is particularly dire for craftsmen and daily laborers, who report earning as little as 20 to 70 Afghanis per day—amounts insufficient to cover basic expenses. "There's no business. Yesterday, until evening, I didn't earn even one Afghani," said Ghulam Mohammad, a Herat resident. "It's winter; we need coal. I have a child who drinks formula milk, and yesterday I had to borrow money."

## Two killed, three injured in Parwan traffic accident

KABUL (Amu TV): A traffic accident in the Salang district of Parwan province claimed two lives and injured three others, according to local Taliban officials. Fazl Rahman Meskinyar, a spokesperson for the Taliban police in Parwan, said the accident occurred when a taxi veered off the road and plunged into a river near the Gahwara Sang area of Salang district. The Salang accident follows one of the deadliest traffic incidents in recent memory. On Wednesday night, two passenger buses collided with gas tankers on the Kabul-Kandahar highway, resulting in more than 50 fatalities. Afghanistan's poorly maintained roads, combined with overcrowded vehicles and lax enforcement of safety regulations, have contributed to a growing number of traffic accidents across the country, underscoring the urgent need for infrastructure improvements and stricter oversight.



# US diplomats meet representatives of Syria's leader

WASHINGTON/DAMASCUS (Reuters): US diplomats visiting Damascus held Washington's first in-person official meetings with Syria's new de facto rulers led by Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham on Friday and discussed with the former Al-Qaeda affiliate the future of Syria's political transition.

The United States, other Western powers and many Syrians were glad to see militias led by HTS topple President Bashar Assad, but it is not clear whether the group will impose strict Islamic rule or show flexibility and move toward democracy. Western governments are gradually opening channels to HTS and its leader Ahmed Al-Sharaa, a former commander of an Al-Qaeda franchise in Syria, and starting to debate whether to remove the group's terrorist designation. The US delegation's trip follows contacts with France and Britain in recent days.

The State Department's top Middle East diplomat Barbara Leaf, Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs Roger Carstens and Senior Adviser Daniel Rubinstein, who now is tasked with leading the Department's Syria engagement, are the first US diplomats to travel to Damascus since Assad's rule collapsed. "They met with representatives of HTS to discuss transition principles endorsed by the United States," a State Department spokesperson said. "They also discussed regional events and the imperative of the fight against Daesh," the spokesperson added.

The delegation engaged with civil society groups and members of different communities in Syria "about their vision for the future of their country and how the United States can help support them," the spokesperson said. Days after Assad's ouster, the United States has outlined a set of principles, such as inclusivity and respect for the rights of minorities, that Washington wants included in Syria's political transition.

The delegation also worked to uncover new information about US journalist Austin Tice, who was taken captive during a reporting trip to Syria in 2012, and other American citizens who went missing under Assad. A press conference had been scheduled with the US officials but a statement issued on behalf of Leaf said it was canceled for security concerns, without providing details.

The US cut diplomatic ties with Syria and shut its embassy in Damascus in 2012. Syrian rebels seized control of Damascus on Dec. 8, forcing Assad to flee after more than 13 years of civil war and ending his family's decades-long rule. The rebel sweep ended a war that killed hundreds of

thousands, caused one of the biggest refugee crises of modern times and left cities bombed to rubble, countryside depopulated and the economy hollowed out by global sanctions.

The lightning offensive raised questions over whether the rebels will be able to ensure an orderly transition. Forces under the command of Al-Sharaa — better known as Abu Mohammed Al-Golani — installed a three-month caretaker government that had been ruling a rebel enclave in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib. Washington designated Al-Sharaa a terrorist in 2013, saying Al-Qaeda in Iraq had tasked him with overthrowing Assad's rule and establishing sharia in Syria. It said the Nusra Front, the predecessor of HTS, carried out suicide attacks that killed civilians and espoused a violent sectarian vision.

Golani said the terrorist designation was unfair and that he opposed the killing of innocent people. Washington remains concerned that Islamic State could seize the moment to resurrect and also wants to avoid any clashes in the country's northeast between Turkiye-backed rebel factions and US-allied Kurdish militia. On Friday, thousands of Syrians held a celebration at Ummayyad Square in central Damascus, in an event called for by HTS. Speakers blared revolutionary songs, while people waved the newly adopted Syrian flag and chanted slogans in support of the transnational government and against Assad.

The crowd was a mix of people from different walks of life and backgrounds: armed men in military fatigues, women — both with and without headscarves — and children. Maram, 62, said that her four children had fled Syria 11 years ago and settled in Germany and Hungary after two of her sons were detained and tortured. She has not seen them since, but they plan to return to their country to help rebuild it, she said.

"The country has been completely destroyed in every aspect," she said, adding she hoped HTS could improve things, but was watchful. "We were not accustomed to freedom or governing our own country, so we will continue to monitor until we reach our goal." There is widespread apprehension among Syrians that the new administration will gravitate toward hard-line religious rule, marginalizing minority communities and excluding women from public life. Obaida Arnout, a spokesperson for the Syrian transitional government, said this week that women's "biological and physiological nature" rendered them unfit for certain governmental jobs.

## Naqvi meets Gandapur, discuss Kurram

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi here Friday visited the office of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where he was warmly welcomed by CM Ali Amin Gandapur.

Both the leaders exchanged views on the prevailing law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and measures so far taken for an establishment of peace in Kurram tribal district. The Interior Minister assured every possible help and assistance to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for establishment of peace in the province.

He also assured full support to the KP Govt in enhancing the capacity of its law enforcement organizations. Mohsin Naqvi said that establishment of lasting peace in Kurram was first priority and underscored the need of taking solid measures with consultation of all stakeholders for maintaining peace and law and order in Kurram.

Both the leaders paid rich to all martyrs of the law enforcement organizations for their great sacrifices in war against terrorism. The Chief Minister said these martyrs were our real heroes and held their invaluable sacrifices for the nation in high esteem.

The KP CM said that people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had rendered great sacrifices for motherland. Declaring sacrifices of martyrs are unforgettable, the CM said that the scourge of terrorism would be fought collectively.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur here Friday visited the headquarter of Frontier Constabulary (FC) where they laid floral wreath on the Martyrs Monument and offered Fateha.

The Interior Minister and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa met at FC headquarter and offered prayers for martyrs of the force. Both the leaders paid rich tributes to the martyrs of FC. The Chief Minister said that Frontier Constabulary was playing a very important role in ensuring law and order in the province and announced special package for the FC martyrs in KP.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that he was proud of the brave jawans of FC. Commandant FC and other senior officials were present.

## Spain court sentences ex-IMF chief

MADRID: A Madrid court has sentenced former International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Rodrigo Rato to more than four years in prison for tax crimes, money laundering and corruption.

Judges found Rato guilty of "three offences against the Treasury, one offence of money laundering and one offence of corruption between individuals", the court said in a statement on Friday.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq along with Speakers' of provincial assembly and legislative assemblies addressing press conference.

# SBP releases first quarterly review of payment systems for FY 25

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has released its Quarterly Payment Systems Review for Q1 FY25, highlighting significant strides in Pakistan's journey toward a cashless and digitally inclusive economy. Covering the period from July to September 2024, the report mentions robust growth in digital payment adoption, infrastructure development, and a gradual shift away from cash and paper-based instruments.

Retail payments in Pakistan during Q1 FY25 grew by 8% in volume to 1,951 million with value of PKR 136 trillion. Payments through digital channels witnessed a quarterly growth of 9% by both volume and value reaching to 1,699 million amounting to PKR 36 trillion. Digital channels are now handling 87% of retail payments by volume, showcasing the public growing trust in digital payments. Mobile banking apps provided by Banks, MFBs, BBs and EMIs played a pivotal role in this growth, with 1,301 million transactions amounting to PKR 19 trillion being carried out through these apps during the quarter, reflecting a 11% rise in volume and 14% in value. The

collective number of mobile banking app users grew by 4%, reaching 96.5 million from 93.0 million in previous quarter.

E-commerce is also emerging as an integral component of Pakistan's digital payments, with a 29% increase in online e-commerce payments. Of the 118 million online e-commerce payments during the quarter, 91% were conducted through digital wallets, signifying a shift from traditional card-based systems. Complementing this growth, the number of Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals expanded to 132,224, enabling 83 million transactions worth PKR 429 billion. Furthermore, the ATM network grew to 19,170 units, facilitating 243 million transactions worth PKR 3.9 trillion, maintaining its key role as a cash withdrawal channel.

Efforts to include underserved segments have gained further momentum, with branchless banking agents playing a critical role in extending financial services especially in rural and remote areas. Over 693,178 agents processed 28 million bill payments/mobile top-ups and 75 million cash deposit and withdrawal transactions during the quarter. Retail merchants accepting digital payments

witnessed a 16% growth, driven by branchless banking initiatives that enable payments through mobile wallets, QR codes, and other digital tools. These developments underscore the importance of alternative financial channels in bridging economic disparities across regions.

The report also highlights the success of the Raast instant payment system, which processed 197 million transactions worth PKR 4.7 trillion, further enhancing the efficiency of instant payments for individuals and businesses alike. Pakistan's payment ecosystem continues to thrive due to the combined efforts of banks, fintechs, payment service providers, and regulators. This collaborative approach has fostered innovation, accessibility, and a greater sense of financial inclusion across the country.

The SBP remains committed to driving a sustainable and inclusive financial future, ensuring that digital innovation continues to empower individuals and businesses. The progress highlighted in this review reflects the nation's potential to transition toward a fully digital economy while fostering trust and reliability in financial services.

# Convocation ceremony at Pak Navy College held

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The 36th Convocation ceremony of Pakistan Navy Engineering College (PNEC) was held in Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Commander Karachi, Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi, and Rector NUST, Lt General Dr. Muhammad Zahid Latif Mirza (Retd), were also present at the event.

During the ceremony, the Chief of the Naval Staff awarded medals to 33 outstanding position holders. Additionally, Rector NUST conferred degrees upon 372 postgraduate and undergraduate students.

In his address, the Chief Guest emphasized that PNEC has consistently fostered and promoted a strong culture of research and development. He praised PNEC for launching post-



graduate and undergraduate programs in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Science, and Computer Science. He also congratulated the Rector NUST and Commandant PNEC on the inaugural graduation of BE Naval Architecture batch. The Chief Guest extended his felicitations to prize winners, graduating students, and their parents for the successful completion of their degrees. He advised the graduates to uphold

strong character, prioritize national interests over personal gains, and always seek guidance and strength from ALLAH (SWT).

Earlier, the Commandant PNEC, Commodore Mudassar Khurshid, reiterated PNEC's commitment to providing quality education across all disciplines. He also acknowledged the exceptional achievements of students in various national and international events.

# India's rowdy parliament session ends

NEW DELHI (AFP): India's winter parliament session ended on Friday after chaotic arguments and allegations of violence by lawmakers across the board, earning a stiff rebuke from the vice president for "destructive disruptions".

Police launched a formal probe against opposition Congress leader Rahul Gandhi after two ruling party lawmakers claimed they were pushed and injured in scuffles at protests outside the parliament building. The two lawmakers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rightwing ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were admitted to hospital on Thursday. The Congress party dismissed the incident as a political gimmick.

But Congress also filed a police complaint, claiming their veteran lawmaker Mallikarjun Kharge, leader

of the opposition in parliament's upper house, was injured at the same protest site, also on Thursday. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, chairman of the upper house, reprimanded lawmakers before the session came to an unceremonious end. "As parliamentarians, we are drawing severe criticism from the people of India — and rightfully so," Dhankhar said.

"These persistent disruptions are steadily eroding public trust in our democratic institutions. It is time to choose between meaningful debate and destructive disruptions." Arguments were triggered by claims of disrespect to India's independence icon and hero of the marginalised Dalit community, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. Gandhi's Congress party this week accused Home Minister Amit Shah, a close

Modi confidant, of disrespecting Ambedkar in a speech inside parliament.

Shah, Modi, and the BJP dismissed the charge and said the opposition was resorting to "malicious lies". One of the key architects of India's constitution, Ambedkar is a revered figure for India's marginalised, who credit him for many key social reforms. Modi won a third term in office this year but without the majority he enjoyed in the last two parliaments, forcing the BJP to rely on coalition allies. The opposition secured enough required seats for Gandhi to formally take up the post of leader of the opposition in parliament's lower house, which had been vacant since 2014. Gandhi, a scion of a dynasty that dominated Indian politics for decades, was briefly disqualified from parliament.

# Court dismisses pleas of PTI founder

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: An anti-terrorism court in Rawalpindi has dismissed the pleas of PTI founder Imran Khan and 10 other party leaders against their indictment in the GHQ attack case.

As per details, the court ruled that the prosecution's evidence is sufficient to start the trial, and that the indictment of the accused has already been made. The court also stated that after the indictment, requests under Section 265-D are no longer effective. Other PTI leaders whose pleas were dismissed include Ali Amin Gandapur, Kunwal Shauzab, Fawad Chaudhry, and Shibli Faraz.

# Trump warns tariffs if EU doesn't buy more oil, gas


WASHINGTON (AFP): US president-elect Donald Trump on Friday threatened the European Union (EU) with tariffs if the bloc does not reduce its "tremendous" trade gap with Washington through oil and gas purchases. "I told the European Union that they must make up their tremendous deficit with the United States by the large-scale purchase of our oil and gas," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform in the early hours of Friday.

"Otherwise, it is tariffs all the way!!!" According to US figures, goods imports from the EU were \$553.3 billion in 2022, while its exports to the bloc were \$350.8bn. This puts the US goods trade deficit with the EU at \$202.5bn that year. Trump, who takes office in January, has made sweeping threats of slapping tariffs on US trading partners — including Canada, Mexico and China — which could send reverberations across the global economy.

Accusing Canada and Mexico of allowing the United States to be flooded with illicit drugs and undocumented migrants, he had announced a 25 per

cent import tariff, while also vowing at least 10pc against China, Washington's Asia-Pacific rival. Canada, Mexico and China make up three of the biggest US trading partners. Earlier this month, the European Union concluded a massive trade deal with four South American countries — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — which aims to create a 700-million-customer free-trade area.

EU Commission Chief Ursula von der Leyen had said the agreement would build trade bridges as "strong winds are blowing in the opposite direction, towards isolation and fragmentation" — comments largely seen as a nod to Trump's threats to hike tariffs. Some analysts have said Trump's tariff threat could be bluster, or an opening shot for leverage in future trade negotiations when he comes into office. But Trump has continually insisted that "properly used" tariffs would be positive for the US economy. "Our country right now loses to everybody," he told reporters at his Florida residence earlier this week. "Tariffs will make our country rich."




## اضافی بل کے بوجھ سے بچیں

## سمجھداری سے گیس استعمال کریں

نومر توافری گیس کا استعمال اگر 0.9Hm سے زیادہ ہوگا تو گیس بل نان پروٹیکٹڈ کیٹگری میں کئی گنا بڑھ سکتا ہے



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پروٹیکٹڈ کیٹگری میں رہنے کیلئے

PID(L)1779-D/24

لچک سے بچاؤ یقینی بنائیں

روایتی گیزری بجائے انشٹنڈ گیزر یا سولر واٹر ہیٹر لگوائیں

معصرت گیس ہیزری بجائے گرم پانی کا استعمال کریں

روایتی گیزری صورت میں گیس سیورکون کے حامل گیزر کا انتخاب کریں