

Bail to Bushra Bibi rejected
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A court in Islamabad on Monday rejected the interim bail granted to Bushra Bibi, PTI founder Imran Khan's wife, in three cases for failing to deposit surety bonds. Prosecutor Iqbal Kakar and Bushra's counsel Advocate Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry appeared in the court. The prosecutor told the court that the former first lady had not deposited the bonds in these cases as yet.



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PESHAWAR: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff being briefed about ongoing security situation.

PM directs prompt completion of low-cost housing projects

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed completion of ongoing federal government's low-cost housing projects expeditiously, besides asking for collaboration with the private sector to boost investment in the housing projects.

The prime minister also instructed ensuring a third-party validation of construction in the federal government housing projects. The prime minister chaired a review meeting of the ongoing projects in the Ministry of Housing. Federal Ministers Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Ahsan Iqbal, Attaullah Tarar and other senior officials attended the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The ministry of housing informed the prime minister about the progress on the ongoing reforms and policy measures in its various departments. It was informed that consultations with all the stakeholders for amendments in the National Housing Policy 2001 had been completed and the process for its final approval would be completed by March 2025 as per the prime minister's instruction.

The meeting was further apprised that the system for allocating houses to the government employees and grant of rents had been digitized, which would help eliminate corruption and bring transparency in the system. The prime minister was also apprised of the ongoing and future projects under the Pakistan Housing Authority.

The meeting was told that work was progressing rapidly on 630 low-cost residential units in Kuchlak, Quetta and 4,112 residential units in Islamabad. The prime minister directed for prompt completion of these projects and third-party validation. It was further informed that work on 5,728 low-cost residential units in Peshawar would begin soon while



work on 5,600 residential units in Rawalpindi and Islamabad would kickstart in the near future. The prime minister directed seeking of services from the reputable construction companies for all these residential projects.

He said renowned international construction companies should be selected for projects for government employees and the public. The prime minister said selection process of the construction companies should be conducted through a transparent process and on merit, adding these projects should be completed within the stipulated time frame.

The prime minister was given a detailed briefing on the affairs of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority. The meeting was briefed on the digitization and reforms of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority, online payments, digital systems for complaint resolution, one-window operations, real-time monitoring, geo-tagging, and other reforms which were being implemented to enhance transparency and efficiency in the system.

The meeting was also informed about different projects under the authority for constructing international standard facilities in Islamabad, including a five-star hotel, hospital,

IT park, apartment complexes, and international standard schools. The prime minister directed submission of a comprehensive plan detailing construction costs and the required time for these projects.

The meeting was informed about the dissolution of PWD and other non-functional organizations. The prime minister expressed satisfaction with reduction in corruption due to the dissolution of PWD and other non-functional organizations in the ministry and also acknowledged the digitization of the current official housing allocation system. The prime minister said that they would take every possible step to provide affordable housing to every citizen of Pakistan, adding reforms were being taken to reduce corruption in the low-cost housing projects for citizens.

Due to government efforts, he observed that Pakistan's image on the global landscape had been restored and the events like international cricket matches, other sports, and global conferences were being hosted by the country. The prime minister directed that international standard hotels, hospitals, and other facilities should be established to facilitate the foreign guests and sought a comprehensive plan from the ministry in this regard.

Protection of Journalists Bill to be presented in joint session: Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday said that the Protection of Journalists Bill would be presented for approval in the joint session of the Parliament.

Replying to a question during the Question Hour session of the Lower House of the Parliament, he said that some names have been shortlisted for the appointment of the Chairperson while the Federal Union of Journalists has forwarded a name so far. Tarar added that the President of Pakistan had not given assent to the bill and returned to the House which would be presented in the joint sitting of the Parliament soon and the House would decide the matter. Earlier replying to another question, Tarar criticized the PTI parliamentarians for propagating false November 26 protests in Islamabad.

He said the 190 million pounds case was classic example of "robbing Peter to pay Paul". The minister said that the verdict on 190 million pound case was supposed to be given today, but the accused fail to appear in the court. The minister said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership had made a habit of not appearing in courts.

He reminded that the PTI had used delaying tactics for six years in for-

eign funding case. Similarly, he said in the Tosha Khana case also, they used delaying tactics and sought adjustments after adjustments. "Sometimes the PTI leaders changed the lawyers, sometimes they changed the letters of attorney," the minister remarked. He said that the innocent people never change attorneys and lawyers but it has been the practice of the PTI to use delaying tactics in court cases.

He asked why did they need to take a sealed envelope in the cabinet meeting and get its approval without opening it. He said that the then cabinet approved £190m bribe issue without knowing the facts in a sealed envelope brought by Shahzad Akbar. He remarked that 190 million pounds was a mega corruption case in the history of Pakistan and there was no example of such a big corruption in history.

Saif: 190m pounds fake case will reach its logical end

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif said on Monday that like other fake cases, the 190 million pounds case would also reach its logical conclusion.

In a statement, Saif, said that the Al-Qadir Trust was a case where money came from abroad to Pakistan, and the money is not in the accounts of the founder of PTI and Bushra Bibi, adding that neither Imran Khan nor Bushra Bibi benefited from the Al-Qadir Trust nor did the country suffer any loss. Saif termed illegal transfer of money abroad corruption. "Imran Khan did not transfer money abroad. The Al-Qadir University is promoting both religious and modern education in the country. Like other fake cases, this case will also reach its logical conclusion," he added.

Pakistan, S Arabia sign Hajj deal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah signed the annual Hajj agreement 2025 between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Under the agreement, 179,210 Pakistani pilgrims will perform Hajj this year, according to a press release received here on Monday from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The agreement includes a commitment to provide the best possible facilities for Pakistani pilgrims, who will be offered special accommodation in Mina at reduced rates.

The Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah assured to provide all possible support for better facilities for Pakistani pilgrims. To make the Hajj journey more accessible, easier, and comfortable, a short Hajj program of 20 to 25 days has been introduced. Pilgrims will have the option to choose their accommodation in Medina for a duration of four to eight days.

Each pilgrim will receive a specially designed bag containing the Pakistani flag, a QR code for identification, and relevant information. A special mobile app will provide all information to the pilgrims on their mobile phones, enabling them to stay updated about their Hajj group's information, training schedule, flight details, accommodations in Saudi Arabia, and live maps and locations of sites during Hajj.

Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain will also participate in a four-day international Hajj conference and expo organized by the Saudi Ministry of Hajj in Jeddah, where additional agreements will be made with institutions and companies responsible for providing facilities to pilgrims.

We stand united against forces of evil: COAS

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited Peshawar on Monday, where he was provided with a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation and the ongoing counter-terrorism operations targeting Fitna Al Khwarizj. Briefing was also attended by Federal Minister of Interior and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During his visit, the COAS praised the unwavering resolve and unmatched sacrifices of Pakistan Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies, who have been instrumental in dismantling terrorist networks and thwarting their nefarious agenda. He stated, "As we stand united against the forces of evil, I am immensely proud of the remarkable achievements of our security forces."

Through their dedication, courage, and supreme sacrifices, we have successfully degraded the operational capabilities of terrorist organizations, both

within our borders and beyond. Our forces have relentlessly pursued and eliminated key terrorist leaders, dismantled their infrastructure, and neutralized their cells, sending a clear message that terror has no place in our land. This war is ongoing and we would take it to its logical conclusion, InshAllah.

COAS further emphasised the relentless efforts of law enforcement agencies in ensuring the safety and security of citizens, foiling numerous attacks, and maintaining peace and order. He highlighted that every operation has been a testament to the courage, professionalism, and operational readiness of the security forces, who continue to thwart the evolving threats posed by terrorists.

The COAS made it clear that any attempt to disturb the peace of the nation will be met with decisive and overwhelming force. "The enemy may try to sow discord and fear, but we will not relent. Hostile elements will be dealt with an iron hand. They will continue to suffer heavy losses, and

their capacity to inflict harm will be decimated," said the COAS.

The COAS also lauded the exceptional morale of the troops, who remain steadfast in their commitment to safeguard the sovereignty of the nation. He affirmed that the Pakistan Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies stand as an unbreakable force, resolute in their mission to protect the motherland and its people.

COAS also separately interacted with politicians of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa belonging to different political parties. The participants resolved consensus on the need for one political voice and public support against the scourge of terrorism. The political representatives showed vivid clarity on unflinching support of the Armed Forces and LEAs in nation's fight against terror and agreed on the need for a unified front beyond political colours against the extremist philosophy of terrorist groups. Upon arrival, COAS was received by the Corps Commander Peshawar.

Security forces kill 27 terrorists in Balochistan

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in Kacchi District of Balochistan, on reported presence of terrorists in the area.

During the conduct of operation, own troops stealthily surrounded & effectively engaged the terrorists' location, and after an intense fire exchange, twenty seven terrorists were sent to hell. Multiple hideouts, including caches of arms, ammunition and explosives, were also destroyed during the operation.

The killed terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians and were highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies. Security forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan.

President Asif Ali Zardari

Monday appreciated the security forces for eliminating terrorists during operation in Kacchi, Balochistan. He lauded the bravery of forces for defeating the nefarious designs of terrorists in Balochistan.

He said the brave armed forces of Pakistan were carrying out operations for complete eradication of terrorism. The elimination of terrorists during operations was a great success of security forces. He said the nation acknowledged the role of security forces for wiping out terrorists. He said the nation was determined to completely erase terrorism from the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday appreciated officers and personnel of security forces for their successful operation against terrorists in district Kacchi, Balochistan.

He praised the professional capabilities of officers and personnel of security forces for killing 27 terrorists during operations. He said the war against terror-

ism would continue till complete elimination of this menace from the country. The whole nation stood with its brave armed forces in the war against terrorism, he said adding, "I and the whole nation pay tribute to the security forces for their fight against terrorism without caring for their lives."

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, praised the security forces for eliminating 27 terrorists during an operation in Kacchi area of Balochistan. He commended the bravery and professionalism of the forces, saying that the nation stands by its courageous armed forces.

Faisal Karim Kundi described the operation as a significant achievement in the fight against terrorism, acknowledging the sacrifices of the forces in thwarting the terrorists' evil intentions. He emphasized that Pakistan's brave military is constantly active in eliminating terrorism and their efforts are proving to be a crucial milestone for peace.

Verdict against Imran, Bushra postponed

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The verdict in the £190m Al-Qadir Trust case against former premier Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi expected to be announced on Monday has been postponed for the third time.

Imran and his wife were indicted in the case on Feb 27, 2024, shortly after the general elections. The case

alleges that Imran and Bushra Bibi obtained billions of rupees and land worth hundreds of kanals from Bahria Town Ltd for legalising Rs50 billion that was identified and returned to the country by the United Kingdom during the previous PTI government.

The pronouncement of the verdict had already been postponed twice — on Dec 23, 2024 and Jan 6,

2025. The decision will now be announced on January 17 (Friday). The judge was expected to deliver the verdict in a makeshift courtroom at Adiala Jail, where hearings of the case have continued over the past year.

Ahead of the hearing today, Imran's sisters Aleema, Noreen and Uzma Khan reached Adiala Jail to attend the hearing.

Los Angeles races to contain wildfires before severe winds return

LOS ANGELES (Reuters): Firefighters raced to contain the frontiers of two Los Angeles wildfires that burned for the sixth straight day, taking advantage of a brief respite in hazardous conditions before high winds were expected to fan the flames anew.

At least 24 people have died in what California Governor Gavin Newsom said could be the most devastating natural disaster in US history, one that has destroyed thousands of homes and forced 100,000 people to evacuate. Flames have reduced whole neighbourhoods to smoldering ruins, leveling the homes of the rich and famous and ordinary folk alike, and leaving an apocalyptic landscape. Officials said 12,300 structures have been damaged or destroyed.

"L.A. County had another night of unimaginable terror and heartbreak," Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath said. Aerial firefighters, some of them scooping

water out of the Pacific Ocean, dropped water and retardant while land crews with hand tools and hoses held the line of the Palisades Fire as it encroached on the upscale Brentwood section and other populated areas of Los Angeles.

That fire on the western side of town has consumed 23,713 acres (96 sq km) or 37 square miles and stood at 11% contained, a figure representing the percentage of the fire's perimeter that firefighters have under control. The Eaton Fire in the foothills east of Los Angeles scorched another 14,117 acres (57 sq km) or 22 square miles — itself nearly the size of Manhattan — and firefighters increased the containment to 27%, up from 15% a day earlier. North of the city, the Hurst Fire was 89% contained, and three other fires that had ravaged other parts of the county were now 100% contained, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) report-

ed, though areas within the containment lines may still be burning.

Firefighters got a temporary break from the weather this weekend as Santa Ana winds, which reached hurricane force earlier in the week, finally eased. The dry winds originating from the inland deserts had fanned flames and blew embers up to 2 miles (3 km) ahead of the front lines. But, in an area that has not received any rain of note since April, the National Weather Service forecast Santa Ana winds of up to 50 to 70 miles per hour (80 to 112 kph) would resume on Sunday night and last through Wednesday.

Officials warned the entire Los Angeles County population of nearly 10 million that anyone may be ordered to evacuate from the flames and toxic smoke. By Sunday, more than 100,000 people in Los Angeles County had been ordered to evacuate — down from a previous high of more than 150,000 — while another 87,000

faced evacuation warnings. "These winds combined with low relative humidities and low fuel moistures will keep the fire threat in all of Los Angeles County very high," Los Angeles County Fire Chief Anthony Marrone told a press conference, adding that evacuated areas may not be reopened until red flag conditions are lifted on Thursday.

Even so, schools except some in mandatory evacuation zones would reopen on Monday, after closing for all 429,000 students in the Los Angeles Unified School District on Thursday and Friday, Superintendent Alberto Carvalho announced. Newsom told NBC News the fires were likely to be the worst natural disaster in U.S. history "in terms of just the costs associated with it." The Los Angeles County Medical Examiner reported 24 deaths from the fires. Private forecaster AccuWeather has estimated the damage and economic loss at \$135 billion to \$150 bil-

lion.

To help expedite the monumental rebuilding effort ahead, Newsom signed an executive order on Sunday temporarily suspending environmental regulations for destroyed homes and businesses. Active duty military personnel are ready to support the firefighting effort. FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell said in a series of Sunday television interviews, adding the agency has urged residents to begin filing for disaster relief. Firefighters from seven states, Canada and Mexico have already converged on the Los Angeles area to help fire departments from around the state.

In Altadena on the edge of the Eaton Fire, Tristin Perez said he never left his home, defying police orders to evacuate as the fire raged down the hillside. Instead, Perez insisted on trying to save his property and his neighbors' homes. "Your front yard is on fire, palm trees lit up — it

looked like something out of a movie," Perez told Reuters in an interview in his driveway. "I did everything I could to stop the line and save my house, help save their houses."

His one-story yellow duplex survived. So did two more homes next door. Across the street, entire houses burned to the ground. "A lot of these areas still look like they were hit by a bomb. There are live electrical wires, gas lines and other hazards," said Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna. Zuzana Korda was evacuated from her home in the Fernwood neighborhood in Topanga, northwest of Los Angeles. Speaking outside a temporary assistance office at the West Hollywood Public Library, she said her landlord told her the family home was still standing, but she was anxious. "We've left everything behind. We have no insurance," Korda said. "We stand to lose everything."



KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visiting at Dr. Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital during the launch ceremony of the report on the lowest level of child mortality rate in government hospitals of Sindh organized by PALIS. —APP Photo

Tessori takes notice of three youths' abduction from Karachi

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has taken notice of the abduction of three youths from Karachi and directed the Inspector General of Sindh Police to ensure their immediate recovery.

According to a statement issued from the Sindh Governor House today, the youths, who were traveling from Karachi to Sukkur, were abducted by dacoits in the riverine area. Reports revealed that the kidnappers had chained them and were demanding a ransom of Rs6 million for their release.

Tessori expressed serious concern over the incident and urged law enforcement agencies to take swift action to rescue the victims. The governor also emphasized the impor-

ance of providing security to citizens traveling across the province.

Meanwhile, former Sindh Governor Muhammad Zubair lauded the performance of Governor Tessori, terming his initiatives significant for public welfare. Speaking at the "Governors' Summit Grand Dinner" held at the Governor House, Zubair said: "What we couldn't achieve, Kamran Khan Tessori has accomplished. His initiatives are commendable, and I wonder why I didn't take such steps during my tenure."

He also thanked Tessori for inviting him to the summit grand dinner. Zubair remarked that the Sindh Governor House was a symbol of British colonial heritage, and during his tenure, he had written to the feder-

al government to consider its transformation. He further added, "Every governor has strived to make the Governor House more accessible to the public, but Kamran Khan Tessori has truly turned it into a people's space. Millions have visited, and it has hosted various gatherings and events."

The former governor emphasized that the participation of all former governors in the summit symbolizes the strength and unity of the federation. Former Governor Mian Muhammad Soomro graced the occasion with his address, where he commended the remarkable initiatives led by Governor Sindh, emphasizing their significant impact on the welfare and betterment of the people of Sindh.

IGP champions children's health with 34 Lakh aid for officers' families



F.P. Report

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, while continuing his mission for the best health welfare of police employees' children, has released over 34 lakh rupees for the treatment of children suffering from serious illnesses of employees posted in Lahore and other districts.

According to the details, ASI Rizwan Yousaf of Lahore has been granted 19 lakh 60 thousand rupees for the cochlear implant of his 2-year-old son who is hearing impaired. Similarly, Traffic Warden Zahid Mahmood, Head Constable Safdar Iqbal, and Driver Constable Gulzar Ahmad have been granted 2.5 lakh rupees each for the treatment of their children.

Constable Muhammad Imran has been granted over 1 lakh 60 thousand rupees for the treatment of his daughter's hearing impairment.

Similarly, Sub Inspector Muhammad Bilal of Pakpattan has been granted 1.5 lakh rupees for the treat-

ment of his 1-year-old son. Constable Rafaqat Ali of Lahore has been granted 1 lakh 43 thousand rupees for the treatment of his son, while Sub Inspector Hassnain Abbas of PHP and Sweeper Muhammad Yaseen of Hafizabad have been granted 75 thousand rupees each for the treatment of their children.

Further details reveal that Constables Waheed Noor, Hafeez Akram, Taqreem Akram, and Sanitary Worker Salamat Masih have been granted over 2 lakh rupees for the treatment of their children, while Head Constable Atif Bashir, Constable Abdullah, and Assistant Supervisor Muhammad Imran have been granted over 1 lakh rupees each for the treatment of their children.

IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, after the scrutiny and approval of the Welfare Management Committee, issued the aforementioned welfare amounts. IG Punjab said that the department is further increasing resources

for the education, health, and comprehensive welfare of police employees and their families.

Meanwhile, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar met with police employees and their families. IG Punjab listened to the issues and problems of police employees and their families and issued orders for immediate relief.

Spokesperson of Punjab Police, while providing details, shared that, upon the scholarship application of Assistant Mazhar Rafiq from Lahore, orders were issued to DIG Welfare for relief.

Similarly, regarding the treatment request of Constable Abid Ali from Okara, orders were issued to DIG Welfare for relief. Likewise, in response to the treatment request of Driver Constable Jaffer Ali Nadeem from Okara, DIG Welfare was directed to provide relief, and in the case of Constable Arif Hussain from Lahore, a scholarship request was made, with relief orders issued to DIG Welfare.

The spokesperson of Punjab Police also said that, regarding the seniority request of Senior Traffic Warden Nasir Mehmood, Additional IG Punjab has directed to provide relief. A financial assistance request by Constable Syed Anwar-ul-Hassan was forwarded to DIG Welfare for relief.

Similarly, the transfer request of Head Constable Imran Shehzad was forwarded to the Additional IG Training for necessary action. The spokesperson

further shared that, in response to Senior Clerk Shah Nawaz Shoukat's request for a government flat, AIG Development was directed to provide relief on merit.



F.P. Report

BANNU: Haji Faredullah Khan, a prominent political and social figure and father of Professor Dr. Tanveer ul Haq, Registrar of Kalam Bibi Women University, Bannu, passed away on Monday.

The funeral prayer of the deceased will be offered today, Tuesday, at 2:30 PM in Ismail Khel, Bannu.

The late Haji Faredullah Khan was the father of Xen MES Zia-ul-Haq and Idris-ul-Haq of the Cancer Hospital. He was also the uncle of former provincial minister Anwar-ul-Haq, Advocate High Court Zahid-ul-Haq (former President Bar Association), and Nauman-ul-Haq.

CM Maryam vows to provide 100,000 houses to deserving families in one year

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has announced a bold initiative to provide 100,000 houses to deserving families within the next year.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of Zahra Homes/Maskan Ravi project, here on Monday, the CM expressed her satisfaction over the completion of Zahra Homes/Maskan Ravi, which has already provided homes to 100 families in just two and a half months, thanks to the efforts of RUDA and the Housing and Urban Development Department.

The CM paid tribute to the vision of PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, acknowledging his dedication to the nation's development over the past 45 years. "When it comes to progress in Pakistan, the name of Nawaz Sharif is synonymous with nuclear power, economic growth, and infrastructure development like motorways," she said.

The CM emphasized the importance of ensuring merit and transparency in the distribution of homes under the Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar program, a key initiative under which interest-free loans of up to Rs. 1.5 million are being provided to families to help them build their homes. These loans, repayable in seven years, have already helped thousands, with more houses under construction in 37 districts across the province.

CM Maryam Nawaz also revealed plans for a new scheme to provide free residential plots of three marlas to deserving individuals, further expanding access to affordable housing. "This initiative reflects my commitment to fulfilling Nawaz Sharif's dream of serving the people of Punjab," she said.

Under the Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar program, the first five houses will also be furnished as a gift. "The overwhelming positive feedback from

beneficiaries is a source of strength, and it motivates us to continue our efforts," she added.

The CM highlighted other ongoing initiatives such as the Kisan and Livestock Cards benefiting farmers, free medicines and tests at hospitals, and ongoing construction of healthcare facilities like the Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital. The Suthra Punjab program, aimed at cleaning up the province, and the construction of 400 roads were also mentioned as part of the government's development agenda.

In addressing concerns over inflation, the CM pointed out significant reductions in the prices of essential items like flour and bread, attributing this to effective governance. "The price of bread has dropped from Rs. 30 to Rs. 12, and the price of flour has also reduced," she affirmed. The CM pledged the launch of more development projects, aimed at further improving the lives of the people of Punjab.

Resolving Karachi's issues requires collaboration: mayor

KARACHI (PPI): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said today that resolving Karachi's issues requires collaboration between the federal and local governments. The economic hub, Karachi, needs collective efforts to address its problems.

According to a statement issued by He emphasized taking action against the plastic bag mafia and urged citizens to stop using plastic bags. Amendments to the laws will be introduced in the next Sindh Cabinet meeting. Modern garbage transfer stations are being established

in the city, and projects to generate gas and electricity from waste are underway.

To improve the solid waste management system in District Korangi, 30 mini dumpers and 6 large compactors have been added. Efforts to enhance the solid waste system on streets and alleys are ongoing. Karachi must be made an exemplary city, focusing on constructive politics rather than criticism. Although the solid waste system has improved, making it ideal is still a goal. More vehicles are being provided to collect garbage from neighborhoods.

The mayor expressed these views on Monday while addressing a ceremony as the chief guest at the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board's Model Colony Yard, where new vehicles for garbage collection in District Korangi were handed over. Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, Deputy Parliamentary Leader in the City Council Dil Muhammad, Managing Director Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Tariq Nizamani, representatives from a Chinese company, relevant officials, and other

elected representatives were also present.

Wahab inspected the machinery by driving a garbage-collecting motorcycle himself and interacting with the solid waste staff. He said that additional machinery is being provided in various districts of Karachi to improve the performance of the solid waste management administration, ensuring effective garbage collection from streets and neighborhoods.

District Korangi, with its large population and a significant industrial zone, holds great importance.

Commissioner reviews upcoming events planning

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Divisional Commissioner Zaid-bin-Maqsood, chairing a coordination meeting here on Monday, reviewed the important initiatives for the city's development. The district administration briefed the meeting on several key programs scheduled for February and March, including the Horse and Cattle Show, Champions Trophy, Regional Conference, and Faiz Festival. The commissioner emphasized the importance of detailed micro-planning to ensure smooth execution of these events.

In addition, the Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) provided an update on the cleanliness planning for both commercial and domestic areas in Lahore.

The meeting also focused on ongoing efforts by the Traffic Police and District Administration to remove illegal encroachments from key areas. Authorities confirmed that joint operations to clear encroachments from city intersections and major roads were continuing.

The commissioner reviewed the traffic flow measures, specifically road markings, zebra crossings, and signage, to ensure safe traffic movement during the events. Additionally, the Traffic Engineering and Planning Agency (TEPA) was directed to revisit the traffic U-turn on Jail Road to improve traffic management.

Collaboration between agencies was also a focal point of discussion, with the commissioner directing the Lahore Ring Road Authority and Traffic Police Lahore to work jointly on improving traffic discipline on service lanes. Further suggestions were discussed for better traffic flow in market areas during upcoming events.

Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza, Director General Lahore Development Authority (LDA) Tahir Farooq, DG Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Tahir Watoo, CTO Lahore Dr. Muhammad Athar Waheed participated.

The meeting underscored the importance of a unified approach to managing the city's logistics and ensuring the success of these major programs.

Gilani issues production orders of Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on the request of Senator Syed Shibli Faraz, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, has issued production orders of Senator Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhary, who is in judicial lockup at "Kot Lakhpat Jail" Lahore enabling him to attend the session of the Senate.

The Chairman Senate, considered the presence of Senator Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhary necessary during the sittings of the 345th session of the Senate. The orders have been issued in exercise of the powers conferred by rule 84 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012.

Copies of the production

orders have been forwarded to secretary interior, chief secretary Punjab and other relevant authorities for compliance.

The President, under clause (1) of Article 54 of the Constitution has summoned 345th session of the Senate to meet in the Parliament Building, Islamabad, on Tuesday, the 14th January, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

IHC adjourns Dr. Aafia release case till Jan 24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday adjourned Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's release case till January 24 and termed that the next week is important pertaining to the matter.

Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan heard the case regarding the release of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui from a US jail. Dr. Fouzia's lawyer Imran Shafiq appeared before the court and adopted the stance that neither the response to the PM's letter to the US president came so far nor was the receiving of the letter confirmed by US

authorities.

The lawyer said that his client Dr. Fouzia, the sister of Dr. Aafia, has reached the US and so far she could not meet Pakistan's ambassador to the US. At this, the court instructed the foreign office to arrange the meeting of Dr. Fouzia with Pakistan's ambassador in the US.

The bench remarked that the next week in this case is important and the court has also given instructions to the foreign office in this regard.

During the hearing of Dr. Aafia's case, the repre-

sentative of the Foreign Office informed the court that the record regarding the PM's foreign visits couldn't be presented on Monday due visit of the Secretary Foreign Affairs to China. He requested the court to grant time in this regard. The court granted time till next week for submission of the record and adjourned the case till January 24.

It may be mentioned here that the IHC's bench had sought a record regarding the foreign visits of PM in a hearing dated December 20.

Qamar honey trap case: LHC dismisses bail plea of Amna Arooj

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore High Court (LHC) division bench on Monday dismissed the bail plea of Amna Arooj, the main accused in Khalilur Rehman Qamar honey trap case, while granting bail to a co-accused, Yasir.


The bench further directed that the trial against Amna Arooj be concluded within a month.

The bench comprising LHC Chief Justice Aalia Neelum and Justice Asjad Javaid Ghural conducted hearings on post-arrest bail petitions filed by the accused.

At the start of proceedings, the defence counsel argued that the case against Amna Arooj was baseless and highlighted that the FIR was registered on July 21, 2024, besides reading out its contents. He stated that Amna is not only a property dealer but she also makes promotional videos, in response to a court query. However, the chief jus-

tice raised questions about Amna's activities, pointing out inconsistencies in the defence's claims. The chief justice further remarked that the misuse of law has

become a growing trend in the country. "A self-reliant woman who works in the property business would not remain silent in cases of harassment," she noted.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Lifestyle Housing (Block II)

NOTICE FOR PUBLIC HEARING

1. This notice is published for information of all stakeholders, general public and concerned Government agencies that EPA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has admitted the application of following project to accord Environment Approval required under Section 13 of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Act 2014.

Name of Project	Location	District
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for a project Lifestyle Housing (Block II) by Lifestyle Development (SMC-Pvt) Limited	Warsak Road Mathra	Peshawar

2. All stakeholders, general public and concerned Government agencies are invited to submit their comments/suggestions on the EIA report/Project. The comments and suggestions may be submitted to office Of Director General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 3rd floor, SDU Building, Khyber Rd, Peshawar Cantt, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, within a period of 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

3. Public Hearing will be conducted as per following schedule

Date	Day	Time	Venue
30 January 2025	Thursday	11:00 AM	Warsak Road Mathra Peshawar

4. All stakeholders, general public are invited to attend the hearing proceedings to share their proposals/ concerns/ suggestions. The EIA report is available at EPA office Peshawar, if any one wants to review the report, he/she can visit EPA office Peshawar (In Office Timing).

Director General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) EPA, 3rd floor, SDU Building, Khyber Road, Peshawar Cantt, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Phone: (091) 9210263	Lifestyle Development (SMC-Pvt) Limited Akakhel Stop, Warsak Road, P.O Mathra, Peshawar Ph: (091)-2950067
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KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
Committed to Excellence in Academics & Research

CORRIGENDUM

Reference is made to advertisement published in Daily Aaj and Daily Frontier Post dated 27/12/2024 regarding Tender Notice for “**Design, Development, Implementation, and Maintenance of Development of a Hospital Management Information System (HMIS)**” and advertisement published in Daily Mashriq and Daily Today's Muslim dated 27/12/2024 regarding Tender Notice for purchase of **Diesel Generator Set (1500 KVA) for KMU Hospital**”.

The date of submission of bids may be read as **28/01/2025 (1030 hours)** instead of **15/01/2025**, which will be opened on the same day i.e. **28/01/2025 (1100 hours)**.

CHAIRMAN PURCHASE COMMITTEE
KMU Road, Phase 5, Hayatabad Peshawar.
Web site: www.kmu.edu.pk
Ph: 091-9217703, Fax: 091-9217704

Adv #062025

KMU Media



PESHAWAR: Shafqat Ayaz, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Science, Technology, and IT in a group photo with the participants of the international conference.

KP to introduce Gandhara Knowledge Corridor: Shafqat

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is committed to leveraging modern technology to promote religious tourism and ensure world-class facilities for foreign tourists visiting the region. Highlighting the rich cultural heritage of the province, Shafqat Ayaz, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Science, Technology, and IT, proposed the establishment of the Gandhara Knowledge Corridor as a platform for knowledge sharing, technological development, and global cooperation.

Addressing an international workshop on the

Gandhara civilization at the Peshawar Museum, Shafqat Ayaz emphasized the significance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as the custodian of 90% of the heritage of the Gandhara civilization. "The Gandhara Knowledge Corridor will facilitate global research and cooperation, showcasing the positive image of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the world," he stated.

The workshop was jointly organized by the Science, Technology, and IT Department and the Archaeology Department, drawing over 40 researchers and scholars from 20 international universities across 14 countries. The international del-

egation, currently on a special visit to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, recently toured the historic Takht Bai site and is scheduled to visit Swat in the coming days. Prominent attendees included the Secretary for Science and Information Technology, the Director General of Science and IT, the Director of Archaeology Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other senior officials.

During the event, Shafqat Ayaz underscored the role of science, IT, and archaeology in preserving and presenting the various elements of the Gandhara civilization through modern research. He highlight-

ed the potential of using artificial intelligence for geological studies and creating digital archives, ensuring the effective preservation and transmission of this invaluable heritage to future generations. He also emphasized that the province offers vast opportunities for religious tourism, and the government is taking concrete steps to enhance these avenues through advanced technological tools. The workshop concluded with the distribution of honorary shields and gifts to the international participants and researchers in recognition of their contributions to the study of the Gandhara civilization.

Kundi suggests initiating global programs if KP government approves

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Kundi emphasized that negotiations are only possible with serious parties and stressed that dialogue is the only way to resolve ongoing problems.

He mentioned that the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would not receive any NRO, and criticized the shift in political allegiances, saying that people who were once unwilling to engage with certain political parties are now willing to do so.

The Governor also pointed out the changing stance of political leaders, referring to Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who had once been criticized but is now being hailed as a savior.

"As a member of the Pakistan Peoples Party, I believe in negotiations, which have always been our core principle," Kundi said.

On the issue of universities, he revealed that 26 universities in the

province do not have vice

chancellors, highlighting his role as Chancellor with the authority to nominate members for various university boards.

Furthermore, he underscored the importance of security, saying that the provincial government, including the Chief Minister is failed is to maintain law and order situations.

The Governor also criticized the lack of progress on security and development projects in the province, particularly in Kurram, where he said that the provincial government's failure to ensure law and order is preventing peace.

He also expressed concerns about corruption in the province, pointing out that law enforcement and governance have been ineffective.

In addition, Kundi expressed a lack of trust in provincial representatives on the Apex Committee, especially in relation to the involve-

ment of PTI, which he accused of facilitating terrorists.

He called for immediate attention to the deteriorating security situation, emphasizing that the situation in Kurram and across the province is worsening while the provincial government fails to take action.

Kundi also revealed that he had raised concerns with the federal government regarding the situation in Kurram.

He further pointed out the misallocation of funds received from the federal government, particularly in relation to the police force, and expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of accountability from the provincial authorities.

The Governor indicated that he would soon meet with the President Zardari to discuss the Chief Minister's involvement in terrorist activities and the growing concerns over the governance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Underpasses at five locations on University Road planned

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, has taken decisive steps to alleviate traffic congestion in the city. Notices have been issued to construct underpasses at five locations on University Road and four locations on Ring Road.

The underpasses on Ring Road will be built at Kabootar Chowk, Dullah Zak Chowk, Jamil Chowk, and Pashtakhar Chowk, while on University Road, similar measures will be taken at Board Bazaar, Town Chowk, Sherpao Hospital Chowk, Agra Chowk, and Tambunan Chowk, which are notorious for frequent traffic jams.



Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Director General Peshawar Development Authority, and other officials, conducted a visit to these sites.

They emphasized on expanding approved

locations and initiating a crackdown on encroachments to ensure smooth traffic flow. Additionally, directives were issued to establish a permanent Anti-Encroachment Squad and maintain traffic discipline to minimize public inconvenience.

Commissioner Riaz Khan stated that a com-

prehensive action plan, incorporating short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies, has been initiated to effectively control traffic congestion in Peshawar. He expressed optimism that timely measures will bring permanent relief and improve traffic management in the city.

PWD reviews monthly performance of FWCs, field officers

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Population Welfare Department (PWD), District Peshawar held a monthly performance review meeting for Family Welfare Assistants here on Monday.

Besides, Population Officer (PWO) Peshawar Sami Ullah Khan Khalil, Deputy District Population Officer Kashif Fida, Tehsil Supervisor Imranullah Khan, and all welfare centres' assistants attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the

monthly performance of welfare centres was reviewed, and strategies were outlined for further improvement. Sami Ullah Khalil, an officer from the Population Welfare Department, conducted a detailed evaluation of the performance and targets of welfare centres.

He directed the staff to provide the best facilities and address shortcomings promptly.

Family Welfare Assistants were instructed to ensure regular attendance and perform their

duties diligently.

Addressing the participants, Sami Ullah Khan Khalil stressed raising awareness about the importance of proper interval between children.

They further stated that the Primary goal of the Population Welfare Department is to promote public awareness about family planning and bring about positive behavioural change.

The officials urged the staff at welfare centres to take positive steps to promote family planning and

ensure that government-provided facilities reach the public.

They reminded that the government is investing resources to improve these services, and it is the staff's responsibility to implement them effectively.

Additionally, male and female assistants were instructed to intensify awareness campaigns about dengue prevention. Residents in dengue-affected areas should be educated on precautionary measures to combat the disease effectively.

Roman and Sheryar Khan achieve academic milestones

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Roman Khan and Sheryar Khan have made their families and school proud by securing top positions in their respective classes. Roman Khan achieved first position in Class 9, demonstrating his dedication and hard work throughout the academic year. His consistent efforts and commitment to his studies have earned him well-deserved recognition. Meanwhile, his younger brother Sheryar Khan also excelled academically by securing first position in Class 6. His remarkable achievement at such a young age reflects his passion for learning and determination to succeed. Teachers and fellow students have praised his discipline and



enthusiasm for academics. Both brothers have set an inspiring example to their peers. The school administration congratulated the duo and encouraged other students to follow in their footsteps.



Private school students from Upper Dir visit KP Assembly

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the special directives of Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, the series of educational visits by schools to the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues. The purpose of these visits is to familiarize the younger generation with the significance of the parliament, the legislative process, and the historical and practical role of the Assembly.

As part of this initiative, a comprehensive educational visit was organized today for the students of a private school from Upper Dir. During the visit, students were provided with

detailed insights into the parliamentary affairs and legislative process of the Assembly.

The visit began with a detailed briefing by the Special Secretary of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Syed Waqar Shah. He enlightened the

students about the legislative framework, rules and procedures of the Assembly, and various aspects of its administrative structure. The students actively participated by asking intriguing questions, which were answered comprehensively.



The students were also given a guided tour of key locations, including the Assembly Hall, the chambers of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, and other significant areas of the Assembly. They observed the daily functions of the Assembly closely and showed keen interest in understanding the legislative procedures.

The students expressed their gratitude to the leadership of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, particularly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati, and the Assembly administration for facilitating this informative visit.

They regarded the initiative as an excellent opportunity for enhancing their knowledge and awareness.

Beggary: Desperate pleas for alms agitate city's residents

PESHAWAR (APP): As the dawn of the New Year 2025 emerged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a troubling sight in the form of an influx of beggars resurfaced in Peshawar with begging bowls everywhere.

The streets, bazaars, and public spaces in most parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially in Peshawar are once again dominated by professional and nonprofessional beggars, who are gripping the attention of passersby with outstretched hands and desperate pleas for alms and charity.

The beggars ranging from elderly and sick to young children, swarmed around the busiest areas in hopes of securing a living by exploiting the goodwill of the city's residents.

In Peshawar, the most well-known areas includ-

ing Qissa Khwani Bazaar, Hashtnagri, Gantagar, Firdus, Nothia, Tehkal, Gulbahar, Faqirabad, Karimpura, Saddar, and beyond — beggars are a common sight, positioned strategically near shopping malls, mosques, road signals, bus terminals, and traffic intersections.

These key points are often teeming with people, making them ideal spots for beggars to appeal to the generosity of the city's shoppers, travellers, and commuters.

With each passing day, the number of beggars, including families with children and elderly people suffering from debilitating conditions, appears to grow in KP due to unemployment, poverty, and social marginalization.

"I started begging after the death of my father

Shamas Khan, who died due to lung cancer," said Mustafa Khan, a professional beggar at Hashtnagri bazaar.

"I was left with no other option but to start begging to repay the huge amount borrowed by my mother for treatment of my father who left me at a very young age," Mustafa told APP with sobbing eyes.

Fayaz Khan, a retired school teacher said that he was busy shopping along with his family at Qissa Khwani bazaar Peshawar last night when a teenage beggar with a black color in hand rushed towards him, asking for money or otherwise his clothes would be made dirty.

"In order to save my clothes, I immediately offered him Rs50, which was refused. On several requests, the beggar accepted Rs. 100 and

started running towards other shoppers by using the same technique that was intolerable in a civilized society," Fayaz said.

The unchecked beggars in Peshawar had made it difficult for people to complete shopping for their children ahead of the end of winter vacations.

He urged the government to take instant action against beggars in the city so that people could do their shopping easily.

Asif Yousafzai, Advocate Supreme Court said that beggary has been declared illegal under West Pakistan Loitering Ordinance 1958, adding that unfortunately this law had not been fully implemented in KP, resulting in a substantial increase in the number of beggars, especially children and

women at Peshawar.

"In Pakistan, begging is unlawful under the said Ordinance 1958, under which beggars or parents of children beggars can be jailed for up to three years," he said, adding the central and provincial laws such as Control of Narcotics Substance Act 1997, West Pakistan Vagrancy Ordinance 1959, Pakistan Employment of Children Act 1991, KP Child Protection and Welfare Act (KPCPPWA) 2010 and KP Orphanage Supervision and Control Act 1976 had been promulgated to check drug addiction and streets begging but the dream of begging free KP was yet to be materialized.

KPCPPWA was enacted in 2010 to protect the rights of women and children, but it has not been fully implemented fully, resulting in an increase in

the number of beggars.

The senior lawyer said the role of the Child Welfare Commission (CWC) was very important to protect child beggars, urging the KP Government to impose a ban on child beggars on the pattern of Sindh province and direct the social welfare department to pick child beggars from markets, roads, traffic signals, streets and rehabilitate them at their welfare centers.

Habib Afridi, Director Social Welfare Department said that beggary was a social problem mostly caused by poverty, unemployment, drug addiction, and social marginalization.

He said that an anti-beggary campaign has been started for rehabilitation of beggars, and special children and the empowerment of poor women in the province.

Syed Qasim Ali Shah, KP minister for social welfare said the government was taking steps to eliminate the scourge of begging from society and make beggars a productive part of the community.

He said that about Rs. 320 million are allocated for the rehabilitation of 2,000 beggars and drug addicts under Phase III of the Drugs and Beggars Free Peshawar initiative.

The government has launched special projects to integrate beggars into society as productive members and mentioned that an agreement has been signed with TEVTA to help achieve this key objective.

The needy children involved in beggary would be sent to Zamung Kor (own house), adding the action plan against beggary is estimated to

cost Rs. 23 million per year.

The minister said that authorities were directed to propose necessary amendments in the legal framework to tighten punishments against professional beggars.

The minister said it has been decided to establish a special task force to ensure speedy implementation of an action plan against beggary and drug addiction in the provincial capital and private sector institutions/organizations with expertise in the relevant field were being engaged for speedy rehabilitation of child beggars and drug addicts.

The KP government has planned to arrange technical and vocational courses for beggars on the pattern of rehabilitated drug addicts to make them useful citizens of society, he concluded.



In brief

Accident victims condoled F.P. Report

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Agriculture Major Muhammad Sajjad Barakwal on Monday visited various areas of District Karak to condoled with the heirs of martyrs of the Saturday's tragic traffic accident that took place in Amberi Chowk District Karak. He offered Fateha for the departed souls and expressed his heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved families. The Minister prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks. Sajjad Barkwal said the entire nation is equally sad side by side with the bereaved families in this difficult time. He appreciated the exemplary relief works of the locals after the occurrence of the tragic accident. The Minister also visited the Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar to inquire after the health of the injured of the said tragic accident the other day and prayed for their speedy recovery.

Five of family injured in Kohat F.P. Report

KOHAT: At least five members of a family including four children were injured, two of them critically when a blast occurred inside a house in Kohat district due to gas accumulation on Monday. Police informed that the incident occurred in Garhi Risaldar area of the district where gas accumulation caused a blast inside a house. The rescue workers shifted the injured to DHQ Kohat from where two of the critically injured children were referred to Peshawar. The injured were identified as the wives of Arshad, Haleema (10), Bakhtawar (7), Fatima (8), Warira (12) and Hasiba (4).

Youth stabbed to death in Haripur F.P. Report

HARIPUR: A quarrel over a petty issue in Haripur district led to the stabbing of a youth, police informed on Monday. Police said the incident occurred in the vicinity of Khalabat police station where a 27-year-old youth, Muhammad Azhar was stabbed to death during a brawl. The youth was stabbed multiple times which led to his instant death on the spot. Police shifted the body of the youth to a trauma center and registered a case under Act 302. A search operation was initiated to arrest the stabber.

Govt initiates several projects F.P. Report

HAFAZABAD: Chief Minister's Coordinator for Population Welfare, Punjab, Saira Afzal Tarar presided over the meeting of District Development Coordinator Committee, and reviews progress on ongoing development projects Hafizabad district. Deputy Commissioner Abdul Tazzaq, MPA Aoun Jhangir Bhatti, officer of different departments were present while Saira Afzal Tarar said that present government is taking all possible measures to upgrade living standard of people across the province and billions of rupees is spending to complete development projects in the Punjab including district Hafizabad. She said that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif was introduced various programmes for providing relief to the people at their threshold whereas fruits of people friendly steps of the government were reaching to the people.



MANDI BAHAUDDIN: Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan inaugurating two projects for installation of electricity facilities.

Japan funded electricity projects inaugurated

F.P. Report

MANDI BAHAUDDIN: Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on Monday, 13th January 2025, inaugurated two projects for installation of electricity facilities in District Mandi Bahauddin, Punjab being managed by Hana Development Council, a non-governmental organization, working to improve health and infrastructure in the region, aim to uplift the quality of life in rural community, especially in Mandi Bahauddin.

The Government of Japan, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)

Program, had provided financial assistance of 92,307 USD under two projects. The grant of 42,818 USD was allocated in 2019 for provision of sustainable electricity facility to eight(8) communities, and 49,489 USD granted in 2022 to connect additional seven(7) communities in Mandi Bahauddin. The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Japanese Embassy officials, NGO Board Members and community leaders.

It is pertinent to mention here that Hana Development Council has received Japanese grant assistance three times to date, implementing projects in collaboration with the Japanese

Embassy and has been working for more than twenty years to empower the people in vulnerable areas in Pakistan.

The grant of 92,307 USD provided by the Government of Japan is utilized to improve the living environment of people in region, creating new opportunities and stimulate economic growth by ensuring access to modern energy services. His Excellency, Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, while speaking at the inaugural ceremony, congratulated Ms. Hameeda Waheeduddin, a Member of Punjab Assembly, President of the NGO, for successful completion of these important projects.

Landi Kotal Press Club cabinet takes oath

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The elected cabinet of District KhyberPress Club, Landi Kotal took oath from Provincial Minister for Religious Affairs, Auqaf and Hajj Muhammad Adnan Qadri in a gathering held in the press club hall on Monday.

Tehsil Chairman Shah Khalid, President Khyber Bar Association Farhad Afridi Advocate, tribal elders Masel Khan, notables, political workers, lawyers and local media persons were also present during the oath taking ceremony.

Among those who took oath were District Press Club President Aman Ali Shinwari, General Secretary Hijrat Ali Afridi, Finance Secretary Mian Sajid, Vice-President Rahat Shinwari and Jibrin Shinwari joint Secretary.

Addressing on the occasion the Provincial Minister said that journalism was the profession of the Prophets and fourth pillar of the state and it should play its role in the better interest of the society.

It was the main duty and responsibility of journalists to convey the right information to the people, he said, adding that the government would facilitate the local journalists. The journalist community, Khyber sacrificed their lives in the line of duty, he remarked. He maintained that efforts would be made to restore funds for the construction of the District Press Club. Earlier, the newly elected President of the press club apprised the chief guest of the problems of the local media persons.

JUI-F blames PTI govt

F.P. Report

BUNER: Jammiat-e-Ulema Islam Fazal (JUI-F) Emir Mufti Fazal Ghafoor along with a delegation visited Buner press club to congratulate new cabinet, on Monday.

Talking to media persons he mentioned core issues of Buner including bad condition of DHQ hospital Daggar and RHC Jowar which were demolished for upgradation but yet to be constructed. He shared passport supply was extremely slow while link with the CPEC Expressway and Motorway a far from dream in spite the people of Buner supported PTI for three consecutive terms.

JUI-F demanded steps from Minister Syed Fakhar Jahan Bacha Chairman DDAC Abdul Kabir Khan and MNA Barrister Gohar Khan to solve these problems immediately. He shared the difficulties faced by the people of Buner in terms of treatment due to the fact that the DHQ Hospital Daggar and RHC Jowar were demolished for upgrading in the previous government. He pointed out due to delay practice in passport the those already abroad and aspirant to go there.

He expressed regret that the elected representative of PTI are in the government for the third time in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but even though they have not yet been able to link Buner with the CPEC Expressway and Motorway due to people of Buner have to face a lot of difficulties in going to and from the outlying districts.

Focus on to provide health and education facilities

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Health, Ahtisham Khan said that the provision of health and education facilities were fundamental rights of every one and no one could be deprived of it.

He made it clear that provincial government of khyber Pakhtunkhwa had a zero-tolerance policy in this connection, adding that the health department was launching a project to provide free OPD medicines to underprivileged and needy individuals.

This project will commence at the Mardan Medical Complex. During his visit to Bacha Khan Medical College Mardan here the other day, Mr. Ahtisham Khan expressed these views while addressing to participants of a program held on the premises of Mardan Medical Complex hospital.

Apart from him, the provincial minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru, Provincial Assembly members Iftikhar Mashwani and Abdul Salam Afridi, Chairman Board of Governors Professor Dr. Arshad Javed, Bacha Khan Medical College and MMC Professor Dr. Amjad Ali, Medical Director MMC Professor Dr. Rahmanuddin, Hospital Director Professor Dr. Muhammad Fazal, Professor Dr. Mutasim Billah, Secretary BoG Azhar Khan, Director Finance Muhammad Shiraz, Nursing Director Barkatullah Yousafzai, and Director Human Resource Abidur Rehman were also present.

The advisor on health Mr. Ahtisham Khan emphasized that the development of health and education sectors was a top priority of the provincial government, and no compromise would be made to bring improvement in these sectors. "Strict action will be taken against those doctors and paramedical staff who are found responsible for negligence or incompetence while providing health services to people coming for treatment.

Benazir Children's Hospital will be provided with all necessary financial assistance to complete its remaining development projects. The provincial government

is working to improve the quality of services and ensure staff attendance in hospitals at the tehsil and district headquarters levels, aiming to reduce the burden on major hospitals and provide patients with medical facilities at their doorstep.

Meeting held: The annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the Sehat Kor Hospital, operating under the Sehat Kor Project, was held at a local hotel in Mardan on Monday. The meeting was chaired by renowned social personalities, Dr. Asad Shah and Dr. Muhammad Shoaib Khan, based in the United States and New Zealand.

The meeting was attended by a large number of members of the Executive Body of the Sehat Kor Hospital. Dr. Jawad, Project Coordinator of the Sehat Kor Hospital, presented the annual report and stated that the hospital provides free treatment to hundreds of patients daily, including men, women, children, and transgender individuals.

The hospital also offers state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and other amenities. The founding members have borne the expenses. Addressing the meeting, founding members Dr. Asad Shah and Dr. Muhammad Shoaib Khan said that, according to Allah, those who serve humanity selflessly are superior.

They claimed that the purpose of establishing the Sehat Kor Hospital was to provide free medical facilities to poor, needy, and their other family members, adding that their volunteer-doctors and other relevant medical staff were available every day for that purpose. They expressed immense pleasure and satisfaction by stating that over 13,000 patients had received free medical aid under the supervision of specialist doctors during the last one year. They vowed to continue serving poor in the future. On this occasion, awards, certificates, and cash prizes were distributed among doctors and paramedical staff who performed well as well as provided excellent volunteer services. Later, members visited the Sehat Kor Hospital in Mardan and inspected its various sections.

Reopening of Angoor Adda Gate: Discussion held

F.P. Report

WANA: A high-profile negotiation committee, comprising prominent elders, religious scholars, and business leaders of the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe, has successfully concluded discussions with the local tribes residing in this strategically significant border area. The dialogue centered on reopening of Angoor Adda Gate and reviving trade activities, crucial for the economic uplift of the region.

The delegation, led by notable figures such as Chief of Ahmadzai Tariq Khan, Malik Boz Gul, Malik Rasool Zaman, committee chairman Maulana Abdullah Nadeem, Malik

Shehryar, Maulana Sabirullah, Malik Saidra Noor, and Saifur Rehman, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, included other influential personalities. The presence of these leaders underscored the importance of the talks for both the local tribes and national interests.

During the initial Jirga, robust discussions addressed key concerns, with the local tribes underscoring their sacrifices for Pakistan's stability. "The Ahmadzai Wazir tribes on both sides of the Angoor Adda Gate have made unparalleled sacrifices for the country's stability. Despite the global powers' involvement in the region,

our patriotism remains unshaken," declared one tribal representative.

The tribes demanded streamlined access to the border gate through special identification cards or simplified procedures, citing their unwavering loyalty to the state. The delegation assured the tribes that their legitimate demands would be presented to higher authorities and efforts would be made to ensure their fulfillment.

"The patriotism of the war-affected tribes of Angoor Adda is beyond question. We are committed to amplifying their voices and addressing their concerns," stated committee chairman Maulana Abdullah Nadeem while addressing the media.

Shangla Press Club elects cabinet

F.P. Report

SHANGLA: Shangla Press Club and Shangla Union of Journalists elected Aftab Hussain elected as president, Fazal Subhan as general secretary of the club while Syed Muhammad Shah Khan Sajid as President of the Shangla Union of Journalists, and Suhail Hassan as General Secretary of the Union, on Monday.

The two rival groups, after extensive consultations and reconciliation efforts, agreed to unite for the greater cause of highlighting regional issues. Following this agreement, the elections were conducted peacefully. The results



declared Aftab Hussain as President of the Shangla Press Club, Fazal Subhan as General Secretary, Syed Muhammad Shah Khan Sajid as President of the Shangla Union of Journalists, and Suhail Hassan as General Secretary of the Union.

Other elected officials of the Press Club including Nukhare as Senior Vice President, Gohar Ali Vice President, Asmat Ali

Deputy General Secretary, Suhail Hassan as Finance Secretary, Iftikhar Hussain as Information Secretary.

The Union of Journalists, elected officials including Raza Shah Senior Vice President, Anwar Hussain, Muhammad Younas as Deputy General Secretary, Abrar Hussain: Joint Secretary, Sabir Hussain Information Secretary, Suhail Shehzad as Finance Secretary.

Commissioner commits good governance in administration

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Commissioner Malakand Muhammad Abid Khan paid a visit to the Deputy Commissioner Office Swat, where he chaired a meeting with all administrative officers. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Swat, Additional Deputy Commissioners, Tehsildars, Sub-Registrars and other staff members.

During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Swat, Shahzad Mehboob, gave a comprehensive briefing on the ongoing development projects in Swat district, highlighting the overall situation and the

challenges faced. The Additional Assistant Commissioner (Revenue) Swat also briefed the Commissioner on revenue matters, including transfers, implementation of registries, and tax collection.

Commissioner Muhammad Abid Khan emphasized the importance of resolving long-pending court cases on merit and processing transfers promptly. He stressed that institutions and staff must perform their duties diligently, as negligence and corruption will not be tolerated. He instructed the Assistant Commissioners to inspect all institutions and perform their duties honestly.

To promote a positive and productive work environment, the Commissioner advised the staff to bring any problems to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner. He also planted a cedar tree in the green area of the Deputy Commissioner's office, symbolizing the importance of environmental conservation. The visit and meeting aimed to strengthen the administration's commitment to efficient governance, transparency, and public service.

By addressing the challenges faced by the district and emphasizing the importance of accountability, the Commissioner's visit is expected to have a positive impact on the region.

Students donate blood to Hamza Foundation

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services has arranged one day blood donation camp at ICMS College Charsadda, with the support of Director, Principal and Coordinator, on Monday.

On this occasion Resource Mobilization officers of Hamza Foundation Ateeq ur Rehman and Ibrar Ullah Jan delivered lectures to the Students and worthy teaching staff of the said College about different welfare activities of the organization, especially free of cost treatment providing to 1504 registered poor and underprivileged Thalassemia, Hemophilia patients of Hamza Foundation and they also delivered motivational speech to the students about the importance of Blood donation.

It was very successful



blood donation camp. They told the students that through Hamza foundation one can save three precious lives by donation of a single blood bag i.e Fresh frozen plasma, platelets and RBC. As many as 90 healthy volunteer students after medical checkup by medical officer, Dr. Kashmala Shah of Hamza Foundation, donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1504 registered poor and underprivileged Thalassemia, Hemophilia

kids and other blood disorder disease patients of Hamza Foundation.

On this special occasion, RMOs of Hamza Foundation distributed appreciation certificates among the students of PEF College. Founder Chairman Hamza Foundation Ijaz Ali Khan also thanked the entire management of the College for the arrangements of such a successful blood donation camp for the ailing humanity of KP.



Lebanese to wait for rebuilding houses

BEIRUT (AP): Six weeks into a ceasefire that halted the war between Israel and Hezbollah, many displaced Lebanese whose homes were destroyed in the fighting want to rebuild - but reconstruction and compensation are slow in coming.

Large swaths of southern and eastern Lebanon, as well as Beirut's southern suburbs, lie in ruins, tens of thousands of houses reduced to rubble in Israeli airstrikes. The World Bank estimated in a report in November - before the ceasefire later that month - that losses to Lebanon's infrastructure amount to some \$3.4 billion. In the south, residents of dozens of villages along the Lebanon-Israel border can't go back because Israeli soldiers are still there. Under the US-negotiated ceasefire deal, Israeli forces are supposed to withdraw by Jan. 26 but there are doubts they will.

Other terms of the deal are also uncertain - after Hezbollah's withdrawal, the Lebanese army is to step in and dismantle the militants' combat positions in the south. Israeli officials have complained the Lebanese troops are not moving in fast enough - to which they say the Israeli troops need to get out first. Reconstruction prospects - and who will foot the bill - remain unclear.

In 2006, after the monthlong Israel-Hezbollah war, Hezbollah financed much of the \$2.8 billion reconstruction with ally Iran's support. The Lebanese militant group has said it would do so again and has begun making some payments. But Hezbollah, which is also a powerful political party, has suffered significant losses in this latest war and for its part, Iran is now mired in a crippling economic crisis. The cash-strapped and long paralyzed Lebanese government is in little position to help and international donors may be stretched by the post-war needs in the Gaza Strip and neighboring Syria.

Many Lebanese say they are waiting for Hezbollah's promised compensation. Others say they received some money from the group - much less than the cost of the damage to their homes. Manal, a 53-year-old mother of four from the southern village of Marjayoun has been displaced with her family for over a year, since Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel on Oct. 8, 2023, in support of its ally Hamas in Gaza. Israel responded with shelling and airstrikes in southern Lebanon. In July, Manal's family heard that their home was destroyed. The family has now sought compensation from Hezbollah.

"We haven't received any money yet," said Manal, giving only her first name for fear of reprisals. "Maybe our turn hasn't arrived." On a recent day in southern Beirut, where airstrikes had hit just 100 meters (yards) away from his home,



Mohammad watched as an excavator cleared debris, dust swirling in the air. He said his father went to Hezbollah officials and got \$2,500 - not enough to cover \$4,000 worth of damage to their home. "Dad took the money and left, thinking it was pointless to argue," said Mohammad, who also gave only his first name for fear of repercussions. He said his uncle was offered only \$194 for a similarly damaged home.

When the uncle complained, Mohammad said, Hezbollah asked him, "We sacrificed our blood, what did you do in the war?" Others, however, say Hezbollah has compensated them fairly. Abdallah Skaiki, whose home - also in southern Beirut - was completely destroyed, said he received \$14,000 from Qard Al-Hasan, a Hezbollah-linked microfinance institution.

Hussein Khairiddine, director of Jihad Binaa, the construction arm of Hezbollah, said the group is doing as much as it can. Its teams have surveyed over 80% of damaged houses across Lebanon, he said. "We have begun compensating families," he said. "We have also started providing payments for a year's rent and compensations for furniture."

Khairiddin said their payments include \$8,000 for furniture and \$6,000 for a year's rent for those living in Beirut. Those who are staying elsewhere get \$4,000 in money for rent. Blueprints for each house are being prepared, he said, declining to elaborate on reconstruction plans. "We are not waiting for the government," he added. "But of course, we urge the state to act." There is little the government can do. The World Bank's report from mid-November said Lebanon's infrastructure and economic losses from the war amount to \$8.5 billion. And that estimate doesn't take into account the last month of the war, Deputy Prime Minister Saadi Chami told The Associated Press.

"The government does not have the financial resources for reconstruction," he said bluntly.

The World Bank said 99,209 housing units were damaged - and 18% of them were completely destroyed. In southern Beirut suburbs alone, satellite analysis by Lebanon's National Center for Natural Hazards and Early Warning identified 353 buildings completely destroyed and over 6,000 homes damaged. Lebanese officials have appealed to the international community for funding. The government is working with the World Bank to get an updated damage assessment and hopes to set up a multi-donor trust fund. The World Bank is also exploring an "emergency project for Lebanon," focused on targeted assistance for areas most in need, Chami said, though no concrete plan has yet emerged. "If the World Bank gets involved, it will hopefully encourage the international community to donate money," Chami said. Ali Daamouh, a Hezbollah official, said earlier this month that the group has mobilized 145 reconstruction teams, which include 1,250 engineers, 300 data analysts and hundreds of auditors - many apparently volunteers.

The compensations paid so far have come from "the Iranian people," Daamouh said, without specifying if the money was from Iran's government or private donors. Jana, a 29-year-old architect, is volunteering with Hezbollah teams to survey the damage to her hometown of Nabatiyeh in southern Lebanon. Much of the city is destroyed, including an Ottoman-era market. Her father's warehouse was hit by airstrikes, and all the medical supplies stored there were consumed by a fire. Hezbollah officials "told us not to promise people or discuss reconstruction because there is no clear plan or funding for it yet," she told the AP. She did not give her last name because she wasn't authorized to talk about Hezbollah's actions. "They advised us to offer support and show the people that someone genuinely cares about their situation," she added.

Venezuela flays new US and European sanctions

CARACAS (Reuters): Venezuela condemned new sanctions that the US, Britain, and the European Union imposed the previous day, when the country swore in President Nicolas Maduro for a third term after a six-month election dispute. "The Venezuelan Armed Forces categorically and energetically rejects the new sanctions imposed by the infamous imperial brotherhood," wrote general Domingo Hernandez Larez, head of the Strategic Operational Command of the National Armed Forces of Venezuela in a statement posed on social media.

He called the sanctions a "desperate action, outside the rule of international law." The condemnation came after outgoing US President Joe Biden's administration increased its reward to \$25 million for information leading to the arrest or conviction of Maduro on drug trafficking charges. The previous reward was \$15 million. It also issued a \$25 million reward for Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello and a \$15 million reward for Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino, as well as new sanctions against eight other officials including the head of state oil company PDVSA Hector Obregon. The US indicted Maduro and others on narcotics and corruption charges, among others, in 2020. Maduro has rejected the accusations. In Hernandez's statement, he said the Venezuelan government has carried out a "head-on attack against the scourge of drug trafficking."

The US move coincided with sanctions by Britain and the European Union, each targeting 15 officials including members of the National Electoral Council and the security forces, and Canadian sanctions targeting 14 current and former officials. Maduro, president since 2013, was declared the winner of July's election by both Venezuela's electoral authority and top court, though detailed tallies confirming his victory have never been published.

Venezuela's opposition says ballot box-level tallies show a landslide win for its former candidate Edmundo Gonzalez. Maduro's nearly 12 years in office have been marked by deep economic and social crisis and a exodus of millions of Venezuelans fleeing the country. His government has always rejected all sanctions, saying they are illegitimate measures that amount to an "economic war" designed to cripple Venezuela.

Italy releases Iranian citizen

ROME (AP): Italy released an Iranian citizen wanted by the US over a drone attack in Jordan that killed three Americans a year ago, after the Italian justice minister asked a court to revoke his arrest.

Mohammad Abedini has already returned to Iran, Iranian state TV said. He was scheduled to appear at a Milan court in connection with his bid for house arrest pending extradition to the US. Abedini was arrested on a US warrant on Dec. 16, three days before Italian journalist Cecilia Sala was detained while on a reporting trip to Iran. Sala, who was believed held as a bargaining chip for Abedini's release, returned home last week.

The US Justice Department has accused Abedini of supplying the drone technology to Iran that was used in a January 2024 attack on a US outpost in Jordan that killed three American troops. An official note on the case released by the Italian Justice Ministry said that under Italy-US extradition treaties, "only crimes that are punishable according to the laws of both sides can lead to extradition, a condition which, based on the state of documents, can't be considered as existing." The ministry said that the potential charge against Abedini - criminal association for violating the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, a US federal law - "did not correspond to any conduct recognized by Italian law as a crime." Iranian state TV said the release and return of Abedini came after Iran's foreign ministry pursued the case, as well as "talks" between Iran's intelligence ministry and the Italian intelligence service.

‘Fragile’ Mayotte still on high alert as storm moves away

PARIS (AFP): A tropical storm still presented a threat to the French territory of Mayotte, officials said, even though it was moving away after bringing torrential rains and flooding, and after killing three people in Madagascar.

The storm came as France's poorest territory, where many people live in shanty towns, was reeling from a deadly cyclone that devastated Mayotte in mid-December. Dikeledi hit the northern coast of the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar as a cyclone before weakening into a severe tropical storm.

Having swept through Mayotte, the storm was headed towards Mozambique, where Cyclone Chido killed at least 120 people in December. "It is now moving away from the island," said Meteo-France. Mayotte was placed on red alert and officials said it would remain in place. "At the moment, Dikeledi is still a threat to our territory," said Floriane Ben Hassen, director of Meteo France in Mayotte. At its closest, Dikeledi passed about 100 kilometres south of the French territory but was now 180 kilometres (111 miles) away. Dikeledi came less than a month after the most devastating cyclone to hit Mayotte in 90 years caused colossal damage in mid-

December, killing at least 39 people and injuring more than 5,600. "We still have extremely strong winds and rainfall that is just as strong," Prefect Francois-Xavier Bieuville, the top Paris-appointed official on the territory, said on television. He said a second spell of bad weather would bring heavy rain to the archipelago. Bieuville said the "territory is very fragile" but added that no casualties had been reported. A woman trapped inside her car during a flood was rescued, he added. Earlier in the day the floods were reported in the south of the archipelago, devastating the village of Mbouini, one of the few localities to have been spared by Cyclone Chido. Torrential rain was reported in Pamandzi, in the south of the island of Petite-Terre. "The worst of the rain is easing up, but we still have wind," local resident Gilles Mounier told AFP. "We've had a lot of water and my neighbour upstairs no longer has a roof, the tarpaulin has gone with the wind, so his flat is flooded and it's leaking at my place," said the 55-year-old. Three people died in the torrential rains that battered northern Madagascar, the National Office for Risk and Disaster Management (BNGRC) said. More than 900 people were also

affected. "In terms of impact, Antsiranana province in Madagascar has sustained the most intense conditions in recent hours," Meteo-France said, referring to the island's northern tip. Mayotte's population stands officially at 320,000, but there are an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 more undocumented residents living in shanty towns that were destroyed by the cyclone in December. Confined to their homes, inhabitants of Mayotte have been banned from moving around until further notice. During the alert, all travel is banned except for rescue services and other authorized personnel. But in Mamoudzou, located on Grande-Terre, the main island of Mayotte, some residents were venturing out on to the streets, a few taking advantage of the rain to wash their vehicles. On the island of Petite-Terre, some braved the red alert to shore up their roofs weakened by the rain. More than 4,000 people have been mobilised in Mayotte, including members of the police and the military. Eighty accommodation centres have been set up to host some 14,500 people, the overseas territories ministry told AFP, saying that the situation was "calm". In Mozambique, Dikeledi could approach the coast of Nampula province.

NK troops in Ukraine gain battlefield experience

KYIV, Ukraine (AP): For weeks, Ukrainian troops braced for an unfamiliar enemy: North Korean soldiers sent to bolster Moscow's forces after Ukraine launched a lightning-fast incursion and seized territory in Russia's Kursk region over the summer.

Their arrival marked a new and alarming phase in the war. And while initially inexperienced on the battlefield, North Korean troops have adapted quickly - a development that could have far-reaching consequences as they gain combat knowledge in the war against Ukraine. Unlike the Russian troops Ukraine has been battling for nearly three years, Kyiv's forces were uncertain about what to expect from this new adversary, drawn into the war after Moscow and Pyongyang signed an agreement pledging military assistance using "all means" if either were attacked.

One Ukrainian soldier who has witnessed North Koreans in battle described them as disciplined and highly methodical, saying they were more professional than their Russian counterparts. The soldier spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the sensitive military issue. However, other soldiers, including Ukrainian special forces, have shared battlefield drone footage on the Telegram messaging app mocking their tactics as out-

dated. Nevertheless, there is consensus among Ukrainian soldiers, military intelligence and others monitoring developments on the ground: While Pyongyang's troops lacked battlefield experience when they arrived, that has been changing quickly.

With 1.2 million troops, North Korea's military ranks among the largest standing armies globally. But its post-Korean War foreign engagements have been limited, leaving them inexperienced with modern warfare technologies like drones. "For the first time in decades, the North Korean army is gaining real military experience," said Andrii Yusov, spokesperson for Ukraine's military intelligence agency. "This is a global challenge - not just for Ukraine and Europe, but for the entire world." Despite Ukrainian, US and South Korean assertions that Pyongyang has sent 10,000-12,000 troops to fight alongside Russia in the Kursk border region, Moscow has never publicly acknowledged the North Korean forces. While reports of their presence first emerged in October, Ukrainian troops only confirmed engagement on the ground in December. Analysts say that without the influx of North Korean troops, Russia would have struggled to pursue its strategy of overwhelming Ukraine by throwing large numbers of soldiers into the battle for Kursk. While Moscow's counterattack in Kursk has inflicted thou-

sands of Ukrainian casualties, Kyiv's overstretched forces have managed to hold on to about half of the 984 square kilometers (380 square miles) seized in August, though the situation remains dynamic. Besides the symbolic impact of Ukraine's success capturing Russian territory, control of Kursk could also be a bargaining chip in any ceasefire negotiations. According to Ukraine's intelligence agency, the North Korean soldiers are operating alongside Russian units, with the latter providing reconnaissance and electronic warfare support. The North Koreans wear Russian military uniforms with fake military IDs in their pockets, according to a report by a Ukrainian military unit that has observed them on the battlefield, and they could easily be mistaken for Russian soldiers. The subterfuge means Moscow and "its representatives at the UN can deny the facts," said Yusov, the Ukrainian military intelligence spokesperson.

Among the things proving their presence is that they have been heard speaking Korean with North Korean accents in intercepted communications, Yusov said. He said the North Korean troops are using their own weapons and equipment and have learned to cope with the improvised explosives-laden drones that have become emblematic of the war, first-hand experience even some NATO-member countries don't have.

Taiwan reports ‘rise’ in Chinese espionage

TAIPEI (Reuters): Taiwanese charged with suspicion of spying on behalf of China rose by a third to 64 people last year, the island's National Security Bureau said, adding most were current or retired soldiers.

China has stepped up political and military pressure in recent years to back its claim that democratically governed Taiwan is its own territory. This has included daily military drills, balloons near the island and an espionage campaign. The increase in the number of Taiwanese charged with attempted espionage for China represented a "significant rise" from 48 and 10 people in 2023 and 2022, respectively, according to a report by the National Security Bureau. The report did not provide an explanation for the increase in cases.

"The Communist Party continues to use diverse channels and means to infiltrate all walks of life in order to absorb citizens to help them develop networks or gather sensitive government information," the report said. China's Taiwan Affairs Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Among those who were charged last year, two-thirds were current or retired members of the armed forces, the report said, adding these demographics were the "main target" of China's infiltration of Taiwan.

Through criminal gangs, underground banks and religious groups, some retired soldiers tried to recruit serving members of the military to acquire sensitive military information or build spy networks, the report said. In some unspecified cases, the

report said, some gangsters were asked to serve as planted agents to "sabotage" and raise China's flag in the event of a Chinese invasion; Some retired military officers were instructed to gather photos and the coordinates of a foreign government office in Taiwan in a move to build a "sniper team" for an "assassination assignment". Seven retired military officials were prosecuted last year on suspicion of Chinese espionage including mapping out the coordinates and details of several military bases and the de facto US embassy in Taipei, the official Central News Agency reported last week. Beijing has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. The government in Taipei strongly rejects the Chinese sovereignty claim and vows to defend its democracy and freedom.

Canada’s leader blunt advice for Trump: ‘Give your head a shake!’

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP): President-elect Donald Trump's remarks that Canada should become the 51st state drew condemnation and a patriotic outburst from a former Canadian prime minister who offered blunt advice to the incoming US leader: "Give your head a shake!" Jean Chrétien, who was Canada's prime minister from 1993 to 2003, joined a chorus of officials from the northern US neighbor who say Trump's remarks are no longer a joke and may undermine America's closest ally.

Canada would never agree to become part of the United States, Chrétien wrote in an article published in The Globe and Mail newspaper, celebrating his 91st birthday.

He extolled his nation's love of independence and said Trump's remarks amounted to "totally unacceptable insults" and unprecedented threats "to Canadian sovereignty." "To Donald Trump, from one old guy to another, give your head a shake!" Chrétien said. "What could make you think that

Canadians would ever give up the best country in the world - and make no mistake that is what we are - to join the United States? Trump has tossed expansionist rhetoric not just at Canada but also at other US allies, with arguments that the frontiers of American power need to be extended to the Danish territory of Greenland, and southward to include the Panama Canal. And while many European leaders have been measured in their response, Canadians have not held back.

"If you think that threatening and insulting us is going to win us over, you really don't know a thing about us," Chrétien wrote in the article. "We may look easy-going, mild-mannered. But make no mistake, we have spine and toughness." The US imports approximately 60% of its crude oil from Canada, which is also the top export destination for 36 US states. Nearly \$3.6 billion Canadian (\$2.7 billion) worth of goods and services cross the border each day.

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Impact of American curbs on Russian oil

THE United States on Friday imposed fresh curbs on Russian oil explorer and producer Gazprom and Gazprom Neft. According to reports this measure is expected to impact imports of Russian oil by China and India, and that the two Asian giants will turn more to the Middle East oil markets, and even American oil sources.

Ever since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the economic sanctions against Moscow, China and India have emerged the major buyers of Russian oil. It is reported by Western news agency Reuters that 20 per cent of China's, and 36 per cent India's, oil imports have been from Russia, and this is bound to decrease with the new sanctions.

The American sanctions were also against 143 ships, mostly of non-Western companies, carrying Russian oil exports. There is the assessment that prices are on the rise for Middle East oil. Russia has however declared that despite the intention behind the American curbs, Russia will continue with its oil and gas production, and it would support a stable global oil market.

A break in the Russian supply could make the global oil markets volatile because of unmet demand. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky welcome the fresh American curbs and said that this would be a blow to the Russian economy, and it is the effective way of ending the Russian war in Ukraine.

The economic battlefield of the Russia-Ukraine war is more complicated than the battlefield of the armies, drones and rockets of the two combatants attacking each other. The fortunes on the battlefield have been fluctuating in the last three years or so. It depends on the continuous supply of arms and munitions from Ukraine's Western allies in Europe and America. Zelensky had reminded the allies to keep to their promise of supply of arms because it is a crucial input for the Ukrainian war machine.

The Western allies, it appears, would prefer to weaken Russia economically through sanctions to end the war, rather than continue to supply arms to Ukraine. The issue of intentions does not matter because what matters is the effectiveness of a measure. If the economic sanctions work better to dissuade Russia from continuing the war, then it will be seen as the more effective one. In the end, it is the economic pressure that will be the real factor for the end of the war.

Western powers had been trying for a long time to use economic sanctions as a weapon to browbeat opponents and trading partners. The question is whether the strategy will work all the time. The experience of Russia in the last three years has shown that economic sanctions have not worked well enough to pressure Moscow to end the war in Ukraine.

The world markets are also diverse. It is possible for the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, members of the NATO and a majority of the members of the EU to cooperate in the matter of sanctions against Russia. But this might not work in the case of large economies like China and India, nor with other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The US and the EU cannot control the global sea-lanes to interrupt the flow of Russian oil. Ultimately, it is diplomacy and dialogue that will be more helpful and more effective in ending the war in Ukraine. The Americans have felt the Ukraine fatigue. Many of the former east European countries, now part of EU, do not entirely agree in the effectiveness of sanctions to stop the war. The US is not any more the dominant power in the world, and it ceased to be a superpower a long time ago. Peace has to be negotiated. It cannot be imposed.

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Syria does not need a 'handshake litmus test'

Hadia Mubarak

ON January 3, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot travelled to Damascus to meet with Syria's interim leader Ahmad al-Sharaa. The visit came less than a month after the sudden downfall of one of the most violent regimes in the Arab world – the Baathist dictatorship of President Bashar al-Assad.

There are a myriad of issues on the agenda of Syrian-European relations, not least regional stability, economic recovery, post-war justice and reconciliation, the refugee crisis and so on.

And yet, Western media chose to focus on al-Sharaa's decision to greet Baerbock with a nod and a smile instead of extending his hand to her, in observance of Muslim religious norms. Western media pundits characterised the incident as "a scandal" and a "snub".

A Politico editorial went as far as suggesting that trivialities like shaking hands should become the new "litmus test" on how "moderate" a Muslim leader really is. In the name of inclusivity, the Politico piece implied that devout male Muslim leaders like al-Sharaa should be forced to shake women's hands – regardless of what their religion instructs – or else, it should set off "alarm bells" in the West. The old adage "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" has become "when in Syria, do as the Germans and French do".

As a Syrian American whose father was exiled from Syria for 46 years and whose family friends have been tortured and killed by the al-Assad regime, I find the Western "litmus test" of Arab leadership laden with contradictions and simply offensive.

I wonder where was media's fury when the British royal, Prince Edward, explained he preferred non-physical contact with ordinary Brits trying to greet him? Should we offer grace when the motive is personal preference and anger when the motive is religious observance?

It is not surprising that Western media is trying to impose Western cultural values as the new litmus test for the "moderation" of Muslim Arab leaders. It has done so for decades.

As anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod has argued in her book, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, there is an assumption in the West "that liberal culture is the acultural norm and should be the universal standard by which to measure societies. Those who fall short are the barbarians outside the gates..."

The very characterisation of Muslim religious norms as "extreme" is a symptom of a hegemonic discourse by which Western norms are masked as universal ones.

The bad news for those who subscribe to this viewpoint is that Western cultural values are not as dominant as they may imagine.

Muslims and Arabs also have agency – the agency to choose to observe their religious values even when they defy the dominant cultural expectations in the West – although we've seen a willingness to bend those expectations when it comes to British royalty, fear of COVID-19 transmission, etc.

The media's hyperfocus on trivialities – like al-Sharaa's dress or personal mannerisms – appears trite in the context of brutal repression that Syrians have endured for 61 years under the authoritarian Baathist regime.

Syrians have their own "litmus test" for evaluating their new leadership, like the government's ability to deliver democracy and freedom, restore and improve civilian infrastructure, unite Syrians and protect constitutional rights, not whether male government members shake the hands of women. Most urgently, Syrians are concerned about their new leadership's ability to steer the country towards peace, prosperity and stability.

Half of the Syrian population is currently displaced and more than 90 percent of the people within Syria live below the poverty line. There are extreme shortages of food, water, and electricity. Unemployment is rife and the economy is in tatters.

Then there is also the trauma of living through a 13-year-long civil war and 61-year-long authoritarian rule.

There is not a single Syrian family I know that has not lost family members or friends to al-Assad's brutal repressive regime. My childhood friends lost their father, Majd Kamalmaz, a psychotherapist and a US citizen, when he went to pay condolences to his mother-in-law in Syria in 2017. A relative from Aleppo lost two teen brothers to torture in al-Assad's notorious dungeons. My female cousin spent a month in an underground prison for passing out bread in a poor neighbourhood in Damascus during the civil war. Family friends – like Heba al-Dabbagh, who spent nine years in Syrian prison in the 1980s because the regime couldn't find her brother – shared harrowing stories of torture.

After suffering for decades under one of the most brutal dictatorships in the world, Syrians are desperate for a new beginning, holding on to tattered threads of hope. They may have faced unimaginable horrors – mass killing, torture, systemic rape, repression, and displacement – but they are no helpless victims. They have a clear vision of the future they want.

If the Western media wants to get Syria right, it needs to practice introspection and recognise how its discourse and expectations may be shaped by decades of hegemonic bias. Instead of imposing a Western "litmus test" on Arab leaders, it should ask Syrians what they want in their leadership.

The price of impunity in Gaza

Dr. Ramzy Baroud

Adramatic escape was cited by Israeli media as the way that Yuval Vagdani, a soldier in the Israeli army, managed to escape justice in Brazil. Vagdani was accused by a Palestinian advocacy group, the Hind Rajab Foundation, of carrying out well-documented crimes in Gaza.

He is not the only Israeli soldier being pursued for similar crimes. According to the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation, more than 50 Israeli soldiers are wanted in countries ranging from South Africa to Sri Lanka and Sweden.

In one case, the Hind Rajab Foundation filed a complaint in a Swedish court against Boaz Ben David, an Israeli sniper from the 932 Battalion of the Nahal Brigade. He is also accused of committing war crimes in Gaza.

The Nahal Brigade has been at the heart of numerous war crimes in Gaza. Established in 1982, it is notorious for its unbridled violence against occupied Palestinians. But the brigade's role in the latest genocidal atrocities in the Strip has far exceeded its dark past.

Even if these 50 or so individuals are apprehended and sentenced, the price exacted on the Israeli army pales in comparison to the crimes it has carried out.

Numbers, though helpful, are rarely enough to convey collective pain. Medical journal The

Lancet's latest report is still worthy of reflection. Using a new data collection method called capture-recapture analysis, the report indicates that, in the first nine months of the war between October 2023 and June 2024, 64,260 Palestinians were killed.

Still, capturing and trying Israeli war criminals is not just about the fate of these individuals. It is about accountability – something that is absent from the history of Israeli human rights violations, war crimes and recurring genocides against Palestinians. The Israeli government understands that the issue now goes beyond individuals. It is about the loss of Israel's historic status as a country that stands above the law.

As a result, the Israeli army announced last week that it has decided not to publicly reveal the names of soldiers involved in the Gaza war and genocide, fearing prosecution in international courts.

However, this step is unlikely to make much difference for two reasons. First, numerous pieces of evidence against individual soldiers, whose identities are publicly known, have already been gathered or are available for future investigation. Second, much of the documentation of war crimes has been unwittingly produced by Israeli soldiers themselves.

Reassured about the lack of accountability, Israeli soldiers have post-

ed countless pieces of footage showing the abuse and torture of Palestinians in Gaza. This self-indictment will likely serve as a major body of evidence in future trials.

This cannot be viewed separately from the ongoing investigation into the Israeli genocide in Gaza by the International Court of Justice. Additionally, arrest warrants have been issued by the International Criminal Court against top Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Though these cases have moved slowly, they have set a precedent that even Israel is not immune to some measure of international accountability and justice.

Moreover, these cases have granted countries that are signatories to these two world courts the authority to investigate individual war crimes cases filed by human rights and legal advocacy groups.

Though the Hind Rajab Foundation is not the only group pursuing Israeli war criminals globally, the group's name derives from a five-year-old Palestinian girl from Gaza who was murdered by the Israeli army in January 2024, along with her family. This tragedy is a reminder that the death of innocent Palestinians will not be in vain.

Though justice may be delayed, as long as there are pursuers, it will someday be attained.

Pursuing alleged

Israeli war criminals in international and national courts is just the start of a process of accountability that will last many years. With every case, Israel will learn that the decades of US vetoes and blind Western protection and support will no longer suffice.

It was the West's shameless shielding of Israel throughout the years that allowed Israeli leaders to behave as they saw fit for Israel's so-called national security – even if it meant the extermination of the Palestinian people, as is the case today in Gaza.

Still, Western governments, including the US and UK, continue to treat wanted Israelis as sanctified heroes – not war criminals. This goes beyond accusations of double standards. It is the highest immorality and disregard for international law.

Things need to change; in fact, they are already changing.

Since the start of the Israeli war on Gaza, Tel Aviv has learned many difficult lessons. For example, its army is no longer "invincible," its economy is relatively small and highly dependent and its political system is fragile. In times of crisis, it is barely operable. It is time for Israel to learn yet another lesson: that the age of accountability has begun. Dancing round the corpses of dead Palestinians in Gaza is no longer an amusing social media post, as Israeli soldiers once thought.

I believe Donald Trump

Andrew Mitrovia

TWELVE days into 2025 and I have already broken what amounted to my one and only New Year's resolution.

I made a vow not to succumb to the easy temptation to write about the madness every time Donald Trump pens an insult-laced tweet or bombastic statement – without, of course, using spell check.

My calculation was that there would be ample opportunity after the US president-elect takes the oath of office later this month to devote time and space to his manic meanderings.

Part of the selfish reason why I promised myself that I would try to avoid, if possible, having to examine the meaning and implications of Trump's signature spasms of absurdity was to shield myself – briefly, at least – from the undeniable psychological harm he has wrought on the world's wounded psyche.

From the moment he announced his candidacy for the presidency in 2016, Trump has dominated our gaze and attention. Every depressing day since has been a cacophony of lunacy that has taken a stiff toll on the mind, spirit, and soul.

But escaping Trump has become impossible. Cloaked in enormous power, he continues – uninhibited by truth or decency – to burnish his insatiable narcissism and ego, offering us a bitter taste of the carnival of chaos looming on the not-to-distant horizon.

On Tuesday, Trump held a rambling news conference at his gilded ode to himself in Florida – Mar-a-Lago.

Among the countless examples of Trump's stream-of-consciousness inanity were his musings about the "drip, drip, drip" of faucets and gas heaters.

"[A] gas heater is much less expensive," Trump said. "It's a much better heat and, as the expression goes, you don't itch."

Ridicule aside, it would be a grave mistake to confuse Trump's stumbling incoherence with a lack of iron-clad conviction. As I have written earlier and often, Trump is, in my view, a bona fide fascist. Fascists don't bluster. Fascists don't joke. Fascists don't josh around. Trump has a plan – saturated in authoritarian means and rhetoric – to realise what he described as a "golden age" where years of "weakness" will be replaced by a return to America's rightful greatness, the jarring sequel. Trump has assembled an obedient administration to fulfil his grand ambitions for America – with little, if any, resistance from a Republican-controlled Congress, the Supreme Court, or the prostrate billionaire owners of large swaths of corporate media seeking his good graces. So, when Trump insists, again and again, that he will use military force, if necessary, to impose America's hegemony over Greenland and the Panama Canal, for "vital" national security reasons, I believe him. Trump was asked if he could "assure the world" that he would not, as president, use "economic or military coercion" to achieve his territorial aims.

Does anybody have a heater where you go and you're scratching and – that's what they want you to have."

Ladies and gentlemen, the garbled synapses of the future president of the United States at work.

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president, use "economic or military coercion" to achieve his territorial aims. His quick reply was: "No."

I believe him because, as history has confirmed, that is precisely what fascists are inclined to do.

As a Canadian, I also believe Trump when he warned that he would use America's singular economic might, in effect, to compel Canada to become the 51st state.

I did not laugh. Instead, I shuddered when Trump was asked whether he was "considering using military force to annex and acquire Canada".

The question was as remarkable as Trump's response. "No, economic force," he said, "because Canada and the United States, that would really be something."

Fascists don't "float ideas" involving seizing land, canals, or annexing sovereign nations. Once born, these "ideas" take tangible shape and form and, inevitably, blueprints are drawn up to turn them into reality.

As a result, I do not consider Trump's promised aggression even against NATO allies as a "negotiating ploy" or a familiar tool to "distract" – as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently suggested – from the onerous costs of the incoming president's proposed across-the-board tariffs on Canadian goods imported into the US.

I am convinced that an emboldened Trump means to make America's "golden age" come true – damn international law, damn territorial integrity, and damn Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty that states that an armed attack on one NATO member is an attack on all members.

It is time to dispense finally with the jejune reasoning that Trump is "kidding" when he makes "outlandish" comments such as possibly declaring war – economic or otherwise – on Greenland, Panama, or Canada.

.....

Look, Trump believes every fantastical word he utters. Canadians, among others, have to admit it and confront a fascist bully – bluntly, plainly, and loudly.

A host of federal politicians rushing to social media to post missives scoffing at Trump's "hysterical" schemes will not suffice.

The premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Andrew Furey, understood what needed to be said and how to say it.

"[Trump's] history has been to create chaos in an attempt, in a confusion with humour. But then often those become policy statements and reality. So, to dismiss it as a joke is, in my opinion, not the right thing to do," Furey said. Canada, he added, is a "strong and sovereign country and it will always be a strong and sovereign country".

Trump's threats to Canada's sovereignty were, the premier said, "completely unacceptable".

Then, Furey, to his credit, issued a stark forewarning of his own directed at Trump.

"Sovereignty comes at an incredible price; a price paid by blood by Canadians. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and to try to take that away is going to come at a significant cost."

Hear, hear, Sir. Hear, hear.

— Aljazeera

Ukraine losing ground on the battlefield as Trump team pushes ceasefire

WITH just a week before Donald Trump re-enters the White House, Ukraine is bracing for some tough choices in the coming months. Its troops are on the back foot against Russia along several parts of the long front-line, it is short of experienced soldiers and doubtful that military aid will continue to arrive at anything like the current rate.

In Kyiv, the government waits and watches the signals from Moscow and Washington and reiterates almost daily its desire for a “just peace.” Any thought of recovering the territory seized by Russia is on indefinite hold.

Despite taking heavy losses, Russian forces continue to push forward remorselessly in Donetsk region, one of four that Moscow has illegally annexed and is seeking to fully occupy. Their daily gains are measured in fields and streets as they creep towards the industrial belt of the region.

According to open source analysts WarMapper, Russia is occupying just over 18% of Ukraine – including Crimea and the areas of Donetsk and Luhansk that it had taken before 2022. Russian forces had taken some 150 square miles (400 square kilometers) in December.

Ukrainian units are vastly outnumbered in the east. One commander said this week that small groups of Russian infantry were conducting assaults from multiple directions at once, making it difficult for Ukrainian forces to concentrate fire.

“While the correlation of forces with respect to tactical fires, drones, and long-range strike appears to not be favoring either side to a significant extent, manpower remains the key differentiator between Russia and Ukraine,” says Mick Ryan, who writes the blog Futura Doctrina.

Russian units are now 3 miles (5 kilometers) from the hub of Pokrovsk and have taken control of Kurakhove and part of the town of Toretsk, according to geolocated video.

The commander of one Ukrainian battalion near Pokrovsk said Russian forces there had intensified shelling and glide-bomb strikes.

Military spokesman

Viktor Tregubov told Ukrainian television that fighting continued around Kurakhove and troops were holding out at the power plant, “so we cannot say that Russian troops have taken the town completely. But, of course, most of the town has been reduced to rubble.”

The Russian “model of simple attrition is unchanged. The enemy inevitably wears down before the Russian steamroller wears down,” as analysts Keith D. Dickson and Yuriy Holowinsky put it.

The goal for Kyiv is to defend what it still holds. Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov said at a meeting with allies – the Ukraine Defense Contact Group –

••••• **Contact Group members have committed more than \$126 billion in security assistance to Ukraine over the past three years. Partners pledged further aid in Germany this week, including 30,000 drones over the next year and more air defense systems. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said Friday that the coalition “must continue to stand foursquare with Ukraine — and to strengthen Ukraine’s hand for the negotiations that will someday bring Putin’s monstrous war to a close.” It’s the “someday” that is the burning question. Austin said of the incoming Trump administration: “I won’t speculate on which direction they would go in.” German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius even suggested the incoming US administration might discontinue the Contact Group meetings, saying that if so “it will need to continue in another form.” Negotiations on ending the conflict seem unlikely at present. “The reason is simple. Moscow is not ready for any compromises. It plays for victory, not a draw,” says Arkady Moshes, writing in 19FortyFive. “Success can be achieved on the battlefield or at the negotiating table, but it must be unquestionable. In Putin’s view, Ukraine needs to be defeated, and the West has to admit Ukraine’s – and its own – defeat publicly,” Moshes adds. Trump’s Ukraine envoy, former US general Keith Kellogg, said last week that he hoped to be able to come up with a solid and sustainable solution to the conflict within 100 days. Trump himself had said on the campaign trail that he would get the fighting stopped within 24 hours of taking office, but when asked more recently how soon he could end the conflict said: “I hope to have six months. No, I would think, I hope long before six months.”** •••••

in Germany last week that Ukraine’s priorities this year would be stabilizing the front line and strengthening its defense capabilities.

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Tim Lister and Daria Tarasova-Markina

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Kremlin’s unchanged goals square with the incoming Trump administration’s plans is unclear.

Ryan, the Futura Doctrina blogger, believes Putin “is likely to ensure that no matter what, the 100-day objective fails. He has no compelling reason to come to the table right now, thinking he has the momentum in this war.”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has given little indication of the parameters that would be acceptable to Ukraine. He said Friday: “We will undoubtedly stand firm and achieve a lasting peace for our people and our country.”

His priority is to make Ukraine’s case to Trump

they add: “Zelensky must take a strategic long view understanding that the lost territories in reality represent a gangrenous limb that must be cut off to save the healthy body.”

At an absolute minimum Moscow will demand that Ukraine cedes the territory it has lost and abandon its drive to join NATO, which Trump believes was a provocation to Russia.

Instead, Kyiv would have to negotiate other guarantees, as Zelensky said in an interview on Italian television this past week, that would “prevent Russia from returning with aggression.”

But the Kremlin is likely to demand much more.

Kyiv is “expected to accept extensive limitations on the size of its armed forces and on the kinds of weapons systems it is allowed to possess. These proposals are not a recipe for a sustainable settlement,” according to the Atlantic Council’s Serhii Kuzan.

Moscow has shown no sign of abandoning its maximalist demand for the totality of all four regions it claims to have annexed.

“This would mean handing over large amounts of unoccupied Ukrainian territory including the city of Zaporizhzhia with a population of around three quarters of a million people,” notes Kuzan.

For now, both the White House and many commentators see no desire by either side to begin talks.

“There is no expectation now that either side is ready for negotiations,” US National Security spokesman John Kirby said in recent days. While both the Kremlin and Trump have expressed readiness for a summit, premature efforts to advance negotiations on the Ukraine conflict could backfire, according to Russian commentator Georgy Bovt.

“If the meeting is held prematurely, when the conditions for peace are not yet ripe, it will do more harm than good. It could lead to an even greater escalation. At the same time, both warring sides are still betting on the continuation of hostilities, not considering their forces exhausted,” he wrote on Telegram.

— CNN

New Lebanese president embarks on reformist path

Michael Jansen

By electing Lebanon’s army chief Joseph Aoun to be the country’s 14th president parliament committed Beirut to forming a government which will enact reforms required to access \$21 billion in aid to reset the economy and reconstruct war damage. The frontrunner in a field of four serious candidates, Aoun was elected by 99 of parliament’s 128 members on January 9th.

This was the fractious parliament’s 13th try to replace President Michel Aoun (no relation) who left office when his six-year term ended in October 2022.

Joseph Aoun is the fourth consecutive president to have served as army commander. The fact that they were chosen shows just how broken the Lebanese political system has become. A fifth general, its greatest president Fuad Chehab, was elected in 1958 after Lebanon’s first brief civil conflict. As none of his three military successors have matched his service, he remains a major challenge to Joseph Aoun.

It is ironic that Joseph Aoun, the US, French and Saudi candidate, should secure more than the two-thirds of the vote needed for his elevation through the backing of Shia Amal and Hizbollah as the latter is regarded as a “terrorist” movement by the US. In recent years US aid totalled \$2.5 billion to the Lebanese army, a force of 80,000, which Washington sees as a counter to Hizbollah. Political necessity produces conflicted allies.

Ahead of the vote, Hizbollah’s candidate Suleiman Frangie dropped out of the race and the movement, along with its Amal ally, said it would submit blank ballots in the first round, but would commit the duo’s 30 votes for Aoun in the second.

A Shia source told Beirut Al-Jadeed television, “We will vote for the army commander after an excellent meeting with him that discussed all political, security and reconstruction concerns.” Once again Hizbollah asserted decisive political muscle despite the weakening of its military arm since October 2023 when its fighters staged cross-border attacks on Israel in support of Hamas in Gaza.

In recent months, Israel turned Lebanon into a war zone, assassinated

Hizbollah’s charismatic leader Hassan Nasrallah, and decimated its fighters. Hizbollah’s allies in Iran’s axis of resistance have been neutralised by Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza and the overthrow of the Assad government in Syria. To maintain influence, Hizbollah’s political wing has cultivated the Lebanese public which demands an end to war, economic recovery and reconstruction.

Aoun has, reportedly, agreed that Hizbollah-Amal backed caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati will continue in office and form a new cabinet which will be in charge until parliamentary elections in 2026. Mikati has been praised for deft handling of the country’s five-year crisis, exacerbated by the absence of a president. Despite limitations of his caretaker status, Mikati’s cabinet has met 60 times, adopted 1,211 decisions, and issued more than 3,700 decrees.

In a frontal challenge to Lebanon’s compromised and corrupted political elite, Aoun has proclaimed major reformist policies. He insists that Lebanon’s army must have a “monopoly of weapons,” without calling for Hizbollah to disarm. However, he has reassured Hizbollah by proposing a defence strategy which would involve the movement by aligning diplomatic, economic, and military efforts to address Israeli occupation, while strengthening Lebanon’s sovereignty. He stated, “I will discuss a defence strategy for the Lebanese state to fight against the Israeli invasion. And I do mean the Lebanese state.”

Until now the Lebanese state – via the army – has not seriously confronted Israel. Aoun promised to address Lebanon’s banking crisis during which deposits of citizens have been frozen and devalued. “Under my leadership, banks will be held accountable and subject to the law,” he stated. On the external plane, Aoun pledged to strengthen ties with both east and west while maintaining strong Arab ties and avoiding involvement in regional conflicts.

To improve governance, Aoun must reduce rampant corruption and enact serious reforms. This will be a monumental mission. The new govern-

ment must end the domination of the political elite which installed itself in the wake of Lebanon’s 15-year civil war (1975-1990). These politicians have refused to tackle Lebanon’s economic meltdown during which the currency has fallen in value by 90 per cent and transformed the country from being mid-income to low-income with 55 per cent of Lebanese falling below the poverty line.

UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Henniss-Plasschaert urged Aoun to act without delay. “The tasks facing the Lebanese state are too monumental to waste time,” adding, “The time has come for every decision-maker to place Lebanon’s interests above any personal or political considerations.”

Lebanese media have responded positively to Aoun’s election. During his term (2017-2024) as army chief he has managed to maintain the integrity of the army and its non-involvement in politics. The army has weathered unrest stirred by the 2019 protest movement, the 2020 explosion which devastated Beirut port, tensions fuelled by the 2022 parliamentary election, and the never-ending economic crisis.

L’Orient Today quoted a Western diplomat as saying in 2022, “Joseph Aoun is much more than a military man; he’s also a skilled political strategist. To lead an army as diverse as Lebanon’s under such circumstances requires a deep understanding of politics. He will prove himself as president.” Aoun’s most urgent task will be to direct the new army chief to deploy in Hizbollah’s area of operations in south Lebanon under the terms of the November 27th-end of January ceasefire with Israel. Hizbollah fighters are obliged to withdraw 30 kilometres across the Litani river and relinquish heavy weaponry. Only the Lebanese military personnel and UN peacekeepers are to be present in the area and along the border with Israel.

Although Hizbollah has pledged “total” cooperation, this is an extremely delicate mission since the south is Hizbollah’s stronghold and its fighters are seen by inhabitants as the only force capable of opposing Israel. It was driven by Hizbollah in May 2000 from its 22-year occupation zone in the south.

Foreign visitors need home-like convenience

Kang Bing

THE National Immigration Administration’s new immigration-friendly policies for foreign visitors announced in December are set to prompt more foreigners to visit China. The policies show China’s determination to advance high-quality opening-up at a time when some countries are resorting to protectionism and isolationism.

The new policies extend the duration of visa-free visits by foreigners to 10 days, and add 21 new ports of entry to the existing list. Since the NIA’s announcement has added a new set of countries whose nationals can enjoy visa-free entry, China now has visa-free entry arrangement with 25 countries, offers unilateral visa exemption to the nationals of 38 countries and provides visa-free visits for visitors from 54 countries.

The visa-free entry policies are yielding the desired results, as data show that in the first 11 months of last year more than 29 million foreigners visited the country — an increase of 86.2 percent year-on-year. In fact, foreign visitors taking advantage of the visa-free policies have increased by more than 132 percent. And with the latest announcement extending the duration of visa-free visit, a lot more foreigners are expected to visit China for business or for sightseeing this year.

But the authorities have to improve many things to better serve the increasing number of foreign visitors. China is now largely a

cashless society with people paying for their purchases by scanning QR codes with their mobile phones. But digital payments are not yet popular even in many developed countries, making it difficult for visiting foreigners to pay their bills. And although the authorities have taken measures to enable foreigners to swipe their credit cards and/or connect their mobile phones with their home bank accounts to make payments in many hotels, restaurants and shops, the arrangement is far from smooth.

In different cities and on different occasions, I have seen foreigners getting frustrated after being unable to pay their bus or metro fares, settle their restaurant or hotel bills, or book their tickets to enter tourist sites. Therefore, measures should be taken to make foreigners’ stay in China more convenient.

Homestays are now popular across the world. I too have opted for homestays in many countries not only because it is cheaper but also because it allows you to cook your own food and communicate with the hosts.

Unfortunately, homestays are few and far between in China for foreign visitors. Hence, the authorities should consider encouraging more Chinese people to open their doors to foreign visitors.

True, about 200 million people in China can speak some English or other foreign languages, but communication remains a problem for

foreigners visiting the country. Many cities now provide instructions and information on buses, subways and high-speed trains, and have put up road signs in English, but they are hardly of any help because they are translated from Chinese into English or other foreign languages using translation software or are printed without being professionally edited.

While strolling in and around an annual international forum venue in Hainan province a few years ago, I found at least 20 signs in English that were either inaccurate, erroneous or simply ridiculous. So I suggest that the authorities start a national campaign to correct the inaccurate and erroneous signs in public places to ensure they serve their intended purpose.

Also, policemen, taxi and bus drivers, shop assistants and restaurant employees should get foreign language training so they can be more helpful to foreign visitors.

China has more than 500,000 public toilets. They are free, clean and mostly well-maintained. But, unfortunately, few of them provide free toilet paper, which is frustrating for many foreign visitors who are not used to carrying toilet paper and soap as they are mostly available in public toilets in the West.

Perhaps installing vending machines dispensing toilet paper and soap in front of public toilets is a better way of addressing this problem.

To make China a foreign visitor-friendly country, we still need to do more.

— China Daily

Aoun ... A president to reclaim Lebanon

Ghassan Charbel

in Damascus to declare the fall of more than half a century of Assad rule. I recalled him again when the rulerless Lebanese republic elected army commander Gen. Joseph Aoun as president, tasking him with the mission of restoring the republic and reviving hope in building the state after decades of ruin.

Lebanon has witnessed a particularly terrible slide toward ruin in recent years. It experienced long years of humiliation and poverty. The more the state grew fragmented, the more the Lebanese people became isolated and orphaned. The Lebanese and non-Lebanese people lost their life savings in the banks amid the financial collapse. Citizens queued in front of banks to beg for a handful of dollars. World news agencies broadcast images of Lebanese people rummaging through garbage in search of anything that would stem their hunger. For the first time in the country’s history, youths threw themselves into the “boats of death” to escape unemployment and hunger.

Aoun feared that the army would fall apart, but his integrity encouraged the friends of Lebanon to aid the military institution and prevent it from collapsing under the weight of poverty and as

the state lay in a coma. From his office in Yarze, Aoun took bold decisions. He refused to quell protests against the political elite that caused this chaos. He also prevented the country from sliding into civil war.

The abasement of the Lebanese people became a daily occurrence. The abasement of the constitution became a rule. The parliament and the state were in disarray. The judiciary fell into the hands of those who were undermining it. Lebanon lost its regional and international friends. It lost its role and meaning. It seemed that the Lebanese patient was resisting all treatments that would save it.

With the vacancy in the presidency lasting two years yet again, it seemed that the Lebanese entity was drawing its last breath and that the segments that make up its society no longer shared the same principles and beliefs that would allow them to coexist under the same roof.

Aoun did not lose hope. Throughout the vacuum, caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati tried to salvage what he could from the last remaining pieces of the state and delay the imminent collapse. But then the surprises started to happen. Yahya Sinwar

launched the Al-Aqsa Flood Operation and Hassan Nasrallah opened the “support front” a day later and everything unraveled after that.

US envoy Amos Hochstein had to stop the Israeli machine of destruction. Lebanon had no choice but to agree to return to UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The Israeli practices after the ceasefire came into effect revealed the extent of the power imbalance. Benjamin Netanyahu had launched a war to change the features of the Middle East and his brutal military machine struck near and far, targeting Iran’s proxies and even Iran itself.

Then the seismic shift happened. Assad got on a plane that flew him to exile and Al-Sharaa took his place in Damascus, while the Iranian influence in the region waned.

The war that had taken place across several maps altered the balances of power in the region. Lebanon found itself confronted with the fallout of the ceasefire and the major change in Syria. It had to find a man who believed in the state, institutions and the state of law, and who had not played a part in the country’s ruin. Aoun’s candidacy started to build up steam.

Several blocs did not want to elect him. They view him as a difficult



PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 982 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining losing 982.77 points, a positive change of 0.87%, closing at 114,230.06 points as compared to 113,247.29 points on the last trading day.

A total of 521,209,059 shares were traded during the day as compared to 499,846,692 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs28.287 billion against Rs24.825 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 449 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 280 of

them recorded gains and 116 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 53 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 70,133,140 shares at Rs1.78 per share, Cnergyico PK with 39,599,889 shares at Rs6.95 per share and Sui South Gas with 31,998,634 shares at Rs43.76 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs499.99 per share price, closing at Rs21,400.00, whereas the runner-up was Services Industries Limited with Rs126.00 rise in its per share price to Rs1,542.18.

JDW Sugar Mills Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs55.00 per share closing at Rs913.09 followed by Sapphire Textile Mills Limited with Rs44.08 decline to close at Rs1,206.00.

Rupee sheds 10 paise against dollar: Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 10 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs278.67 against the previous day's closing of Rs278.57.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs278.95 and Rs280.45

respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs2.11 to close at Rs284.66 against the last day's closing of Rs286.77, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen went up by 02 paise and closed at Rs1.77, whereas a decrease of Rs4.05 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs338.24 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs342.29.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 and 02 paise to close at Rs75.87 and Rs74.23, respectively.

ICCI president urges govt to address SMEs challenges on priority basis

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), emphasized the pivotal role of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in a drive towards economic growth and development.

He stressed that by addressing the challenges faced by SMEs, is crucial for their development and, ultimately, for the country's economic progress, said a press release issued here on Monday.

Qureshi urged the government and relevant stakeholders to take concrete measures to resolve the key issues confronting SMEs, enabling them to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the nation's economic

prosperity.

Meanwhile, the ICCI President has welcomed the launch of a simplified SME Loan Application Form, a joint effort by the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA), the State Bank of Pakistan, and the Pakistan Banks Association to address the long-standing barriers SMEs face in accessing formal financing due to complex loan application processes and low financial literacy.

Introducing the simplified loan application form is a significant step towards promoting SME growth. However, Qureshi stressed that more needs to be done to achieve rapid and sustainable growth in the SME sector. He added that

streamlining regulations reduces bureaucratic hurdles and encourages SME growth.

Nasir Qureshi went on to say that SMEs are the economic engine of Pakistan, which contributes 40 percent of the GDP and employs nearly 80 percent of the workforce, but unfortunately, their potential to contribute to import substitution and export enhancement remained largely untapped.

Nasir Qureshi highlighted that Pakistan has over 5.2 million Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), accounting for approximately 90% of private businesses. Despite their significant presence, SMEs face numerous challenges, including limited

access to financing, frequent power outages, and soaring energy costs, which hinder their growth and ability to create jobs.

To address these issues, Qureshi emphasized the need for a supportive environment that bridges the gap between industry requirements and available skills. Organizations like SMEDA, NAVTTC, and TEVTA must be crucial in facilitating this growth.

Additionally, Qureshi suggested that SMEs' participation in international trade shows and exhibitions should be encouraged to boost their contribution to national export revenue. This would enhance their competitiveness and promote economic development in Pakistan.



KARACHI: Chairman PNSC Sultan Ahmed Chawla alongwith Executive Directors Jarar Haider Kazmi and Capt. Mustafa Kizilbash meeting with Malaysian Minister for Plantation and Commodities Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani.

Hyundai Pakistan introduces all-new SONATA N Line

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Hyundai Nishat Motors (Private) Limited (HNMP) successfully launched the highly anticipated Hyundai SONATA N Line, a true icon of power, elegance, innovation, and technology. This marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's automotive landscape.

The SONATA N Line showcases unparalleled performance combined with a sleek design, featuring a 2.5L turbocharged engine that delivers an impressive 290 horsepower and 422 Nm of torque.

Accelerating from 0 to 100 km/h in just 6.3 seconds, it promises an exhilarating driving experience. Equipped with over 20 Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), including cutting-edge safety and convenience features, this sporty sedan redefines excellence on the road.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Hassan Mansha, Chairman of Hyundai Nishat Motors, said, "As

we welcome a new year, the SONATA N Line reflects our vision for the future and our passion for innovation. It's more than just a car—it's a statement of style, technology, and performance, crafted to inspire and excite. We're committed to creating experiences that resonate with the modern driver and look forward to a year of driving innovation together."

Yamada Masaqi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hyundai Nishat Motors, added, "The SONATA N Line is the epitome of Hyundai's innovation and performance. With its unmatched blend of style, technology, and power, it has been designed to captivate the modern driver."

Sohail Nawaz, Chief Operating Officer (COO), commented, "This launch sets a new benchmark in Pakistan's premium sedan market. The SONATA N Line's advanced features and dynamic design cater perfectly to the evolving

demands of car enthusiasts."

Malik Adnan, Senior General Manager of Sales and Marketing, noted, "The SONATA N Line is a testament to Hyundai's commitment to excellence, delivering not only exceptional performance but also a uniquely elevated driving experience."

The launch event featured an exclusive preview of the SONATA N Line's innovative features and expert sessions. Attendees had the opportunity to witness the future of driving at the Expo Centre, Lahore.

Hyundai Pakistan continues to set new standards in the automotive industry by delivering high-quality vehicles that meet the evolving needs of Pakistani consumers. Launching the SONATA N Line marks another step in Hyundai's journey to provide world-class automotive experiences, solidifying its position as a leader in Pakistan's premium car market.

Chicken price increases by Rs79 at last two weeks

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the twin cities, the price of chicken increased by Rs 79 rupees per kg in the last two weeks, and the price of poultry chicken increased to Rs 412 rupees per kilo.

The last month until December 24, chicken was sold at Rs 333 rupees per kg, which was less than the previous month's price hike in poultry prices in the retail market.

The poultry consumables, chicken and eggs prices have been reduced for the past few weeks, and are once again out of reach of the public. The prices of poultry items have increased by 23.72 percent in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi during the last two weeks, which has created huge volatility in the market.

According to the market survey conducted by APP here Monday, during past two weeks in the twin cities, a 23.72 percent increase was witnessed in

the price of chicken, while a same 26 per cent increase in the price of poultry eggs in the last seven weeks.

According to the survey, the price of live chicken in the twin cities was between Rs 400 and 412 per kg from the last week of this month of January 2025. Similarly, chicken meat is sold at Rs 600 to 610 per kg in the market of both cities.

During this time, it was also found that poultry eggs used to be sold at Rs 300 to Rs 210 per dozen in the market of both cities.

Meanwhile, talking to APP, the former Chairman Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA), Chaudhry, Muhammad Ashraf said the increase in the current prices of poultry is due to demand and supply issues.

PPA ex-Chairman said that the increase in poultry business inputs and cost of doing business was seen across the country due to which the market was in crisis.

He said that many peo-

ple related to the chicken business in the country were affected by the current crisis and especially small businesses and poultry farms were closed, adding the poultry business in the four provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is suffering from the current economic crisis.

Chaudhry Ashraf said that the country's economic conditions are also an important issue and the poultry feed ingredients imported from foreign countries are very expensive, in which soybean is important.

He said that many soybean ships have stopped at Karachi port, which has an inevitable impact on poultry prices. PPA has also called for a further increase in the prices of chicken and there was an increase observed in the prices of poultry items in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

بسان حلفی فہرست وارثان
مستوفیہ روشن زری
مستوفیہ روشن زری ولد مشتاق الحق ساکن مینج جہ داد زری ملک
نوشہرہ کاہن ہوں۔ در نیوت خرم ہوں۔ یہ پوجہ گنگی بیان
کرتا ہوں۔ کمن متری والدہ مستوفیہ روشن زری
فوت ہو چکی ہے۔ جسکے وارثان مندرجہ ذیل ہیں۔ 1۔
عمران الحق پر۔ 2۔ کایت الحق پر۔ 3۔ شہاب الحق۔
4۔ محمد شہزاد پر۔ 5۔ شبنم الحق شوہر فوت شدہ ہیں۔
مندرجہ بالا مستوفیہ شری قانونی وارثان ہیں۔ اسکے علاوہ
مستوفیہ کا دیگر کوئی وارث نہ ہے۔ غلط بیان کی صورت میں
مسن میں دس روپے جرمانہ ہوگا۔ التزم۔ 03-01-2025
محمد شہزاد الحق 17202-0321589-5

LOST
Transfer Order of Plot No.S-251,
6TH STREET, Phase-VII-EXTN.,
measuring 120 square yards or
thereabout (with construction
thereon) situated in Pakistan
Defence Officers Housing
Authority, Karachi has been lost.
Finder or anyone having objection/
claim may please be contact and
Director Transfer and record,
Pakistan Defence Officers
Housing Authority Karachi within
fifteen (15) days of publication. I
have also approached Defence
Housing Authority Karachi for cer-
tified true copy of this document.
On expiry of notice period,
no objection/claim will be accept-
ed. Naveen Kumar

Court Notice
In the court Yousaf Shah Civil
Judge -I/Elaqa Qazi Kabal
District Swat Case No: 21/1 Date
of submission: 25/05/2024 Next
hearing date: 18/01/2025, Abdul
Wahab S/o Sanobar R/o Dewlai
Tehsil Kabal Swat Vs Fazal
Subhani etc. Notice to respon-
dent- (1)Mst Aini Wife of Yousaf
Shah R/o 12 impasse Charless
94,000 Cretal Country Pris
France .respondent. In above
mentioned case the respondent
can't be served in the ordinary
way, it is therefore proclaimed
that if said respondent will not
appear personally or through
dually authorized agent or
pleader in the court at 9:00 am
dated 18/01/2025 ex-parte pro-
ceeding will be held against the
mentioned respondent under my
hand and seal of this court.

Court Notice
In the Court of district Judge / Zilla
Qazi Buner at Daggar Buner. Civil
Appeal No 4/13. Institution 27/4/
2023. Date of hearing. 23/1/2025.
Sher Zada etc VS Mst Hakem
Jan etc. Notice to No.26/1.Umer
Shah.26/2. Umbar Shah sons of
Purdil Shah resident of
Surkhway Naway Kalay Buner
abroad in Malaysia & Saudi
Arab.Whereas in the above men-
tioned case the mentioned defend-
ants can not be served in the
ordinary way, it is, therefore, pro-
claimed that if the said defendants
will/shall not appear personally or
through dually authorized agent or
pleader in the court at 8:30 am
dated 23/1/2025 the proceeding
will be taken ex- parte. Given
under my hand and seal of this
Court.

Court Notice
In the Court of Javeria Sartaj
Khan Additional District Judge II
Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at
Daggar.Appeal.No. 26/13
Institution. 26/1/2024. Date of
hearing. 29/1/2025 .Sadar Khan
etc VS Ajmal Khan etc. Notice to
no .3.Shah Baroz Khan s/o
Nambat Khan. 12.Afaren Khan
s/o Redullah Khan. 19.Farman
Khan s/o Miraj Khan. 50.Ali
Bahadur s/o Mer Hider. 60.Bakht
Mand Khan. 61.Parvez Khan.
62.Hayat Khan. 63.Behram Khan
sons. 64. Msts. Mashtara.
65.Farmeen. 66.Nasreen. 67.Mst.
Riasat ds/o Bahadur. 69.Bakht
Raza d/o Jafar resident of Krapa
tehsel Daggar district Buner.
Whereas in the above men-
tioned case the mentioned
defendants can not be served in
the ordinary way, it is, therefore,
proclaimed that if the said defend-
ants will/shall not appear perso-
nally or through dually author-
ized agent or pleader in the court
at 8:30 am dated 29/1/2025 the
proceeding will be taken ex-
parte. Given under my hand and
seal of this Court.

Graana.com hosts meeting with CDA and Bahria Enclave

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Driving Growth Through Collaboration with CDA and Bahria Enclave Partners Building on the success of its previous event with affiliate partners from DHA Phase 1, Graana.com continues its commitment to elevate Pakistan's real estate sector. This time, the platform hosted an Affiliate Partner Event at its Beverly Centre Head Office, bringing together affiliate partners from CDA and Bahria Enclave. The event created a platform for open dialogue and collaboration aimed at driving growth in the real estate industry. The gathering served as a milestone in fostering partnerships to rejuvenate the secondary market and enhance the real estate experience for all stakeholders.

The event was strategically organized to brief affiliates on the benefits of

the Asset Management Division (AMD) Affiliate Program and highlight the immense potential of collaborative efforts. By uniting industry players, Graana.com seeks to address challenges within the real estate sector and capitalize on emerging opportunities to build a robust and sustainable market.

Highlighting the importance of strategic partnerships, Farhan Javed, Director Graana.com, addressed the audience, shedding light on the current dynamics of Pakistan's real estate sector.

He noted the pressing need for innovative solutions to tackle economic pressures, regulatory reforms, and market stagnation. During his address, he remarked: "Graana's AMD Affiliate Program is designed to create a win-win opportunity for all stakeholders. By working closely with our partners from CDA and Bahria

Enclave, we aim to revive the secondary market, increase business prospects, and uplift the industry as a whole. Together, we can redefine real estate transactions in Pakistan."

The AMD Affiliate Program is a cornerstone of Graana.com's vision to integrate its advanced digital marketplace with the expertise of real estate professionals. Through this program, affiliate partners gain access to exclusive inventories, official product listings, and the IMARAT Group's expansive network.

This initiative not only enhances their market reach but also ensures a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving industry. Additionally, partners are empowered to utilize Graana's cutting-edge technology to streamline property transactions and improve visibility for listings, creating a seamless experience for buyers, sellers, and investors.

Faisal Naqvi, Head of AMD, elaborated on the transformative potential of the program: "The AMD Affiliate Program is more than just a partnership; it's a collaborative approach to optimize investments and deliver greater returns. By aligning efforts with affiliates from CDA and Bahria Enclave, we aim to build a transparent, efficient, and rewarding ecosystem that propels mutual growth and drives sustainable success in the real estate sector."

The event featured insightful discussions on the future of real estate in Pakistan, with a particular focus on addressing challenges such as shifting economic conditions, tax reforms, and tighter regulations. The affiliate partners shared valuable on-ground insights, enabling Graana.com to better understand market needs and tailor its solutions accordingly.

The gathering also



included a presentation on the advanced tools and resources offered by Graana.com's digital platform. Affiliates were given an in-depth overview of how the platform's technology-driven solutions, including AI tools and real-time analytics, can enhance their business operations and expand their customer base. These resources are designed to empower affiliates to stay ahead of the competition and adapt to the changing market landscape.

In his concluding remarks, Farhan Javed emphasized the importance of unity and collaboration in navigating the challenges faced by the real estate sector. He stated: "Through collaborative and innovation, we can overcome the hurdles facing our industry and pave the way for a brighter future. Graana.com is committed to fostering meaningful partnerships and delivering solutions that not only meet market demands but also set new bench-

marks for excellence."

The event concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm among the affiliate partners, who lauded Graana.com's efforts to create a collaborative ecosystem. The inclusion of CDA and Bahria Enclave partners in the AMD Affiliate Program underscores Graana.com's dedication to bridging gaps within the industry and ensuring a streamlined experience for all stakeholders.



Warner, Williamson, Joseph and Mitchell to make their debut in HBL PSL 2025

F.P. Report

LAHORE: New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell became the first pick of the HBL PSL 2025 player Draft as the two-time winners Lahore Qalandars roped him in to bolster their batting order here at the Huzoori Bagh in Lahore Fort on Monday afternoon. Mitchell, who has played 70 T20Is, will make his HBL PSL debut later this year.

Left handed batter David Warner was pounced by 2020 HBL PSL champions Karachi Kings as they made use of the second pick in the first Platinum round. Warner, with his wealth of experience including 12,727 T20 runs in 392 T20 matches, will also be among the list of notable debutants this season.

Peshawar Zalmi used the Right to Match option for Tom Kohler-Cadmore, who was picked by Quetta Gladiators. Kohler-Cadmore has represented Zalmi for the last four HBL PSL seasons. Gladiators then picked up New Zealand's Mark Chapman, who has played 81 T20Is in his 10-year long international career and is a dual international as well.

Michael Bracewell and Matthew Short were the last two picks in the Platinum one round as they were gleaned by Multan Sultans and Islamabad United, respectively. Bracewell, an all-format player for New Zealand has played 149 T20s having scored 2744 runs and taken 66 wickets.

29-year-old Short will add to Islamabad's explo-

sive batting line-up as they look to add a fourth HBL PSL Trophy to their cabinet later this year.

In the Platinum round two, Quetta Gladiators and Karachi Kings had two picks each. Gladiators used their Wild Card pick option to snare all-rounder Faheem Ashraf to their squad.

Aggressive Kiwi opening batter Finn Allen was the other player Quetta picked in this round. Allen, 25, has played 47 T20Is for New Zealand and scored 1141 runs with the help of two centuries and at a strike rate of 158.69.

Karachi Kings strengthened their pace arsenal as they went for Adam Milne as their first pick of the Platinum two round and followed it up by using Wild Card on Mohammad Abbas Afridi.

Milne will bring in extra pace to the HBL PSL 2025 along with his experience of 186 T20s in which has bagged 213 wickets at an average of 23.61. On the other hand, Abbas Afridi, who will now ply his trade for the Kings, was the leading wicket taker – 23 wickets, for Multan Sultans in HBL PSL 2023 and also became part of the team of the tournament.

The Diamond round of picks saw Peshawar Zalmi, Islamabad United and Lahore Qalandars bag quality overseas talent in the form of Corbin Bosch, Jason Holder and Kusal Perera. Bosch was picked by Zalmi, Holder by United and Perera by Qalandars.

Peshawar Zalmi topped up their pace stocks by

HBL PSL 10 PLAYER DRAFT TEAM ROSTER						
CATEGORIES	LAHORE QALANDARS	KARACHI KINGS	QUETTA GLADIATORS	PESHAWAR ZALMI	MULTAN SULTANS	ISLAMABAD UNITED
PLATINUM	DARYL MITCHELL FAKHAR ZAMAN SHAHEEN SHAH AFRIDI	ADAM MILNE DAVID WARNER ABBAS AFRIDI	FAHEEM ASHRAF FINN ALLEN MARK CHAPMAN	BABAR AZAR SAIM AYUB TOM KOHLER-CADMORE	MICHAEL BRACEWELL MOHAMMAD RIZWAN USAMA MIR	MATTHEW SHORT NASEEM SHAH SHADAB KHAN
DIAMOND	HARIS RAUF KUSAL PERERA SIKANDAR RAZA	HASAN ALI JAMES VINCE KHUSHDIL SHAH	ABRAR AHMED MOHAMMAD AMIR RILEE ROSSOUW	CORBIN BOSCH MOHAMMAD ALI MOHAMMAD HARRIS	DAVID WILLEY IFTIKHAR AHMED USMAN KHAN	IMAD WASIM AZAM KHAN JASON HOLDER
GOLD	ABDULLAH SHAFIQUE JAHANDAD KHAN ZAMAN KHAN	AAMIR JAMAL MUHAMMAD IRFAN KHAN SHAN MASOOD	AKEAL HOSEIN SAUD SHAKEEL MOHAMMAD WASIM JNR	ABDUL SAMAD HUSSAIN TALAT NAHID RANA	CHRIS JORDAN KAMRAN GHULAM MOHAMMAD HASNAIN	BEN DWARHUIS SALMAN IRSHAD SALMAN ALI AGHA HAIDER ALI
SILVER	ASIF AFRIDI ASIF ALI DAVID WIESE MUHAMMAD AKHLAQ RISHAD HOSSAIN	ARAFAT MINHAS LITTON DAS MIR HAMZA TIM SEIFERT ZAHID MEHMUD	HASEEBULLAH KHAN KHAWAJA NAFAY KYLE JAMIESON KHURRAM SHAHZAD USMAN TARIQ	ARIF YAQOUB NAJEEBULLAH ZADRAN MAX BRYANT MEHRAN MUMTAZ SUFYAN MOQIM	AKIF JAVED GUDAKESH MOTIE JOSH LITTLE FAISAL AKRAM TAYYAB TAHIR	ANDRIES GOUS COLIN MUNRO MUHAMMAD NAWAZ RUMMAN RAEES
EMERGING	MOHAMMAD AZAB MOMIN QAMAR	FAWAD ALI RIAZULLAH	MOHAMMAD ZEESHAN HASAN NAWAZ	ALI RAZA MAAZ SADAQAT	UBAID SHAH SHAHID AZIZ	HUNAIN SHAH SAAD MASOOD
SUPPLEMENTARY	TOM CURRAN SAM BILLINGS SALMAN ALI MIRZA MOHAMMAD NAEEM	KANE WILLIAMSON MOHAMMAD NABI OMAIR BIN YOUSUF MIRZA HAMOON	KUSAL MENDIS SEAN ABBOTT SHOAIB MALIK DANISH AZIZ	ALZARRI JOSEPH AHMED DANIAL	JOHNSON CHARLES SHAI HOPE YASIR KHAN MUHAMMAD AMIR BARKI	RILEY MEREDITH RASSIE VAN DER DUSSEN

picking Bangladesh's Nahid Rana in the Gold category round one. 22-year-old Rana has impressed one and all with his express pace in his brief international career.

In the same category, Islamabad United picked Aussie left-arm fast bowler Ben Dwarshuis, who has bagged 176 T20 wickets at an average of 22 in 140 games. He will join his fellow countrymen Riley Meredith and Short on the United roster for HBL PSL 2025.

In the Silver category round three Bangladesh leg-spinner Rishad Hossain was picked up by Qalandars. In a first, United States of America's (USA) Andries Gous made it to the HBL PSL 2025 and

he will turn up for Islamabad United. Multan Sultans added Irish pacer Josh Little and West Indies' spinner Gudakesh Motie to their side during this round.

In the supplementary round one, Kane Williamson was picked by Karachi Kings, who will join his New Zealand teammate Milne. He will be one of the notable overseas signings for Kings along with Mohammad Nabi, David Warner and Litton Das.

Johnson Charles, Tom Curran, Kusal Mendis and pacer Alzarri Joseph were bagged by Sultans, Qalandars, Gladiators, and Zalmi, respectively in the supplementary round one. In the round two, Sam

Billings was snared by Qalandars who used Right to Match card against defending champions Islamabad United, who later picked up Rassie van der Dussen.

Quetta Gladiators made a strong pick in the Supplementary round two as they bagged Australia's Sean Abbott adding more pace and batting firepower to their line-up. Shai Hope was picked by Sultans while Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi will return to Karachi Kings this year.

Shoaib Malik will feature in his tenth consecutive HBL PSL edition as he was picked up by Quetta Gladiators in the Supplementary round three. Among the two

Emerging rounds of picks, notable selections were, batting prodigy Hasan Nawaz going to Gladiators' roster, while talented Maaz Sadaqat was picked up by Zalmi.

Saad Masood the right-arm leg-spinner, who can bat as well, made headlines in the recent Champions T20 Cup in Rawalpindi, found home in Islamabad United and will be marshalled by Shadab Khan himself. Hunain Shah returns to Islamabad United while Ubaid Shah was picked up by Multan Sultans.

Final Squads: Islamabad United: Matthew Short, Naseem Shah and Shadab Khan (all Platinum), Imad Wasim (mentor) and Azam Khan,

Jason Holder (both Diamond), Ben Dwarshuis, Salman Irshad, Salman Ali Agha (Brand Ambassador) and Haider Ali (all Gold), Andries Gous, Colin Munro, Muhammad Nawaz and Rumman Raees (all Silver), Hunain Shah, Saad Masood (both Emerging)

Supplementary – Riley Meredith and Rassie van der Dussen

Multan Sultans: Michael Bracewell, Mohammad Rizwan and Usama Mir (all Platinum), David Willey (mentor), Iftikhar Ahmed (Brand Ambassador) and Usman Khan (all Diamond), Chris Jordan, Kamran Ghulam and Mohammad Hasnain (all Gold), Akif Javed, Gudakesh Motie, Josh Little, Faisal Akram and Tayyab Tahir (all Silver), Ubaid Shah and Shahid Aziz (both Emerging)

Supplementary – Johnson Charles,

Muhammad Amir Barki, Shai Hope and Yasir Khan

Peshawar Zalmi: Babar Azam, Saim Ayub, Tom Kohler-Cadmore (all Platinum), Corbin Bosch, Mohammad Ali and Mohammad Harris (all Diamond), Abdul Samad, Hussain Talat and Nahid Rana (all Gold), Arif Yaqoob, Najeebullah Zadrab, Max Bryant, Mehran Mumtaz and Sufyan Moqim (Brand Ambassador) (all silver), Ali Raza and Maaz Sadaqat (both Emerging)

Supplementary – Ahmed Daniyal and Alzarri Joseph

Quetta Gladiators: Faheem Ashraf, Finn Allen and Mark Chapman

(Platinum), Abrar Ahmed,

Mohammad Amir (mentor) and Rilee Rossouw (all Diamond), Akeal Hosein, Saud Shakeel (Brand Ambassador) and Mohammad Wasim Jnr (all Gold), Haseebullah Khan, Khawaja Muhammad Nafay, Kyle Jamieson, Khurram Shahzad and Usman Tariq (all Silver), Mohammad Zeeshan and Hasan Nawaz (both Emerging)

Supplementary – Danish Aziz, Kusal Mendis, Sean Abbott and Shoaib Malik

Karachi Kings: Adam Milne, David Warner and Mohammad Abbas Afridi (all Platinum), Hasan Ali and James Vince, Khushdil Shah (all Diamond), Aamir Khan, Shan Masood (all Gold), Arafat Minhas (Brand Ambassador), Litton Das, Mir Hamza, Tim Seifert and Zahid Mehmood (all Silver), Fawad Ali and Riazullah (Emerging)

Supplementary – Kane Williamson, Mohammad Nabi, Omaid Bin Yousuf, Mirza Mamoon

Lahore Qalandars: Daryl Mitchell, Fakhar Zaman and Shaheen Shah Afridi (all Platinum), Haris Rauf (Brand Ambassador), Kusal Perera and Sikandar Raza (all Diamond), Abdullah Shafique, Jahandad Khan and Zaman Khan (all Gold), Asif Afridi, Asif Ali, David Wiese, Muhammad Akhlaq and Rishad Hossain (all Silver), Mohammad Azab and Momin Qamar (both Emerging)

Supplementary – Mohammad Naeem, Sam Billings, Salman Ali Mirza and Tom Curran

Fury announces retirement from boxing again

LONDON (BBC): Former world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury has announced his retirement from boxing.

Fury last fought in December when he lost his rematch against WBA (Super), WBC and WBO champion Oleksandr Usyk.

The 36-year-old Fury previously announced his retirement after beating Dillian Whyte in April 2022 but returned six months later.

The Briton has enjoyed two stints as heavyweight champion and holds a record of 34 wins, two defeats and one draw.

"Hi everybody, I'm going to make this short and sweet," Fury said.

"I'd like to announce my retirement from boxing, it has been a blast, I've loved every single minute of it and I'm going to end with this: Dick Turpin wore a mask." The Briton shocked long-reigning world champion Wladimir Klitschko in 2015 to win the WBA (Super), IBF, WBO, IBO, and The Ring heavyweight titles.

After over two-and-a-half years out of the ring, during which he tackled mental health issues, Fury returned to action in 2018 and became a two-time champion by beating Deontay Wilder to claim the WBC belt in 2020.

Fury's decision to retire denies fans the chance to see a long-anticipated clash with fellow Briton Anthony Joshua.

On Saturday, Joshua said a fight with Fury "has to happen this year" when speaking at the Ring Magazine awards.

Matchroom's Eddie Hearn, who promotes

Joshua, has however questioned the legitimacy of Fury's announcement.

"We've been here before. If that is the end, congratulations on a great career," Hearn told BBC Sport.

"One of the best heavyweights of this generation and made a bucket load of money. If your hearts not in it, if the fight has been punched out of you, it's definitely time to call it quits.

"A few people will always suggest that he could be calling a bluff, but I don't know him well enough to give you an answer. If you don't want it anymore, if your hearts not in it anymore, if you've had the fight punched out of you – it's a dangerous game." Joshua and Fury have been leading figures in the heavyweight division over the past decade but both are looking to bounce back from losses.

Joshua suffered the fourth defeat of his career against IBF heavyweight champion Daniel Dubois in September, while Fury's last two trips to the ring have ended in losses against Usyk.

"You do not want to get in the ring with Anthony Joshua if you're doing it for money," Hearn added.

"You've got to want it. You've got to want to provide the British public with the biggest fight in the history of the sport. You've got to want to go to war with AJ and get that victory. If it's just a money thing, you've got enough money.

"I'm always an optimist. For me when that fight with AJ is a fight that can be made in two minutes in

a room, I am always hopeful. But Tyson Fury's earned the right to make his own decisions. If he's done, he's done. If not, then we make the biggest fight in the history of the sport. Only time will tell.

"Every fight fan stops me in the street and asks when do we get to see that fight. AJ has made it very clear in last couple of days, he's called Fury out. It's quite unlike Anthony.

"Fury doesn't want the fight, there's nothing you can do. You can't drag him into the fight. I don't know whether this was a move to stop the flow of pressure because with AJ calling him out, pressure is mounting. It could be the start of a great build-up, great mind games or it could be the end of Tyson Fury's career. "What lays in the palm of his hand is the biggest fight in the history of our country. Will he walk away from that? Maybe."

Fury boasted an undefeated record of 34 wins and one draw until he met Ukraine's Usyk in the first heavyweight undisputed contest of the four-belt era.

Usyk won the first meeting by split-decision and backed up that performance with a unanimous decision victory last month. Frank Warren, who promotes Fury, told BBC Radio 5 Live he had not spoken to Fury prior to his retirement announcement.

"I've said all along that there is no way I will be trying in anyway influence him," Warren said.

"If that what he wants to do, that's great. He's done everything he can do. Probably been the best British heavyweight of his

generation by far. Two-time world champion, two closely fought fights against Usyk. He's got plenty of money, got his wits about him, got a lovely family. God bless him, enjoy."

"He's become a world star. If you look at some of the fights he's had, he's not been in one fight that hasn't been exciting. Very, very exciting fights. Big heart, got off the floor when he's been knocked down by big punches and come back to win fights. He's been something special."

A quick glance at the comments section on Fury's retirement announcement video tells you everything you need to know. We have been here before and only a few truly believe the Gypsy King's words. The general feeling is that Fury will be lured back into the ring. A super-fight with Joshua, one which has been years in the making, makes too much money for it to not materialise – especially with the Saudi-funded heavyweight showdowns.

After Fury's losses to Usyk and Joshua's shock defeat by Daniel Dubois, perhaps this is Fury's way to hype up a fight which had lost a bit of its appeal; make the public think it will never happen before it does. Fury's savvy boxing business acumen matches his in-ring intelligence.

If this is the end for the Morecambe fighter – and that's a big if – then he will go down as one of Britain's greatest heavyweights of the modern-era, and there is certainly no shame ending your career after defeats by generational great Oleksandr Usyk.

Draper 'shows heart' to win Melbourne opener

MELBOURNE (BBC): British number one Jack Draper was far below his best but managed to avoid a shock first-round defeat at the Australian Open.

Draper, seeded 15th, twice trailed before fighting back to beat Argentine clay specialist Mariano Navone 4-6 6-3 3-6 6-3 6-2 in a mammoth four hours and one minute.

The 23-year-old left-hander was playing his first match since October, having had his build-up disrupted

by a hip problem.

Draper insisted beforehand he was "ready to go" against 46th-ranked Navone.

But the US Open semi-finalist's usually reliable serve was broken five times and he committed a whopping 88 unforced errors.

Nevertheless he showed character and resilience to come through, taking advantage in the final set as Navone struggled with injury.

"I think I showed a lot of

heart today. It wasn't pretty at all. It was nowhere near my best. Sometimes it's about showing some heart," said Draper.

"I'm really, really proud of that. I think that's a big win." As well as disrupting his off-season, Draper's hip injury meant he was unable to play a warm-up event before the first Grand Slam of the year.

In a bid to regain sharpness, he played practice sets against 24-time major champion Novak Djokovic

and world number one Jannik Sinner last week on Rod Laver Arena.

However, there is no substitute for match practice – and it showed from the start. Draper's footwork was not sharp, his groundstrokes not fluid and his body language did not convey much positivity.

The Briton faced break points in four of his five service games in the opening set as Navone's solidity from the baseline drew out errors.

Triple Man Utd and Fernandes captain - FPL tips & team of the week

LONDON (BBC): What a midweek we have coming up. Fantasy Premier League is back, every game is on TV and there are a couple of plum match-ups which could turn into points bonanzas. The key talking point this week is how big to go on Manchester United assets.

Before last week's draw at Liverpool they had five losses and just four goals in six games – that is not what you want in FPL!

But now, Southampton at home. The league's second-worst defence, conceding more than two goals per game... it's an opportunity you can't miss.

This week's team is dominated by the Red Devils.

The team of the week is selected based on current FPL prices to fit within a £100m budget, as if you were playing a Free Hit.

A couple of clean sheets and a star performance from 19-point Bryan Mbeumo.

Six of the 11 players returned, leading to a steady 69 points.

Keeper and defence Robert Sanchez, Chelsea, goalkeeper, £4.8m – home to Bournemouth

Losing Evanilson and his back-up Enes Unal to long-term injury in the same week is such a blow for Bournemouth.

Bournemouth have taken the second most shots in the league yet only score once per 11 efforts on goal.

So a dream scenario is a clean sheet and some save points for Sanchez (although last time I backed a keeper against the Cherries he conceded

three!).

Noussair Mazraoui, Manchester United, £4.4m – home to Southampton

This article was first published with Diogo Dalot in the team but his suspension from his FA Cup red card at Arsenal applies in all competitions.

Saints have failed to score in five of their past six games. Mazraoui is likely to play in his favoured right-back position, with Dalot out, and is often in and around the bonus-point conversation when United keep a clean sheet.

Lewis Hall, Newcastle United, £4.9m – home to Wolves

Four returns in his past five games, including two double-digit hauls.

Hall is one of the best budget options in defence at the moment and Newcastle's run of games – Bournemouth home next and then Southampton away – make him an excellent long-term pick.

With Arsenal's defence taking on Spurs and Liverpool facing a tricky trip to Nottingham Forest, it makes sense to look elsewhere this week.

Daniel Muñoz, Crystal Palace, £4.7m – away at Leicester

Over the past five games, the Colombian's xGI is 1.4, behind only Hall and Trent Alexander-Arnold, yet he has no attacking returns.

Over the season it is 4.7 – behind only Alexander-Arnold's 5.5 – with just two goals and two assists.

Munoz – I've said it before – is a haul waiting to happen and why not against a Leicester side who have struggled for goals recently.

Midfield

Bruno Fernandes (captain), Manchester United, £8.3m – home to Southampton

Fernandes has four goals and seven assists this season (along with two red cards) and he is chugging along as the 10th best midfielder this season.

Seasoned FPL players know the Portuguese has many avenues to points – his xGI is always high and he's on penalties.

Look at what he did against strugglers Leicester and Everton at home – 17 points and nine points.

Southampton are worse, he should haul.

Amad Diallo, Manchester United, £5.4m – home to Southampton

The budget Ivorian is being paired with Fernandes for double United attack this week.

Of midfielders under £5.5m, only Aston Villa's Morgan Rogers (88) has more points than Diallo's 80.

He is first-choice, was rested in the cup and his price facilitates big-money players elsewhere.

Anthony Gordon, Newcastle United, £7.5m – home to Wolves

Newcastle are on fire, with five straight wins, and Gordon has returned in all of those games.

The one defence that has conceded more goals than Southampton?

Wolves.

Any more explanation needed? Mohamed Salah (vice captain), Liverpool, £13.7m – away at Nottingham Forest

Considering he hasn't blanked since gameweek seven, it is impossible to leave Salah out but he's

not captain this week.

I'm backing Forest's stingy defence to keep him relatively quiet.

Cole Palmer, Chelsea, £11.4m – home to Bournemouth

Mr Dependable's longest run of games without a return is three this season. At the halfway point he is on course to better his 22 goals and 13 assists from 2023-24.

If you put him in your side and stick with him, you'll get rewards.

Strikers Alexander Isak, Newcastle United, £9.3m – home to Wolves

The hottest striker in the game. See Gordon's entry above if you need any further convincing!

Kai Havertz, Arsenal, £7.8m – home to Spurs

The German has been dropped recently, but with Gabriel Jesus injured he is likely to come back in against a Spurs side with a porous defence.

Havertz's early-season form has tailed off but he still has seven goals so far and North London derbies at Emirates Stadium often have goals.

Only one of the past six meetings there had less than four goals – there were three!

Subs bench

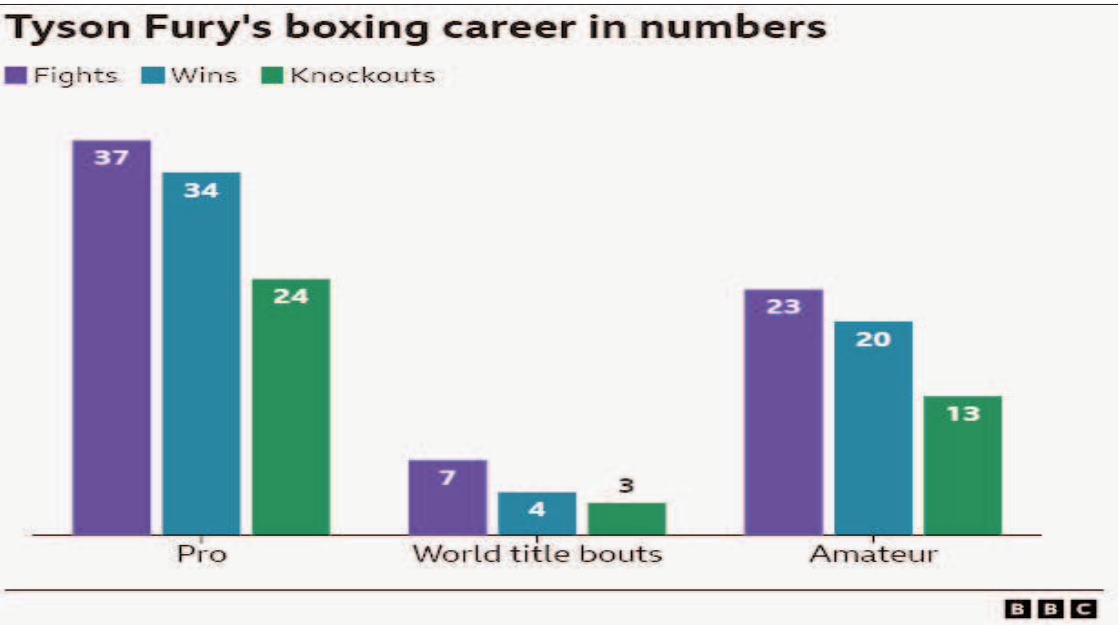
Joe Lumley, Southampton, goalkeeper, £4m – away at Manchester United

James Justin, Leicester City, defender, £4.2m – home to Crystal Palace

Showed in the FA Cup that he has a goal threat.

Patson Daka, Leicester City, striker, £4.8m – home to Crystal Palace

Sepp van den Berg, Brentford, defender, £4.1m – home to Manchester City





In brief

IRSA releases 29,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 29,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 40,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1476.71 feet and was 78.71 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 15,100 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1134.05 feet, which was 84.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,900 cusecs and 100 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 22,000, 14,500, 2,000 and 5,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 13,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,400 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Three drug peddlers arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Monday arrested three drug peddlers, three liquor suppliers and two other accused for illegal LPG decanting from different areas. According to a police spokesman, the Morgah held three drug peddlers with more than 4.5 kilograms of hashish. The arrested accused included Ikram, Imran and Tariq. Similarly, the Waris Khan Police arrested three liquor suppliers namely Zahid, Khalil-ur-Rehman and Hamza Omar, and recovered 18 litres of liquor from them. Likewise, the R A Bazaar Police nabbed two accused for illegally decanting of Liquefied Petroleum Gas and seized gas cylinders and refilling equipment. The accused were identified as Tariq and Saqib.

PIMS launches helpline service

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) on Monday launched a helpline service to immediately address the concerns of patients. The step was taken on the special instruction of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for the convenience of patients. According to Dr. Mubashir Mushtaq Dahi, spokesperson to the Executive Director of PIMS hospital, now patients can contact through phone number 0519071711 directly in case of problems related to treatment at the hospital. He said that best treatment facilities are being provided in the capital's largest hospital, PIMS. He said that signboards have been installed at various places in the hospital for the convenience and awareness of patients and their families. He said that thousands of patients come to PIMS OPD and its emergency for treatment on daily basis. He said that the Prime Minister's Coordinator for Health, Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Barth has taken important initiatives to provide best health facilities in Islamabad. He added the availability of senior doctors in the hospital for 24 hours to serve patients has been ensured. He said that ED PIMS Dr. Imran Sikandar is committed to resolve the complaints of patients timely on contacting him through helpline number. He said that basic medicines are being provided free of cost to thousands of patients in the hospital every day.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ulrika Sundberg, Special Envoy to OIC and for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue meets Federal Minister for Law and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar to strengthen interfaith harmony and promotion of minority rights.

Senator Talal accuses PTI of fabricating deal narrative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Talal Chaudhry, a senior leader of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), on Monday sarcastically accused the PTI leadership of fabricating a false narrative about negotiating a deal with the government to evade accountability.

Speaking to the media alongside the Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, Chaudhry emphasized that no leniency would be granted to those involved in the £190 million corruption scandal. He stated that the case clearly implicated the PTI founder and his spouse, who are employing delaying tactics to evade accountability.

He pointed out the contradiction between the PTI founder's ambition to establish a "Riasat-e-Madina" and the corruption accusations against him, particularly regarding his appropriation of entire Toshakhana gifts.

Critics accuse him of wrongdoing while presenting himself as a proponent of Islamic values, yet his actions resemble those of Yazeed.

Additionally, PTI government has been accused of misusing state resources and donating a portion to charity to create a false image of generosity, raising doubts about the authenticity of PTI leadership.

Chaudhry also firmly rejected PTI's claims that the government offered to move the PTI founder to Nathiagali or place him under house arrest at his Banigla residence, asserting that these claims were fabricated by PTI, with no such offer from the government.

Furthermore, he stated that no amnesty, similar to the NRO, would be granted to those responsible for the violence on May 9, adding that instead of defending their cases, PTI leadership seems focused on striking deals with the government.

Talal Chaudhry claimed that the Al-Qadir Trust was established to conceal the £190 million corruption scandal, alleging a secret agreement to cover it up. He revealed that the British agency NCA investigated and recovered the stolen funds, which were subsequently returned to Pakistan.

Chaudhry also accused Shehzad Akbar, a key figure in the PTI government, of holding regular meetings with a prominent land developer, and pointed to the involvement of PTI founder and Bushra Bibi, the wife of the PTI founder, in corruption that has caused significant harm to the country.

Chaudhry praised former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for allowing the law to take its course in his own cases, even returning from London to hear the verdict. He criticized the PTI founder for using delays to prolong his legal battles.

Swedish envoy calls on Azam Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): H.E. Ulrika Sundberg, Special Envoy to the OIC and for Inter-religious and Intercultural Dialogue from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law & Justice and Human Rights, in Islamabad.

The meeting focused on safeguarding minority rights, enhancing digital law compliance mechanisms, advancing online safety measures, and fostering interfaith harmony.

The Special Envoy commended Pakistan's efforts to promote inclusive education, particularly the success of the recent International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities. She praised Pakistan's progressive policies aimed at empowering future generations and ensuring equitable access to quality edu-

cation, especially for girls.

The minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to protecting minority rights, as enshrined in Articles 20-36 of the Constitution. He highlighted the establishment of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM), a statutory body dedicated to safeguarding minority rights, promoting interfaith harmony, and ensuring minority participation in national development.

To prevent the misuse of laws, including the Blasphemy Law, the Minister outlined efforts to develop comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These include forensic investigations, credible witness protection, and impartial legal processes to uphold justice and protect vulnerable communities.

Discussions also focused on enhancing digital safety and addressing online harm. The Minister shared initia-

tives such as public awareness campaigns and digital literacy programs to protect children from cyberbullying and online exploitation. He also emphasized collaboration with international stakeholders, such as Meta, to develop tools like the Take It Down portal for reporting and removing harmful online content targeting child exploitation.

The provinces, in line with their responsibilities under the 18th Amendment, have also taken measures to ensure the safety of minority worship places and the protection of minority rights through dedicated mechanisms and enhanced security protocols. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of shared commitments to advancing human rights, fostering interfaith harmony, and creating a safer digital environment, particularly for vulnerable groups.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the PM for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam presenting a souvenir to former PM of Norway, Kjell Magne Bondevik during his visit to her office. —APP Photo

Edu Minister Khalid meets with ex-PM Norway

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Monday met with a high-level delegation led by former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani and former Member of the Oslo Parliament, Norway, Aamir Javed Sheikh, said a press release. Dr. Khalid Maqbool welcomed the former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik. He said that Kjell Magne Bondevik is a friend of Pakistan who has always worked towards helping Pakistan in fighting its challenges.

The minister said that the presence of His Excellency internationalized the agenda of the International Conference on Girl's Education. He said that Pakistan is taking the lead for the Islamic countries to tackle the issue of girl's education and Out of School Children in general.

Dr. Khalid Maqbool said that Pakistan faces a myriad of challenges in the field of education in the wake of climate change. He said that the present government has also declared an educational emergency. He said that currently the Ministry of

Education is addressing the issues of access to schools, limited infrastructure, quality of teachers training and nutritional problems of children in collaboration with other ministries.

Dr. Khalid said that due to our efforts the percentage of Out of School Children with respect to population is decreasing. He said that to develop and implement targeted interventions a special department called Pakistan Institute of Education has been developed to gather accurate data about challenges being faced by the Education sector of the country.

The minister said that to address the cultural impediments of access to education for girls, the International Conference on Girl's Education will be a historic achievement. He said that religious scholars from all over the world supported the cause of girl's education. He said that Pakistan has taken the lead to eradicate the misconception surrounding girl's education in the Islamic countries.

Kjell Magne Bondevik said, "I have always worked towards helping Pakistan in resolving its numerous strategic and internal challenges." He said that Pakistan has made history by conducting the International Conference on Girl's Education. He said

that Pakistan has huge potential and through proper management of resources all of the issues can be addressed. He praised the efforts of the Ministry for Education and the Federal Minister of Education in championing the cause of promoting girl's education.

Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani said that Pakistan has adopted latest techniques and approached to tackle all of the challenges of the education sector. He said that Pakistan is focusing on effective disaster management to protect the educational infrastructure of the country.

He said that climate change has presented unique challenges but the Ministry of Education has started targeted interventions to ensure positive outcomes, adding that a special pink bus program was launched in GB and Islamabad to ensure that female students do not have to face logistical issues of access to schools. He also said that a Schools Meals Program has also been launched which will ensure that the stunting issue of children is also addressed.

He explained that under the leadership of Prime Minister of Pakistan a special task force on education was also formed which has been a guiding beacon for all of the efforts of the government.

Kyrgyz delegation visits PM&DC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Republic of Kyrgyzstan, led by H.E. Kendirbaeva D.Sh. Minister of Science and Education visited the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) to discuss the promotion of medical education and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The Ambassador H.E. Avazbek Atakhanov of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Rectors, Heads of Kyrgyz universities and representatives from HEC were also part of the delegation. The meeting was held at the PM&DC office today on 13th January 2025. The discussion revolved around the registration criteria for foreign medical graduates, admission standards for Pakistani students in foreign institutions, and accreditation protocols for foreign medical colleges.

Addressing during the meeting, Mr. Rizwan Taj emphasized the significant progress Pakistan has made in the medical field. He noted that the country currently has 186 medical and dental colleges, producing highly



skilled healthcare professionals. He further stated that over 365,000 doctors are registered with PMDC, playing a crucial role in meeting the healthcare needs of a nation. Pakistani graduates a respected across the globe.

Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj explained that only graduates from PM&DC-recognized foreign institutions are eligible for provisional registration and can appear for the National Registration Examination (NRE). Graduates who successfully pass NRE Steps I and II qualify for a full license to practice medicine or dentistry in

Pakistan. He further emphasized the admission criteria for Pakistani students seeking enrollment in foreign medical institutions. Students must be admitted to a PM&DC-recognized foreign institution and the candidates must check the list and fulfill the criteria available on the website before proceeding abroad for their studies.

Regarding the accreditation of foreign medical institutions, Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj explained that the PM&DC maintains a list of recognized foreign institutions on its official website. This list is provisional and subject to periodic review. He shared

that PM&DC has developed a new accreditation proforma, requiring foreign institutions to meet the standards set by the National Regulator, the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and the PM&DC criteria.

Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj remarked, "Pakistan's medical education system has earned global recognition for its high standards. Collaborating with Kyrgyzstan provides an excellent opportunity for mutual growth and the advancement of medical education in both nations."

However, no compromise will be made on the quality of medical education within the country or outside for the Pakistani students. The Kyrgyz Minister of Science and Education appreciated Pakistan's contributions to the global medical fraternity and expressed keen interest in strengthening ties between the two countries in the field of medical education.

The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing to explore avenues for joint capacity-building measures to further enhance the quality of medical education in both nations.

Bilal Akbar assigned to work as a Divisional Coordinator

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Transport and Mass Transit Bilal Akbar Khan said that over a meeting at Commissioner's Office to review the performance of government departments. Public representatives and divisional heads participated in the meeting in which DC Hasan Waqar Cheema and RPO Babar Sarfraz Alpa gave a briefing on the divisional performance.

Speaking on the occasion, Bilal Akbar Khan said that Chief Minister Punjab has entrusted him with the responsibilities of Rawalpindi Division for coordination between stakeholders. He said that joint efforts of parliamentarians and administrative officers would lead to public relief.

"We will try to bring regional policies that would be made with mutual consultation keeping in mind the

local problems and needs", he said and added that the most important step is the socio-economic registry.

"Public representatives should help the needy people in their constituencies to register to benefit from relief programs like the Ramadan package etc. He said that the solar panel project in Energy sector is also about to launch, so public representatives should inform the people about its registration process.

"Chief Minister added 32 new field hospitals in the health care system in 100 days from where 30 to 35 thousand people are getting free treatment in Punjab every day", he said.

He went on saying that E-buses have been ordered to solve the transport problems of Rawalpindi. A total of 78 e-buses will be operated on six routes including Taxila Wah Cantt. IJ Principal Road to

Chongi No. 26 and Daulata to Rawalpindi. Bilal Akbar Khan said that our target is to transform 150 bus stands into model bus stands in one year.

During the briefing by RPO Rawalpindi, it was informed that the crime rate in Rawalpindi has reduced significantly. According to the latest data, there has been a 24% reduction in property dispute cases in Rawalpindi, 29% reduction in robbery cases and 52% reduction in robbery cases.

Similarly, the cases of car theft have reduced by 27%. Deputy Commissioner Hasan Waqar Cheema, while giving a briefing on the progress made on the special initiatives of the Chief Minister in jRawalpindi district, said that 553 students have benefited from the Chief Minister Internship Program so far.

45 Afghan prisoners released

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation announced that 45 Afghan citizens detained in neighbor country prisons for lacking legal documents have been released. Ministry reported on Monday, that these individuals were freed as part of ongoing efforts to secure the release of Afghan detainees in neighbor country. They returned to Afghanistan the same day. The detainees were arrested in various parts of neighbor country for not possessing legal documents.

Water rights must be enforced

KABUL (Khaama Press): An Iranian MP, Ahmad Bakshayesh Ardastani, stated that the Taliban does not adhere to diplomacy or water treaties, emphasizing that Iran's water rights from the Helmand River must be claimed, not granted. Ardastani emphasized in an interview with an Iranian media outlet, saying, "Water rights must be claimed, not granted." Ardastani alleged that the Taliban views Iran as weak, much like US, and seeks to renegotiate the existing treaty to sell water to Iran.

Over 400 children with congenital heart defects treated

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) has reported that since the beginning of the current solar year, nearly 404 children suffering from congenital heart defects (hole in the heart) have received treatment in the country. According to the spokesperson of ARCS, over 30,500 other children with the same condition have been registered with the organization and are still awaiting treatment. "Since the beginning of the solar year 1403, close to 404 patients suffering from congenital heart defects have been treated. The cost of treatment for each patient has also been provided separately," said Mudassar Hamraz, the spokesperson for ARCS. Some families have said that due to financial challenges, they are unable to afford treatment for their children, leaving them in dire circumstances. "When we came here, they said his weight was too low, and the doctors insisted that he must undergo surgery. We are facing significant difficulties because of economic problems, and whatever we earn, we bring to the doctor, "Kochi, the father of Abu Bakr. "Pregnant mothers should pay special attention to their health and nutrition during pregnancy. Secondly, family marriages often lead to congenital heart problems in newborns. Thirdly, the arbitrary use of medications during pregnancy is also dangerous, and mothers should avoid this," said Doctor Ultaf Haidari. Previously, ARCS had reported identifying around 14,000 children suffering from congenital heart defects in the country. However, new statistics indicate that the number of affected children is much higher, and efforts to treat them are ongoing.

Free eye treatment drive launches in Ghazni



GHAZNI (TOLOnews): A team of eight specialist doctors, with financial support from Turkish humanitarian aid, has begun treating eye patients at Ghazni Regional Hospital. According to officials, these doctors will treat about 1,000 eye patients and perform more than 200 surgeries. Zarak Zarek, the head of public health in Ghazni, said: "More than 200 surgeries will be performed here, and about 1,000 patients will be examined. Most OPD (outpatient clinic) patients have eye problems. Additionally, dozens of glasses and medications are distributed based on daily needs." Mohammad Aziz, a member of the medical team, said: "We first examine patients in the OPD, focusing on those with retinal issues. All necessary preparations have been made for these patients, and their surgeries will be performed here." However, some patients and their families believe that the number of patients is too high and that the duration of the treatment process should be extended. "We came here because it was announced that needy and poor individuals would be treated here. But we have been standing in the mud since morning, there is no order, and there is no clear numbering system," said Azizullah, one of the patients. Our people are poor and have come here for free treatment, but this is the situation. There is extreme crowding and disorder," said Mohammad Hashim, a patient. "Our request is for this process to continue. All these people are poor. I have seen individuals who have come from remote areas like Qarabagh and Muqur, just after hearing this news on social media," said Haji Mohammad, one of the patients' attendants. Local officials have also announced their efforts to expand free treatment campaigns in Ghazni province so that more people can benefit from healthcare services.

1,200 drug addicts treated in Badakhshan

B A D A K H S H A N (TOLOnews): Local officials in Badakhshan province said that over the past ten months, they have collected 1,200 drug addicts from the provincial center and districts and referred them to treatment centers. According to them, among these individuals, children and women have also undergone treatment. Abdi Mohammad Nasimi, head of data collection for the counter-narcotics department of Badakhshan police headquarters, said: "In the past ten months, we have collected about 1,200 people from the center and districts and referred them to rehabilitation hospitals. Currently, over 200 others are still undergoing treatment in these hospitals." Some individuals undergoing treatment are urging the caretaker government officials to not only prevent the cultivation and trafficking of narcotics but also to create employment opportunities for them. "Our demand is for narcotics to be completely eradicated. If drugs remain available in the market, we will return to using them," said Hamidullah, one of the individuals under treatment.

Frozen hands, heavy burdens: Child laborers continue to engage in hard labor



KABUL (TOLOnews): Despite the harsh cold in Kabul, child laborers continue to engage in hard labor in the capital. Some of these children say they are forced to work to support their families financially. Jawad, one of these children, cleans others' shoes with frozen hands. He is a sixth-grade student, but life's hardships have turned him into a breadwinner to support his father. Jawad told TOLOnews: "Our request of the government is to find us jobs or pay salaries to me and my father." "I work so I can bring five loaves of bread home. My father is old; both of us work to cover household expenses," said Elham, another child laborer. Today, too, the weather is cold, and children's hands have turned pale from the freezing temperatures. The illness of her father and the lack of a breadwinner in the family forced her to sell pomegranates on the streets instead of attending school. "I am forced to come and work to cover household expenses," she said. Farzinaz, another child laborer, said: "I work and bring home money for bread." The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs says it has activated shelters in all provinces to address the issues of child laborers. "This ministry visits children engaged in hard labor and has instructed inspectors and employers to prevent the use of children in hard work," stated Samiullah Ebrahimi, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. According to statistics provided by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 19% of children in Afghanistan are engaged in labor. This statistic highlights the widespread challenges faced by child laborers in the country.

Hyena rescued and released in Nagarhar

JALALABAD (Khaama Press): Officials from the Nagarhar Environmental Protection Department reported that a wild animal, identified as a hyena, was handed over by local residents and subsequently released back into the wild. According to Bakhtar News Agency on Monday, January 13, the hyena had been captured in the Kashkot area of Khogyani district, Nagarhar, by local nomads to prevent potential harm. After being handed over to the department, it was set free in its natural habitat. Officials stated that the hyena was treated and then released into the wild in the presence of members from a joint committee dedicated to wildlife protection and release. Hyenas are rare in Afghanistan and are primarily found in the desert and arid regions, especially in the eastern and southeastern parts of the country. Research indicates that hyenas play a crucial role in the ecosystem by feeding on the carcasses of dead animals, contributing significantly to environmental cleanliness. They are mostly nocturnal and live in small groups. Ecologically, hyenas are vital for maintaining balance in nature. By consuming the remains of dead animals, they help prevent the spread of diseases and reduce environmental contamination. However, misconceptions about the supposed benefits of hyena body parts for enhancing sexual strength have led to poaching, particularly targeting female hyenas, driven by profit-seeking individuals. Raising awareness about the ecological importance of hyenas is crucial to prevent their unnecessary hunting and protect them from extinction. These animals are indispensable for maintaining environmental health and biodiversity. Collaborative efforts between wildlife departments and local communities can ensure the protection of endangered species like hyenas while fostering understanding of their critical role in preserving ecological balance.

Polio Legacy Challenge to be launched

KABUL (Ariana News): Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation along with Qatar will launch the Polio Legacy Challenge to help eradicate the disease in Afghanistan, a top official of the organization told Gulf Times. According to Chris Elias, the president of the Global Development Division at Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the campaign will be done in conjunction with the Islamic Development Bank, along with Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia. "With our work on polio eradication, we are actually launching something called the Polio Legacy Challenge with the Islamic Development Bank. "Gates Foundation and the governments of Qatar, UAE, and Saudi Arabia will provide some funding through the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund to support the primary healthcare system in Afghanistan," Elias said. "This is a new initiative that is just beginning now. We are basically working with the countries that have indicated their interest in doing it and in the process of finalising the agreements with the Islamic Development Bank. We hope to launch it in early 2025," he explained. "We will have a governing body in which all of the contributors will participate. The funds will be administered through the Islamic Development Bank for support of the primary health care system in Afghanistan," continued the official. Elias noted that currently he chairs the board of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, and has been working with Qatar on some of the regional initiatives to help finalise the job of polio eradication.

Karzai: Girls' education a fundamental right — welcomed Islamabad Conference statement

KABUL (Khaama Press): Hamid Karzai, the former president of Afghanistan, welcomed the final statement from the International Conference on Girls' Education in Islamic Countries held in Islamabad. He emphasized that girls' education is an undeniable and fundamental right. On Monday, Karzai posted on his social media account, asserting that denying girls' education is against Afghanistan's national interests and broader well-being, calling it unjustifiable. Karzai stated that providing educational opportunities for all young people not only restores hope for a dignified life within the country but also helps prevent forced migration and sets Afghanistan on a path toward progress, development, and self-reliance. He stressed that Afghanistan's reliance on the knowledge and talent of its youth is key to building a stronger and better future for the nation. The International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Societies, held in Islamabad, concluded without the Taliban's participation. The conference emphasized the importance of girls' education in Islamic countries, highlighting its support from religion, constitutional laws, and international standards. Although the conference's statement did not directly address the ban on girls' education in Afghanistan under the Taliban, it firmly opposed restrictions on women's education in Islamic nations. Karzai's support for girls' education underscores a growing call from Afghanistan's leaders and the global community to prioritize education as a fundamental right and a means of national progress.



The conference in Islamabad and statements like Karzai's highlight the urgent need for the international community to advocate for the restoration of education rights for Afghanistan's women and girls, ensuring their inclusion in the country's future development.

Switzerland donates 2.6m to Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund

KABUL (Khaama Press): The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Afghanistan announced that Switzerland has contributed 2.3 million Swiss francs (approximately 2.6 million USD) to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. OCHA expressed gratitude for Switzerland's donation in a statement posted on Monday, January 13, on its social media platform. It welcomed the support, emphasizing the potential impact of this aid on those in need. OCHA expressed hope that Switzerland's contribution will bring "real change for people in need in Afghanistan," especially as the country faces worsening conditions with the onset of winter. Several international humanitarian organizations have warned of rising poverty and an increasing need for aid in Afghanistan as temperatures drop. The situation has exacerbated vulnerabilities across the country. According to OCHA statistics, 22.9 million people in Afghanistan will require humanitarian assistance in 2025, with an estimated budget of 2.24 billion USD needed to address their needs effectively. Recently, OCHA also announced a donation of 1.1 million USD from Spain, aimed at providing critical humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. The World Food Programme has expressed concern over Afghanistan's deepening economic crisis, highlighting that millions of people in the country urgently require assistance. OCHA also recognized Switzerland as a longstanding donor, noting that since 2016, the country has contributed over 20 million USD to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. The increasing financial contributions from countries like Switzerland and Spain are crucial for addressing Afghanistan's growing humanitarian needs. However, sustained international support is essential to meet the long-term challenges. As Afghanistan grapples with a worsening economic crisis and harsh winter conditions, global collaboration and resource mobilization are vital to prevent further deterioration and to provide immediate relief to millions in need.

Taliban to grant degrees to madrasa students and clerics

KABUL (Amu TV): The Taliban's Ministry of Higher Education has announced plans to award bachelor's degrees to 11,000 madrasa students and master's degrees to 15,000 clerics. The ministry stated that examinations for granting these degrees will be held across 31 provinces. However, many citizens and experts have criticized the move as an injustice to Afghanistan's educational system, arguing that it undermines academic standards. According to the ministry, the examination process began on Saturday and is expected to continue for five days. "The Taliban's decision to grant degrees to madrasa students and clerics is unfair and unacceptable," said one Kabul resident. "Instead of supporting madrasas and clerics, the Taliban should reopen schools and universities for girls." Another Kabul resident echoed this sentiment, saying, "The Taliban have deprived thousands of women and girls of modern education while investing in madrasas and clerics. This is a grave injustice to the people of Afghanistan." The Taliban have prioritized building madrasas and elevating the status of religious scholars in governmental and educational structures—an approach that critics say could have damaging consequences for the country's social and cultural fabric. Sayed Massoud, a university professor, called the move a violation of academic standards. "Granting bachelor's and master's degrees to madrasa students and clerics goes against the policies of the Ministry of Higher Education. The Taliban are doing this extralegally to bolster their human resources," he said. Since returning to power, the Taliban have barred women and girls from education, employment, and even medical training. Meanwhile, they have expanded madrasa programs, increased support for clerics, overhauled educational curricula, and imposed severe restrictions on social freedoms—particularly for women. Critics warn that these measures are driving Afghan society toward greater extremism.



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Refugees Minister yet to assume office days after appointment

KABUL (Amu TV): Four days after Abdul Kabir, a former deputy political chief minister in the Taliban administration, was appointed acting minister for refugees and repatriation, his name has yet to appear on the ministry's official website. There is also no indication that he has formally begun his work. Analysts suggest that the delay stems from internal disputes between the Haqqani network and the Kandahari faction of the Taliban. Kabir's appointment last Thursday followed the death of Khalil-ur-Rahman Haqqani, the previous minister, who was killed in a suicide bombing in Kabul last month. While the Taliban have stated that the appointment was made by the decree of their supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, there has been no formal commencement of Kabir's duties. "In accordance with this decree, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the former deputy political prime minister, has been appointed as acting minister for refugees and repatriation," Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement at the time. However, the ministry has yet to update its official platforms, and no activities or messages from Kabir have been shared. This silence has fueled speculation that factional power struggles within the Taliban are hindering the transition. A struggle for power Some analysts believe the delay underscores tensions between the Kandahari leadership, associated with Akhundzada, and the Haqqani network, which has historically controlled the Ministry of Refugees. "No official appointment happens without Akhundzada's direct approval, but this situation is about power-sharing," said Najibullah Azad, a professor at the University of Wisconsin. "The Haqqani network sees the Ministry of Refugees as strategically important, having used it over the past three years to expand its influence and build connections with various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. They are unlikely to allow someone from Akhundzada's circle, like Abdul Kabir, to take charge of this ministry." Azad suggested that these internal power struggles have delayed Kabir's formal appointment, noting that such disputes reflect broader challenges within the Taliban's governance structure. Kabir's role and background Abdul Kabir, who was born in Baghlan Jadid district, has spent much of his life in Paktia province and has ties to the Haqqani network. After the Taliban returned to power in 2021, he was appointed deputy political prime minister, operating from Sapidar Palace, a former center of power in Kabul. The Ministry of Refugees, under the Haqqani network's leadership since the Taliban takeover, was previously led by Khalil-ur-Rahman Haqqani, the uncle of Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani. Khalil-ur-Rahman was killed in December in an attack claimed by ISIS-Khorasan. Amid the growing speculation, the Taliban released a portion of Kabir's speech in which he appeared to downplay the significance of the delay. "Today, it is me. Tomorrow, another honorable Muslim will take my place and serve even better than I do," Kabir said. The exact time and location of the remarks were not disclosed.



KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari chairing a Board of Governors' meeting of Cadet College Petro at CM House.

2025 to be marked a period of progress

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has stated that the year 2025 marks a period of progress and positive developments from the Sindh government. Significant development projects are in progress in Karachi and other districts of Sindh.

Following the inauguration by Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the first phase of Shahrah Bhutto has been opened to the public. Additionally, work on the Yellow Line BRT is proceeding diligently, with efforts continuing day and night. It is anticipated that various sections of the Yellow Line BRT will be completed ahead of schedule.

Speaking to the media at the Sindh Assembly Media Corner, Senior Sindh Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, announced that the Transport Department is also developing bus depots. He added that the Sindh government plans to introduce double-decker buses for the citizens of Karachi this year. Additionally, an EV taxi service will be launched for the youth, with EV taxis made available to the public through easy installment plans.

He stated that the Sindh government is undertaking large-scale road development projects across the province. He emphasized that the progress being made by the Sindh government in the health sector is unparalleled in Pakistan. Additionally, rapid work is underway on the Hub Canal to address Karachi's water shortage.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that, similar to how journalists from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad were invited to visit the Sindh government's projects, journalists from Sindh will also be given the opportunity to tour these initiatives. He highlighted that significant progress is being made across all departments of the Sindh government. He praised Syed Nasir Hussain Shah for his commendable work in the energy sector. Furthermore, the Chief Minister of Sindh has emphasized that efforts are underway on a desalination project, which aims to convert seawater into potable water for the people. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has directed all ministers to ensure the delivery of facilities promised to the public during the elections.

In response to a question, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the Chief Minister of Sindh has encouraged the entire business community to step



forward and invest in various sectors. The Sindh government is in discussions with multiple companies to attract investment in Pakistan. However, due to IMF conditions, establishing new industrial zones is currently not feasible. He highlighted the Dhabaji Special Economic Zone as an excellent opportunity for domestic and foreign investors, traders, and businessmen. He further mentioned that Chinese investors have expressed interest in investing in the Dhabaji Special Economic Zone.

In response to another question, he stated that having multiple spokespersons is beneficial. He added that it would be advantageous for each department to have its own spokesperson, emphasizing that this is not a new practice.

In response to another question, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the leadership of the Pakistan Peoples Party, including Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Sindh Chief Minister Babangidah, has made it clear that the PPP's stance on the issue of canals is very firm. The PPP will not accept any canals being constructed on the Indus River.

In response to another question, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that an appropriate toll is imposed on all public-private partnership projects to ensure that investors who have partnered with the government can recover their investments.

In response to another question, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that not all the cases against Imran Khan are unfounded. He mentioned that Imran Khan took a watch, sold it, and falsely claimed that the proceeds were used to build a road, which he described as a lie. He asserted that every case against Imran Khan is valid. He further explained that when an attempt was made to arrest Imran Khan, police were attacked with petrol bombs, including from inside his house. The government has not pursued prosecution in cases that are clear and straightforward.

FO slams 'racist, Islamophobic' remarks

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Responding to a recent spate of "xenophobic remarks", the Foreign Office (FO) on Monday expressed deep concern over the increasingly racist and Islamophobic political and media commentary towards the Pakistani community in the United Kingdom (UK).

"Pakistan-UK friendship is characterised by warmth, cordiality, robust cooperation and trust. Nurtured over decades this relationship remains an important priority of Pakistan's foreign policy," an FO spokesperson said in a statement. "The deep and multifaceted relations cover important areas including trade and investment, education, security, counter-terrorism, parliamentary cooperation and people-to-people contacts," said Shafqat Ali Khan, adding: "The presence of 1.7 million strong British-Pakistani diaspora provides the strongest link between the two friendly countries." The FO official said that British nationals of Pakistani origin have a rich history of contributing to the UK's growth, development and, indeed, freedom. "An exceptionally large number of predominantly Muslim soldiers from what is now Pakistan served in the British Indian army and laid down their lives for the cause of democracy in both world wars," Khan added.

Seoul says 300 NK troops killed in Ukraine

SEOUL: Some 300 North Korean soldiers have been killed while fighting in Russia's war against Ukraine, a South Korean legislator has said. Added to the 300 deaths are about "2,700 injuries", Lee Seong-kweon told reporters on Monday, after a briefing from Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS).

"The deployment of North Korean troops to Russia has reportedly expanded to include the Kursk region, with estimates suggesting that casualties among North Korean forces have surpassed 3,000," Lee said. The NIS analysis also revealed that the North Korean soldiers have "a lack of understanding of modern warfare" and are being used by Russia in a manner leading to "the high number of casualties", the legislator added.

The statement from the South Korean politician comes days after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Kyiv had captured two North Korean soldiers, releasing a video of the injured fighters being interrogated. Zelenskyy said Kyiv is "ready to hand over" the captured North Korean soldiers in exchange for Ukrainian prisoners of war held in Russia. The Kremlin on Monday declined to comment on the reported capture of the North Korean soldiers.

"We cannot comment in any way, we do not know what is true there," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "We continue to discuss the possibility of exchanges, which is not easy work ... but for us the life of every Russian soldier is important," he added.

Seoul has previously claimed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has sent more than 10,000 soldiers as "cannon fodder" to help Moscow fight Kyiv, in return for Russian technical assistance for Pyongyang's heavily sanctioned weapons and satellite programmes. — Aljazeera

President approves development, salary package for Cadet College Petro

F.P. Report

KARACHI: President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, presiding over a special Board of Governors meeting, reflected the CCP's commitment to maintaining its status as a premier institution for education and character building in Pakistan, and approved the development and modernisation of Cadet College Petro (CCP).

The meeting was held at CM House. It was attended by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman BOG Commander Karachi VA Muhammad Faisal Abbasi, Secretary to President Shakeel Malik, Members BOG Commodore Faisal Iqbal, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatoti, Secretary Colleges Asif Ikram, and others.

The meeting began with the opening remarks from President Asif Zardari said, "Cadet College Petro is my alma mater and holds a very special place in my heart." He added that he took immense pride in having studied there and is committed to giving back to this prestigious institution.

The President said that Cadet College Petro has a significant role in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh. "It has produced remarkable leaders in politics, the armed forces, civil bureaucracy, judiciary, and other fields," he said. The President appreciated the institution for its role in the holistic training of youth and said, "Even after 66 years, CCP stands strong, continuing its legacy of excellence. Wherever its alumni go, the training and success imparted by the college reflect in their personalities."

During the briefing, the President was told that CCP spans 758 acres and currently accommodates 846 students, with two swimming pools on campus. President Zardari directed

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to establish two more swimming pools and ensure all necessary facilities are provided under a five-year plan. President Zardari emphasised the college's critical role in nation-building. He noted that Cadet College Petro continues to excel as a centre of excellence, boasting a 100% success rate across various educational boards, including the Hyderabad Board, the Federal Board, and the Cambridge International System.

The President was told that the CCP's cadets had achieved remarkable positions, such as Cadet Moazzam securing 3rd position in the Hyderabad Board, and CCP attaining the highest CGPA of 5.86 in Sindh for SSC-II examinations under FBISE. CCP's global presence is also expanding, with cadets excelling in international Chinese language and cultural programs. Proposals for a German Language Lab were presented to enhance global opportunities for cadets further.

Infrastructure Upgrades: The President approved an upgrade to the infrastructure of Cadet College Petro and directed the Chief Minister to implement these upgrades within the next four years. Key projects included the upgrading of ICT labs and the installation of smart digital screens in junior classes, as well as the reconstruction of Iqbal and Qasim Houses and renovation of other cadet houses. Additionally, the President ordered enhancements to critical facilities, such as the installation of a chiller system for the cadets' mess and a new water pipeline from the Indus River. The Riding Club will also be expanded to accommodate the increasing interest in equestrian activities by adding more horses.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of CCP, President Asif Ali

Zardari approved major steps, including the establishment of a Housing Scheme and Health Insurance for employees. The Endowment Fund will increase from Rs. 406 million to Rs. 1 billion, and the introduction of the 'Asif Ali Zardari Model High School Petro' will provide quality education for the children of staff and the local community.

New Development Projects: The President directed Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to commence the construction of 52 new houses for teaching and ministerial staff. The expansion of the academic block, a new mess, and a sitting area for parents visiting the college were also proposed to enhance their experience.

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah informed the President that he has approved a Rs. 200 million grant for Cadet College to clear employee pension arrears. He added that the process of installing a 1.5 MW solar-powered electricity plant to reduce energy costs is currently underway. The Chief Minister also mentioned that the inclusion of Cadet College Petro in the Sindh Education Endowment Fund to facilitate financial aid for cadets is in progress.

President Zardari commended CCP's administration and faculty for their dedication to nurturing future leaders and directed the Chief Minister to announce a special salary package for the college's teaching staff. He reaffirmed his commitment to the institution, describing CCP as a beacon of excellence and a source of pride for Pakistan. The meeting concluded on an optimistic note, with CCP poised for transformative growth. These initiatives are set to solidify its reputation as a premier cadet college, empowering youth with education, discipline, and global competencies to excel in the modern world.

AFI's support for partnership with SBP hailed

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Governor, State Bank of Pakistan Mr. Jameel Ahmad reaffirmed the central bank's dedication to increasing financial inclusion through strengthened collaborations with both global and domestic stakeholders. Mr. Ahmad shared these remarks in a bilateral meeting held with Chief Executive Officer of Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI), Dr. Alfred Hannig, during his visit to Pakistan on Tuesday, in Karachi.

In the meeting, Mr. Ahmad highlighted SBP's recently launched 3rd edition of National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) 2024-28. He emphasized that SBP will persist in its efforts for enhancing financial inclusion through digitalization, and reduce the gender gap in finance.

Dr. Hannig extended AFI's appreciation for SBP's leadership role in promoting financial inclusion in Pakistan and discussed areas of mutual collaboration to continue efforts towards breaking the barriers. SBP is a founding member of AFI since 2008, which is a policy leadership alliance of central banks and financial regulatory institutions from

84 countries with the common objective of advancing financial inclusion at country, regional and international levels. SBP currently serves on AFI Board, and as Vice-Chair of AFI Gender Inclusive Finance Committee and the South Asia Regional Financial Inclusion Initiative (SARFII).

Governor Jameel Ahmad appreciated AFI's support and its longstanding partnership with SBP, which facilitated in peer learning exchanges and capacity building opportunities for SBP officers in developing and implementing evidence-based financial inclusion policies. In his remarks, Dr. Hannig highlighted the crucial and progressive need to enhance regulators' capacity in South Asia region to achieve impactful financial inclusion policy objectives, and stressed that the implementation should be balanced with effective cyber security resilience and consumer protection.

The meeting also explored opportunities to further strengthen institutional collaboration in areas of digital payments, financial literacy, sustainable finance and MSMEs financing. Both parties resolved to continue efforts

for improving financial health and well-being of masses, especially of unbanked and underbanked population segments.

The SBP also organized a discussion of Dr. Hannig with financial inclusion stakeholders including the Presidents and CEOs of the banks, representatives of the Pakistan Banks' Association, Pakistan Microfinance Network, Fintech Association & Network and SBP's senior management. During this session, the NFIS 2024-28 was presented along with SBP's financial inclusion goals for the next four years. An interactive discussion followed, where industry participants shared grassroots level insights and key challenges in broadening access to financial services, while AFI shared its perspective based on global best practices. The forum agreed to enhance collaborations among domestic stakeholders and international organizations for improved knowledge sharing on emerging trends in financial inclusion. The visit concluded with a tour of the SBP Museum, where Dr. Hannig appreciated the cultural heritage, preservation of SBP's history, and the evolution of Pakistan's money over time.

Final draft of Gaza truce deal presented to sides

DOHA/CAIRO (Reuters): Mediators gave Israel and Hamas a final draft of a deal on Monday to end the war in Gaza, an official briefed on the negotiations said, after a midnight "breakthrough" in talks attended by envoys of both Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

The official said the text for a ceasefire and release of hostages was presented by Qatar to both sides at talks in Doha, which included the chiefs of Israel's Mossad and Shin Bet spy agencies and Qatar's prime minister. The official said Steve Witkoff, who will become US envoy when Trump returns to the US presidency next week, attended the talks. A US source said the outgoing Biden administration's envoy Brett McGurk was also there.

"The next 24 hours will be pivotal to reaching the deal," the official said, characterising the draft as the outcome of a breakthrough reached in the early hours of Monday. Israel's Kan radio, citing an Israeli official, reported on Monday that Israeli and Hamas delegations in Qatar had both received a draft, and that the Israeli delegation had briefed Israel's leaders. Israel, Hamas and the foreign ministry of Qatar did not respond to requests for confirmation or comment.

Officials on both sides, while stopping short of confirming that a final draft had been reached, described progress at the talks. A senior Israeli official said a deal could be sealed within a few days if Hamas replies to a proposal. A Palestinian official close to the talks said information from Doha was "very promising," adding: "Gaps were being narrowed and there is a big push toward an agreement if all goes well to the end." The United States, Qatar and Egypt have worked for more than a year on talks to end the war in Gaza, so far fruitlessly.

Both sides have agreed for months broadly on the principle of halting the fighting in return for the release of hostages held by Hamas and Palestinian detainees held by Israel. However, Hamas has always insisted that the deal must lead to a permanent end to the war and Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, while Israel has said it will not end the war until Hamas is dismantled.

Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration is now widely seen in the region as a de facto deadline. The president-elect has said there would be "hell to pay" unless hostages held by Hamas are freed before he takes office, while outgoing President Biden has also

pushed hard for a deal before he leaves. The official said talks went until the early hours of Monday, with Witkoff pushing the Israeli delegation in Doha and Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani pushing Hamas officials to finalize an agreement.

The head of Egypt's general intelligence agency Hassan Mahmoud Rashad was also in the Qatari capital as part of the talks, the official said. Trump envoy Witkoff has traveled to Qatar and Israel several times since late November. He was in Doha on Friday and traveled to Israel to meet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday before returning to Doha.

Biden also spoke on Sunday by phone with Netanyahu, stressing "the immediate need for a ceasefire in Gaza and return of the hostages with a surge in humanitarian aid enabled by a stoppage in the fighting under the deal," the White House said. Israel launched its assault in Gaza after Hamas fighters stormed across its borders in October 2023, killing 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

CJP calls for constructive criticism on judges

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi on Monday called for constructive criticism on judges. He was talking to a delegation of Supreme Court Press Association on Monday.

He said that every judge of apex court is independent in making decisions. "The judges should be criticised but criticism should be constructive," said the CJP Afridi. He said on a lighter note that he was made CJP in so much haste that he couldn't buy a new suit for his oath-taking ceremony.

The chief justice said that several reforms have been introduced in judiciary during last few months. "The high court has its own authority. We cannot directly interfere in the affairs of high court and lower judiciary," he said.

PTI issues show-cause notice to Sher Afzal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership has once again issued a show-cause notice to party leader Sher Afzal Marwat for giving a statement against the party lines.

In the notice issued to Sher Afzal Marwat, the lawmaker has been directed to respond to issuing statements against the party policy and party's secretary-general Salman Akram Raja, the sources said. The notice further orders Marwat to defend himself within seven days while advising him not to appear on any other public media platform as a representative of the party or raise any more issues during that time.

Earlier in May 2024, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) also issued a show-cause notice to Sher Afzal Marwat for making irresponsible statements. As per details, the notice was issued by the then-PTI secretary general Omar Ayub Khan and asked Marwat to explain his statements, which were deemed damaging to the party's reputation.

The notice states that such statements were against the party's discipline and violate the clear instructions of the party's founder, Imran Khan, who has emphasized the importance of responsible behavior. Marwat was warned that failure to respond or provide a satisfactory explanation may lead to further disciplinary action.

PHC issued notices to Federal and KP govts

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court (PHC) has issued notices to the federal and provincial governments in 13 and 10 cases related to missing persons respectively, seeking their response, on Monday.

PHC Chief Justice heard the petitions filed by the families of missing persons. During the hearing, Additional Attorney General, Sana Ullah represented the federal government, while Additional Advocate General, Inam Ullah Yousafzai, represented the provincial government.

The provincial government submitted reports in four cases related to missing persons, while the federal government submitted a report in one case. The court issued notices to the federal government in 13 cases and the provincial government in 10 cases, directing them to submit their responses.

Court orders Federal's govt to authorize D I Khan Sessions Court for

ANF cases: The Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim has directed the federal government to authorize the session and additional sessions judges' courts in Dera Ismail Khan for hearing cases related to the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Under Control of Narcotics Substances Act, on Monday.

PHC ordered federal's government during the hearing of a bail application filed by Rauf Khan, who was arrested by the ANF for smuggling 167 kilograms of hashish. The Chief Justice expressed concern over the unnecessary travel and expenses incurred by litigants who have to travel 200 kilometers to Kohat for hearings.

The Chief Justice emphasized that the government's role is to provide facilities, not create problems. He noted that the current arrangement causes unnecessary hardship for litigants and additional expenses for the government.

During the hearing ANF's lawyer, Tariq Kakar and Additional Attorney

General Sana Ullah appeared before PHC. The Chief Justice asked why the local courts in Dera Ismail Khan had not been authorized to hear these cases.

The ANF's lawyer replied that this was not within their authority, and that the federal government would need to issue a notification to authorize the local courts. The Chief Justice directed the federal government to take immediate action to authorize the local courts. The Additional Attorney General, assured the court that the federal government would take immediate action to authorize the local courts. He informed the court that there were over 53 cases related to the ANF pending in Kohat, and that authorizing the local courts would greatly facilitate the litigants.

The counsel Nausheen Ahmad advocate informed the court that the petitioner is Hepatitis-C patients and requested for provision of bail. The court adjourned the hearing until January 27 and directed the federal government to submit a report on the matter.

Ayaz Sadiq greenlights third round of govt-PTI talks

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The third round of dialogue between the government and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has finally been called.

National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq has summoned the meeting - third round - on Jan 16 (Thursday). The two sides

will once again sit together at 11.30am to take the reconciliation efforts forward. Earlier, rumours were rife that the negotiations between the two key political parties had been put on the back burner amid delay in PTI delegation's meeting with Imran Khan to discuss the future course of action.

The NA speaker, who

oversees the negotiation process, is reported to have facilitated PTI leaders' meeting with the incarcerated founder to pave the way for resumption of stalled talks. The dialogue process between the government and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf seemed to have entered into a stalemate.